

Natural Areas and Capital Performance Oversight Committee Working group: Community engagement

This working group meeting is an informal discussion to review meeting materials, learn more about the bond program and to prepare for work in the next full committee meeting. The discussion topics will be reported out in that meeting, but no official decisions or committee business will be conducted during this session.

October 11, 2023

October 11 oversight committee community engagement working group summary

Attendees: Burt, Erin, Georgena, MG, Beth, Melanie

Link to video recording: <https://vimeo.com/887380308?share=copy>

Overview of recent engagement activities for Blue Lake Park and Community Choice grants

- Heard an update on two engagement activities planned for the Blue Lake Park renovation project engagement through three phases of the project (small partner cohort, BIPOC focused, general and tribal government engagement). In the last two months, the team has completed the first milestone for engagement
- Heard an update on the community choice grants process on the initial community vote for District 4 residents and projects moving on to the final round of voting open to anyone 11 and older in the region) is happening in October. Then final recommended slate of projects will be shared for Metro Council consideration and approval in January 2024.
- In both instances, working group discussed the type of projects need to emphasize how people have been heard. Need to make that connection between feedback and outcomes.
- Bond talks about accessibility...all these projects have accessibility in mind
- Come back to accessibility lens for all bond projects

Takeaways from discussion about audit at Sept. 14 meeting

- Engagement is connected to access. This bond is not only about access to physical place but to decision-making and where power and money decide
- Defining what we mean by access and accessibility
- There are a lot of levels that the audit report talked about
 - Community has already told us what is important to them when they show up at a site. How do we measure some of those intangible pieces.
 - How do we also recognize that the conservation benefits of many of our properties are access...access to clean air and water, eco-system functions in the region
- Understand that there are subjective aspects to what we're talking about that can be put down in black and white.
- Engagement as an iterative process. How does this question get woven into some of the community engagement, communication and story-telling piece. incorporate it into long term work plan
- Follow up on access work. adding elements to staff and committee members

Note: working group expressed an openness to having updates on the work come to each of the three working groups. Don't need to create a new working group. Let's not add another committee but figure out how to work within another committee

New member recruitment

- It would be nice to have different perspectives of people living with different abilities
 - Accessibility specialist at PCC. Patricia
 - Organization...is all about sports adaptive sports NW

Future topics for the committee to hear about

- Bringing in the agency's tribal liaison or just talk about where tribal engagement has approached our projects

Natural Areas and Capital Performance Oversight Committee Working group: Land acquisition

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October 12, 2023

October 12 oversight committee land acquisition working group summary

Attendees: PK, John, Owen, MG, Shannon, Beth, Melanie

Link to video recording: <https://vimeo.com/887403877?share=copy>

Takeaways from discussion about audit at Sept. 14 meeting

- Really important that there is absolute clarity about the overall purpose of this bond, don't want to do anything
- John read the meeting summary, appreciated the committee members comments and questions. It sounds like the auditor's main issue was access and equitable access and it's about
- Auditor said that the team found limitations to accessing some of the land. One barrier is that the portfolio is oriented towards conservation. Can we have both? I think we can, but not everywhere
- Need to make it clear that we are working towards accessibility, but it may be limited depending on the site.
- Access to sites to mass transit is being discussed as part of the regional transportation plan
- Agree that local share/grants should take a more focus to public access
- Also important to provide better signage that indicates space is open
- More ideas about how to make folks feel safe and welcome
- Different levels of access
 - New opportunities for access at Metro sites
 - How do we advance arguments about investments happening in local partners
- Lots of work done pre-bond passage that contextualized an understanding that there isn't an official definition of access for this bond measure. It is important to take that context and make that official, but that context is based on work that is being updated by the department (Racial Equity Diversity and Inclusion plan, oversight committee, disability justice)

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Discussion on better leveraging maps, information sharing

- One map with acquisition investments from the 1995, 2006 and 2019 bond
- For signs and information, how do we help provide leadership to other organizations working on these same topics?
- Challenge around creating a single online map that represents the region's parks, trails and natural areas
- How can we make data dense and information dense? Provides a lot of information that people can zone in on at different levels? Mapping struggling with the balance of how much information to include vs. complexity
- Need to capture the full investment of the region. What's the system as a whole doing? More than what's Metro's part of that
- The latest bond investment maps from the 2022-2023 annual report can be found here: <https://www.oregonmetro.gov/news/parks-and-nature-2023-regional-investments-neighborhood-benefits>

- A map of Metro natural areas is also available at the bottom of this webpage
<https://www.oregonmetro.gov/metro-parks-and-natural-areas>

Update on land acquisition work

- Since May, acquired 3 properties, 2 trail easements. Small dollars and sizes but significant in terms of our term. Also recently closed on a property in the Tualatin River (53 acres)
- Completed 19 acquisitions across 13 diff. target areas
- Talking to 20 landowners, serious conversations
- Recently hired a senior real estate specialist and working with a recruiting firm to target folks for remaining vacancy
- Have currently, offers on 6 properties (\$8 million)
- Discussed goals for pace of acquisition
 - Only doing since 18 months...continue to believe that as the team gets staffed up and the volume of projects
 - Seeing increase in terms of how many landowners we're talking to...bell curve of quick pace happening in year 2 or 3
 - Also acquisitions within the urban target area require agreement on managing from local partner. When Metro acquires something within another park providing jurisdiction, we don't manage it
 - When Metro acquires trails we pass the easement to the park provider and often that is challenging.

Natural Areas and Capital Performance Oversight Committee Working group: Bond finance

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October 16, 2023

October 16 oversight committee finance working group summary

Attendees: Cary, Shannon, Tabitha, Chantia, Beth, Melanie

Link to video recording: <https://vimeo.com/887396576?share=copy>

Update on bond finance as of October 2023

- One of the tools staff can provide is our expectations and markers for where the work should/will go and then you can track how we are or aren't meeting those expectations.
- For the finance focus, this means being clearer about spend and other finance activities we're anticipating for this fiscal year
- We're working to anticipate spend and award for this fiscal year and also future fiscal years as we plan to spend and award bond funds mostly by 2031.
- Some of the things we know now that are influencing our projections for this FY include
 - 3-4 major capital projects at BLP underway now and should spend about 10-15 million this FY
 - Analysis of the challenges in the current real estate market and our team capacity for acquisition means that we'll probably spend at a similar pace to last fiscal year (about \$6-\$7 million).
 - We're also paying attention to funds awarded and teeing up more through local share, community choice grants and capital grants
- Projecting to spend more in the next two years and will share longer term spend forecast with the committee in the coming months
- Other dynamics
 - We're closing out the 2006 bond
 - COBID participation across the bond remains at about 30%

Takeaways from discussion about audit at Sept. 14 meeting

- Needed more notice about the audit and what it was covering blindsiding
- Wanted committee to be more aware of audit progress

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Future topics for the committee to hear about

- Are there any contract equity updates and diving in to the figures behind the overall COBID participation numbers
- Workforce participation
- Audit response work plan
- Specific financial measures as targets