

Metro

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Metro

Minutes

Tuesday, December 12, 2017

2:00 PM

Metro Regional Center, Council Chamber

Council work session

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Councilors Present: Council President Tom Hughes and Councilors Craig Dirksen, Bob Stacey, Shirley Craddick, Sam Chase, Carlotta Collette, and Kathryn Harrington

Councilors Excused: None

Council President Tom Hughes called the Metro Council work session to order at 2:06 p.m.

2. Chief Operating Officer Communication

Ms. Martha Bennett, Chief Operating Officer, shared that she had attended an International City/County Management Association Meeting on Thursday, December 7, 2017. She also indicated that the next cycle of Community Placemaking Grants would open in January, 2018. Ms. Bennett wanted to thank Ms. Ina Zucker, Director of the Council Office, for her assistance during the screening process of selecting candidates for Deputy Chief Operating Officer.

3. Work Session Topics:

3.1 Metro Historic Cemeteries Consultant Review

Mr. Brian Kennedy, Asset Management Program Director, introduced Mr. Will Sloane, senior staff member with L.F. Sloane Consulting Group (SCG). Mr. Sloane shared that SCG was engaged by Metro to review the current cemetery operations by utilizing the 2012 master plan as a benchmark. He shared that 14 of Metro's cemeteries were found to be well-maintained and had experienced staff conducting operations at a strong level. However, Mr. Sloane did indicate that with a cremation rate of approximately 75%, Oregon's cemetery marketplace was very challenging. Since the rate of cremation was higher

than the national average, Mr. Sloane spoke to the diluted role of cemeteries in the bereavement process. Also, there was competition from multiple cemeteries owned by large public cemetery companies, smaller cemeteries, and non-profit cemeteries. Additionally, he mentioned that the presence of co-located funeral homes at many sites posed another challenge to Metro's cemetery operations. Mr. Sloane noted that over the past four fiscal years, Metro's cemetery operations required a subsidy of \$400,000. However, since 2011, Mr. Sloane shared that the revenue had grown by \$125,000 whereas expenses had grown over \$280,000. Thus, the subsidy provided by Metro had nearly doubled and this trend was leading to an unsustainable path. Overall, Mr. Sloane proposed that the subsidy Metro provided to its cemetery program could be significantly reduced, however, given the challenges of the market he conveyed that revenue was not expected to grow. In order to bring subsidy levels back to 2011 levels, along with streamlining operations, Mr. Sloane proposed the following strategies:

- Focus active sales at a limited number of cemeteries
- Formally eliminate the cemetery manager position
- Adjust pricing structure to makes it easy for customers and staff
- Enhance marker and monument sales
- Repurpose the perpetual care fund
- Explore outsourcing the lawn care
- Study partnering with organizations to delegate maintenance at specific cemeteries
- Study a fundraising program

Council Discussion:

Councilor Harrington appreciated the comprehensive nature of the recommendations provided by SCG. She also inquired upon the special circumstances that would allow community

members to use a particular cemetery that would traditionally closed to sale. Mr. Kennedy answered that special circumstances typically applied to spouses or family members that already have bought space at a cemetery. Councilor Stacey inquired upon the 75% cremation rate in Oregon. Mr. Sloane spoke to societal and cultural changes for the increased preference for cremations. Councilor Craddick spoke to the advantage of having programs that would increase space efficient burial and services that were cheaper and more accessible to the public. Councilor Harrington asked Mr. Sloane about the portion of cremations that were buried at a cemetery. Mr. Sloane indicated that this information was difficult to gather and not readily available. Councilor Chase reiterated that the cemetery program was an opportunity to provide the community with a service, rather than treating the program as a revenue generating.

3.2 2018 Regional Transportation Plan - Project Update and 2018 Engagement Activities

Ms. Elissa Gertler, Director of Planning and Development, shared that the presentation would cover an update on the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and ensuing engagement activities for 2018. Ms. Gertler recommended that Council provide guidance on the RTP update, along with direction on the Regional Leadership Forum #4 that would take place on March 4, 2018. Ms. Kim Ellis, Principal Transportation Planner, reiterated that the RTP would set course for moving the region safely, reliably, and affordably for decades to come. It would also establish priorities for federal, state, and regional funding. In terms of project phasing, Ms. Ellis shared that Metro was in phase four, where building a shared regional strategy would be prioritized. Phase four would last until March 2018, and Council would potentially adopt a plan for action in December 2018.

Ms. Ellis recalled that the Call for Projects was completed in August 2017. She added that more than \$3 billion had been

invested into the region's transportation system since 2014. Moreover, Ms. Ellis shared that agencies used an online RTP project hub to submit more than \$21 billion in updated project priorities (for 2018-2040) that addressed safety, congestion, access and other needs. In regard to the proposed projects, Ms. Ellis shared that an interactive map of proposed projects had been launched. Ms. Ellis shared several categories of draft project phasing of the RTP projects: draft 2018-2027 financially constrained RTP projects, draft 2028-2040 financially constrained RTP projects, and draft 2028-2040 strategic RTP projects. Financially constrained projects are the highest priority projects for the next ten years given limited transportation funding. The list of projects may include projects for which funding has been committed and projects that can be implemented with the funds the region currently expects to have available. Strategic projects are additional priority projects that reflect more aspirational transportation investments that the region cannot currently afford. So, the projects in the strategic projects list would be implemented in the 2028-2040 time frame if additional funding becomes available. Ms. Ellis shared that 50% of transit capital projects would occur during the 2018-2027 financially constrained phase of the RTP.

According to early observations from technical evaluations, Ms. Ellis highlighted that vehicle miles travelled in the region continued to decline. She also added that transit demand had nearly doubled, most jobs and households had access to transit, and emissions continued to decline. In regard to congestion and delay increases, Ms. Ellis noted that there was a 61% increase in vehicle delay per person since 2015. Ms. Ellis acknowledged that results from safety and equity analysis were new and least conclusive at the time. She added that a health impact assessment was underway by the Oregon Health Authority and Multnomah County Public Health Department.

In regard to early 2018 outreach and engagement, Ms. Ellis

shared that a Community Leaders' forum would occur in January 2018, whereas a 30 day online comment opportunity on RTP priorities would be open from January 8, 2018 until February 9, 2018. There would also be County-level coordinating meetings from January-February 2018. Moreover, Ms. Ellis reported that the fourth Regional Leadership Forum would occur on March 2, 2018. The forum would involve finalizing the shared RTP for the region.

Councilor Discussion:

Councilor Collette asked staff when the public review of the draft RTP would occur. Ms. Ellis shared that the public review would occur from June 29, 2018-August 13, 2018. Councilor Harrington appreciated that there would be a targeted business outreach as part of the engagement strategy for the RTP. Councilor Stacey inquired upon the project evaluation process, particularly areas where the program was falling short. Ms. Ellis shared that jurisdictions needed more GIS data and that some data was not readily available or in easy to use formatting. Councilor Collette requested more information on the major investment areas of the RTP. Ms. Ellis shared that throughways would involve 65% of cost during the 2028-2040 phase of the RTP, whereas 52% of freight access investment would occur during the 2028-2040 phase of the strategic RTP. Councilor Harrington stressed the importance of the Regional Leadership Forum #4 in updating the region on the RTP implementation.

3.3 2040 Strategy Update

Mr. Andy Shaw, Director of Government Affairs and Policy Development, shared that the presentation would cover the next steps and work plans for potential housing and transportation funding measures. He provided a brief background: Metro has conducted itself as a steward of regional systems in order to maintain regional livability. In

order to make the region a complete and livable space, efforts have been made to connect urban, rural, natural, and built communities to one vision i.e. the 2040 Vision. In order to illustrate a history of developing a livable region, Mr. Shaw recalled Metro initiatives such as: 1992 Greenspaces Master Plan, 2040 Vision, Nature in Neighborhoods grant program, Climate Smart Communities, and the Equitable Housing Initiative.

Though progress in the region had been made, Ms. Gertler highlighted that several areas were not showing positive changes. She mentioned that the median household income in Portland had increased nearly \$11k in the past five years, yet Black and Native American household saw only one-tenth of that increase. She also expressed that renters in some parts of the region had faced rent increase of over 70% from 2011-2015. Ms. Gertler also discussed that the increase in Oregon's population meant that aging transportation infrastructure was being overwhelmed, and that traffic and congestion were still a concern for the metropolitan region.

Ms. Gertler cited the Community Investment Initiative, the Regional Snapshots program, and Parks and Nature's Equity Action Plan as examples of how Metro was attempting to strengthen its diversity portfolio. Furthermore, she noted that the region gained 33,500 new residents from 2013-2014. Ms. Gertler, as a testament to the changing demographics of the region, shared that nearly 15% of migrants who moved to the region were from outside the U.S.

In terms of dealing with regional issues such as housing and transportation, Mr. Shaw noted that Metro should emphasize the investment into new systems, while updating older systems, so that the region can compensate for changes in the region's infrastructure and population. Thus, Mr. Shaw indicated that Metro must make an immediate impact now, in order to accomplish goals set out by the 2040 Vision. He mentioned the following investment

strategies for the region:

- Invest in more affordable homes and make it easier to build homes of all kinds
- Invest in a transportation system that improves traffic, makes people safer, and protects our climate
- Invest in our commitment to preserving access to nature for all our region's residents
- Invest in improving the lives of people of color, and all people region-wide

In regard to regional housing, Ms. Gertler shared high-level program elements that would address regional housing issues: developing the 2018 regional housing bond program and further investing in, and managing, the Equitable Housing Initiative program.

When discussing Parks and Nature programs, Mr. Shaw indicated that the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan was being developed. Further stakeholder engagement and finalizing outcomes and actions were key elements being scrutinized. Mr. Shaw recommended that the Metro Council leadership continue to provide guidance on program and policy direction. Further guidance would be required for the Regional Transportation Plan, and Urban Growth Boundary work programs. He added that coalition building and community partnerships would be crucial for initiatives, such as the 2018 housing bond.

Council Discussion:

Councilor Chase emphasized the importance of public engagement for the 2018 housing bond. He also reiterated that polling would be critical in the development of the bond. Councilor Dirksen and Councilor Harrington thanked staff for presenting the major scope of initiatives that are being targeted by Metro.

4. Metro Attorney Communication

Ms. Alison Kean, Metro Attorney, shared that senior

attorneys were working on the development of the 2018 housing bond. She also shared that staff from Office of Metro Attorney were finalizing the Jade District affordable housing building and community center. Furthermore, staff from OMA were assisting in the development of Parks and Nature's bond.

5. Councilor Liaison Updates and Council Communication

Councilor Dirksen attended transportation policy group meeting on Friday, December 8, 2017. Councilor Harrington shared that the next Regional Transportation Planning Organization meeting would take place on January 12, 2018.

6. Adjourn

Seeing no further business, Council President Tom Hughes adjourned the Metro Council work session at 5:07 p.m.
Respectfully submitted,



Amaanjit Singh, Council Policy Assistant

ATTACHMENTS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR THE MEETING OF DECEMBER 12, 2017

| ITEM | DOCUMENT TYPE | DOC DATE | DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION | DOCUMENT No. |
|-------------|----------------------|-----------------|--|---------------------|
| 3.2 | PowerPoint | 12/12/17 | 2018 Regional Transportation Plan: Project update and early 2018 engagement activities | 121217cw-01 |
| 3.2 | Handout | 12/12/17 | Regional Leadership Forum#4 Agenda | 121217cw-02 |
| 3.3 | PowerPoint | 12/12/17 | 2040 Strategy Update: 2020 in sight | 121217cw-03 |