

## MINUTES OF THE METRO COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEETING

Tuesday, January 3, 2006  
Metro Council Chamber

Councilors Present: David Bragdon (Council President), Carl Hosticka, Rod Park, Robert Liberty, Rex Burkholder, Brian Newman

Councilors Absent: Susan McLain (excused)

Council President Bragdon convened the Metro Council Work Session Meeting at 2:05 p.m.

### **1. DISCUSSION OF AGENDA FOR COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING, JANUARY 5, 2006/ ADMINISTRATIVE/CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER AND CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS**

Council President Bragdon reviewed the agenda for the first regular council meeting of 2006. In addition, there will be a key budget work session tomorrow afternoon.

### **2. METRO NATURAL AREAS BOND MEASURE DISCUSSION**

Jim Desmond, Parks Director, discussed the Blue Ribbon Committee (BRC)'s recommendation that 5% (\$11 million) of the bond measure be the grants portion; the Greenspaces Policy Advisory Committee (GPAC) recommended double the percentage and amount. The various bond elements are coming together, but there are still a few things to be ironed out. Mr. Desmond shared documents discussing the opportunity grant program, the proposed bond measure, and preliminary target areas (copies of which are included in the meeting record).

Chris Carlson, Parks Manager, said that the purpose and the focus of the program were still being discussed. She went through some of the program focus criteria. Re-naturing was proving to be an important area.

Council President Bragdon asked Council to contribute their thoughts about which focus criteria would be best used to support the bond measure. Councilor Hosticka asked if there was any polling data to support a decision. No one was aware of any. Mr. Desmond asked if he and his staff correctly understood the thrust of the Council's desires for the bond measure so that they could appropriately present it to others.

Councilor Liberty liked the list of re-naturing opportunities. He wondered whether some of this money would be used to support other goals such as centers and corridors. He thought maybe some of the re-naturing opportunities were a bit of a stretch to the goal of water quality and habitat and asked how consistent we should be about this.

Councilor Burkholder said it was important to think strategically about the bond measure and how the grant program would help get the bond measure passed. He didn't want the list to be too exclusionary. Grant recipients might have other ideas that we haven't thought of. He thought the focus of the grants should not be on large capital projects (such as roads), since those could eat up half the money without directly improving water quality or habitat.

Councilor Newman wanted to focus on visible projects that “looked green.” He wanted the projects to be easily identifiable as Metro projects and as enhancing water quality and habitat. Staff clarified for him that these monies could not be spent on private properties.

Councilor Hosticka said there was an additional goal, when the Nature in Neighborhoods program was passed, that we would do something besides regulation. He would support projects that were natural and could sustain themselves. Projects like construction and roads, interpretive displays and green streets might not fit in with this philosophy.

Mike Houck, BRC member, observed that community-supported agriculture was discussed at their meetings, although it didn’t wind up on the list. Councilor Hosticka said that demolition was good if it resulted in natural areas. Did agriculture qualify as nature? Councilor Park thought it did. His concern about the list was that it could be separated out as hardscape and the natural areas. He thought maybe a list that was too specific would have people picking out things they didn’t like and that they therefore might not vote for the measure. He thought a more generic approach would be more saleable.

Council President Bragdon heard similarities among the Council’s suggestions. He reviewed a memo from Councilor Liberty (a copy is included in the meeting record), which was mostly compatible with staff’s approach. He asked whether Council generally agreed about water quality and habitat and asked Councilor Liberty if he objected to constituency building. Councilor Liberty did not. Councilor Hosticka wanted to be clear on what we meant by water quality. Would the Big Pipe project be included? He asked for a better understanding that we were looking for natural solutions, not engineering projects. He wanted Council to clarify their opinion about this.

Councilor Park wanted a definition of “under-natured.” Ms. Carlson said there had been numerous discussions about it but wasn’t aware of a specific definition. Councilor Liberty said that it would be a hard sell in his district if all the target areas were outside his district. Nature in Neighborhoods didn’t have much meaning if it didn’t target the neighborhoods. He gave an example of a site by Mall 205 which had the potential to be a natural feature and pedestrian access, but it would require significant engineering. He didn’t want people to be deterred from such a project if hardscaping was being discouraged in the bond measure.

Councilor Hosticka’s thinking was more along the lines of whether eco-roofs, green streets, interpretive displays, etc., things where the primary characteristic was an artificial construction. He wanted a clearer distinction between a natural system and an attractively landscaped area. He thought we might want to focus more on natural systems.

Councilor Newman said he thought good ideas from the list were rain gardens, wildlife crossings, that type of thing. Councilor Burkholder wanted language that would describe the goals more helpfully and include a better description of the overall concept. If we had good language on this, we could use it as a guideline for suggested projects to see whether they fit in or not.

Council President Bragdon’s personal opinion was that he didn’t feel the example of green streets was appropriate – too capital-intensive and not enough habitat focus. He asked Ms. Carlson if there was a way to capture Council’s suggestions into more general language. Ms. Carlson replied that the Council’s comments had been very helpful. She thought some of it could be incorporated and would work on some new language.

Councilor Park wanted some examples of daylighting creeks and streams – what kinds of examples were we thinking of? What was the scale? Ms. Carlson said she would provide this to him. Councilor Liberty discussed data from some maps he had had prepared, showing relationships between geographic income distribution, growth centers, and proximity to natural areas. By and large, acquisition targets are in wealthier neighborhoods. The City of Portland will have an opportunity to acquire natural areas through their local share. Overall, Councilor Liberty felt that lower-income areas were under-served in access to natural areas.

Mr. Desmond agreed, saying that the Coalition for a Livable Future (CLF) had also demonstrated the overlap between income and natural areas. Councilor Hosticka said he would support criteria that attempted to address inequities, but he wondered if it didn't conflict with other criteria such as local match. Councilor Park felt that the discussion was turning into a conflict between projects, rather than an overview of what was good for the region. He thought we ought to try to brainstorm how to sell the regional bond issue at the neighborhood level. Councilor Liberty said he felt just the opposite – how could we sell the Nature in Neighborhoods concept if the perimeter got all the natural areas? He thought that without the economic equity portion, it would be a tougher sell, especially in his district, although a larger grant program would help.

Council President Bragdon asked Council to discuss their preferred approach – either to use general criteria or to list particular target areas. Councilor Liberty said that if being specific in worked for areas on the edge, that ought to apply to urban areas. People would look at a map and say, oh, there's something for us there. He personally felt that the map in his neighborhood didn't give him a lot to sell in terms of target areas.

Councilor Newman said he didn't feel comfortable at this point identifying zones on maps. Probably there were thousands of people who lived in such neighborhoods; he didn't want the amount of money to raise expectations that we could spend money in each neighborhood. He would prefer the approach that listed criteria, such as for mature neighborhoods that were under-natured.

Councilor Hosticka supported the weighting idea, but he wanted to address the political approach head-on. In 1995, he thought there wasn't a close approximation between the yes votes and the voter's geographic proximity to a target area.

Councilor Burkholder didn't think that was the issue. He agreed with Councilor Liberty; he wanted to see the costs and benefits balance out and thought the weighting program could address that. He thought the wording "increasing parks, natural areas and other green spaces in under-natured areas of the region" covered all the criteria they were talking about.

Council President Bragdon summarized that Council preferred the use of criteria to a target list and directed staff accordingly. Council did agree, however, that the criteria should include some weighting along the lines of Councilor Liberty's preference.

Regarding the eligibility criteria – Councilor Hosticka commented that there were many suburbanites who would drive into urban areas to experience natural areas such as Forest Park and Smith and Bybee Lakes. But he wondered about people who were transportation-limited, who might have a need for a natural area closer to them. He thought people didn't just think of natural areas as being in their neighborhoods, they would go some distance to experience it.

Council and staff then discussed the leveraging requirement, which the BRC has endorsed. GPAC suggested that the 1:1 ratio was too strict and recommended a lesser match. Both committees agreed that in-kind contributions, such as volunteer work, should be accepted.

Councilor Hosticka said he liked leverage but that if we wanted to be consistent we would need a waiver process. Councilor Newman thought the 1:1 ratio sounded good and had no problem with the idea of a waiver. Councilor Burkholder agreed. Council President Bragdon said we should publish 1:1 but reserve the right to issue a waiver. Councilor Liberty agreed but wanted to make sure that in low-income areas they not be disadvantaged by not having the 1:1.

Councilor Park asked if the applications would be weighted, giving a bonus for higher leverage projects. Mr. Desmond said this was a question for the Council. He thought the 1:1 leverage was good; should it be one of the selection criteria?

Council President Bragdon asked for a straw poll on the amount. The recommendations were \$11 million (5%) or \$22 million (10%). He did have some polling data, nothing too specific, but overall there was significant citizen support for water quality and habitat. Councilor Park thought the lower amount was better. If we wanted to get it passed, go with the strengths. Councilor Liberty said he'd like at least 10%. Councilor Newman didn't want anything to come out of local share or signature projects. Councilor Hosticka supported 10%. Council President Bragdon was personally more comfortable with 5%. The overall salability of the program has been in its specificity. The strength of the opportunity fund is also a vulnerability. We know there are going to be needs down the line, we want flexibility in order to be responsive, and we have no way of knowing we will need them. He thought \$11 million was a lot of money for an untested concept, especially since there was already a large local share for neighborhood projects. This would be an opportunity for income equity.

Council President Bragdon summarized the discussion and areas of consensus that he had heard. Did staff need more direction today? Ms. Carlson was asked to prepare some potential definitions of under-natured neighborhoods and more descriptive language for the criteria. Mr. Desmond discussed the map that he had handed out and thought maybe it was not as helpful as it could have been. Council might not want to obsess over it. He would provide a better map with clearer titles.

### **3. BREAK**

### **4. REGIONAL TRAVEL OPTIONS PROGRAM UPDATE**

Pam Peck, Public Affairs Manager, wanted to let Council know the status of the program now that Metro is taking ownership of it from TriMet. There will be a resolution on January 26. She displayed the PowerPoint presentation that was in the meeting packet.

The Regional Travel Options (RTO) program has a lot of partners that work together to provide transportation options and market the options to the public. Ms. Peck provided background on the program. Some elements are still in transition from TriMet. She reviewed how the program supported Metro goals and objectives and observed that we needed to identify a local partner to contribute matching funds. She discussed the evaluation program and has been working with partners at PSU to set it up properly. Some vehicles would have Global Positioning System (GPS) devices attached to them, in order to verify data. They will be analyzing results and cost savings before moving on to subsequent phases of the program. The goal was to be as fully

integrated with other Metro programs as possible. A major focus was collaborative marketing – this would be the heart of Metro’s role. She also discussed the regional rideshare program, one of the bigger pieces still in transition from TriMet.

Councilor Liberty asked whether state gas tax dollars could be used to pay for van pools. Ms. Peck did not have an immediate answer but agreed to provide it. She discussed the six Transportation Management Association programs and the 2040 initiatives grant program. In response to Councilor Liberty’s question, Ms. Peck stated that grants have ranged from \$8,000 to \$100,000. To support the RTO program will require two more staff. Council members questioned the budgeting figures, and Ms. Peck promised she would look into it.

She then discussed the Drive Less/Save More campaign, which was the result of four focus groups. Most of the program money will be going into advertising. The campaign will kick off February 1, and will include radio, television, billboards, and OPB sponsorships. Councilor Liberty asked if there was research on the effectiveness of similar campaigns. Ms. Peck was not aware of any. This program has been mandated by the state legislature. She discussed the techniques that the program will use to measure effectiveness.

#### **5. COUNCIL BRIEFINGS/COMMUNICATIONS**

There were none.

There being no further business to come before the Metro Council, Council President Bragdon adjourned the meeting at 4:21 p.m.

Prepared by,



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**ATTACHMENTS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR THE MEETING OF JANUARY 3,  
2006**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Doc Date</b>	<b>Document Description</b>	<b>Doc. Number</b>
1	Agenda	1/5/06	Metro Council Agenda for January 5, 2006	010306c-01
2	Bond Measure	12/27/05	TO: Metro Council FROM: Parks RE: Opportunity Grant Program	010306c-02
2	Bond Measure	1/3/06	TO: Metro Council FROM: Parks RE: Proposed Bond Measure 2006	010306c-03
2	Bond Measure	1/3/06	TO: Metro Council FROM: Parks RE: Preliminary Target Areas	010306c-04
2	Bond Measure	1/2/06	TO: Metro Council FROM: Robert Liberty RE: 2006 Bond Measure—Urban Nature Grant Program Element	010306c-05