

**GRESHAM REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (GRDCAC)
February 10, 2021 MEETING MINUTES**

Meeting Held Remotely via Zoom

COMMITTEE PRESENT: Christopher Bentley, Vice Chair
Paul Drechsler
Ryan Johnson
Amelia Salvador, Chair
Dimitrios Zourkos

COMMITTEE ABSENT: Helen Kidane

COMMISSION
LIAISON PRESENT: Commission Vice President Eddy Morales

STAFF PRESENT: Emily Bower, Gresham Redevelopment Commission Executive
Director
Amy Evans, Recording Secretary

GUEST SPEAKERS
PRESENT: Nate McCoy, National Association of Minority Contractors-Oregon
Andrew Colas, Colas Construction

A. Call to Order

Vice Chair Bentley called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

1. Announcements

2. Public Comment

None

3. Draft Urban Renewal Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Fiscal Years 2021/22 – 2025/26

Emily Bower, Gresham Redevelopment Commission (GRDC) Executive Director, introduced Nate McCoy of NAMC-OR, and Andrew Colas, president of Colas Construction and of Phase II of the Downtown Rockwood Project. Mr. McCoy and Mr. Colas gave the presentation

GRDCAC Discussion

Mr. McCoy opened the floor for questions.

Ms. Bower said, we know that without the help of NAMC-OR we would not have the benefit of relationships with the subcontractors, which is what NAMC-OR really does best. You did outreach for us, you spent a lot of time helping MWESB contractors through the bid process and much more. From

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here, where do we go for the next project? How do go on and increase our goals? Overall, how do we move from where we are today, so we can improve as we do each project?

Mr. McCoy said, first is to make use of the pre-apprenticeship programs in the area, where we can help to educate young people about the trades and the opportunities they provide. Right now, there's a stigma attached to jobs in the trades, as well as difficulty for contractors to find real talent in the trades. A good way to improve would be to use these programs to begin building these relationships at an earlier stage, like a pipeline from pre-apprenticeship to apprenticeship to full-time job.

Mr. Colas said, it is important to note that there are different ways of measuring these goals, and sometimes project managers will use numbers to artificially reach their goals. For example, some pre-apprenticeship participants will be hired or put on jobs because they are BIPOC, but aren't given actual education during the hours they're working. This is bad for everyone involved. So, there has to be some real way for the city to keep developers accountable for the numbers they're reporting. It's therefore important to properly vet your project partners, which is why NAMC is such a good asset. We need to make sure our developers are transparent in their hiring practices and their project partners. Are apprentices actually learning the skills they're meant to learn? Are we actually empowering BIPOC apprentices with the skills they need?

Mr. McCoy said, we just dropped a report into the chat that may be interesting to you, with this same idea in mind. This is a report on a project we did last year with Metro, which really set a gold standard for how to do this properly. It was one of the largest projects Colas and NAMC have ever been involved with. We use this to help educate the community on how to use pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs effectively and as an example of restorative justice and how to really get procurement right.

Mr. Drechsler said, I want to say I appreciate all the work each of you have done. Andrew as well, your family has had a special place in Gresham and has helped with a lot.

Commision Vice Chair Morales said, the Gresham Redevelopment Commission (GRDC) has been in discussion about our procurement process and how to support more BIPOC businesses. I found this report very useful. I would love to hear from Nate at some point, maybe the tope three things we could do better to prioritize and focus on improving our procurement processes.

Mr. McCoy said, certainly, we can bring up our top 3 things when we present at the next GRDC meeting. I will say now, and I believe Andrew mentioned it earlier, that there are often unintended consequences to program that sound like a "sweet spot" for small businesses, because they often lead to additional work or compliance, like signing up for a program or additional registration costs. These aren't necessarily bad, but they will end up costing the City of Gresham more. I've discussed with Emily some options like doing a Community Benefit Plan (CBP) instead of a traditional CBI, which allows smaller and non-union businesses more flexibility. Nothing against unions, because they have a huge marketplace in the industry. However, we do need to come up with policies that allow contractors to be supported where they currently are. So, in thinking about improvements, it's important to focus on what feels achievable and a little more flexible

Mr. Bentley said, so often in urban development, we have to balance the desire to “get the project done” with the obligation to be thoughtful in who we contract with, and who we hire, and which tenants we market to. How do we balance this desire? Because Gresham is not flush with cash; we are one of the poorest communities per capita in the state of Oregon, and we are very different from Portland in a lot of respects. So, how do we balance staying on targets/dates with our equity goals?

Ms. Bower said, that’s a great question. Right now, the City of Gresham is in somewhat of an “innovating” stage. That is, there have been a few teams and individuals who have “blazed a trail” in creative ways to do equitable development. I think the sooner the City embraces the lessons learned from these individual cases, the better they will be able to implement overarching equitable policies, for example the RFP process, the procurement process, the engagement process and more. Downtown Rockwood was fortunate to begin this kind of thinking at the beginning of the project, but we haven’t put these lessons into a framework for the rest of the City. So we need to begin asking, how do we take the lessons learned in projects like Downtown Rockwood and integrate them into the foundations of city-wide policy? Josh Fuhrer’s original vision for this project was to at least get this ball rolling. The other piece is the relationship piece. What partnerships do we already have in the community that are already doing this work, from whom we can learn and who we can support.

Mr. McCoy said, I agree. Additionally, the way to address the issue of cost impact is to reverse-engineer some of those outcomes by taking you to some of these contractors and showing you the impact of the costs. Many times, adding another layer of compliance in an effort to promote equity actually costs BIPOC contractors disproportionately more, and it also ends up costing the City more, too.

Mr. Colas said, for most projects, the biggest factor on cost is typically project size. After a certain point, most subcontractors bidding on a project are going to be union, which means higher prices. But this does not always mean you’re getting more diversity. Similarly, procuring with more equitable practices doesn’t always cost more. The part that people have to remember is that typically the reason there’s a cost increase is because typical BIPOC-owned firms are only 8-10 years old, which means their buying power is less. Platt Electric, which has been around almost 100 years, so they’ll be able to have prices that are lower than a small electric company who’s only been around a decade. So, these smaller BIPOC firms haven’t had the opportunity to benefit from retained income from the last 50 years like the bigger firms have, because those opportunities didn’t exist for them back then. It is a real barrier to overcome. So, to build goals for an equitable income into the framework of your contracting process will go a long way toward improving the system here.

Mr. Bentley said, thank you for speaking to this question. I hope we are also considering procurement that includes local contractors as a requirement as well. It sounds like the City is already working on building in responsible practices into its system.

4. Good of the Order

B. Adjournment of meeting

Hearing no further business, **Chair Salvador** adjourned the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

AMELIA SALVADOR
CHAIR

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Evans
Recording Secretary

**GRESHAM REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (GRDCAC)
March 10, 2021 MEETING MINUTES**

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COMMITTEE PRESENT: Christopher Bentley, Vice Chair
Paul Drechsler
Ryan Johnson
Helen Kidane
Amelia Salvador, Chair
Dimitrios Zourkos

COMMITTEE ABSENT:

COMMISSION
LIAISON PRESENT: Commission Vice President Eddy Morales

STAFF PRESENT: Emily Bower, Gresham Redevelopment Commission Executive
Director
Amy Evans, Recording Secretary

GUEST SPEAKERS
PRESENT:

A. Call to Order

Vice Chair Bentley called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

1. Announcements

2. Public Comment

None

3. Draft Urban Renewal Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Fiscal Years 2021/22 – 2025/26

Emily Bower, Gresham Redevelopment Commission (GRDC) Executive Director, presented the PowerPoint presentation (PowerPoint attached as Exhibit A).

Note: This presentation was a “first look” at the CIP, and no vote was held.

GRDCAC Discussion

Ms. Bower opened the floor for questions.

Ms. Kidane said, you mentioned that there was about \$45,000 of outside funding for the Rockwood Urban Plaza. Where was this funding from?

Ms. Bower said, most of this \$45,000 comes from our Service Development Charges (SDCs), which are a part of how infrastructure gets built. When developers build something, they pay an SDC fee to contribute to that particular development. In this case, prior to the redevelopment, the site had existing SDC credits that could then be applied to the new development given the uses.

Chair Salvador said, I actually have a listing across the street from the Downtown Rockwood catalyst site that I recently obtained. It was previously a daycare years ago, but now you can see the building from this listing, so hopefully we can sell it to something that will be great for the community.

4. Good of the Order

B. Adjournment of meeting

Hearing no further business, **Chair Salvador** adjourned the meeting at 6:17 p.m.

AMELIA SALVADOR
CHAIR

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Evans
Recording Secretary