

Urban Renewal Agency
Regular Meeting
June 14, 2021

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

Staff: City Manager Rachael Fuller, Finance Director/ACM Will Norris, City Attorney Dan Kearns, Fire Chief Leonard Damian, Police Chief Neal Holste, Public Works Director Mark Janeck, City Engineer Wade Seaborn, City Recorder Jennifer Gray, GIS Analyst Jonathan Skloven-Gill

Absent:

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

II AGENDA ADDITIONS

The budget Public Hearing was moved ahead of the Regular Business Item; Heights Urban Renewal Project Update/Policy Discussion.

III APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: To approve the meeting minutes of May 10, 2021, as written.

First: Saunders

Second: Counihan

Discussion: None

Vote: Motion passed unanimously

IV BUSINESS FROM THE AUDIENCE

V PUBLIC HEARING

Adoption of FY2021-22 Budget (Res. 2021-URA-02)

Mayor opened the hearing and read the script. There was no one signed up from the public to speak and no written comment was received. Mayor McBride closed the public testimony portion of the hearing.

Norris gave an overview of the resolution adopting the approved URA budget.

The FY2021-22 Proposed Budget was approved by the Budget Committee on May 12, 2020. A public hearing on the Approved Budget is required by Oregon Budget Law. This is the time for citizens to provide written and oral comment on the FY2021-22 Approved Budget.

The Urban Renewal Agency Budget Committee deliberated on the Proposed Budget and

approved budget as presented. Significant projects and initiatives funded in the Approved Budget include:

- Addition of a Special Projects & Engagement Coord. shared with the City
- Evaluation of Structured Parking on the Columbia Lot
- Downtown Wayfinding Signage
- New Parking Payment Kiosks
- Contribution toward 2nd & Oak Signalization
- Contribution toward Waterfront Stormwater Line Replacement
- Continued Heights Urban Design Planning

Motion: I move to adopt Resolution 2021-URA-02, adopting the budget for FY2021-22.

First: Saunders

Second: Metta

Discussion: None

Vote: Motion passed unanimously

VI REGULAR BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Heights Urban Renewal Project Update/Policy Discussion

The purpose of this meeting is to share with the Board the results of current outreach efforts, findings, and feedback from community stakeholders, and to get Board approval of the emerging project goals that will be used to guide the upcoming streetscape concept alternatives.

Over the next 12 months, the Urban Renewal Agency will develop a preferred streetscape plan for the Heights that guides infrastructure investments focused on improving transportation efficiency, safety, and community livability. The project is broken down into three phases. The primary deliverable of Phase One is the establishment of project goals informed by a review of the background work, community feedback, and stakeholder input.

Outreach and Emerging Goals: Included within URAB meeting packet are summary memos of the Phase One public survey and outreach efforts and emerging goals of the project. An overview of the findings and themes from the surveys and interviews indicate that "The preliminary project goals most important to survey participants are related to slowing traffic, creating safe streets and intersections for all users, and promoting a livable community through street improvements that support access to local businesses".

Other common themes that emerged and are detailed in the summary include the need to preserve the Heights as a local destination, to make safety improvements specifically at street crossings, to improve connections to neighborhoods and schools, to improve bicycle connections and amenities, to build on the area's character and history, and to manage on-street parking.

The following is the list of project goals for Agency Board review and approval.

Project Goal 1: Preserve and promote a livable community through streetscape improvements that balance safety and access for people walking and biking with parking needs to support access to local businesses and future mixed-use development.

Project Goal 2: Create an identify for the Heights that reflects the diverse culture and history of the area and as destination for residents.

Project Goal 3: Create streets and gathering spaces that provide safe, comfortable places for people walking and biking along and across the corridor and that connects area recreation and commercial destinations and neighborhoods.

Project Goal 4: Calm traffic and improve intersections to improve safety for people driving, walking, and biking and supporting local businesses.

Project Goal 5: Support existing and future development by maintaining and improving utility infrastructure as part of the streetscape project.

Project Goal 6: Engage residents and businesses, the school district, and those that use the corridor to provide ongoing input in the streetscape project.

Project Goal 7: Provide locations for people to gather, to stop and rest.

While the goals above were broadly supported, it is also clear from outreach activities that parking will be a significant point of contention between various stakeholder groups. Changes to the district will almost invariably require altering parking configurations, locations, and potentially even capacity. In anticipation of this potential challenge, Agency staff intends to add a limited-scope parking study to the Phase Two contract for Agency consideration. The Phase 2 contract amendment may come to the board as early as July but is dependent on solidifying initial project goals.

Staff requests that the URAB review and approve the project goals to be used to guide Phase 2 concept design and development. If there are elements, concepts, or goals that the Board finds essential to the success of the project, which are currently not included in the project goals, staff requests Board direction on goal amendments to be included in the final Phase One documents to be considered at the next Board meeting.

The Urban Renewal Advisory Committee reviewed and unanimously concurred with the proposed project goals at their May 20th regular meeting.

Polanski presented a PowerPoint presentation. PowerPoint has been added to the record. He gave an update on the project schedule, where they are in the process to date, what has been accomplished, where they are headed, and what has been done regarding public engagement. He spoke about the information gathered from the survey. They are looking for Agency approval on the project goals or clear direction on revisions that are needed.

Key takeaways from the online survey. Most important issues to address slow traffic, creating safe streets and intersections, promoting a livable community, supporting access to local businesses and improve safety for people driving, walking, and biking.

The survey collected information regarding the routes people use in the Heights and feedback on issues they experience in the area. The common takeaway, there are no common routes used in the Heights. All the streets and corridors are used very well. They heard a consistent theme from walkers, bikers, as well as drivers.

Polanski reviewed the groups of people they spoke to. They met with the Landmarks Review Board, Latinos en Accion, Latino businesses in the project area, Upper Valley community members, Community organizations, businesses (on-going) and the Urban Renewal Advisory Committee.

Key takeaways from the stakeholder meeting: preserve the area as a local destination, slow down traffic, make street crossings safer, improve connections to neighbors and schools, improve bicycle connections and amenities, build on the areas, character and history and manager on-street parking.

Polanski spoke about the filter system they used to create the project goals. They started with the Urban Renewal Heights Plan Goals. From the kickoff meeting, they took the information for the conversations and developed the preliminary project goals. The goals were taken to the Urban

Renewal Advisory Committee last month. The Advisory Committee agreed with the suggested goals that were identified. There were only a couple small updates. Those are reflected in the final goals presented, for the Agency's consideration. The numbering of the goals does not reflect the priority.

Councilor Zanmiller stated even though they are not intending to have the goals in a priority order, everyone who reads this will take it that it is in priority order. He suggested the traffic calming goal be move from Goal 4 to Goal 1. He believes it will be the public presumption that the list of goals is listed in priority. He stated the expanded text in Goal 3 and Goal 7 sound very similar. He said that might need further discussion.

Councilor Saunders suggested that public transit should be added to the goals since they are using this area. They have different needs then pedestrians and bikers.

Polanski affirmed public transit has been a part of the conversation. He stated Councilor Saunders suggestion points out there is a gap and public transit should be included.

It was agreed to add transit access to Goal 3.

Councilor Metta liked all the goals and appreciates the work that has been done. She believes the challenge will be to balance cars, bike, pedestrians, and the other things people want to see in this project. She agrees a parking study in Phase 2, is a good idea. It will provide more information to the community.

Councilor Rivera thanked MIG for the outreach they did with Latino businesses in the Heights.

Councilor Counihan suggested language promoting traffic calming while maintaining businesses access, rather than using wording to make it seem like it is one versus the other.

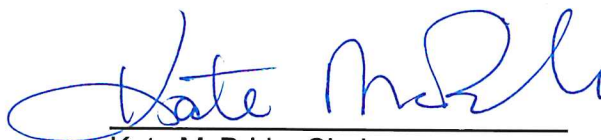
Councilor Haynie stated he really likes these goals. One part of the goals he feels is not there and should be considered is regarding economy. He sees economy having two meanings. One, the economy of business but there is also a certain degree of economy of day-to-day commodity business use in this area, that is affordable for its users. He reads Goal 2 is to develop this area as a mix use neighborhood, and that sounds great. He thinks there is some sense of also wanting to preserve it for the economical local's business area. It is also in other goals, but he does not necessarily think they are saying the goal is to completely change the mixed-use neighborhood. They want to preserve the basic nature of what the Heights maintains. He believes it is in the goals, but he is reacting to Goal 2.

Nilsen stated staff intends on coming back next month with revisions to the goals, taking the comments they heard this evening. They will fill finalize them and launch into Phase 2.

- Motion:** I move to approve the draft project goals, amending to move Goal 4 to the top of the list (traffic calming) and changing the word "and" to "while" on Goal 4. Also, adding public transit to Goal 3.
- First:** Zanmiller
- Second:** Counihan
- Discussion:** Norris went over his list of items to confirm staff has all suggested amendments.
- Vote:** Motion passed unanimously

VII ITEMS FROM AGENCY MEMBERS

VIII ADJOURN – 6:59 p.m. by unanimous consent.



Kate McBride, Chair



Jennifer Gray, City Recorder

Approved by the Agency on 7/12/2021