



**PROSPER**  
**PORTLAND**  
Building an Equitable Economy

**DATE:** May 8, 2019

**TO:** Board of Commissioners

**FROM:** Kimberly Branam, Executive Director

**SUBJECT:** Report Number 19-18

Approving the Thirteenth Amendment to the South Park Blocks Urban Renewal Plan and Forwarding to City Council with a Recommendation for Approval

### **BOARD ACTION REQUESTED AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION**

Adopt Resolution No. 7310

This action by the Prosper Portland Board of Commissioners (Board) would adopt the Thirteenth Amendment (Amendment) to the South Park Blocks Urban Renewal Plan (SPB Plan). If approved, the SPB Plan will be amended to contain a project that includes a public building that benefits the urban renewal area (URA). Specifically, the amendment will allow for potential financial investment in the Multnomah County Central Library (Central Library) located at 801 SW 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue (see a map in Attachment A).

### **STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT AND OUTCOMES**

This Amendment and future investment in the Central Library align with Prosper Portland goals by forming 21<sup>st</sup> century civic networks, institutions, and partnerships.

### **BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

The SPB Plan was adopted by the Prosper Portland Board July 9, 1985 through Resolution No. 3362 and by Portland City Council on July 24, 1985 through Ordinance No. 157635. Purposes of the SPB Plan include “providing improvements necessary to promote downtown as the entertainment and cultural center of the metropolitan area, ... [and to] establish the South Park Blocks as an art and cultural center in the City and region.” While work to improve the Central Library is consistent with goals of the SPB Plan, the original plan did not contemplate the project as a potential public building. In order to comply with Oregon Revised Statutes Chapter 457.085 (2)(j), which requires that an urban renewal plan that contains a project that includes a public building to also contain an explanation of how that public building will serve or benefit the plan area, staff are asking the Prosper Portland Board approve an amendment to the SPB Plan that would acknowledge potential investment in the Central Library, a public building.

Since the SPB Plan stipulates that amendments that identify a project that includes a public building are considered Council-Approved Amendments, staff will be seeking that Portland City Council approves this Amendment to the SPB Plan later in spring 2019.

The Central Library has served the community since 1913, providing a historic public space for all to gather, learn, create, and access the community’s collective knowledge and resources. The Central Library receives approximately 665,000 visits per year for a variety of purposes including access to books and periodicals, job search assistance, and public gathering space. The building was renovated in 1997

and Multnomah County staff has more recently identified a series of infrastructure improvements necessary to continue to provide quality services and experience for the community. The proposed improvements span three areas of the library—replace a failing electrical transformer and remedy associated heating, ventilation, and air conditioning issues; increase the safety of the emergency exit path and address longstanding landscaping issues; and create additional quiet meeting and work spaces for small groups. The estimated project cost for these improvements is \$2,000,000 and work is expected to be completed by 2021. Central Library staff, which is currently refining the scopes and collecting bids for the projects, has committed to meeting the terms of the South Park Block Urban Renewal Area funds including the using the money in a way that is consistent with tax increment fund requirements and spending timelines.

### **EQUITY IMPACT**

Amending the SPB Plan to include the Central Library has a number of equity impacts and benefits, most notably by providing the opportunity for Prosper Portland to invest in a facility that serves broad members of the Portland community. Multnomah County staff estimates that within a two-mile radius of the Central Library there are:

- Households below poverty level: 19.4%
- Households where the language spoken at home is other than English: 16.7%
- Households with population under age 18: 1%

The Central Library also serves a large population of people experiencing homelessness, mental illness, and addiction; as such, the library's social workers and staff who specialize in serving people experiencing homelessness are based at Central Library, which is located near health and human services, shelters, and other services.

Should the Prosper Portland Board approve the Amendment, staff at Prosper Portland and Multnomah County will begin drafting an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) that will stipulate how the potential future investment will conform with the agencies' social equity and green building policies.

### **COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND FEEDBACK**

While there has been no specific public participation related to this action, Multnomah County staff has conducted a yearlong community input and data analysis process that has led to a vision statement for the entire library system known as the Framework for Future Library Spaces. Among other priorities, the vision calls for increasing the number of smaller quiet rooms for study, video conferencing, and small group collaboration.

### **BUDGET AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION.**

There are no direct financial impacts from this proposed action. However, should this action be approved by the Prosper Portland Board and City Council, staff will likely return to the Board and City Council in summer 2019 seeking approval of an IGA to invest approximately \$2,000,000 in Central Library improvements.

### **RISK ASSESSMENT**

There are no material risks associated with the proposed Amendment.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Map of Central Library

### Map of Central Library

**Project Name:** Multnomah County Central Library  
**Location:** 801 SW 10th Avenue, Portland Oregon  
**URA:** South Park Blocks Urban Renewal Area

