



METRO COUNCIL WORK SESSION
MEETING SUMMARY
Nov. 22, 2011
Metro Council Chamber

Councilors Present: Council President Tom Hughes and Councilors Shirley Craddick, Carlotta Collette, Carl Hosticka, Kathryn Harrington and Rex Burkholder.

Councilors Excused: Councilor Barbara Roberts.

Council President Tom Hughes convened the Metro Council work session at 2:04pm.

1. ADMINISTRATIVE/COUNCIL AGENDA FOR DECEMBER 1, 2011/CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Martha Bennett of Metro had no Chief Operating Officer communications at this time.

2. INDUSTRIAL AND EMPLOYMENT AREAS WORK PROGRAM UPDATE: REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL SITE READINESS

Mr. John Williams of Metro introduced the Regional Industrial Lands Inventory Findings report and named the project's many partners, including the Port of Portland, the Portland Business Alliance (PBA), Business Oregon and National Association of Industrial and Office Properties (NAIOP). The purpose of the project was to identify large parcels of industrial land in the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) as well as selected Urban Reserves, and to categorize each by market readiness. Ultimately, the Metro and its partners would like to support job growth in industrial areas by helping to create development-ready employment sites with increased regional coordination and investment.

Mr. Bernie Bottomly of PBA explained Phase 1 of the project, which inventoried all industrial sites at 25 developable acres or more, identifying parcel aggregation and evaluating development constraints to net developable acres, and categorized them into three tiers by market readiness. Market readiness was determined by factors including infrastructure needs, brownfield status, annexation requirements, land assembly needs, transportation conditions, and availability. There were 56 industrial sites in total; 9 Tier 1 sites, ready to be developed in 180 days, 16 Tier 2 sites, ready in 7 to 30 months, and 31 Tier 3 sites, ready in more than 30 months.

Mr. Keith Leavitt of the Port of Portland addressed the findings from Phase 1 and discussed the Port's experience with large industrial sites, their demand in the region and marketability. From a real estate standpoint, Mr. Leavitt concluded that the Portland Metropolitan area lacks large industrial sites that would attract traded-sector companies. The report indicated significant challenges and investments needed to upgrade tier 2 and tier 3 sites to more marketable statuses. Furthermore, conclusions highlighted an uneven geographic distribution of industrial sites in the region and too few 50 plus and 100 plus acre sites.

Council Discussion:

Councilors questioned why the report was capped at 25 acres for analysis of industrial sites when there is much demand for small sites in the region. Councilors also questioned why industrial sites with existing infrastructure available for redevelopment were not considered in the report. Mr. Bottomly responded to the Council's concerns by pointing to the regional demand for large industrial sites and explaining that existing building or infrastructure on sites can in many cases be a strong market deterrent because of the cost to demolish incompatible structures.

Councilors expressed concern about the way industrial land need is quantified in the region, and whether or not there is a significant demand for more industrial land not yet available. Mr. Leavitt identified the findings of Metro's brokers when accessing traded-sector companies land needs, which indicated a clear demand for large sites in the region.

Councilors discussed the issue of subdivision of industrial sites, and how Metro can help maintain larger sites for future developments. Mr. Leavitt said that the Port of Portland is working to maintain larger sites at 55 acres at least when subdivision is an option. Mr. Bottomly reiterated that the report demonstrates a snapshot in time of available industrial land that is subject to development and modification.

Councilors deliberated where to focus Metro's efforts in supporting the creation of more market ready industrial sites in the region. Eleven tier 2 and tier 3 sites were highlighted by the report as areas that could experience considerable improvements with regional coordination and investment. Councilors concluded by discussing Metro's ultimate role and future policy actions that could aid industrial lands in brownfield cleanups, infrastructure and transportation improvements, and land use decisions that support marketability.

3. BREAK

Councilors recessed for 5 minutes.

4. PARKS PORTFOLIO PROJECT

Mr. Jim Desmond of Metro presented Metro's Portfolio of Natural Areas, Parks and Trails, highlighting both the agency's opportunities and challenges in the future. Metro currently owns and operates 15,000 acres, more than one third of all the natural areas in the region. Since the Metropolitan Greenspaces Master Plan was adopted in 1992, Metro worked to create a cooperative regional system of natural areas, protected and managed those areas, preserved the diversity of plant and animal life, established a system of trails, restore green and open spaces and encouraged environmental awareness and education about the regional system. Voter approved bond measures from 1995 and 2006, which secured funding for Metro to buy more natural areas for environmental protection, restoration and increasing public access to nature parks, regional trails and recreation facilities.

Ms. Mary Anne Cassin of Metro presented on increasing public access and restoration efforts in Metro's parks. Ms. Cassin stressed the need for balance between habitat conservation and public access. Only ten percent of Metro's parks have no access at this time, with over 5,000 acres of formal access and 8,000 acres of informal access. Blue Lake Park and Glendoveer Golf Course are the highest-traffic destinations in Metro's portfolio and are designed to handle large numbers of

visitors. Informal access is balanced across the region. However, areas with less visitor infrastructure and relatively high use have exhibited of safety concerns from insufficient parking and illegal trail formation. Ms. Cassin stated that thoughtful planning can protect natural resources while simultaneously providing access.

Metro has organized volunteer work parties to fight invasive weeds and sponsored education programs. Ms. Cassin cited Metro's extensive restoration record, which includes 1,700,00 trees and shrubs planted in 16 years. The cost to restore Metro's parks depends on the habitat type and stage of restoration.

Questions for Metro Council consideration included,

1. Should Metro invest more money in restoring and maintaining land and, if so, where will the funding come from?
2. How much land should Metro open to the public, how soon and how will park development be paid for?
3. Where does Metro want to be on the continuum of natural areas, parks and trails providers; an active land manager or a convener, planner and technical expert?

Mr. Desmond reiterated that Metro is mid way through allocating the 2005 bond measure, and must consider ways to maximize investments and develop specific models for the future of parks management in the region. Metro could develop and open more public amenities, which vary in cost depending of level of access, and would require routine maintenance.

Council Discussion:

Councilors expressed appreciation for the thoroughness of the Park's Portfolio report. There were comments about increasing conservation education to further build support for Metro's restoration efforts. Councilors asked questions about including more parks avenues for active recreation such as inner tubing to both increase public access and also generate more revenue.

Councilors expressed apprehension at acquiring more land if it means falling behind in the responsibility to adequately maintain current parks. There was a sense that Metro is getting further along in the process, but not there yet in terms of ideal levels of restoration. Councilors also alluded to regional pressures that influence policy decisions and action regarding parks, and how there needs to be thoughtful consideration of equity of public access. Comments were made about how public access to parks and recreation facilities creates a sense of community.

5. COUNCIL BRIEFINGS/COMMUNICATION

- Councilor Craddick visited the Covanta Energy facility in Brooks, Ore., which burns solid waste to create electrical energy. Councilor Craddick also visited the waste facility in Vancouver, British Columbia.
- President Tom Hughes met with the Regional Solutions Team. They discussed the future of Willamette Falls, as well as a number of other projects for the region including a bike park at Gateway.

- US Congressman Earl Blumenauer spoke at the Community Investment Initiative leadership retreat, delivering the message that the region needs to prioritize projects sent to Washington D.C.
- Councilor Carl Hostiska asked what opportunities Metro might lose if the agency invest into the Willamette Falls/Blue Heron project. President Hughes called the project catalytic and that it could become hugely time-consuming. Councilor Collette spoke of potential partnerships for habitat restoration of the site.
- Councilor Carlotta Collette reminded Council that Metro was not awarded the HUD grant.

ADJOURN

Seeing no further business, Council President Hughes adjourned the Council work session at 4:40pm.

Prepared by,



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ATTACHMENTS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR THE MEETING OF Nov. 22, 2011

ITEM	DOCUMENT TYPE	DOC DATE	DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION	DOCUMENT No.
2.0	Presentation	Nov. 22	Power Point Pres. – Regional Industrial Land Inventory Findings	112211cw-01
2.0	Table	N/A	Proposed Phase 2 sites – Regional Industrial Land	112211cw-02