

MINUTES OF THE METRO COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEETING

Tuesday, April 8, 2009
Metro Council Chamber

Councilors Present: David Bragdon (Council President), Kathryn Harrington, Rod Park, Carlotta Collette, Rex Burkholder, Carl Hosticka, Robert Liberty

Councilors Absent:

Council President Bragdon convened the Metro Council Work Session Meeting at 1:33 p.m.

1. DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY FUND (LOCAL ASPIRATIONS)

President Bragdon introduced the agenda. Meghan Gibb, TOD Director, introduced the agenda item “Development Opportunity Fund (Local Aspirations).” She discussed placemaking strategy and local projects. She discussed code changes, innovation, and need assessments for Portland as well as regional jurisdictions. Councilor Park asked about ownership interest. Ms. Gibb said she did not know exact numbers of ownership percentage. She communicated Councils’ desire for concrete implementation plans. She talked about desires to spur development innovation, and Metro’s unique competitive advantage for innovative and community-based development. She described investment choices available for Council.

Councilor Liberty said he thought contributing to construction costs was not included in the proposal. He discussed innovative architecture for market testing, and leveraging opportunities. He said if people were interested in that, there would need to be secondary plans. Ms. Gibb discussed implementing local decisions. Councilor Burkholder asked about feedback loops. He asked about setting the future for change in development. Councilor Harrington asked about revenue impacts to local cities and citizens. She asked what the concrete value was to both cities and citizens, and what the risk of inaction was. Councilor Park talked about local product and associated costs. He asked if there was a “cookbook” or standardization process for regional development.

2. CONNECTING GREEN: OVERVIEW AND CONSERVATION EDUCATION

Mike Wetter, Metro Senior Advisor, introduced an overview of the Connecting Green project. He talked about on-the-ground implementation of Connecting Green. Mr. Wetter talked about the Connecting Green Alliance and its role as a coalition “bigger” than Metro. He said there was power and value in coalition-building, and the outcome was additional investment. He discussed communication plans, including addressing the project as a system – otherwise it would not be viewed in a systemic way. Councilor Burkholder asked about scope of restoration. Mr. Wetter talked about the conservation and acquisition elements of the project. He talked about “branding” strategies.

Tony Vecchio, Oregon Zoo Director, introduced the Conservation Education agenda item. He discussed the decline of generational acknowledgement of environmental preservation values and transitions in environmental education patterns. Jim Desmond, Sustainability Center, provided background and information on the conservation education “petal” of the Connecting Green project. He talked about outdoor school. He said it was a matter of great regional concern and aligned very closely with the Oregon Zoo. He was before the Council to request additional funding for conservation education that would be housed under the Connecting Green project. He

provided statistics on educational need. He discussed challenges and risks, primarily lack of funding to propel further. He described building partnerships and integrated education strategies.

Councilor Collette asked about staffing specifics. Mr. Desmond said there was “appetite” in the region, but not adequate resources aligned with demand. Councilor Burkholder said there was a network and Metro needed to increase conservation education efforts throughout the region. He said it was important to get a conservation education agenda moving forward. Councilor Harrington said she did not see a concrete outcome, but instead saw a request for funding for a gap analysis and business plan. Councilor Hosticka said he saw more people talking about the outside world instead of actually being outside and in it. He talked about environmental education being viewed as a political tool – he said it was important to address that directly. He said it was interesting because school districts were not mentioned much in the discussion.

3. CONNECTING GREEN: REGIONAL SYSTEM

Mr. Desmond introduced the Regional System agenda item. He said it was important to create something that Metro could encompass and had a lot of regional interest. He said he felt goals were clear and a regional system was a component of “Making the Greatest Place.” He talked about Metro’s role as leaders of moving Connecting Green and a regional system forward. He talked about different funding strategies for regional parks throughout the nation. He discussed phases and strategy actions. He talked about access to Metro acquired property. He provided a scope looking at risks and challenges.

Councilor Harrington asked about consensus for fund allocation and distribution. Mr. Desmond said the aim was for a more equitable regional distribution of funds. Councilor Harrington asked about measure of result and outcome for the agency. Mr. Desmond said there would be a regional system with specified funding sources and specific regional roles. Councilor Harrington said there were still behavior change issues to sort out. Councilor Liberty asked what the value was for an integrated park system, and how that sort of budgeting system worked. Councilor Liberty asked about tangible values of redone signage. Mr. Desmond said it was a product of demonstration. Councilor Collette said it helped build constituency as well. President Bragdon said there needed to be a product. President Bragdon said the ad hoc way of conducting business was not sustainable. He said there was a pressing internal discussion to be had about what Metro wanted to be and what sort of system we wanted to develop. Councilor Park discussed strategies to approach equity. Councilor Collette talked about media payback for activities such as Park(ing) Day. Mr. Desmond said people love this topic.

There being no further business to come before the Metro Council, Council President Bragdon adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

Prepared by,



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ATTACHMENTS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR THE MEETING OF
April 8, 2009

Item	Topic	Doc. Date	Document Description	Doc. Number
1	Powerpoint	4/8/09	Metro Region Development Opportunity Fund, Presentation to the Metro Council	040809cw-1
2	Powerpoint	4/8/09	Connecting Green: Regional Conservation Education	040809cw-2
3	Powerpoint	4/8/09	Connecting Green: Regional System	040809cw-3