

**CDBG Priority Task Force Council Workshop**  
**Meeting 15: Monday October 6, 2008**  
**5:00pm Room 20, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor City Hall**

City Councilors: Mayor Ed Suslovic and City Council Members: Kevin Donoghue, John Anton, Cheryl Leeman, Dan Skolnik, David Marshall

Attendance: Co Chairs Anna T. Collins and Denis Lachman, and members: Jon Bradley, Wendy Harmon, Kyra Walker, Jeannemarie Celenatno, Rachael Weyand, Rhonda Juneau

Staff: Joe Gray City Manager, Pat Finnigan, Rachel Talbot Ross, Doug Gardener, T.J. Martzial, Mike Murry, Deb Marquis, Elura Webber,

Public: Lilian Berhard, Keith, Chris O'Neil

Mayor Suslovic opens the meeting, thanks everyone for coming. He asks everyone to introduce themselves. The Mayor then turns it over to the Task Force.

Denis thanks the Mayor and the Portland City Council for inviting us.

Anna begins the presentation. She provides an overview of the Shapiro and Boxer-Macomber Memo and the HCD Task Force. The HCD Task Force provided a 10 Point Plan with two recommendations regarding priorities: 1) priority given to direct benefit to low and moderate income persons and 2) priority will be given to projects contributing to a comprehensive revitalization of targeted neighborhoods.

The task of the CDBG Priority Task Force was to review current priorities, research needs in the community and recommend priorities for allocation of resources. The future steps include staff developing a clear transparent RFP and ranking system. The scoring will go be finally decided by Council.

Anna turns the presentation over to Denis. He explains that if we don't understand our mistakes of the past, we are likely to repeat them. He says if we look at the past funding allocations, we have set funding amounts or percentages in three silos: planning and administration, public improvements, and social services. He refers to the slide of the three silos. The silos don't touch and are not coordinated. One of the questions we asked was: 1) Were programs or projects funded in the past that were coordinated with city vision or plans, 2) were they located in a target area, 3) did proposals create a complimentary impact, and 4) was there a clear and transparent ranking system.

In the past these programs and projects were not coordinated. The questions to the answers above resulted in several no's. The CDBG Priority Task Force asked how we could coordinate these efforts and change these no's to yes's.

He begins to discuss the priorities. The first priority is basic needs: no one should be without food and no one should sleep in the cold.

The second is planning and administration, well planned projects result in bigger impacts and better projects.

He then describes the impact initiative priorities: housing, work and shop, mobility and accessibility and safe neighborhoods. We chose *housing*, because people need a place to live. The Task Force identified *work and shop* because people need places to shop and work in their neighborhoods. *Mobility and accessibility* was also identified because people need to be able to get to and access jobs, shops, stores, and services from where they live. Also it's important to be *safe* in the places where you live, work and shop. They provided some suggested funding percentages: 20% planning and admin, 65% impact initiatives or priorities, and 15% basic needs.

Denis introduces some of the other lenses for reviewing applications: coordinated with city vision and plans, located within targeted area, creating a complementary impact, and ranking. He provides a number of examples of how this would work.

Councilor Mavodones arrives.

Denis continues presenting examples. The next example is Logan Place. This would be housing and safe neighborhoods- ranking medium. His second example is a combination of housing, work and shop, mobility and accessibility. His third example has housing, work and shop, mobility and accessibility and safe neighborhoods. What would a very high project look like? His example is Parkside Neighborhood Center: Housing, community policing, there could be some daycare or job training, plus pedestrian friendly sidewalks and streetscape improvements, and this provides a wow effect.

Another example could be Washington Avenue. He lists several examples of how putting it all together creates stronger communities.

Anna wraps up. She talks about some of the problems: lack of community development focus, lack of resources, scatter approach- everyone got a little, lack of objectivity, lack of transparency, lack of coordination with planning.

The task force has suggested some solutions: focus on Low-Moderate-Income location (intersection with neighborhood Main Street and troubled areas, or affordable housing projects), increase minimum from \$5,000 to \$20,000, Reward leverage and cooperation- rewarding for multi-dimensional projects, serve lowest census populations first.

Jon Bradley addresses the impact on social service agencies. The Task Force recognizes the current ongoing funding is not what will continue, the Task Force wants to create something bigger. It will go beyond funding \$5000 per position in many agencies. He also adds that funding does not necessary move around, and the holes that this fills will still be there. But the Task Force's goal was to find the best use of funds. The opportunities are there, no agency is blocked out, but they will have to change their strategy for receiving funds. It's critical to note that there were two set asides- 1 being basic needs. It's important not to mix into having a community impact with allowing people to have food or shelter to keep people safe. Finally the Task Force thought of different ways to combine things, but it will challenge social service agencies in how to be part of the community.

Also with higher minimum, the Task Force decided to have a second set aside for smaller grants for training or capacity building.

Denis says we are eager to hear your thoughts. He passes out the power point.

Ed thanks the Task Force for their hard work and effort. There is a public forum tomorrow and another task force meeting before the Council Meeting on October 20. He also says he likes the

concept of transition not transformation. This may not be implemented into this year's RFP. Anna says that she has a lot of faith in HCD staff and the allocation committee to continue this. The allocation committee can start ranking, but not all projects will be able to be ranked according to this model.

Councilor Skolnik asks about moving from subjective to objective review of applicants. How do you plan to inject objectivity?

Anna responds that it was difficult to determine why some agencies got funded and others did not. It is hoped with this rating and ranking system will help to answer those questions. The Task Force is making recommendations for priorities. But the allocation committee will develop the scoring.

Councilor Cohen arrives.

Councilor Donoghue asks what are the planning and admin recommendations that the task force is making. Denis answers that they have had several meetings with Alex, but planners would help to inform the projects that are requested. Plans or project proposals that are developed by different departments, would be better coordinated and selected based on areas where developed occurred. It would be more coordination with HNS staff, planners and Public Services Department. Some areas that had very low income areas would receive higher focus. One example is the Bayside Plan. Other areas could be selected and more work could be done. We could identify those areas and come up with a comprehensive approach. Anna says that although it sounds complicated, it can be done slowly in transition.

Councilor Marshall asks about the target areas, what is it and can you describe it? Denis says that it could be a geographic selection. That may include a Main Street- a business area, if people can improve their economic situation they can help move them out of poverty. A neighborhood Main Street combined with lower income areas could overlap- that would be a focus. Another option is that a proposal can come forward and make the argument why that place should be a target area. Anna explains that target areas could be around local Main Streets, or affordable housing projects, or hot spots- or troubled areas. The Task Force is providing examples; the allocation committee would weigh all the applications equally. It is up to the community and applicants, and the allocation committee to determine how well the proposals address these needs.

Jon says if there is an affordable housing project, infrastructure improvements in that area can also be enhanced. These are examples of what could be. This is where it can be creative.

Councilor Leeman questions about the allocation in respect to infrastructure improvements. She says that her neighborhood- East Deering, used to be eligible. When we invested in the streetscape, people fix up their homes, and so much so that we are no longer eligible. You can get tremendous benefit for revitalizing an area, concentrated. She warns against only funding larger projects.

Denis says that the Task Force considered that however with limited resources we decided to build connections, like sidewalks leading from the new Bayside Trail to downtown to connect people. Anna says that the sidewalk that Councilor Leeman refers to can still be funded, but in the proposal, they would need to work harder to see how it fits into a bigger picture. Councilor Leeman argues that there is not always an argument for how it fits into a larger project. She says she didn't believe it either, but she saw it happen. It puts pressure on the neighbors.

Jon says he appreciates her comment. He says it's the same as the lens we looked at social services. How can we have a bigger impact? The Task Force decided that choices have to be made.

Councilor Leeman says she understands, but there is a benefit from selectively picking out where you want to put your money. I don't want this to become a program that developers use to fit their infrastructure needs. The intent was to bring up low income neighborhoods out of poverty.

Councilor Cohen, apologizes for being late. He thanks the committee for their hard work. A lot of good work has been done to make more specific and rational decisions. Any year where there's lots of projects and few dollars it's difficult to weigh the projects. He likes the principles that are here. As long as it's flexible enough to allow for small and larger projects. In his mind the two biggest difference resulting from these recommendations is that we will not always fund the 33% to social services, and the \$20,000 minimum.

Anna explains that if one year the city allocates 33% it can return to that limit another year. Some years you can have less, dependent on the projects that are proposed. She asks if the Councilors have a minimum they would recommend.

Councilor Marshall asks how the federal standards for this program have changed. He asks TJ to respond.

TJ says that HUD is looking for outcome performance of the programs and projects. These recommendations support the HUD regulations. We started to implement this some last year, but we will need to track better the outcome performance measures of applicants.

Councilor Marshall says that his first response to the memo is that there is not much in it, but based on the presentation he understand how it fits together. When he looks at the Parkside Neighborhood Center and the impact it has in that neighborhood he appreciates that. Thank you.

Councilor Anton says that the Task Force has done what we asked them to do: to review an ad-hoc funding program and to set some priorities. Did they get it all right? Who knows- we won't know until it goes forward and programs are funded. However the check will be the next task force and when it will be convened. The Task Force did a very thorough job and he appreciates the work that has been done. It provides a platform for going forward.

Anna says the key would be implementation and follow up. Following up and coming back in a year or two to see where we are. Implementation is going to matter, and we are concerned about that. Denis and I as co-chairs will help the allocation committee with the information that we have learned. Hopefully the learning curve will be easy.

Mayor Suslovic asks two questions. With the very integrated projects, will there be multi-year funding? Jon responds that's one of the recommendations. Mayor Suslovic thanks Jon for his explanation on how this will impact social services. He asks the Task Force members what feedback have they received? Anna responds that the feedback has been positive. A collaborative model is heavily supported in the social service community. Even the state is looking toward collaboration and leveraging. Wendy adds that many liked larger grants and multi-year funding. Jon says that many organizations expressed concern that they will loose funding. He says it will take time, maybe implementing it next year. The first year after it is really implemented it is important to review.

Mayor Suslovic thanks the Task Force and staff for putting in the time and effort. The TF will have a public forum tomorrow. He says this year is still a transition year. Anna says she is interested in feedback, how can implement some of this to start this process. Mayor Suslovic says that Councilors can contact staff if they have further concerns.

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## **CDGB Priority Task Force Follow-Up Meeting**

**6:00 Room 209, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor City Hall**

The task force discusses what will be adopted this year. Jon says that he would like that we not adopt this for this year. We could plan out the proposal, but not implement it. It would create a lot of anxiety for the providers. People need to plan for the change and loss of money. We can get the money out immediately.

Kyra says that what if we implement that silos so that a stand alone historic preservation project would not score as highly. That would not affect social service agencies.

Jeannemarie says she likes about the concept of the ranking as something that could be implemented. The reality is that most people would score at the low end of ranking. If someone is able to implement the collaboration, than they stand as a model.

Anna says that there should be a way to compromise. We could say adopt the recommendations and give the ranking system a shot then agencies can see how they are graded. Part of it would start to have some teeth. The other way to look at it is every one has an equal shot. Everyone will have this same challenge. It will be the same applicants, and they will have the same impact. The ranking committee will be kind. Jon says when you change the application it adds a lot of time. Last year there was a big change. We are talking about changing it last year, this year and again next year. Adapting to these changes is especially difficult for smaller agencies. If you make a lot of differences, it's a lot more work.

Wendy says last year we did a ranking. Can we elaborate on that a bit? The ranking can be an internal review.

Denis asks TJ and Amy what they think. TJ appreciates what Jon says and agrees it would be too much to implement this year.

Denis wants to hear staff's recommendations of transition. Anna says that she goes a step forward that this year is a test year for the allocation committee to determine how it moves forward. Let them decide how it goes forward. Let the allocation committee decide.

They recommend that we release the recommendations and a series of workshops for implementing these recommendations. By 2010 this should be fully implemented.

Rachael says that we should attach the expectations for this year. Everyone agrees.

Anna says that we could implement the reflection of city plans and the location based.

Kyra says that we could include the list of priorities and use the categories we have recommended: housing, work and shop, mobility and accessibility and safe neighborhoods plus basic needs.

TJ and Amy will come up with some transitional recommendations for our next meeting.

They discuss Councilor Leeman's comments about specific sidewalks.

They discuss the idea funding non-coordinated sidewalks. How does that compliment the revitalization of that area? The applicant would have to make a case where this sidewalk is going to make a big impact in your area. The justification needs to be made.

Denis says we have targeted areas model there are two ways to get there: either identified by planning or argued by the proposal. Targeted areas are not the same as eligible districts.

Jon says this is not the only money to build sidewalks. We spent a lot of time on this- Denis has made the case and we have made our recommendations.

The committee also discusses that Cheryl did not want this to be a pot that developers could go to for their infrastructure requirements. The Task Force decides that this money is NOT to be used for their development review requirements. It can go to compliment the development.

Move to adopt minutes from October 1, seconded by Denis. All 7 vote in favor.

Anna says that there is only one more TF meeting on Tuesday October 14 6:30-9:00pm. She asks that we have another meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> to make more decisions.

The second piece is we need 2-3 TF writing volunteers to help write. Denis and Anna will send what they have to Amy and she will do most of the writing.

Jon, Rachael and Wendy will volunteer to edit.

She suggests a 7:30-9:00am meeting on Thursday October 16. This is the writing meeting. Amy will find a room.

Anna asks about capacity building. Jon says we need to have a percentage set aside. Denis makes a motion to set some aside and have staff decide how much the set aside for basic needs.

Amy and TJ could coordinate with Rachel Talbot Ross

The TF asks Amy and TJ how much would be set aside for basic needs. Basic needs and capacity building would need to be lower than \$20,000. What would the basic need set aside be?

Basic needs, social workers would not be basic needs, but shelter staff may be. It would be food, not staff to serve food.

The Task Force asks staff to recommend the following: 1) capacity building percentage, 2) basic need percentage, 3) what to implement this year, and 4) how to define and fund basic needs. Also to set a meeting for Thursday October 16, 7:30-9:00am meeting.

Wendy asks if energy is part of sustainability or separate. Denis argues that sustainability is together with energy. Amy mentions that energy is the emerging need of the day. They describe how that may be added as a yearly identification.

Denis says that he has a different representation in the report. Wendy says that they have already defined the principles and approved them. Any changes would have to be approved. The report will expand upon the priorities and principles that have been approved. They agree and adjourn.