



METRO COUNCIL RETREAT
Meeting Summary
Sept. 6, 2012
Cooper Mountain Nature House

Councilors Present: Council President Tom Hughes and Councilors Carl Hosticka, Carlotta Collette, Rex Burkholder, Kathryn Harrington, and Barbara Roberts

Councilors Excused: Councilor Shirley Craddick

Staff/Guests Present: Martha Bennett, Scott Robinson, Alison Kean Campbell, Andy Shaw, Ina Zucker, Annierose Vonburg, Kelsey Newell, Nikolai Ursin, Colin Deverell, Ramona Perrault, Katie Shriver, and Nuin-Tara Key

Deputy Council President Rex Burkholder convened the retreat at 2:02 p.m.

1. BACKGROUND

At the June 5, 2012 retreat, Council directed staff to prepare a proposal and scope of work that outlined a process to develop an agency-wide equity strategy. Ms. Martha Bennett stated that the intent of the September retreat was to present staff's proposed approach for developing the strategy within the context of Metro's roles and responsibilities. She stated that the intended outcome of Phase 2 is, through an engagement process, to develop an agency-specific strategy for advancing equity and to develop an equity action plan. If Phase 2 is successful, staff recommended Metro implement the equity plan which is the project's third and final phase. (Phase 1 of the equity strategy was the completion and presentation of Metro's Equity Inventory report in June 2012.) Ms. Bennett emphasized that that proposal was drafted to address Council's concerns regarding clarity as to Metro's role when discussing equity, the importance of not over committing in Phase 2, and the need to tie the equity strategy to Metro's sixth desired outcome.

Ms. Bennett overviewed the agenda. The goal of the retreat was to seek Council guidance on how best to move forward with the proposal for developing the strategy. Ms. Bennett stated that Council would have an opportunity during the retreat to weigh in on the proposed process for Phase 2, provide direction on next steps, and identify potential opportunity costs, risks and benefits of developing an equity strategy.

2. PRESENTATION PROPOSAL

Ms. Nuin-Tara Key overviewed the Phase 2 proposal and stated that the proposal attempted to:

- Provide an evidence/data-based engagement process;
- Build on existing strengths and efforts;
- Strengthen new partnerships;
- Build internal capacity around equity;
- Build external capacity and knowledge around Metro's role and responsibilities;
- Coordinate with and support Metro's diversity program;
- Define Metro's strategy; and
- Develop an Equity Action Plan to be implemented during Phase 3.

She reiterated that the purpose of Phase 2 is to – through an engagement process – develop an agency strategy for advancing the region’s equity outcome within the context of Metro’s unique roles (e.g. employer or convener), and to develop an equity action plan to guide implementation during Phase 3. She also noted that the strategy proposal was shaped by the agency’s Diversity Action Plan, and federal and state requirements around limited English proficiency, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, etc.

Ms. Key stated that staff proposed to address three research questions during Phase 2:

1. Within the six desired outcomes, what are the regional inequities and where are there disparities?
2. How do Metro’s roles relate to the inequities that exist across the region’s desired outcomes; what is the relationship of Metro’s role to these disparities?
3. What is Metro’s strategy to advance equity within the context of the agency’s roles?

Ms. Key overviewed each of the research questions and their associated major process elements and anticipated deliverables.

3. COUNCIL DISCUSSION

- Councilors discussed the term *community* and its multiple dimensions. Staff stated that Council would have an opportunity to discuss and flesh out the term in detail during Phase 2.
- Some councilors expressed the importance of identifying both existing inequities and existing similarities in communities, and the need to acknowledge shared commonalities within the region.
- Council discussed the different areas Metro does or does not have the ability to impact in regard to equity. For example, Metro cannot change who is appointed to the elected council, but the agency can address its hiring practices.
- Councilors stated that the original intent of the term *equity* referenced in the region’s six desired outcomes was to ensure that the benefits and burdens of growth would be distributed evenly across the region. While staff believed the original intent of the outcome had not been lost, some councilors did not feel it was clear in the current proposal.
- Councilors discussed the importance of agreeing on terminology when defining or framing equity. For example, Councilors cautioned that words, such as *gentrification* or *displacement*, can be loaded terms.
- Members expressed the need to develop a shared terminology/language with the environmental justice community.
- Councilors discussed the importance of including equity stakeholders earlier in the process – specifically during the research phase. Councilors emphasized the importance of developing authentic relationships with members of the environmental justice community.
- Councilors discussed external engagement on the strategy. Members cautioned that past Metro engagement has left some communities of color feeling included only when Metro requires their assistance.
- Councilors cautioned that Metro should not make any unrealistic promises or develop an equity framework and outcomes that the agency cannot expect to meet.

- Some councilors stated that while there is a desire and need to improve agency practices, it is important to acknowledge – and take credit for – areas where Metro is doing good work and already addressing equity. Additionally, councilors recommended that good existing policies should not stop during Phase 2, but be implemented right away.
- Councilors discussed whether Metro should address housing in an equity context. Members discussed the consortium of groups that worked on recent grant proposals to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
- Some councilors briefly highlighted opportunities for equity work to dovetail with work being done by the Greater Portland Pulse.

4. **BREAK**

The Metro Council recessed for a short break.

5. **BUDGET ESTIMATE**

Mr. Scott Robinson presented two draft budget amendments for Council consideration: *Enhanced Data Collection (Limited English Proficiency)* and *Equity Strategy* projects.

Proposed Amendment #1: Enhanced Data Collection (Limited English Proficiency)

The first, a \$146,000 FY 12-13 budget amendment, would provide funding for the *Enhanced Data Collection (Limited English Proficiency)* project. In order to receive federal funding, Metro is required to meet a series of federal requirements; such as those outlined in Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. Staff indicated that the work must be completed by December 30, 2012. The proposed amendment would be funded through the agency's contingency fund.

Proposed Amendment #2: Equity Strategy

Mr. Robinson stated that staff estimates \$410,000 would be needed to fund project initiation and step 1 of the *Equity Strategy* project. To meet this total, he recommended that the Council reallocate \$110,000 from the existing FY 12-13 budget, and proposed a new amendment for \$300,000 to fill the remaining gap. Similar to the proposed LEP amendment, the equity strategy amendment would be funded through the contingency fund. The proposed budget amendment would fund Step 1 of 3 only; additional budget allocations would be needed to fund Steps 2 and 3/Equity Action Plan. The total project estimate, to date, is \$705,000 to \$1,060,000 over three years.

Councilors discussed what contingency funds are traditionally used for and what the potential risks are in allocating these funds. Councilors were less comfortable with the projections for years 2 and 3 of the *Equity Strategy* project. Members directed staff to bring the FY 12-13 budget amendment to Council to fund step 1, but all future funding needs need to be incorporated into the regular budget cycle and will not be sequestered. Members requested that more detailed information on interim outputs or deliverables be identified for these steps. Additionally, Councilors discussed the importance of developing a sustainable process and a desire to ensure data compatibility – specifically that the project have the ability to collect and share data with partners.

6. RISK ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Ms. Bennett led the Council in a cost, benefit and risk assessment exercise. She asked councilors for their general reactions to a set of potential benefits and risks, and the likelihood the benefit or risk could occur.

Potential Benefits:

What could be achieved?	What is the likelihood of it happening? (Rank "High," "Medium," or "Low")
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better internal coordination and improved efficiency gains across 	Response: Low+.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build internal capacity and knowledge 	Response: Medium+.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build external capacity and knowledge 	Response: Medium -.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Metro's leadership role around regional equity 	Response: Medium.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Metro is better positioned for grants and funding opportunities 	Response: Medium.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support successful achievement of federal and regulatory requirements 	Response: Medium to High-.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure higher success in advancing region's desired outcomes 	Response: Medium to High.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build lasting relationships with new partners 	Response: High-.

Potential Risks:

What could go wrong?	What is the likelihood of it happening? (Rank "High," "Medium," or "Low")
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consensus around indicators cannot be achieved. 	Response: High.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expectations are raised that Metro can address outside of the agency's direct control 	Response: High.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expectations are raised that Metro will add additional responsibilities not currently part of the agency's core functions/roles 	Response: High.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners do not support the process (partners feel they are "being studied" rather than partnering to identify issues and share solutions 	Response: High.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process for defining Regional Outcomes Equity Baseline with partners stalls around use of "addressing" past inequities 	Response: High.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metro Council spends large amount of political capital without benefit of gaining political support 	Response: Medium.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metro loses autonomy or ownership over the process 	Response: High.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metro cannot engage the partners that are needed to ensure success and long-term support because of limited partner capacity 	Response: High.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underestimate resource needs 	Response: High.

Councilors identified additional high risks related to stakeholders’ desire to have Metro address equity regionally versus developing an agency-specific strategy.

7. COUNCIL GUIDANCE AND AGREEMENT / SUMMARY & NEXT STEPS

Council directed staff to draft and forward for Council consideration the first amendment, the *Enhanced Data Collection (Limited English Proficiency)*, for \$146,000 in the fall 2012. Additionally, while Council did agree to move forward with the \$300,000 amendment to fund Step 1 of *the Equity Strategy* proposal, Council requested a work session to further discuss the timeline, cost, and scope and scale of the project. Council directed staff to schedule a work session in advance of developing a formal budget amendment for Council consideration. Also, Council appointed Councilors Harrington and Burkholder to serve as interim liaisons through the remainder of calendar year 2012.

Lastly, Council discussed and approved – with edits – a letter of support on behalf of the Coalition of Communities of Color (CCC) for the organization’s Kaiser Permanente grant application, *Foundation for Regional Equity: Leadership, Vision and Engagement*, which is targeted at improving engagement between the CCC and Metro. Councilors requested that additional language be added to the draft letter calling for the CCC to expand its membership and outreach across the region into Clackamas and Washington counties. (Draft copy of the letter included as part of the meeting record.)

8. ADJOURN

Seeing no further discussion, Council President Tom Hughes adjourned the Council retreat at 4:34 p.m.

Prepared by,



Kelsey Newell, Regional Engagement Coordinator

ATTACHMENTS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR THE MEETING OF SEPT. 6, 2012

Item	Topic	Doc. Date	Document Description	Doc. Number
	Agenda	9/6/12	Revised 9/6/12 Council agenda	90612c-01
	Handout	N/A	Metro's values of respect and definition of diversity	90612c-02
	Diagram	N/A	Metro's roles in equity	90612c-03
2.	Handout	9/6/12	Project proposal – Metro equity strategy	90612c-04
4.	Handout	9/6/12	Draft budget and timeline	90612c-05
5.	Handout	9/6/12	Cost/benefit risk assessment	90612c-06
	Letter	9/6/12	Draft letter of support for the Coalition of Communities of Color grant application	90612c-07
	Handout	N/A	SEIU citizen testimony (no name provided)	90612c-08