

**Westside TIF Action Plan
Working Group Meeting #9
Prosper Portland, 220 NW 2nd Ave, 1st Floor Conference Room
Thursday, May 28, 11:00 am – 12:00 pm**

MEETING PURPOSE

The purpose of the meeting is to:

- Confirm grant program strategy
- Next steps

MEETING MATERIALS

- Meeting slides

INPUT SOUGHT

- Input regarding grant program strategy

DECISIONS or RECOMMENDATIONS TO BE VOTED ON

- Direction for program strategy

UPCOMING MILESTONES

- Follow up virtual meeting to finalize grant program priorities and evaluation criteria
- Next Working Group Meeting: late August/early September 2026

Meeting Summary

(See also meeting presentation)

Welcome, Introductions

- Sarah King (Prosper Portland) welcomed people to the meeting and reviewed the agenda.

Public Comment

- None

Process Refresh

- Sarah King reviewed the schedule for quarterly Working Group meetings and topics through 2026.
- Elizabeth Nye asked if the grant is dependent on City Council budget approval.
 - Sarah Harpole (Prosper Portland) replied that the grant funds are not, but the overall Prosper Portland budget will not be final until there is final approval from City Council.

- Matthew Claudel asked how this schedule aligns with the governance structure discussed with the Working Group.
 - Sarah Harpole responded that the official governance structure is tied to the Action Plan and will be on hold until there are enough resources to resume Action Planning so in the meantime this group will continue to convene on a quarterly basis.
- Sarah King shared an update on budget approval for FY 26-27.
- Sarah King shared a recap of where the investment priorities left off in the last meeting to set the context for the discussion topics.
- Cody McNeal asked if there is a process for the district to become aware of the grant dollars becoming available.
 - Sarah King responded that it's part of the discussion today to consider timing for resources and when the grant is finalized there will be a robust outreach effort.
- Jen Cole mentioned since the grants are small and there is a limited time window for funds, it will be important to define economic activity for the grant structure.

Grant Program Strategy Discussion

- Jennifer Mannhard (Prosper Portland) reviewed key considerations for the Working Group to discuss for the grant program implementation and mentioned that Sarah Harpole and Amanda Park (Prosper Portland) are present as subject matter experts on existing Prosper Portland grant programs.
- Jennifer Mannhard prompted the Working Group to consider eligible investments to include under public realm activations.
 - Jen Cole expressed concern around temporary assets like street furniture or improvements that don't have a maintenance plan.
 - Randall Friesen asked what that could look like.
 - Jen Cole responded things like temporary art or activations need protocols to ensure responsible parties for maintenance programs.
 - Sarah Harpole stated that the grant could require a maintenance plan for those types of activations.
 - Elizabeth Nye mentioned that Old Town has a set aside for maintenance as an example.
 - Sydney Mead mentioned the Portland Street Art Alliance includes maintenance plans for their murals.
 - Sydney Mead asked what the group felt about event and operational support – concern that a one-time event or festival wouldn't carry the economic benefit that could be achieved with this investment.

- Jennifer Polver agreed – does not provide long term return on investment.
- Jen Cole asked what if it is initiating a longer-term investment or an event that is part of a larger framework of activation/engagement?
- Matthew Claudel asked if existing things or new things are eligible?
- Sarah Harpole mentioned in the last meeting it was discussed that this was not intended to be a replacement fund for existing activations.
- Peter Andrews mentioned that it could be dangerous to create overly restrictive roles for the grant and to create room for more opportunities so that people aren't boxed in. If it is an existing event, they have demonstrated capacity. More flexibility is better.
- Kiana Ballo (Prosper Portland) mentioned there would be a competitive process for awarding grant funds.
- Jennifer Mannhard asked the Working Group to discuss how to evaluate leveraging additional funding for applications.
 - Sydney Mead stated that matching dollars could be tricky for people but there is a need to catalyze development. Avoid too high of a bar.
 - Jen Cole mentioned it is common to require a certain level of match and demonstrate commitment.
 - Elizabeth Nye added that there is a risk of sacrificing speed by putting extra requirements, it takes time to collect other funding. If community volunteer hours count, that could work. If there are requirements for in-kind or matching investments, it could sacrifice speed.
 - Matthew Claudel agreed flexibility is good. Comfortable saying there is an evaluation criterion to bring additional support for the committee to review what the applicants are bringing to the table.
 - Elizabeth Nye asked how to evaluate people's ability to execute.
 - Sarah Harpole mentioned examples through existing grant programs.
 - Peter Andrews stated to avoid being overly restrictive with geographic boundaries beyond the existing TIF district boundaries.
- Jennifer Mannhard asked the Working Group how to evaluate economic impact.
 - Jen Cole discussed the number of local contractors/subcontractors or local artists, that is also economic activity could be helpful framework.
 - Beth Burns asked if there is a priority for businesses/organizations that have demonstrated success.
 - Elizabeth Nye responded there should be priority.
 - Peter Andrews added to prioritize people with an existing standing in the district or partnership with existing organizations.
 - Randall Friesen agreed local partnership is a must.

- Elizabeth Nye discussed that outsiders coming in can actually hurt the local businesses.
- Matthew Claudel agreed this is particularly true with restaurants. Often grants include reporting requirements are arduous, could there be partners to support with evaluation and structure for reporting consistently?
- Sydney Mead mentioned that Amanda and the Office of Events and Film have a good model with event grants.
- Amanda Park (Prosper Portland) discussed that reporting can depend on the grant size, it can be challenging to capture the data. Need 500-1000 people at an event to capture PlacerAI data. The Office of Events and Film support grantees in completing reporting because it can be challenging and provides tools like a QR code survey for eventgoers to complete.
- Jen Cole agreed it is important to offer assistance in the grant application.
- Amanda Park responded that it is one of the things the Office of Events and Film can help with.
- Sydney Mead asked if that should be a question. How will your application generate foot traffic and support adjacent retail?
- Sarah Harpole discussed both need the questions in the application and need to be transparent about how applications are evaluated. Need to be explicit about preferences without excluding during the selection process.
- Sydney Mead asked how jobs work into this consideration? Number of jobs created.
- Sarah Harpole replied it depends on the nature of the grant size
- Jen Cole added number of vendors paid, or subcontractors engaged could be helpful to know, particularly local vendors.
- Amanda Park clarified between local within Portland or local within the district.
- General Agreement from the group to focus within the district. Could be layers for Portland local and district local.
- Amanda Park mentioned it could prioritize retailer engagement in application.
- Matthew Claudel asked if there could be an in-kind collaboration with Tri-Met to get free transit for events.
- Sarah King responded that it could be part of a larger conversation.
- Jennifer Mannhard moved the Working Group to discuss the maximum grant amount and number of grants available.
 - Sydney Mead proposed up to \$150,000 for a grant.

- Jen Cole replied that is a lot of money for a small number of folks to pull off in a short amount of time. The amount of money could limit small organizations from engaging, and the smaller amount makes it more competitive. Depends on the intent of the grant. For a small org, \$50,000 is a lot.
- Sydney Mead discussed if the amount is too small it may not have the same level of benefit. It is only a one-year grant.
- Elizabeth Nye mentioned it could be a larger grant if it is a district wide activation versus a single geographic location would need to be smaller.
- Sarah Harpole discussed stating a minimum could communicate that smaller amounts are available as well and add language for speak to the scale.
- Jen Cole stated it is about whether people have capacity to execute on a larger amount.
- Sydney Mead asked what administration is necessary, personally doesn't feel like reporting has been overly burdensome in the past.
- Peter Andrew expressed worry about limiting the number that could limit the ability to have a big impact and opportunity to evaluate the proposals. Need creativity to drive impact. Comfortable with \$10-250K per grant, job of the review panel to decide the best proposals.
- Jen Cole discussed if the range is large, there needs to be a different evaluation criterion for different funding amounts.
- Sarah Harpole proposed to require match at a certain scale of grant.
- Elizabeth Nye asked to be clear about the total amount of funding available and looking to put a portfolio together as a grant program. Encourage applicants to be realistic and funding requests to maximize the impact.
- Matthew Claudel agreed being clear with expectations is helpful and can help better compare applications. Like having some grants at different levels.
- Elizabeth Nye discussed avoiding too many limitations and seeing what comes in.
- Sydney Mead mentioned adding the whole dollar amount is awarded through the grant program and not rolled over into a different program as long as there are applications.
- Jen Cole stated some entry level amount for people who may be newer is helpful to generate enthusiasm.
- Sydney Mead agreed but things are so expensive now, worried that there is a limit to the impact for below \$20k with what costs are at these days.

- Vanessa Sturgeon asked what a typical size for Downtown Clean and Safe grants are.
- Sydney Mead responded 20-25K per grant with conditions for lease length and did have a significant impact with leasing spaces in Downtown.
- Matthew Claudel asked how much Coraline program costs.
- Sydney Mead responded that operational costs are around \$325K, that is the size of project that would be great for these dollars.
- Jennifer Mannhard moved the conversation back to events versus physical improvements for Working Group consideration.
 - Sydney mentioned being geared more toward projects like PDX pop-up shop - bringing in small businesses during the holidays can help create launch pad for small businesses to move into other spaces. Or around tenant improvement grants can have a big economic benefit for businesses.
 - Jen Cole replied that this grant wouldn't necessarily be for tenant improvements for one business. This needs to be a placemaking program, free and public. Broad access for participation is important. Ok if there is a paid component but needs to have accessible engagement.
 - Matthew Claudel discussed that there are plenty of examples of publicly accessible private spaces and that should be eligible. Going back to the idea of wrap around support for the grant, navigation support or insurance could be challenging for a small operator. The City has mechanisms for this but people could use support to help things go smoothly.
 - Amanda Park replied that Uniquely Portland grant requires insurance but the Office of Events and Film provides a lot of support even for small grants. It is a lot of work, but for the events many people want to do, they don't need a lot of grant funding.
 - Elizabeth Nye mentioned the example of the Cherry Blossom Festival, how to create the linkage from Cherry Blossoms on the waterfront to businesses in the district? What is the event or activation to create the linkage?
 - Jen Cole proposed criteria to include amplifying foot traffic.
 - Amanda Park discussed leveraging consideration for foot traffic, way finding.
 - Cody McNeal stated the need to demonstrate impact is the most important thing.
 - Jen Cole discussed the need for technical assistance for permitting
 - Matthew Claudel agreed.

Next Steps

- Jennifer Mannhard stated that staff will incorporate feedback into a proposal for the working group to review and provide feedback on.
- Sarah Harpole added that there will be a draft recommendation for review followed by an optional virtual meeting or feedback via email. Additional conversation would be helpful for final approval.

Attendance

Westside Working Group	Present
Sydney Mead, Downtown Clean & Safe	X
Vanessa Sturgeon, TMT Development / PMC	X
Diana Stuart, DNA	
Matthew Claudel, OTCA	X
Peter Andrews, Melvin Mark	X
Randall Friesen, Columbia Pacific Building and Construction Trades Council	X
Elizabeth Nye, Lan Su	X
Cody McNeal, Unico	X
Giovanni Bautista, resident / Metro housing policy analyst	X
Beth Burns, pear	X
Jessica Elkan, James Beard	
Angel Medina, Republica / Todos Media	
Jennifer Cole, PNCA	X
Alisha Sullivan, Winter Lights Festival	
Jennifer Polver, Pioneer Courthouse Square	X
Alan Jones, Jones Architecture	
Guests & Staff	
Brian Moore	X
Sarah King	X
Jennifer Mannhard	X
Kiana Ballo	X
Amanda Park	X

Jessica Conner	
Josh Roper	
Gwen Thompson	
Wendy Smith	
Mariam R	
Thuan Duong	
Sarah Harpole	X