



Metro

600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736

Meeting summary

Meeting: Nature in Neighborhoods Capital Grants Pilot Program Design and Review
Committee Meeting #11
Date: Tuesday, May 24, 2022
Time: 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
Place: Zoom
Purpose: Guidebook and Request for Proposal development
Outcome(s): Develop the program Guidebook and Request for Proposal

Recording: <https://vimeo.com/713780928/cae51dfac0>

Attendees

Committee Members

Jairaj Singh, they/he, Unite Oregon
Jeffrey Lee, he/him, (City of Portland, BES)
Theresa Huang, she/her, Urban Greenspaces Institute
Kevin Hughes, he/him, City of Hillsboro Parks and Recreation Department
Alisa Chen, they/them, Grow Portland

Absent:

Anthony M. Bradley
Blanca Gaytan Farfan

Staff

Crista Gardner, Metro
Brandon Goldner, Metro
Humberto Marquez Mendez, Metro
Gabrielle Brown, Metro (PSU Fellow)
Allison Brown, JLA Public Involvement
Travis Rumohr, JLA Public Involvement

Welcome and Introductions

Allison Brown, JLA Public Involvement, opened the meeting and verified that the summary from the previous meeting was approved by all in attendance. She then checked with the group about any access needs and reviewed the general meeting plan. Crista Gardner, Metro, explained that Humberto Marquez Mendez, Metro, would be leading most of the meeting to discuss community outreach.

Design Development

Gabrielle Brown, Metro, explained that the group would start off by finishing some of the conversations from the last meeting. She then introduced the question that would be discussed first, under the category of Design Development, "Is secondary development via charrette or implementer-prepared?"

- **Gabrielle Brown:** Do we want to a second budget delegate summit, so a second touchpoint with the community to work on the projects together to get advanced final insight into design before

that secondary development happens or are we just going to rely on subject matter experts and implementer staff to do that work? What do you all think and where are you at?

- **Crista Gardner:** This is the last piece of this discussion. We just want to confirm what we think we have heard from you. There are two ways to do this secondary project development, one is to have individual meetings community members (budget delegates) and staff members or consultants that will help with the design of that project. Or there is the other way, which is what we are proposing here, which is having a budget development workshop, and have a little design component to a community-based workshop. That's what we've heard you say in the past, that you want more opportunities for community engagement, we just want to check that this is indeed what you want to do.

Allison addressed the comments on the board, specifically the desire to have an opportunity for follow up and an opportunity to interact with subject matter experts.

- **Gabrielle Brown:** The whole point of the summit is to create opportunities, such as interacting with subject matter experts to develop ideas.
- **Committee Member:** I'm just trying to think through the process, because I haven't had to go through this process myself, of having to propose a project. I guess having the first one grant people contact info to get in touch with Metro staff to talk about their ideas, does that sound like how it's kind of been done? Is that already feedback going on after the first summit?
 - **Crista Gardner:** Most of these projects will be implemented by local jurisdictions, not Metro staff. That's why we are talking about doing a workshop where we bring together the community, the local jurisdictions, and also some local experts that can really help the community and those local jurisdictions figure out designs for a particular idea.
 - **Committee Member:** I do feel like having a second summit helps people form more concrete ideas while developing a project.
- **Committee Member:** It would be good to review the process, for me. Who the budget delegates are comprised of, is that going to be us or are they other volunteers?
- **Crista Gardner:** Let's go back and review for a moment. Review the schematic and then we will move on to Humberto talking about engagement then come back to this.

Crista explained the scope of work graphic, where small projects and large projects go through an idea collection phase, then from that, this committee will go through a vetting process using the predetermined criteria to winnow the number of projects down to a more manageable amount of projects that really fit the criteria. Those projects would then go through a budget delegate summit, which would have the community members, experts, CBOs, etc. in a room together working through a high-level design schematic. From that design schematic there would be a preliminary community vote on a further reduced number of projects. After all of that, the projects would go into the secondary development. Metro's recommendation would be to implement a second, smaller budget delegate summit, that group would get a more complete design and the community would take a final vote. The projects selected through the vote return to the committee which then recommends to the Metro council.

Crista reviewed the reflective questions, racial equity framework and asked everyone to be thinking about these, as well as other elements, such as the spectrum of community engagement. Crista explained that Humberto would talk about the community engagement toolkit. She noted that it is also

important to think about the targeted populations and consider environmental justice and underserved communities.

Community Engagement

Humberto Marquez Mendez, Metro, facilitated the discussion. He explained that he wanted to give the committee a time to look at the elements in the process phases and bring any questions forward before moving over to the community engagement element.

Goals and Priorities

Humberto brought up the first question in Engaging Communities: Goals & Priorities – “What are inclusive and equitable community engagement strategies we can use in this process?”

He explained that the goal is not to answer all the questions, but to get them on the board and discuss them. Humberto gave everyone an opportunity to place their ideas on the board.

Ideas posted on the board included:

- Language translation.
- Variety of engagement activities (virtual, visual, open-ended, etc.).
- Pay and reward people for their time and input.
- Breakout groups!
- Photovoice gallery/gallery walks.
- Make activities fun.
- Community group agreements maybe??
- Making sure there are multiple time opportunities if doing in-person event.
- Utilizing community specific media outlets and chat groups.
- Partner with community engagement liaisons/representatives.
- Learning about the needs from community first so experts know what to address.
- Many of my engagement experience expressed wanting opportunity to follow up for more inputs or for people to follow up with them.
- Going to existing community events rather than only relying on your own events.
- I love PB Cambridge’s GIS platform for informing and collecting comments!

After giving the group some time to place ideas on the board, Humberto asked them to discuss their ideas.

- **Committee Member:** (Elaborating on his idea of Photovoice gallery/gallery walks) There’s a co-liberate curriculum that is a part of movement generation’s school of thought, one of the participatory action research engagement practices is starting with stories and is basically engaging people through photography. In traditional photovoice processes, the photos are shared in a focus group process with others, this focuses on a gallery to share for reflection during a community event. You set up the photos and you can place sticky notes and share thoughts.
 - **Humberto Marquez Mendez:** That sounds great, that sounds like a useful tool during the idea collection phase to get ideas and strategies from the communities.
 - **Committee Member:** It could be both the delegates and the community members providing the material. Typically, it’s provided but I think we could encourage community members to come with their own photographs and share them in the room.
 - **Humberto Marquez Mendez:** It seems like it could then be adapted. If the implementer provides the photos, then there could be a summit stage where

people are being asked to respond to something, as opposed to the collection phase with people bringing ideas.

- **Allison Brown:** There are some themes, one of them seems to be minimizing the burden of having to share ideas in one way. Kind of that thought process of what are ways to make it so it's not somebody's responsibility to share something in a way someone else can understand? Also, there is the recurring theme of "go to where people are", engage with them in their space, and let people know through channels that they are using. Are there other strategies that folks have seen work well out in community?
- **Humberto Marquez Mendez:** I saw Theresa mention her experience with communities wanting follow-up. I think that is also transferable to this square.
- **Committee Member:** There's one project at my workplace, we have a site called Showcase Wetlands, it involves a whole lot of partnerships with the native people, and a lot of it is managed by them, learning to relinquish their power.
 - **Committee Member in the chat:** Yes! Not exactly strategy focused, but learning to identify our own biases (e.g., not focus on weed management when it can impact toxicity, neighbor relations, access for elders for first foods harvesting)
- **Humberto Marquez Mendez:** Talking about having different learning styles, paying people for their time and their input. I have seen it work and when we don't do it, we've seen it not work so well.
- **Humberto Marquez Mendez:** If we think about it in terms of multiple touchpoints of engagement, we can see why there would be a second summit. We don't want to assume that we know everything.

Idea Submission

Humberto transitioned the group into discussing Idea Submission and addressing the first question "How can we maximize engagement & inclusion during idea submission?" He asked for the group to think about what ideas from the first phase could be copied and pasted into the next category. He also encouraged the group to add their ideas to the next question, "How are ideas submitted in-person? (E.g., community events, info sessions, community public spaces like libraries or religious spaces)", if they felt inclined to do so.

Ideas posted on the board included:

- Having staff fill out forms while giving space for delegates to speak and elaborate their ideas.
- Use infographics, stories, and photos for project background and proposal guidelines. Also interpretation > direct translations.
- Understanding that youth are encouraged to attend (especially for those of us who have served as "translators" to our parents)
 - Another PB group allocated one chosen project to be voted by a Youth Committee!
- Variety of engagement activities (virtual, visual, open-ended, etc.).
- Explicitly describe our intentions of including those often excluded.
- Make activities fun!
- Allow participants to write up key questions "snowball fight".
- Option to start with storytelling.
 - Follow-up: For many communities including indigenous peoples, cultural practices and materials like oral stories are a deep, sometimes sacred part of their heritage.
 - Staff needs to have a transparent protocol for permissions regarding how they would steward/protect particular narratives to respect cultural property and avoid

unnecessary harm. Otherwise, seemingly good intentions of sharing others' stories could have unintended negative impacts on trust!

- Learning about the needs from community first so experts know what to address.
- Going to existing community events rather than only relying on your own events.
- Utilizing community specific media outlets and chat groups – ex) idea recruitment ad.

The group then discussed the ideas posted on the board.

- **Humberto Marquez Mendez:** One that I think is really important, is engaging community members that may not have participated in things like this before. The ability to capture stories, and elders passing down stories, it hits home with me. I think thinking about outreach vs. engagement, outreach is how we invite people to participate and engagement is what are the ideas that we are participating with. What are some other outreach strategies that we could use that aren't already up here?
 - **Allison Brown:** I see one starting with storytelling. I think this is the first touchpoint with communities. So, it is the starting point from which you will connect with folks.
- **Committee Member:** Looking at how we should explicitly describe our intentions. First, it's not an easy thing to do, it's tricky to strike a balance between connecting with communities and not abusing that relationship to fulfill a specific need. I also come from a public health background, sometimes the best way to get what you want is to have a clean and refined message about what you are looking for.
 - **Allison Brown:** There's a need to be ready to talk about what we are going to do. What is the message here and what is the process?
- **Humberto Marquez Mendez:** The sticky note about using infographics is appreciated. I think that that is great, allowing folks the ability to learn through different methods.

The group then took an informal poll on the Mural Board centered on the question "Is Idea Collection a hybrid process (online & in-person)?" The four present committee members indicated that they all believed "Yes", that it should be hybrid.

- **Humberto Marquez Mendez:** I really identify with the point highlighting children that act as "translators" for their parents, and how it is important to include youth in the discussion.

Humberto then checked in with Gabrielle and Crista about whether there was something the group hadn't answered yet. They agreed this is a great starting point that would develop as time went along. Humberto then moved the group on to the next question: "How are ideas submitted in-person? (E.g., community events, info sessions, community public spaces like libraries, schools, religious spaces)".

Ideas posted on the board included:

- School events, community centers.
- Going to existing community events rather than only relying on your own events.
 - Community liaison pickups.
- Tabling at gathering locations identified specifically by community (e.g., marketplace, park, etc.).
 - For those visiting such sites they should have understanding of cultural "manners".
- At earlier sessions, make a space for people to offer suggestions?
- In person in-language surveys / or in person collection tools.
- Classic focus group events – we could call them "ideation stations".

- Asking before going/promoting in a space.

Humberto copied some ideas over to the question and discussed the ideas with the group.

Humberto – there was another one about going to existing community events so I am going to copy and paste that one.

- **Committee Member:** My comment around liaisons, it's like utilizing community engagement liaisons to work one-on-one. Going to people's homes or specific shops to have these conversations.
 - **Humberto Marquez Mendez:** So doing more direct work, as opposed to waiting in a space for them to be there.
- **Allison Brown asked:** Are there spaces that this might not be ok to do this in? Certain religious or community spaces? Is there a space that government-related folks should not be coming into?
 - **Committee Member:** I brought that up last time, I think really asking ahead of time and asking permission if you're going to any space. I think seeing if it is appropriate ahead of time is important. I think that could apply to a place of worship or even to a community event.
- **Humberto Marquez Mendez:** I like the sticky note calling classic focus groups "ideation stations". Focus groups can be problematic, so I like referring to them in this way and changing the approach.

Group took a break for 5 minutes

Allison noted that before the group got back into things, they would share a bit of the timeline piece.

Timeline Discussion

Gabrielle shared information about the timeline piece and reviewed/read directly from the document. She explained that unanimous consent is needed to make a decision on extending the timeline, asking for discussion to determine whether the committee would like to extend the amount of meetings from 18 to 24, meet regularly through the summer, and delay implementation to make decisions.

Gabrielle noted that there would still meetings reserved for the vetting and implementation stage down the road.

- **Committee Member:** I have a thought, summer is harder for me and probably for other people probably. If Metro is looking to replicate this process, trying to rush through it is not probably the best idea. If it's going to be replicable, that doesn't set people up for success.
- **Allison Brown:** Theresa, sounds like you're cool either way, Kevin, hearing do it or do it right, Jairaj, Alisa, and Jeffrey?
- **Committee Member** I won't be in the US starting August 11, I'll be in Iceland, so there will be a time zone difference. I am willing to try to make it work though.
- **Committee Member:** For me, I have a lot going on this summer, I could use that time to work on other things, but I could use that time to work on other things.
- **Committee Member:** I'm currently flexible during summer, work-wise, so I could definitely meet but I understand others. I don't have strong feelings for either.

- **Humberto Marquez Mendez:** Sounds like some are on board with extending it, but maybe not to that length. If it was extended by another meeting or two, instead of that plan, is that workable or would you still rather not do it? Maybe it's not 4 meetings, maybe just 2? Is that more workable?
- **Committee Member:** I wanted to acknowledge, not everyone who is here is representative of an indigenous community, I'm making an assumption, I don't think the product is going to be, it's going to be a continually evolving process. There are always more voices to be heard.
- **Committee Member:** Through the end of July is very doable for me, won't be working.

Gabrielle noted that there is a page on the Jamboard for those that have hard boundaries and those that want to write something out.

- **Brandon Goldner:** I think part of the thought behind this is, are we as staff making sure there is the opportunity for more space if that's what you want to do. The driving thought that there is a lot of information. Are there other ways for you to be confident other than extending the meetings?

Budget Delegate Summits and Project Development

Group returned to discussing Budget Delegate Summits and Project Development, and Humberto reviewed the discussion so far for Alisa.

The first question to discuss in this section would be "How can we maximize engagement & inclusion through Budget Delegate Summits & Project Development?"

Humberto encouraged the group to do what they did before and place transferrable ideas into the new spot on the board.

Ideas posted on the board included:

- Providing food, drinks, and a wide variety of ways to participate (virtual and in person).
- Provide stipends to honor peoples' time.
- Icebreaker activities like nature storytelling (shared in Metro's Connecting with Nature Report).
- Sharing photos/stories of past projects – big posters! Have past awardees have a station to share own experiences of proposal process? Or even hosting event at a project site!
- Project implementers and landscaper being receptive to ideas that may not be traditionally accustomed to.
- Mock up project sites like Park(ing) Day displays.
- Different booths for different expert areas or projects.
- Have different sessions/rooms for different languages.

The next question discussed was "Is the Budget Delegate Summit & Project Expo one large event each or multiple smaller events?"

Ideas posted on the board included:

- With 1 event how do we support folks who might not be able to make it? I like the idea of 1 large event for cohesion but can foresee it leaving folks out.
- Maybe one large weekend event (sort of like a conference).
- Smaller spread out events so folks have more time to think through ideas / let ideas develop.

- Multiple smaller to cover many people's varied work and life schedules.
- Greensboro PB recommends at least 1 event for morning, weekend, and evening.

Humberto announced that before diving into the third question, the group would take a poll and make a decision about one large event vs multiple smaller events.

Gabrielle initiated a poll around on large event vs multiple smaller events on the Mural Board. The results were:

- **4 for multiple smaller events**
- **1 for one large event**

The group then went on to address the next question: "If more than one, how are these organized (by type, by neighborhood, etc.)?"

Committee members added their thoughts to the box regarding how the events should be organized, with the assumption that they are discussing multiple smaller events based on the results of the poll

Ideas posted on the board included:

- East & West & South (ex: 2 in Hillsboro 2 in Gresham etc.), maybe 1 centrally located.
- Make it all virtual.
- Geographic makes the most sense I think. Also, paying attention to neutral ground (ex: not at religious or political venues, etc.).
- If in person located by public transit access within neighborhoods or whatever subsets used.
- If we do hybrid we need to make sure both options are evenly accessible; a lot of hybrid events I've seen have leaned heavily toward supporting virtual or in-person attendants.
- Virtual + in-person options?
- "Proposal advocate" > "Budget delegate"? I was also unfamiliar with "charrette" prior to this!
- Consider that how it's organized can also play out how cross-cultural and cross-project collaboration happens.

The group then discussed all three questions and the ideas shared on the board.

- **Allison Brown:** Gabrielle, when you say type, what do you mean?
 - **Gabrielle Brown:** Some PB programs divide their subcommittee work by geography and some do it by project type. Sometimes we've heard that doing it by "type" can be hazy, you might have 10 of one kind and two of the other, also the boundaries between one type and the other might be difficult to determine.
- **Humberto Marquez Mendez:** Just another point around maximizing inclusion and engagement, is around language and calling it something different than what we've been using. Specifically, the point about "budget delegate summit", it's kind of complicated, we need to use accessible language.
 - **Gabrielle Brown:** The term was coined as a reference to the PB model that we've been using, budget delegates are the people that work with subject area experts to develop projects, that's where it comes from, but your input is important.

Next Steps and Closing

Allison then began addressing next steps while people continued to put their ideas in the Mural board. She dropped a link to the Jamboard and encouraged folks to share their thoughts and included a tab for the timeline discussion.

Crista then shared some information on next steps and encouraged people to continue participating.

Allison then shared that folks could continue sharing on the Mural board for the conversation next time. She then brought the meeting to a close.

Appendix A: Zoom Meeting Chat

Jeffrey Lee: Sorry going off video for a sec (still actively listening!) -- caring for my in-law's dog and she starts barking for her dinner at 5pm sharp!

Jeffrey Lee: Yes! Not exactly strategy focused, but learning to identify our own biases (e.g., not focus on weed management when it can impact toxicity, neighbor relations, access for elders for first foods harvesting)

Allison Brown (she/her): I have named the crows Macho Man Randy Savage and Hulk Hogan (shout out to my wrestling-obsessed pal who named them), and they visit daily and love when I do yard work (I'll throw worms out for them so they can have some tasty treats). Squirrels are very into the peanuts. Working on that.

Allison Brown (she/her): Hey Alisa! Welcome in: we're just talking about extending our meeting schedule...or not

Alisa Chen: Sounds good!

Theresa Huang (she/hers): I have no plans so either way works for me

Allison Brown (she/her): Either ending June 21st, or end of August

Jeffrey Lee: I think the guidebook will be continually evolving especially after the first run!

Jeffrey Lee: Meetings in Iceland??

Allison Brown (she/her):

<https://app.mural.co/t/natureinneighborhoodscapital3991/m/natureinneighborhoodscapital3991/1648151204571/56c935687d314013ebd52c31e9af4c8a32d10189?sender=udb943acb45109510e5263334>

Theresa Huang (she/hers): the deadly quite makes me anxious too lol

Allison Brown (she/her):

<https://jamboard.google.com/d/1dJfhZRhZsMHNsJCS9Qt4OOUGGpDB41bkbDkvVPU50nQ/edit?usp=sharing>

Jeffrey Lee: Saw that! Thanks!

Allison Brown (she/her): And if you want to check out the last Jamboard (now with Metro staff stickies!), that's here:

Allison Brown (she/her):

<https://jamboard.google.com/d/198YA7UvdoqncgNhD6CbpTUUIc3krXCZAE5V1XC34TBU/edit?usp=sharing>

Appendix B: Land acknowledgement – Oversight Committee

The greater Portland area is built upon the ancestral homelands, villages and traditional use areas of multiple Indigenous tribes and bands who have stewarded these lands we cherish since time immemorial.

The lands at the confluence of the Willamette and Columbia rivers have long served as a major crossroads for the economic, social and political interactions of tribal nations for thousands of years and a place of significance in the homelands and traditional territories of many tribal nations.

We owe a special acknowledgement to the many tribes and bands and their descendants who ceded these lands in treaties with the United States.

We recognize the strong and diverse tribal nations and Native communities in our region today and offer respect and gratitude for their stewardship of these lands past, present and future. Metro seeks to establish meaningful relationships and explore opportunities to collaborate and consider tribal priorities and interests in our work, including our parks and nature bond work. We are building our understanding of tribal interests in the greater Portland area as we implement our parks and nature work.

As we learn more, we hope to refine Metro's approach to land acknowledgements in the future; We recognize land acknowledgements are important and can be sensitive. We are hoping to learn more to integrate this into our work appropriately and in a good way honoring tribal interests going forward.