

**MEETING SUMMARY OF THE BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE FOR TRAILS
MEETING 1**

Monday, May 5, 2008, 4:00-6:00 p.m

Metro Council Chamber/Annex

Members Present: Eileen Brady, Scott Bricker, Rex Burkholder, Steve Faulstick, Jay Graves, Cynthia Haruyama, Al Jubitz, Julie A. Keil, Richard Kidd, Randy Leonard, Nichole Maher, Rod Monroe, Rick Potestio, Dick Schouten, Philip Wu, Ian Yolles and Dave Yaden

Members Absent: John Russell, Chris Enlow, Dave Underriner

Chair Dave Yaden convened the Blue Ribbon Committee for Trails at 4:04 p.m.

1. Metro Council President David Bragdon welcomed the committee. He set the context for the committee with brief remarks and a reading from E.M. Forster's Howard's End, emphasizing connectivity.
2. Chair Dave Yaden empanelled the committee members and asked members to introduce themselves and tell a story about their favorite trail or trail experience.

Committee members introduced themselves and told a story about their favorite trail or a trail experience that was special to them.

3. Regional trails video presentation

Metro Parks and Greenspaces Director Jim Desmond introduced the video and thanked the committee members for their participation. He explained that some of the material the committee will be reviewing in months to come could be very technical or complex and that staff would be on hand throughout to provide assistance. He also added that committee members should feel free to seek out staff for clarification or any other help needed.

The video highlighted the benefits of trails and the need for additional trails through interviews with trail users and footage of trail usage.

4. The history, status, and future of regional trails presented by Mia Birk of Alta Planning & Design and Mike Wetter, Senior Policy Advisor, Metro.

Mia Birk of Alta Planning and Design presented a PowerPoint about the benefits of trail systems using examples of existing trails and proposed trails from around the region.

Mike Wetter reemphasized specific benefits and values of trails. Mike noted that at our present rate of completion, the regional trail system would not be built out until 2098. He asked the committee to look over the trail packages that Metro

staff, trail advocates, and other local agencies had prepared and determine what level of commitment the region should have for completing these trail packages – including pace and funding strategies.

5. Situational analysis presented by Mike Wetter, Planning Manager Mary Anne Cassin, Metro Parks and Greenspaces, and Transportation Planning Manager Tom Kloster..

Mary Anne Cassin informed the committee that the 20 selected packages vary in design, completion level, length, cost, geography and usage but are geographically distributed and would connect the region. The common denominator is that they have trails “champions”, are inspirational, and would reinforce each other in completing the network.

Tom Kloster discussed the opportunity to frame how trails fit into transportation planning and the upcoming timeline for funding opportunities including (Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program) MTIP and the 2009 Federal Transportation Reauthorization Bill.

Mike Wetter discussed the Rails to Trails Conservancy Active Transportation federal funding application. He advised the committee that while this application is due June 30, 2008 and staff are already working on it, one purpose of the application is to favorably position this region in time for the 2009 Federal Transportation Reauthorization Bill. The committee can refine the proposal based on the committee’s defined trail priorities.

Eileen Brady asked if most the funding discussed would be a one-time capital investment or ongoing for operations and maintenance of trails. Mia Birk confirmed that what we are discussing it is a one-time investment.

Senator Rod Monroe expressed that we always need a local match.

Tom Kloster responded that maintenance is a problem for all transportation. He stated that one goal is that trails would fall under the transportation umbrella or be considered an extension of the traditional transportation system, so that trails could receive funding for maintenance through transportation dollars

Mary Anne Cassin informed the committee that a state funding measure, Measure 66, which dedicates Oregon Lottery proceeds to State Parks and salmon recovery, is required to be reauthorized before 2014. State Parks is considering putting this question before voters as soon as 2010. It is therefore important to get in early with priorities to potentially qualify regional projects for state funding.

6. Chair Dave Yaden discussed the committee’s charge included in their committee packet. .

Chair Yaden asked the committee if they understood the charge or if they had any objection or questions.

Scott Bricker commented on fragmentation and the need to include trail connectivity to regional centers, schools, and transit. He described trails as the “platinum condition” of the bicycle system but suggested that local connectors are equally important. Chair Yaden asked if Bricker was comfortable that this was included in the committee’s charge. Bricker responded yes.

Senator Rod Monroe commented that the committee needed to look at the state legislative funding mix and how the various pieces could and should fit together.

Chair Yaden added that included in the committee’s charge is to look into alternative forms of funding and new funding (growing the pie).

Commissioner Dick Schouten commented that it was important to make sure trails in rural and suburban areas were included.

Al Jubitz asked if barriers to completing the trails would be covered in the later meetings, which was confirmed by Mike Wetter.

Councilor Rex Burkholder commented that the committee needed to think about the connection to Clark County, Washington both in terms of projects and strengthening support for federal funding efforts.

Mary Anne Cassin added that Lisa Goorjian, the trails planner for Clark County was present at the meeting. Metro is working collaboratively with them on a parallel track with assistance from a National Park Service technical grant program to coordinate our two plans into one comprehensive whole.

Rick Potestio asked to what degree the committee would be asked to look at the character of the trails (in terms of prioritizing) and if the group of trail packages was complete or if the committee would be asked to evaluate and craft additional trail packages.

Mike Wetter responded that additional trails would be open for discussion but what is being presented to the group was developed by local partners and already has support. He added that the committee would not be asked to prioritize the trails but look at the qualities they each represent.

Cynthia Haruyama asked how the knowledge of barriers to completing trails learned in the past 10 years would be incorporated.

Jim Desmond responded that the issue is really two-fold. Trail advocates would be able to offer detailed information on this for the individual packages and the

more overall historic barriers dealing with funding would be presented to the committee in greater detail in subsequent meetings.

8. Final Questions

Chair Yaden asked the committee if there were any final questions regarding the charge, meeting schedule or logistics. The committee had no additional questions.

Chair Yaden invited the committee to participate in the upcoming field trips to learn more about and to experience first-hand some of the individual trails.

9. Introduction to Trail Packages presented by Derek Robbins of the City of Forest Grove.

Derek Robbins invited the committee to speak to the trail champions of each trail package at the reception.

Al Jubitz asked whether the committee could assume that the trail corridors (trail packages) had been agreed upon. He also asked whether the committee could assume that the trail packages included the voter approved Greenspace Initiative (Metro bond measure) and whether there were any debate over where the trails should be located or debate over land acquisition.

Jim Desmond responded that the packages are somewhere between conceptual and literal but Metro was confident with the overall feasibility of the trail packages. He added that Metro's Natural Area bond program would be able to fund some of the acquisitions. Desmond also invited committee members to speak to the individual trail champions for more details about this issue.

Mayor Richard Kidd reiterated the importance of connectivity in the packages.

Chair Dave Yaden thanked the staff for the presentations.

10. Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Blue Ribbon Committee for Trails, Chair Dave Yaden adjourned the meeting at 6:06 p.m.

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