

MISSOULA REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
CONDENSED BOARD MEETING MINUTES

October 20, 2022

FINAL

A Regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Missoula Redevelopment Agency was held on Thursday, October 20, 2022 in the Hal Fraser Conference Room, 140 W. Pine St., and via Microsoft Teams at 12:00 p.m. Those in attendance were as follows:

Board: Karl Englund, Ruth Reineking, Melanie Brock, Jack Lawson

Staff: Ellen Buchanan, Annie Gorski, Annette Marchesseault, Tod Gass, Jilayne Dunn, Maci MacPherson, Lesley Pugh

Public: Dawn McGee, Goodworks Ventures; Jeff Smith, WGM Group; Dustin Hirose, HDR; David Erickson, Missoulia; Daniel Carlino, Missoula City Council; Rachael Kropp, City of Missoula; MCAT

CALL TO ORDER

12:00 pm.

INTRODUCTIONS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[September 15, 2022 Regular Board Meeting Minutes](#) were approved as submitted.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no public comments or announcements.

ACTION ITEMS

[Scott Street Redevelopment Project – Site Work for Infrastructure \(North Reserve-Scott Street URD/Ward 1/Northside Neighborhood\) – TIF Request \(Gorski\)](#)

Gorski said the Scott Street Redevelopment project request today is for starting on site work for the public infrastructure. She reviewed an image of the existing conditions there. Two years ago the City purchased 19 acres in the area. Ravara Development LLC has a purchase and sale agreement with the City to purchase six acres of the property. As part of that development there are a number of street connectivity pieces that need to occur that will be implementing the North Reserve-Scott Street (NRSS) Master Plan. The streets include Shakespeare, Charlo and Palmer. This is the first phase of that work, and Ravara and their consultant WGM have advised that to get the best pricing on the infrastructure the

package needs to be done in phases. Gorski said the plan would be to bid construction of the site work in January/February and be one of the first projects contractors could bid on in the new year to get more favorable pricing.

Gorski reviewed the site plan showing the overall development including housing and commercial uses. Several pieces of the development align with elements in the City's Strategic Plan as well as in the NRSS Master Plan. Those include prioritizing infrastructure and supporting the area with an interconnected, multi-modal street system. Gorski said in addition to the street extensions there are some additional bike and pedestrian facilities that are being planned on Scott Street, specifically a new cycle track. There is also reference in the Plans to support additional housing for all types and needs in the City and public/private partnerships that support a mix of land uses, and improving and maintaining infrastructure including for complete streets. Gorski said staff feels there is a lot of alignment between this project and those Plans.

The funding request today is for up to \$305,000 for site work for infrastructure. Staff expects to come back to the Board early next year with a request for the construction phase of the work. Jeff Smith, WGM Group, and Dawn McGee, Goodworks Ventures/Ravara, were present to answer any questions.

Buchanan noted the dirt that comes off the site is going to go to the landfill but will be used as cover. The trucks may not be required to be weighed, which may reduce the cost, since they are using it for cover for their use. Also, if all of the dirt for the streets, the Community Land Trust (CLT) piece and market-rate piece are done at the same time then all three entities will share in the mobilization costs. If they are done at different times then the price may go up.

Smith said they are looking at about 21,000 cubic yards of material that needs to be removed from the site. They are cutting the streets down to future subgrade and one of the goals there is that they develop a fire access route for intermediate fire access during construction before the streets are built. They are also taking a foot of material off of the buildable portions of the site based on geotechnical recommendations. The material at the surface is kind of a hodgepodge of fill and various miscellaneous materials that have been placed on the site over the years and is not suitable for construction. Smith said one truck holds about 10 yards of material so they are looking at about 60 days of hauling time. By doing this work over winter as weather allows they remove the 60 days from the critical path of the construction schedule and facilitate a much shorter construction duration for the infrastructure next year.

Reineking said she is in support of this project but is concerned with the truck traffic this will create on Scott Street. She does appreciate there will be some multi-modal paths and asked if they will extend beyond the two blocks shown today. Gorski said it is her understanding that the cycle track is just planned right now for the Scott Street section shown on the site plan. Reineking asked if it corresponds to anything the City is planning. Gorski said there is a project in the CIP (Capital Improvements Project) related to Scott Street. There is also a plan for a roundabout at Scott and Phillips Streets. The City is placing a lot of attention on Scott Street, however she is unsure when those improvements will occur.

Englund asked if it will be ready to lay asphalt after the site prep is finished. Smith said at the end of this construction period there will be some of the storm drainage infrastructure in, they are putting infiltration facilities at the low points so there are no ponds of water during the intermediate period between when this work is done and when the final roads are built. This work facilitates the final construction of infrastructure. There will still be water and sewer mains to install, and dry utilities for power and communications. Smith said when those utilities are in they will build the base course, pour curb, pave asphalt, and place sidewalks and street landscaping. Brock said this is similar to the process with the Hotel Fox Site and Montana Rail Link (MRL) Park where they had to deal with the dirt first, but this is how those sorts of projects are tackled.

Reineking said the NRSS Strategic Plan anticipates extending Turner Street past this property and connecting to the west which will do a lot to change traffic patterns there. She asked if there is any news on what is happening with the western portion of this City-owned land. Buchanan said it is still currently being used to treat the material that is coming out of the ground at Zip Beverage. It's called a Land Treatment Unit (LTU) and will likely be there for another year or two. In the meantime, the Public Works Department has access to it and is using it for storage and other things. There are new alternative plans for the Public Works facility that were not looked at earlier that would not require the back portion of the land be used for Public Works. The City is hopeful they can get the environmental results that will allow housing to go there as well. Mountain Line, although they haven't relinquished interest in this property, are currently looking at property out toward the airport.

REINEKING: I MOVE THE MRA BOARD APPROVE AN INITIAL REQUEST UP TO \$305,000 FROM RAVARA TO FUND SITE PREPARATION AND EXCAVATION FOR INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDED TO SUPPORT A NEW MIXED-INCOME, MIXED-USE NEIGHBORHOOD ALONG SCOTT STREET AND THAT AMOUNT OF THE TIF REIMBURSEMENT WILL BE BASED ON PAID INVOICES SUBMITTED BY THE OWNER DOCUMENTING ACTUAL COSTS OF THE TIF ELIGIBLE IMPROVEMENTS, AND AUTHORIZE THE BOARD CHAIR TO SIGN THE DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT.

Brock seconded the motion.

Buchanan wanted to emphasize that the real impetus for this is implementing the NRSS Master Plan.

No further discussion. No public comment.

Motion passed unanimously (4 ayes, 0 nays).

[Bitterroot Trail Montana Rail Link \(MRL\) Bridge – Feasibility Study \(URD II\) – Request to Approve Professional Services Agreement \(Gass\)](#)

Gass said this item is before the Board thanks to the work Mayor Engen did in discussions with Montana Rail Link (MRL). The discussions resulted in MRL granting permission to the City to investigate the feasibility of modifying their bridge over the Clark Fork River and converting it to a shared use facility for bike/ped use. Gass pointed out that MRL is not

abandoning the Bitterroot Spur Line, and so any modification to the Bridge comes with the condition that it would also be able to be used for rail use if that need arises in the future.

Gass said this has been before the Board in the past, first as part of the 9 Year Strategic Plan for URD II that the Board approved in March 2022. Gass said in his mind this is part of the final critical link of the Bitterroot Trail linking downtown Missoula to downtown Hamilton. Secondly, it was included in the MRA CIP that was presented to the Board in June 2022 and was approved for inclusion into the CIP. The intent expressed at that time was to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to get an engineering firm on board to conduct a feasibility study and produce a conceptual design. HDR was selected based on their long history of working with MRL and have been their on-call engineer since 1999.

Today's request is to consider approving the scope of work and the budget associated with it. Phase 1 of HDR's scope of services includes a feasibility study and preliminary conceptual design illustrating the general design characteristics of the modified Bridge and includes a high-level cost estimate for planning purposes. Tasks within Phase 1 including Project Management & Meetings, Feasibility Study and Preliminary Conceptual Design are outlined in Gass' memo.

Staff is anticipating Phase 2 will be added later to the agreement with HDR through Board action. It would include advancing the design concepts for maintenance requirements, lighting and design criteria along with estimates of probable cost with the project stakeholders. Staff wants to have Parks & Rec, MRL and the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) at the table for input.

The agreement being drafted for Phase 1 will include language that it can be terminated if during the feasibility study they discover an insurmountable problem, defect or flaw with the Bridge that throws up a red flag. Gass said there will be checkpoints along the way that will determine proceeding or ceasing work.

Gass said the request today is to approve a Professional Services Agreement with HDR Engineering Inc. and the associated Scope of Work and budget for completion of the MRL Bridge Feasibility Study & Conceptual Design Project at a cost not to exceed \$341,102, and authorize the Board Chair to sign the Agreement with the understanding that if the project is found to be infeasible due to structural condition, project cost or other reason, the project will be halted and no further expenditures will be authorized. The URD II budget has about \$310,000 in contingency and as of this week with the closing of the URD II Bond there is a reimbursement to URD II of \$1.2 million for the Bridge Apartments purchase. Staff feels comfortable there are adequate funds in the district to take on this expenditure. Dustin Hirose with HDR was present to answer any questions.

Buchanan said there are two other aspects to the initial evaluation including how to get people across Broadway Street safely and how to get people down to the Riverfront Trail on the south side of the river as part of the scope of this. She said the first piece of the evaluation is the structure and it is not going to be an easy evaluation. Because of the way the trestle was constructed and unique aspects of it, it will take some effort to figure out what is there structurally. Hirose said the Bridge was built around the late 1800s and is fairly old. The girders themselves are relatively unique, two of them came from a different

site and may actually be older while the third girder was fabricated for this particular site. At this point there are no architectural/construction plans for those girders and the only way to analyze them is to actually access the structure through climbing methods. They are linking that with a structural inspection, but it does take effort and time to do that and see exactly what they're dealing with.

Reineking asked at what point the definition of stakeholders expands to include the public/neighborhood. She said a lot of people will be interested in this and the connections. Gass said staff is planning to have a public outreach component when they do Phase 2. Staff has been in contact with Bob Giordano, Free Cycles, and he is on board with it. Giordano is in favor of what MRA is doing and is very interested in taking that trail even further down the tracks and connecting with 1st Street. Englund asked about MDT's involvement and if they lean any expertise to the trail/bridge portion. Buchanan said they are involved for the safe crossing across Broadway Street and may or may not have involvement with the actual trail/bridge. Buchanan emphasized that the railroad will obtain their ability to use that rail line for trains if needed.

Reineking asked for a timeline. Gass said there will be a notice to proceed around the beginning of November. The structural feasibility will be completed in the spring of 2023 and Phase 1 should be completed by July 2023. After that they hope to continue on. Englund asked if Phase 2 would be actual design should everything in Phase 1 pass. Buchanan said yes. Englund asked if there was any possibility at that point to use the design build/contract manager at-risk model. Buchanan said it is possible and that decision can be made once Phase 1 is done and staff knows they have a project and are ready to move into Phase 2. Gass said the project won't go anywhere without MRL's buy-in on the design, and Parks & Rec will be an important partner because they will be the ones maintaining it.

Lawson asked if the extent of the agreement with MRL is that they have agreed to a feasibility study. Buchanan said it is until MRA knows what it is proposing to do. They have given MRA the green light to move forward with this and have given access to the trestle. In terms of paying for the actual work, Lawson asked if it is assumed to become a public investment or is there hope MRL will be in on it as well. Buchanan said it will be a public investment. Reineking added that improvements to the rail for the benefit of MRL would not be MRA responsibility. Buchanan noted this is a project MRA worked on 20+ years ago and even started doing the engineering feasibility, but abandoned it because of some changes that were going on with the railroad. Englund said it's not a pedestrian bridge, it is MRL's bridge so that's the way it is. Mayor Engen was able to work with them and they eventually came around to the idea that it may also be a bike/ped bridge. Now it just needs to be taken one step at a time. Englund added that MRA and MRL have worked well together on other projects. Buchanan said MRL is a great community partner and there is a very nice piece of property on Johnson Street that demonstrates that (MRL Park). Brock said this is the last gated area in URD II and it's exciting to think of the amazing public amenity it could be to both sides of the river. Englund said when Buchanan presented the 9 Year Strategic Plan for URD II to MRA and the City Council, everybody was excited that this was a priority.

Daniel Carlino, City Council, said he has heard from a lot of constituents that this is a really popular project. He said it's a great way to connect the Westside and Riverfront

Neighborhoods. He wanted to make sure there was a safe crossing across Broadway Street, perhaps a raised crosswalk. He said he also supported the idea of having a way to come down on the south side of the river by the baseball stadium and also by where the Riverfront Trail connects with the Bitterroot Trail. Carlino said he wanted to show his overall support for this project.

BROCK: I MOVE THE MRA BOARD APPROVE A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH HDR ENGINEERING, INC. AND THE ASSOCIATED SCOPE OF WORK AND BUDGET FOR COMPLETION OF THE MRL BRIDGE FEASIBILITY STUDY & CONCEPTUAL DESIGN PROJECT AT A COST NOT TO EXCEED \$341,102, AND AUTHORIZE THE BOARD CHAIR TO SIGN THE AGREEMENT WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT IF THE PROJECT IS FOUND TO BE INFEASIBLE DUE TO STRUCTURAL CONDITION, PROJECT COST, OR OTHER REASON, THE PROJECT WILL BE HALTED AND NO FURTHER EXPENDITURES WILL BE AUTHORIZED.

Lawson seconded the motion.

No further discussion. No public comment.

Motion passed unanimously (4 ayes, 0 nays).

NON-ACTION ITEMS

STAFF REPORTS

[Director's Report](#)

MRA Housing Policy

Buchanan said part of her report refers to the housing policy that staff is working on internally. Gorski reminded the Board that in the last legislative session there was a change made to the definition of infrastructure in the urban renewal section of the statute.

“Workforce housing” was added to the definition and so staff has been working since this spring to understand a couple of things including what other cities are doing around the state and understanding better what the needs are. Staff has been thinking about what types of programs can be implemented that are simple to administer, but also flexible, knowing the needs of a small project may be different than a larger one. Gorski said staff would like the Board’s input and is looking at putting together a working group. Englund asked if it will be the Board’s policy or the City’s policy. Buchanan said it is something that would go to the City Council as policy and MRA would carry it out. Internally it needs to be vetted first and go through the MRA Board and then to City Council.

Brock said there are a lot of layers and she was curious how it plays into the Affordable Housing Trust Fund work. Buchanan said that is one of the things staff is wrestling with, there are a lot of layers and various definitions floating around depending on which entity you’re talking to. The Board concurred they like the idea of putting together a working group with a couple of Board members, City Council, staff, stakeholders, etc. Englund said they’ve done it before and it is a valuable process. He recommended running the idea by City Council to see if that is what they want to do.

Midtown Master Plan

Brock said there were 175 people, 25 under the age of 10, that participated in the community visioning night. It included a kids' charrette and they would like a zoo with a tiger and more ice cream shops in Midtown. They launched a survey on midtownmasterplan.com and would love everyone's feedback. The EcoNorthwest team will be back in January with plan alternatives.

MRA Communications Update

No update.

FY23 Budget Status Reports

Dunn said her memo covers all the changes on the reports for this month. MRA now has its Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 mills, but are still using an estimated ending fund balance which gets tweaked during the course of the audit. She noted MRA did close on the Series 2022A and Series 2022B bonds for URD II which will reimburse the district for the acquisition of the Bridge Apartments.

Staff Activities Reports (7/30/22-8/27/22)

COMMITTEE REPORTS

OTHER ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 1:04 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Lesley Pugh