

A. CALL TO ORDER BY PRESIDING OFFICER

Chair Travis Stovall called the Gresham Redevelopment Commission (GRDC) meeting to order on Tuesday, August 24, 2021 at 3:44 p.m. via Conference Call +1 253 215 8782 Meeting ID 872 6324 8033 or <https://greshamoregon.zoom.us/j/87263248033>.

1. ROLL CALL OF THE GRESHAM REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Chair Stovall called the roll.

COMMISSION PRESENT: Commission Chair Travis Stovall
Commission Vice Chair Eddy Morales
Commissioner Janine Gladfelter
Commissioner Vincent Jones-Dixon
Commissioner Mario Palmero
Commissioner Sue Piazza

COMMISSION ABSENT: Commission Acting Chair Dina DiNucci

STAFF PRESENT: Emily Bower, GRDC Executive Director
Nina Vetter, City Manager
Eric Schmidt, Assistant City Manager
Kevin McConnell, City Attorney
Cecille Turley, Program Technician/Recording Secretary

2. INSTRUCTIONS TO CITIZENS ON SIGNING UP FOR PUBLIC TESTIMONY REGARDING AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Chair Stovall read the instructions.

B. CITIZEN AND COMMUNITY GROUP COMMENTS FOR AGENDA (EXCEPT PUBLIC HEARING) AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Cecille Turley, Recording Secretary, reported that no citizens signed up to provide oral testimony or submitted written testimony.

C. CONSENT AGENDA

None.

D. PUBLIC HEARING

None.

E. COMMISSION BUSINESS

1. FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND THE FUTURE OF THE GRESHAM REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION AND ROCKWOOD-WEST GRESHAM RENEWAL PLAN

Emily Bower, GRDC Executive Director, and Elaine Howard with Elaine Howard Consulting, presented the final work session focused on the future of GRDC and the Rockwood-West Gresham Renewal Plan (Plan) and the urban renewal district's role and overall financial sustainability of the City of Gresham. The presentation provided a high-level overview of the work sessions to date, a review of the proposed scenarios (expire, extend, or expand), staff recommendations, and outlined next steps. (Power Point presentation attached as Exhibit A.)

Chair Stovall felt the presentation was informative and thorough and asked for questions or comments from the GRDC.

Vice Chair Eddy Morales asked if staff's recommended scenario to extend would enable them to fold in adjacent areas into the urban renewal area (URA), such as Vance Park, and if there would be more flexibility on how urban renewal funds could be used.

Ms. Bower explained that if the GRDC moves forward with staff's recommendation, they would not bring in any adjacent properties and would only be requesting an extension of the timeframe to use the full tax increment financing (TIF) allowed for in the existing Plan. If they were to increase the boundary of the URA by over one percent, that would require a level two substantial amendment to the Plan, which would require going through the same process as creating a new urban renewal plan or district and that would require more time and analysis. Oregon Revised Statutes ORS 457 limits how TIF can be used and mandates that much of the funding be focused on capital improvement projects. However, the GRDC can be creative in determining and prioritizing which projects should be built and work with the community to determine the criteria to have a successful project.

Vice Chair Morales asked if they could include Vance Park within the one percent threshold.

Ms. Bower explained that Vance Park is approximately 40 acres if we're talking only about what's owned by Multnomah County and not the adjacent locations just outside the Vance Park boundary, which are privately owned. Staff can determine the amount that's privately owned and if that amount is under the one percent threshold if that's the GRDC's direction. There would also be a need to further investigate which parcels would make the most sense to include.

Ms. Howard reported that under the one percent threshold, only 12.11 acres could be added.

Vice Chair Morales noted that Ms. Howard explained that Gresham's urban renewal district is one of the more restricted districts she has seen in terms of what the district can do. If we were to renew the district, would those restrictions remain in place?

Ms. Howard stated that the restrictions are mainly in the City charter and any proposed changes would require an amendment to the charter. There are also some restrictions in the Plan itself. Changing the charter and the plan would probably be something to go hand in hand because any substantial amendment to the Plan also requires a vote of the electorate. It's her understanding that the Charter Review Committee is getting ready to look at issues and that would be a great one to put on their plate.

Ms. Bower reported that the Plan is something that the Charter Review Committee would look at through the lens of determining the best outcomes for the district and community. If the voters extend the district, there would be time for the Charter Review Committee to work out the kinks, should they find that a priority.

Kevin McConnell, City Attorney, reported that the City Attorney's office would work with Ms. Bower, Ms. Howard, and the Charter Review Committee on what recommendations they may have to address these restrictions. Almost any change made to the Plan would be considered a substantial amendment.

Chair Stovall asked Vice Chair Morales for clarification regarding the benefits and potential should the district include a Vance Park addition.

Vice Chair Morales explained that it was Acting Chair DiNucci who has been in conversation with Multnomah County regarding the property, and possibly with Ms. Bower, as well.

Ms. Bower explained that it was Acting Chair DiNucci and others who helped do engagement around a master plan Multnomah County is working on and looking at potential uses of the properties just outside of Multnomah County's Vance park property. There is potential for redevelopment opportunities related to those properties that are dependent upon some policy discussions and how those move forward.

Vice Chair Morales reported that there have been conversations regarding work that could be done outside of the downtown Gresham area and possibly creating waterfront property, either with one of the pits near Vance Park or some of the Columbia Slough.

Chair Stovall felt that the City should be a part of the conversation with Multnomah County on their master plan work and how it flows into downtown Rockwood and all the redevelopment happening there, even if the district cannot expand into the Vance Park area without a substantial amendment to the Plan.

Commissioner Mario Palmero noted that since the Plan went into effect almost 20 years ago, there's been a recession and the COVID-19 pandemic, which has impacted their ability to complete projects outlined in the Plan. He recognized that a lot has been accomplished but asked how much has been accomplished.

Ms. Bower stated that staff's accomplishments report presented to the GRDC late last year outlines the accomplishments and showed there was a significant increase in their ability to do projects after 2014. However, there isn't enough runway of time left to know what the additional impact of those investments, such as Downtown Rockwood, will have until they have a few more years to analyze it. Progress did not stop but was slowed down during the six to eight years of economic downturn. If those lost years could be regained, she believes they could see an increase in investment and revenue within the City, based on the investments there today. If they could extend the timeline of the district another six years, it would give the GRDC an opportunity to prioritize those additional projects and utilize the remaining maximum indebtedness (MI) allowed for in the Plan.

Commissioner Palmero asked if the May 2022 election would be the timeline for putting an expansion of the district out to the voters.

Ms. Bower stated that if they were to ask for an extension to the timeline, they could potentially get it on the May 2022 ballot. If the GRDC's direction is to expand the geographic location of the district, it would require additional analysis and time and the earliest date would be November 2022.

Ms. Howard explained that in terms of the timeline for TIF revenues to reach the MI, the forecast is solid that six years is enough time to accumulate the amount of money to reach the \$92 million MI. In terms of delivery of projects in that timeframe, Ms. Bower would need to speak to that possibility.

Ms. Bower said it would be up to the GRDC to prioritize which projects they would like to complete within that six-year timeframe.

Chair Stovall noted that it was the recommendation of the staff and consultant to move forward with an extension to achieve the MI, and the GRDC would make their decision on that at their next meeting.

Vice Chair Morales asked, if the GRDC wanted to explore another option, could they extend the amount of time beyond six years?

Ms. Bower stated it would take more time and analysis and outreach to ensure that the right narrative is brought to the voters on expansion and extension, so the earliest it could go to the voters would be November of 2022. If voters were to pass the extension first, they could possibly go back to the voters with another proposal in a couple of years after doing the appropriate analytical work.

Commissioner Vincent Jones-Dixon stated that he was initially leaning toward option 3B but understood the explanation for doing the extension first and then doing the research for a proposal on expansion, which could later be presented to the voters. He is comfortable with that approach.

Commissioner Mario Palmero noted that the City's departments, including Urban Renewal, have had drastic staff level cutbacks, and wondered regarding extending the district, and also researching an expansion, if the department would need to grow to accomplish those things.

Ms. Bower reported that if the voters pass the extension, there would be some increase in staffing.

Chair Stovall called for final comments or questions from the GRDC.

Commissioner Jones-Dixon asked for further explanation of Option 3B and the process. He asked for greater detail of the pros and cons, including whether it would incentivize new businesses coming to Gresham and what impact it would have on the City in terms of doing the analysis, etc.

Ms. Bower explained that staff could maybe do a high-level strategy of what it would entail to move that forward. For example, if there is direction from the GRDC to move forward on that, how might we draft an outline of that strategy. She thinks she can probably come up with some points there for GRDC consideration. Regarding next steps, once there is direction from the GRDC on which option they want to move forward, the next step is to get City Council approval of a non-emergency ordinance that outlines the language for the ballot, the timeline, and the process to have that approved.

F. COMMISSION MEASURES AND PROPOSALS

None.

G. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

Hearing no further business, **Chair Stovall** adjourned the meeting at 4:38 p.m.

/s/ TRAVIS STOVALL
CHAIR

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Cecille Turley
Cecille Turley
Recording Secretary