

Provide an Update on the Green-Blue New Deal (GBND) Priority Projects for Implementation over the next 5-years.

Richmond City Council Meeting
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Nannette Beacham, Economic Development Director
Samantha Carr, Environmental Manager
Yahna Williamson, Management Analyst

Recommended Action

RECEIVE a written update on the Richmond Green-Blue New Deal project prioritization process and final top five projects.

Background

On [July 6, 2021](#), the Richmond City Council adopted [Resolution 88-21](#) to support the process of developing a Richmond Green-Blue New Deal and Just Transition to 21st Century jobs.

On [October 1, 2024](#), staff presented the Richmond Green-Blue New Deal (RGBND) Opportunities Report and its appendices to the City Council for initial review. In response to 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.

GBND Update Overview

What we've done
so far:

1. Conducted additional research into the projects outlined in the Report.
2. Surveyed city staff, the Economic Development Commission, and the Workforce Development Board to identify priority projects.
3. Determined the top seven projects that received the most votes on what to prioritize based on the feedback received.
4. Reached out to department heads to get their feedback on the seven priority projects.

Additional Considerations Received from Department Heads:

- Gap in the workforce development section
 - Emphasize creating meaningful employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for local residents
- Explore adding project that's more focused on the "Blue" aspect of the Green-Blue New Deal
- Explain that food waste and tree planting are already underway under energy-related efforts, which is why they weren't prioritized here
 - Reiterate that focus is more on areas not currently receiving attention to ensure balance across initiatives
- Clarify the scope-of-work for each project
 - Using Economic Development Evaluation Toolkit (next slide) to help refine scope-of-work for projects

Top Five Projects Identified Based on Survey Responses:

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%)**

Next Steps for Each Project:

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, workforce pathways, 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.

Economic Development Evaluation Tool

Section 1: Relevance and Strategic Fit

- A) Alignment with local and regional economic development strategies.
- B) Consistency with community needs and priorities.
- C) Alignment with Just Transition.

Section 2: Economic Impact

- A) Potential for job creation and retention.
- B) Expected increase in private investment.
- C) Enhancement of local tax base.

Section 3: Feasibility and Sustainability

- A) Technical and financial viability of the project.
- B) Capacity of the implementing organization.
- C) Long-term sustainability and Just Transition alignment

Section 4: Performance Measures

- A) Clear, measurable objectives and outcomes.
- B) Defined metrics for monitoring progress.
- C) Mechanisms for data collection and reporting.

Section 5: Risk Assessment

- A) Identification of potential risks and challenges.
- B) Strategies for risk mitigation.

[U.S. Economic Development Administration](#)

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