



AGENDA REPORT

Economic Development

DATE:	June 17, 2025
TO:	Mayor Martinez and Members of the City Council
FROM:	Nannette Beacham, Director of Economic Development Samantha Carr, Environmental Manager Yahna Williamson, Management Analyst
Subject:	Update and Approve the Richmond Green-Blue New Deal (GBND) Top-Five Priority Projects over the Next 5 Years.
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	There is no fiscal impact to receiving the update.
PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:	October 1, 2024
STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE:	Provide an update to City Council on the work completed to prioritize the top five projects in the Richmond Green-Blue New Deal (GBND) Opportunities Report. These will be the first set of projects for City staff to focus on implementing over the next five years. Once the top five priority projects are approved, a scope of work will be co-developed for each project. The goal is to initiate a phased implementation process with clear, actionable steps aligned with existing efforts and available capacity over the next five years.
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	RECEIVE a written update on the Richmond Green-Blue New Deal project prioritization process and APPROVE top five priority projects - Economic Development Department (Yahna Williamson 510-620-6574/Samantha Carr 510-620-5407/ Nannette Beacham 510-620-1306).

BACKGROUND

On October 1, 2024, City staff presented the Richmond Green-Blue New Deal (RGBND) Opportunities Report and its appendices to the City Council for initial review. In response to City Council and community feedback, City staff initiated an internal evaluation process to refine the implementation strategy and narrow the scope of projects to be prioritized over the next five years.

As part of this process, City staff:

- Conducted additional research and reviewed all 24 projects identified in the Opportunities Report
- Surveyed internal departments, the Economic Development Commission (EDC), and the Workforce Development Board (WDB).
- Factored in staff feedback, combined Port Upgrades, and Offshore Wind Manufacturing
- Factored in staff feedback, combined Building Electrification Retrofits, and Green Accessory Dwellings

Consequently, City staff identified a list of five top-ranked projects based on survey results and departmental feedback. Notably, there was a six-way tie for the 5th, 6th, and 7th ranked positions. To help refine the prioritization, input from both the survey given to Economic Development Commission (EDC) and Workforce Development Board (WDB) as well as feedback from City staff was considered. The survey results strongly supported Green Accessory Dwellings and Offshore Wind Manufacturing, reflecting an interest in innovative, future-oriented job creation. Meanwhile, City staff prioritized the Transition to Zero Emission Vehicles, highlighting its alignment with existing planning and overall feasibility particularly with workforce development. This collective input helped inform the shortlist of projects recommended for further scoping:

1. Port Upgrades (80%) & Offshore Wind Manufacturing (40%)
2. Building Electrification Retrofits (50%) & Green Accessory Dwellings (40%)
3. Brownfield Research and Innovation (50%)
4. Destination Downtown (50%)
5. Transition to Zero Emission Vehicles (40%)

To manage workload and ensure steady progress, staff recommend focusing on no more than five priority projects initially. Several of the top-ranked projects are already being piloted or led by other City departments and community partners, enabling staff to concentrate on coordination and support rather than launching entirely new initiatives.

While the remaining projects were not selected as immediate priorities for the City over the next five years, many outlined in the Opportunities Report are already in progress or in early development stages through the efforts of other government agencies, organizations, and City divisions (Attachment 1).

NEXT STEPS

Once the top-five priority projects are approved, City staff will co-develop with the community detailed scope of works for each project to guide the next phase of RGBND implementation, using the U.S. Economic Development Administration's Evaluation Toolkit as a first step (Attachment 2). The intended goals of the scope of works will be to confront climate change while advancing economic equity and environmental justice through targeted investment in clean energy, infrastructure upgrades, and workforce development. By uniting climate action with workforce inclusion, strategies and actions included in the scope of work hope to deliver a triple bottom line: (1) environmental sustainability, (2) economic justice, and (3) workforce inclusion. Central to this process will be to identify workforce pathways for local workers, especially youth and underserved residents, within new green and blue industries through and incorporate strategic training pipelines, pre-apprenticeships, and certifications.

Additionally, the scope of work will incorporate coordination rather than duplication of efforts, emphasize collaboration across departments and community organizations, and account for the City's limited staffing and fiscal resources (Attachment 3). City staff will continue to provide regular updates and collaborate with the EDC and WDB.

Next steps will include and occur across the following phases:

Phase 1 Assessment:

- Confirm selected projects are viable and aligned with community and City priorities
- Incorporate economic development indicators from the U.S. Economic Development Administration's Evaluation Toolkit to assess strategic fit, job creation potential, and sustainability (Attachment 2)
- Assess funding needs, timelines, and preliminary implementation steps

Phase 2 Community Outreach:

- Engage with stakeholders including EDC, WDB, Downtown Task Force, and port users to align efforts and share updates
- Provide community members with opportunities to give input and ensure Just Transition principles are centered

Phase 3 Strategic Planning:

- Develop implementation pathways for each project that include workforce development alignment, economic development impact, and job quality metrics
- Coordinate with regional partners (e.g., Green Empowerment Zone) to identify synergies

Phase 4 Implementation Readiness:

- Co-develop a refined scope of work for each selected project, incorporating community input and interdepartmental review.
- Define responsible departments, required partnerships, and resource needs.
- Prepare briefing materials and progress tracking tools to guide ongoing interdepartmental coordination and reporting.

City staff will return to City Council during Phase 4 with draft scope of works and resource needs for review. Please see Attachment 4 for a summary of these steps as well.

SYNERGISTIC POLICIES:

The GBND initiative is rooted in Resolution 88-21 and builds upon Richmond's Climate Action Plan, Economic Development Action Plan, Health in All Policies Strategy, and Richmond Workforce Development Local Plan. The overarching goals include advancing a Just Transition and creating at least 1,000 new green-blue jobs to support a just, equitable, resilient, and sustainable future. Additionally, this is included in the City Council Goals and Priorities 6.1.b.

DOCUMENTS ATTACHED:

Attachment 1 – Green-Blue New Deal Opportunities Report

Attachment 2 – Economic Evaluation Toolkit

Attachment 3 – Updated Project Status and Accomplishments

Attachment 4 – Presentation GBND Update - Project Prioritization