

Urban Renewal Agency

Regular Meeting

March 9, 2020

Present: Chair Kate McBride, Vice Chair David Meriwether, Hoby Streich, Mark Zanmiller, Megan Saunders, Tim Counihan, Jessica Metta, Erick Haynie, Gladys Rivera

Staff: Rachel Fuller, Finance Director/ACM Will Norris, City Attorney Dan Kearns, Planning Director Dustin Nilsen, City Recorder Jennifer Gray, Fire Chief Leonard Damian, Police Chief Neal Holste, Interim Public Works Director Wade Seaborn, Administrative Services Officer, Monica Morris
Management Analyst Haley Ellett

Absent:

I CALL TO ORDER – McBride opened the meeting at 6:01 p.m.

II AGENDA ADDITIONS

III APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: To approve the meeting minutes of December 9, 2019 as written.

First: Saunders

Second: Streich

Discussion: None

Vote: Motion passed unanimously

IV BUSINESS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Heather Staten, Executive Director Thrive Hood River – she encouraged the Agency to follow the recommendation of the Urban Renewal Advisory Committee regarding the MIG contract. The Agency made the decision over a year ago to get a comprehensive urban design for the Heights and it was done for a reason. It is a complicated area with a lot of conflicting interests to assess. No one is better than the Heights Urban Renewal Agency to bring all the stakeholders into the planning process. By taking a holistic look, the consultant will be able to analyze all the conflict interests and come up with a plan that works for everyone. She asked the Agency to really look at the transportation system. The current system does not work well for anyone. She gave Council ODOT numbers regarding accidents in the Heights area. By 2039, half of the intersections will be operating at a halfling level. She believes MIG will be able to untangle the mess and provide an urban design that is safe for everyone.

Tina Lassen – she sits on the Planning Commission and represents the Planning Commission on the Urban Renewal Advisory Committee, but she is here tonight as a private citizen. She has been encouraged by the City on how supportive they have been of alternative transportation. She thinks the Heights program is a place to really demonstrate that commitment. 12th and 13th Street does not work for anyone who is not in single occupancy vehicle. They need to think about programs that will reflect all citizens. She asked that the agency look at this holistically and how it will work with the Westside and other ideas for extending transportation network with Transit and bike paths.

V REGULAR BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Urban Renewal Advisory Committee Interviews

Norris stated applications were received by Clint Harris and Nick Kraemer. Cramer notified staff that he wanted to be removed from consideration. That leaves on applicant, Clint Harris.

Council invited Harris to introduce himself and speak about why he is interested in participating on the Advisory Committee.

Motion: I move at appoint Clint Harris to the URAC.
First: Meriwether
Second: Streich
Discussion: None
Vote: Motion passed unanimously

2. Heights Urban Design & Engineering Project: Future Options

The Heights Urban Renewal District was formed in 2011 via Ordinance 1999. The district was authorized at creation to borrow up to \$8.5 million to accomplish the projects in the simultaneously adopted Heights Urban Renewal Plan and Report. The district remained largely inactive for several years as it accumulated resources and the downtown and waterfront urban renewal districts dominated the agency's focus.

In 2017, the Urban Renewal Agency (Agency) hosted a series of community events to prioritize Heights Urban Renewal Plan projects. These meetings included open ended options for the public to propose new ideas. Studying traffic flow modifications on State Highway 281 was a common request. Dovetailing on the Agency hosted events were grassroots events, including a "Walkshop" facilitated by Blue Zones, LLC and streetscape demonstration projects as part of an Open Streets event. These community events heavily emphasized modifying traffic flows on State Highway 281.

In 2018, the Agency issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for an urban design team to, in part, study incorporation of traffic modifications into the Heights Urban Renewal Plan. An advisory budget of \$100,000 was advertised based on recent Waterfront Lot 1 design work. The Agency selected a consulting team and worked through initial project

visioning and completion of a traffic study in 2019. The Agency and project team chose to discontinue this contract in late 2019. The Agency then entered contract negotiations with the second rated consulting team from the original RFP, MIG, to carry the project forward. MIG's original proposal was rated 85.7 compared to the first rated firm's 87.2, meaning that the two firms were nearly identically ranked.

The MIG team thoroughly reviewed the project work to-date as well prior existing Heights District planning documents. MIG and Agency staff held near weekly conference calls to answer questions and develop a revised project scope of work outline. During the scope discussions it became clear that the existing project and budget are not realistic.

The memorandum and scope outline from MIG are intended to initiate a discussion on the desired project scale and explain what is required to adequately consider district traffic modifications. This includes increasing the project budget by as much as 3x. This enlarged budget is cognizant of the fractured and energized interest groups that have coalesced around the traffic change question in the Heights. The attached MIG memorandum and scope also offer an alternative condensed option that remains within existing budget but also does not venture outside of the adopted 2011 Heights District Urban Renewal Plan (which does not include major roadway and intersection modifications). MIG and Agency Staff agree that reevaluation of project scale is a necessary and appropriate step at this point. The MIG team is ready and willing to support the Urban Renewal Agency for either sized project. The primary goal is to align resources to project ambitions to insure a successful implementation.

Alternatives:

1. Move forward with MIG under the existing competitive solicitation but pair scope to the existing 2011 Heights Urban Renewal Plan, as amended in 2017, retain the original project cost of approximately \$130,000 (including Next Door outreach services).
2. Move forward with MIG under the existing competitive solicitation and scope which includes evaluation of traffic modifications with the understanding that the project cost will likely exceed \$300,000 in order to include sufficient community outreach.
3. Rebid the project with a higher advisory budget.
4. Abandon the design effort and bid individual projects per the 2011 Heights Urban Design Plan schedule.
5. Request additional information from City Staff before proceeding.

The Urban Renewal Advisory Committee reviewed the MIG memoranda at their February 20th regular meeting and unanimously recommended Alternative #2.

There is no specific staff recommendation. Each alternative is equally viable. The choice between alternatives is solely dependent on policy preferences, spending considerations, and acceptable timelines.

Kearns stated the legal ability to switch to No. 2, if this were a Public Works project, the City would not be able to change the scope for example without rebidding it, but this is for professional services. It is qualifications based and the scope has not changed. Ultimately the primary focus should be qualifications.

Councilor Rivera asked since they will already be working with The Next Door, would it be possible to add language stating the collaboration that will happen for certain outreach events. Norris stated that should be already in the contract. If it is not explicitly in the outline, it will be in the contract.

Mayor McBride stated there are alternatives presented in the meeting packet. She asked that each Councilor discuss which direction they would like to proceed with.

Councilor Metta stated feels this is the opportunity to get thing correct in the Heights. She prefers to take the long-term bigger picture route; Option 2.

Councilor Zanmiller stated he is in favor of Option 2 and 3.

Councilor Coughlin is in support of the Urban Renewal Agency recommendation; Option 2.

Meriwether stated he is also in favor of Option 2.

Councilor River is in favor of Option 2.

Councilor Haynie is in favor of Option 2 and 3.

Councilor Saunders is in favor of Option 2.

Streich is also in favor of both Option 2 and 3.

Mayor McBride is in favor of Option 2.

Mayor McBride stated there is a consensus the Agency wants to move forward with the recommendation of the Advisory Committee to move forward with MIG.

Councilor Zanmiller commented about the number of public and URAC meetings. He feels that some of the meetings are duplications. There could be simplification done to the meeting schedule. He asked if the Advisory Committee could think through how to get the comments and be efficient with the comments.

Norris stated he will take that concern and work with the Advisory Committee to flush out why each of the meetings provides value and determine if there is a need to it eliminate any of the meetings that are in the schedule.

Motion: I approve to move forward with MIG under the existing competitive solicitation and scope and look to staff to develop a contract that will have an NTE. To also include language regarding The Next Doors collaboration.

First: Metta

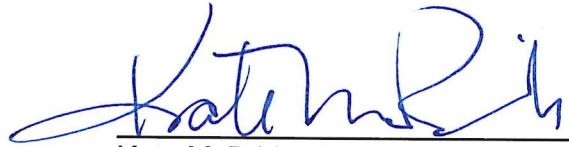
Second: Meriwether

Discussion: None

Vote: Motion passed unanimously

VI ITEMS FROM AGENCY MEMBERS

VII ADJOURN – 6:44 p.m. by unanimous consent.



Kate McBride, Chair



Jennifer Gray, City Recorder

Approved by the Agency on 6/8/2020