

PORTLAND CLEAN ENERGY COMMUNITY BENEFITS FUND (PCEF)

GRANTS COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

April 20, 2023 • 6:00 PM – 8:30 PM

Hybrid Meeting—Zoom Call & Open Signal

Committee Members	Position	Affiliation	Present
Dr. Megan Horst	Co-Chair	Associate Professor, School of Urban Studies & Planning at Portland State University	Yes
Ranfis Villatoro	Co-Chair	Oregon State Policy Manager, BlueGreen Alliance	Yes
Shanice Brittany Clarke	Member-at-Large	Director of Community Engagement, Portland Public Schools	No
Faith Graham	Member-at-Large	Principal Director, West Coast Strategy and Development, Elevate Energy	Yes
Maria Gabrielle Sipin	Member-at-Large	Technical Assistance Manager, Safe Routes Partnership	Yes
Michael Edden Hill	Member-at-Large	Community Member	Yes
Robin Wang	Member-at-Large	Vibrant Future LLC	Yes
June Reyes	Community Engagement Coordinator	PCEF Staff	No
Sam Baraso	Program Manager	PCEF	Yes
Cady Lister	Deputy Program Director	PCEF	Yes
Jaimes Valdez	Org. Development & Policy Manger	PCEF	Yes
Kris Grube	Project Manager	PCEF	No
Wendy Koelfgen	Project Manager	PCEF	No
Rachel Gilmore	Administrative Specialist	PCEF	Yes
Elizabeth Stover	Senior Communications Strategist	PCEF	No
Tracy M. Smith	Facilitator	Inhance LLC	Yes
Camerina Galván	Notetaker	Galvan Consulting LLC	Yes

OTHER ATTENDEES: Ciara Pressler, Strategic Consultant, Pregame; Jason Ford; Gayle Palmer, East Portland Resilience Coalition; Brittani Holland; Jasper; Mohamed Farah, Constructing Hope; Bill Harris, former Energy Auditor with Washington County Action for Low-Income Families; Tim Sharp, The Heat Pump Store; Ye Feng; ShaeB; Jeni Hall, Energy Trust of Oregon; Julia Reed, PBOT; Zef Wagner, PBOT.

INTRODUCTIONS

- Tracy M. Smith called the meeting to order at 6:10 PM.
- The quorum was met.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: TRACY M. SMITH, FACILITATOR

- Bill Harris shared that he and Elliot Gall, a Portland State University instructor and lead at the Healthy Buildings Research Lab, have a product favorable for infiltration for mechanical ventilation systems in homes and buildings.

MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL: SAM BARASO, PCEF

- Two revisions to the March 16, 2023, Meeting Summary were made.
 - Robin Wang's affiliation is Vibrant Future.
 - Faith Graham's affiliation is Elevate.
- Faith Graham moved to approve the March 16, 2023, Meeting Summary with the two revisions. Ranfis seconded it.
- Approved: March 16, 2023, Meeting Summary.

UPDATE: CLIMATE INVESTMENT PLAN (CIP) TIMELINE: CIARA PRESSLER, PREGAME

- Ciara Pressler has yet to receive feedback from the committee members for improving the process.
- Ciara Pressler reviewed the CIP timeline.

STRATEGIC PROGRAM 14: CLIMATE-FRIENDLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS: CADY LISTER, PCEF

- Cady Lister gave an overview of the Climate-Friendly Public Schools Strategic Program. A school district roundtable is planned for April 28, 2023.
- Committee member comments and questions:
 - Give an example of a student lead initiative.
 - Response: A high school has a Climate Club about composting, and the school has a green infrastructure project on the property. There is a lot of energy and interest but few committed resources.
 - Would it be a problem to fund schools that straddle Portland and other city boundaries and serve, for instance, Portland and Gresham students?
 - Response: We are looking at schools where the buildings are physically located in Portland. We don't anticipate an issue because the clean energy initiatives serve Portland, and the workforce/contractor development efforts are expanded.
 - In upcoming conversations with schools, can PCEF ask if the investment can prevent school closures and consolidations from happening? School closures and consolidations disrupt families, and students have longer commutes to school.
 - Response: We will research and integrate the issues into the conversation.
 - What happens if the funding given doesn't align with the need? Will there be a rightsizing?
 - Response: The needs could use the total fund. The HVAC system in one school is \$7M.

- One area of improvement can be regenerative agriculture (RA). Please add it.
 - Response: We'll add RA.
- Staff funding is needed to keep RA projects ongoing. Are there allocations to staff funding?
- How many schools are there, and how did you land on \$50M? What was the thinking around the numbers?
 - Response: We wanted the students to feel we entrust them with significant money and trust their ideas and projects. We wanted to spread out the funding. We looked at the list of all the schools in the districts and where there was a higher percentage of students on free and reduced lunch and students who reflected PCEF's priority populations. We started with \$50M after talking with school districts and seeing the high need for physical and building improvements. There are different ways to split the money.
- This strategic program feels good, and I wonder why we can't be more audacious. This project has a triple bottom line—students, staff, and energy efficiency. We can also influence workforce development.
 - Response: Staff are still reviewing public comments, and the convening with school districts may lead to changes in the programming. We hear your points.
- The \$50M allocation was decided, and a formula was developed for distribution. What if we lead with the approach, "What do schools need to become climate resilient as soon as possible?" What would the amount be in comparison to the \$50M?
 - Response: It could be the entire fund. An HVAC system in one school costs \$7M. The list is long and deep. We can talk to folks to get estimates. Both housing and school buildings need substantially more funding than PCEF has available.
- **ACTION ITEM:** PCEF staff will talk with school district representatives to get an estimate.
- What would be the holistic cost for one school? I worry that we won't achieve the best outcomes if we piecemeal.
 - Response: We don't have the answer right now. The type, size, and configuration of a school makes a difference. We can try to get estimates. When we look at our housing stock and school buildings, both could take more money than we have to get them to robust resiliency, energy efficiency, and renewable energy levels. The allocation is also based on community input and priorities.

STRATEGIC PROGRAM 9: INCREASING URBAN FARMING OPPORTUNITIES: PLANNING AND LAND ACQUISITION: SAM BARASO, PCEF

- Sam Baraso gave an overview of the Increasing Urban Farming Opportunities: Planning and Land Acquisition Strategic Program.
- RA will be convened in the next month.
- Committee member comments and questions:
 - We can't understate the need. I would like there to be a RA roundtable.
 - This approach has a bias for organizations that do not have access to land. Hopefully, the funding for RA will address the gap.
 - Response: We will convene a RA roundtable. It's important.

- RA needs funded staff. It doesn't maintain itself. The strategic program will only support staff for a year or two. Then what happens?
 - Response: We recognize that continued land management is vital beyond five years. We want to convene with Megan Horst to share our evolving thinking. We will connect with East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District to discuss a model that drives equitable outcomes and provides stability.
- **ACTION ITEM:** The PCEF staff will connect with Megan Horst and East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District.
- What does the competitive process look like?
 - Response: We have yet to get this level of detail. The focus will be on priority populations.
- This could be a case study for future policies. I encourage PCEF to engage Pineros Y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste (PCUN) or United Farm Workers in designing the program. We cannot separate soil exploitation from the workforce.
 - Response: Thank you.
- Nonprofits can come and go. Has PCEF considered funding through a land trust to ensure the land is always available as intended?
 - Response: This is a great suggestion. We'll think more about this to determine the relationship between the land ownership people seek and how that compares to easements.
- A committee member shared that investing across several issues is the right direction.
- A committee member encourages the roundtable to think about land trusts. There can be an opportunity for multiple nonprofits to share the land.

STRATEGIC PROGRAM 12: STREET TREE EXPANSION ON 82ND AVENUE: JULIA REED, PBOT, AND ZEF WAGNER, PBOT

- Julia Reed and Zef Wagner gave an overview of the Street Tree Expansion on 82nd Avenue Strategic Program.
- Committee member comments and questions:
 - Help me understand the sequencing. Does 82nd Avenue remain a five-lane urban arterial highway? Can we only accomplish the expanded pedestrian zone by purchasing a right of way to keep the five lanes?
 - Response: It's about setting a community vision for the corridor. PBOT will conduct community engagement and compromises regarding the use of space will have to be reached. PBOT is also talking with TriMet and Metro about a potential bus rapid transit project which will bring investment in bus stations and bus vehicles.
 - Response: We can consider opportunities to narrow the roadway. It comes with trades off and costs. It may be a good option in areas with slopes or buildings up against the sidewalk. The most common scenario is widening the sidewalk into a front yard, parking lot, or landscaping strip. We will maximize the number of trees planted. It is worth spending more money planting trees where they are most needed to benefit PCEF priority populations.
 - What percentage of the corridor are the 15 blocks?

- Response: The 15 blocks would cover the entire Lents neighborhood. It would run from the Holgate area to the Foster/Woodstock area. North of Holgate, there are continuous street trees because of the Eastport Plaza shopping center. For example, we could start there and work our way south to take care of the whole Lents neighborhood. We will develop several scenarios and gather community feedback.
- Much of this will rely on the property owners. Do you have research about property owners' interests?
 - Response: PBOT can make right-of-way acquisitions. PBOT makes a fair market value offer. Most property owners accept the offer. Through a right-of-way acquisition, PBOT develops the sidewalk at no expense to the property owner. In rare cases, if someone disputes it, we enter a negotiation process. In some cases, if they are holding out for a higher price, then PBOT might forgo the project on that property, and there will be a gap in the sidewalks. We would want to concentrate on areas with more significant benefits.
- What are the strategy and dynamics for achieving a connected tree canopy along the 15 blocks? Instead of a row of trees, how about pocket parks and mini forests? Why this alternative versus others that may be easier?
 - Response: We are proposing median trees in certain areas for safety. In some places, we won't be able to plant trees because of unground sewer lines or other issues. We've heard loud community support for trees. Median trees don't take the place of street trees. Together median trees and sidewalk trees can create a canopy effect. We are using other funding for the medians mostly.
 - Response: Pocket parks are a good strategy. Other funds could help with private property acquisition. It will have limited benefits because you must find property owners willing to sell or people willing to have their entire parking lots redesigned. We can offer more certainty of a continuous tree canopy through other methods.
- This question was directed at PCEF staff: How does this program fit into the other tree canopy and 82nd Avenue projects?
 - Response: It is different. The Equitable Tree Canopy Strategic Program is focused on private yard trees and street trees where there is an existing place to plant trees. It's a community planting effort focusing on the adjacent neighborhoods around 82nd Avenue.
 - Response: The other 82nd Avenue Strategic Program will support commercial business stabilization through various investments such as infrastructure, depaving, and tree planting. We'll need a conversation to create a cohesive program.
 - Response: PBOT feels they can create a space between the properties and the road that doesn't exist along 82nd Avenue, such as the Montavilla neighborhood. The project goes beyond the cost of the trees.
- This feels like a significant investment. Why invest PCEF funds in widening sidewalks? What is PBOT's explanation for public scrutiny?
 - Response: We need to create a space to put the trees. In terms of public scrutiny, this is the most popular project. It will make the walking environment more pleasant.
 - Response: If someone asks if we were maximizing the number of trees planted, the answer would be no. The approach would lead to trees being planted in higher-income

neighborhoods. We can invest in areas with the most need and requests the investment. We can't plant trees along 82nd Avenue as is because there is a lot of concrete.

- Considering inflation, how much will the investment stretch to 2026? I want a more audacious strategy for workforce development. The committee member referenced an article from *The Oregonian* where a contractor stated that working on a PBOT project is difficult when one pre-qualification is to demonstrate five years of experience contracting with PBOT. How can you diversify PBOT contracting businesses on PBOT projects if there has been historical exclusion?
 - Response: We need to be guided by the community and the PCEF Committee. We described one scenario. We can ask the public if we maximize the timeline and get trees planted by 2024 if that means that areas where it will be more difficult, will be missed. We can share with the public different scenarios and have it be community-led.
 - Response: I am not an expert in procurement. I am surprised by the information shared and will look into it. It may apply to the prime contractor and not the subcontractor. We do need to make adjustments because we need to find contractors to complete the work.

PUBLIC COMMENT OVERVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF KEY THEMES: RACHEL GILMORE, PCEF, AND SAM BARASO, PCEF

- Rachel Gilmore shared photographs from recent community engagement events and data on the public comments, respondents, and interest areas.
- Committee member comments and questions:
 - A committee member encouraged PCEF staff to ask the community if they felt their input was incorporated or valued.
 - If you had more time and resources, is there another interest or group you would have engaged, or would you have liked to try another method of engagement?
 - Response: If we had more time, we would have developed more accessible documents. We heard loud and clear, "Who is the audience?" People want to see how to participate, and the document is highly technical. Collateral materials accompanying the draft plan would have been more digestible for people to provide feedback.
 - In the next round, will you be able to have collateral materials or an infographic?
 - Response: We will be able to do a little bit of this. We will work more with the graphic design team for the final draft in September.
 - Once this is all complete, it would be nice to get feedback from the community to determine if they felt their input was incorporated and valued.
- Sam Baraso shared that PCEF staff are reviewing and organizing the comments and developing key takeaways. The comments are organized into three categories:
 - What was good /where there was support
 - Key takeaways that are under consideration in the draft
 - Out of scope of influence
- **ACTION ITEM:** Committee Members will receive the comments in a slide deck next week.
- Sam Baraso shared the key takeaways from global comments.

- Committee member comments and questions:
 - There is a theme around balancing the interest of the community and other stakeholders. I’m unsure how you are accountable to communities without rethinking how RFPs have been structured in the past, without MOUs, or community benefit agreements. Community-led and accountability are subjective. Who defines them? They are challenging to measure and assess by PCEF compared to a community organization. I would appreciate updates on how you manage this since it is under consideration.
 - Response: This is important; we’d like the committee to help us think about this. We’ve scheduled a long work session to think about accountability. There is a fear within the community that the government will run over and rough shot. It’s a valid reaction.
 - Federal grants are evaluating twenty percent of applications on community benefits and demonstrating accountability to the community. We could learn from those programs. I’m happy to make connections to the folks in the programs.
 - Response: Thank you.
 - I’d like to see ways to operationalize and measure a just transition beyond building a transformative infrastructure and the programs.
 - This is such a robust community engagement process. Will the raw information be available to the community researchers? Where can they access it?
 - Response: We need to discuss how to scrub emails. We received information in different formats. We need to discuss this with June Reyes and Rachel Gilmore before giving specifics, but we are hopeful it will be posted before the next iteration of the CIP draft.
 - **ACTION ITEM:** PCEF staff will discuss how to scrub emails for identifying information.
 - **ACTION ITEM:** Sam Baraso will connect with Rachel Gilmore and June Reyes about making the information accessible to community researchers.
 - Regarding the point, “Addressing the issue of business and government having an unfair advantage over local nonprofits in accessing funding or projects/programs.” Do you feel these comments came from the shift in CIP to projects like PBOT? Do you think the spirit of the comment is that the contractors will eventually get paid to do the work rather than nonprofits?
 - Response: There are comments where nonprofits voice concerns about a shift from funding only being available to nonprofits to funding being directed to government and private businesses. I don’t think the comments are regarding contractors but rather a concern about who will control the money.
 - Across all our programs, is there an effort to ensure that nonprofits can do some of the work rather than assuming its city agencies doing the work in-house or contracting it out?
 - Response: Nonprofits can apply along with private for-profit businesses. RFPs for contracting are structured differently than grants. We can be attentive and clear about objectives.
 - Is the comment regarding doing the actual work or who has decision-making power? Or is it both?
 - Response: It will depend. For example, when discussing single-family home retrofits, an organization designing them in partnership with the community and other groups may

receive \$55,000. If the strategic program needs contracts to administer at least 50 retrofits, they will receive \$50,000. The programs will be different, and people will participate in different ways. This is part of the complication.

- Response: The question regarding the advantage of the private sector and government over nonprofits will be different. There may be times they are competing for the same work, as in the case of building upgrades for extreme weather response. County libraries and community-based organizations could both apply. We will need to be attentive to the advantages.

– **ACTION ITEM:** PCEF staff will bring more examples to the committee members.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 8:30 PM.

NEXT MEETING: The next hybrid meeting will be Thursday, May 18, 2023, 6:00 PM—8:00 PM