

City of Bend
City of Bend Accessibility Advisory Committee
July 27, 2023
Meeting Minutes

Chair John Heylin conducted and called the City of Bend Accessibility Advisory Committee (COBAAC), on July 27, 2023, hybrid meeting to order at 12:02 PM, at City Hall in Council Chambers, 710 NW Wall Street, 97703. Watch the COBAAC [July 27, 2023, YouTube Livestream](#).

1. Roll Call:

Members Present Virtually (5)

- Aaron Rivers (He, Him)
- Kori Sparks (He, Him)
- Liz Diether-Martin (She, Her)
- Liz Woodfin (She, Her)
- Whitney Bennett (She, Her)

Members Present In-Person (5)

- John Heylin (He, Him) Chair
- Carl Burnett (He, Him) Vice-Chair
- Derek Hofbauer (He, Him)
- Nicholas Radon (He, Him)
- Stephanie Bennett (She, Her)

Members Absence Excused (1):

Amanda Hamer (She, Her)

City Staff Attended:

- Cassandra Kehoe (She, Her), Accessibility and Equity Manager & COBAAC Staff Liaison, DEIA
- Andrés Portela (He, Him), Equity and Inclusion Director, DEIA
- Barb Campbell (She, Her, Hers), Councilmember and COBAAC Council Liaison
- Stephanie Betteridge (She, Her), Chief Innovation Officer & Assistant City Manager
- Tobias Marx, Parking Services Division Manager
- Mellissa Kamanya (She, Her), Affordable Housing Coordinator
- Lisa Larsen (She, Her) Administrative Support Specialist, Accessibility and Equity

2. Land Acknowledgement:

COBAAC Chair Heylin (he, Him) Volunteered to read the Land Acknowledgement

City of Bend Land Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge that the beautiful land, known as Bend, Oregon north of the Columbia River is the original homeland of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. The Confederated Tribes ceded this land in the Treaty of 1855 while retaining regular and customary hunting, fishing, and gathering rights. The Wana Łama (**Warm Springs**), Wasq'ú (Wasco), and Northern Paiute people inhabited this area in certain seasonal times that clearly established their presence. It is also important to note that the Klamath Trail ran north through this region to the great Celilo Falls trading grounds. This trade route expanded the impact of commerce between Tribal nations. We acknowledge and thank the original stewards of this land. It is our hope that guests continue to honor and care for this land.

3. Approval of June 22, 2023, Draft Minutes: Timestamp 4:39

Motion: Vice Chair Burnett motioned to approve the COBAAC June 22, 2023, Draft Minutes as read, with no corrections. Chair Heylin seconded the motion. The motion approved to move the June 22, 2023, draft minutes to final, and unanimously passed by all voting members who attended this meeting, in person (5) and virtually (5).

4. Public Comment: Emily Hammond left no comment and attended virtually.

5. COBAAC Member Update: Timestamp 6:01

Voting COBAAC Member Kelly Crowley handed in her resignation on July 25, 2023. Alternate Member Woodfin and moving forward recognized as a voting COBAAC member. This change meets the COBAAC Charter, 'Committee Composition: The membership will consist of eleven voting members.

6. Brooks Alley | How to Incorporate Accessibility into Development | Q&A: Timestamp 6:46

Tobias Marx, Parking Services Division Manager

Division Manager Marx discussed Brooks Alley. At a Stewardship Subcommittee meeting, there was discussion of a long, large project with the potential use of tourist funding to make improvements to areas downtown. At this stewardship subcommittee meeting a group of council members talked about a short-term version.

With this information, Division Manager Marx and the Economics Manager, Ben Hemson met with a group of local stakeholders and Downtown Business owners. Marx and Hemson asked these two groups to think about how they could make Brooks Alley safer until they start a larger project.

They held three community meetings about how to move forward and found out they did not agree with the suggestion of temporarily closing Brooks Alley but making it pedestrian friendly. During the three community meetings, they produced a workable solution to present to the Stewardship Committee and City Council.

Division Manger Marx shared what the Brooks Alley project might look like during construction; hoping to start within the next couple of months.

COBAAC members asked questions and discussed various aspects of the Brooks Alley project, accessibility, pedestrians, parking, and the problems with adding a bike lane.

7. Welcome: Andrés Portela III, He, Him, Equity, and Inclusion Director Timestamp 37:51

Equity and Inclusion Director Portela's career started with Civil Rights and Equity work in Fair Housing.

Director Portela is grateful to be here, working for the City of Bend, and excited to work with COBAAC in a variety of ways with their expertise. He has a passion for the work that COBAAC does and looks forward to the help COBAAC can add to this department.

8. Accessibility and Housing: **Timestamp 38:59**

Mellissa Kamanya (She, Her), Affordable Housing Coordinator

Affordable Housing Coordinator Kamanya mentioned COBAAC Vice Chair Burnett attended the last Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) meeting and gave an excellent public comment which started conversation about the scoring criteria for city funded projects.

Coordinator Kamanya brought up an observation in the scoring criteria, there are no bonus points or scoring for projects that build more than a minimum number of accessible units. This is something that AHAC will discuss at its August 9th meeting. It will need to go through the city's legal department because of Fair Housing guidelines and rules to assure compliancy.

Coordinator Kamanya stated that she is having important conversations with different agencies, including state level agencies. Most are looking and wondering how they can incentivize building more than the number of required units.

Coordinator Kamanya talked about a Fair Housing Council of Oregon training she attended. She said one of the slides read; in Oregon, we need six thousand wheelchair accessible units constructed every year.

Coordinator Kamanya shared a QR code for an Accessible and Housing Survey, asking COBAAC members to help her:

- Gathering information to find out the wants and needs for our Bend community members living with disabilities.
- Take this survey based on your current needs, or you can think about what you might need as you age.
- Using this information to direct City staff to Fair Housing work and to identify community needs.
- Please take a moment to complete the survey.
 - Your response is completely anonymous.
 - Note that this survey is only open through August 31st. Thank you for your input!

Coordinator Kamanya answered questions from COBAAC members and will email Accessibility Manager Kehoe this information.

9. COBAAC 2022-2023 Strategic Plan: **Timestamp 49:27**

City of Bend Accessibility Advisory Committee Members

Subcommittees meeting updates:

- **Improving Transportation and Infrastructure Group:**
Members: Hofbauer, Bennett, Vice Chair Burnett, Radon, Woodfin

Vice Chair Burnett read notes of suggested initiatives from their subcommittee meeting:

- 1) By the end of 2024, there is one additional option for accessible airport transportation in Central Oregon. We will achieve this by advocating for the creation and funding of an accessible, on-demand airport transportation option, such as:

- Uber/Lyft (PDX WAV-type service)
 - Taxi companies (ensuring ADA compliance and incentivizing purchase of vehicles)
 - Creating dialogue between the cities of Bend & Redmond + RDM airport
 - A potential partnership with CET (Cascades East Transit).
- II) Within the next 6 months, we will organize a half-day, on-street walking event to highlight two areas where accessibility gaps exist in public sidewalks and rights of way. We will focus on high-pedestrian-traffic areas. At least one of these should be a place where a state highway (U.S. 20) and city streets intersect. We will invite people from all relevant local government entities and nonprofit organizations, such as the City of Bend, ODOT (Oregon Department of Transportation), CET, COCA (Central Oregon Coalition for Access), Commute Options, and Deschutes County.
- **Creating an Accessible Community Group:**
Members: Diether-Martin, Vice Chair Barnett, Crowley, Chair Heylin, Rivers

Chair Heylin read notes of suggested initiatives from their subcommittee meeting:

- I) Initiative: Create a single webpage for disability related services:
- Specific: All disability related services to fit on a single page pdf that also added to the website. Include links to non-city resources.
 - Measurable: website page that can fit on a single pdf.
 - Attainable: Need to track down answers to FAQ
 - Relevant: to daily life for locals and visitors
 - Time-based: draft ready by Sept meeting
- II) Initiative: Chamber of Commerce partnership:
- Specific: Start a relationship with the Chamber to start working on education for businesses regarding disability rules and regulations.
 - Measurable: A working relationship with the Chamber.
 - Attainable: Send an email to the Chamber
 - Relevant: To business owners so they can be compliant with rules.
 - Time-based: Ask the Chamber to come to a COBAAC meeting, speak, and get a dialogue going.
- III) Initiative: Yearly COBAAC BBQ:
- Specific: A BBQ at Miller's Landing sponsored by COBAAC to raise awareness of COBAAC.
 - Measurable: Attendance counts.
 - Attainable: Get sponsorship from the city for food, drinks, trailer?
 - Relevant: A time to socialize with the community but also outreach.
 - Time-based: Early June BBQ.

- **Creating a Culture of Accessibility with the City of Bend Organization:**

Members: Utzman, Hamer, Woodfin.

Member Utzman reported that this group was unable to meet. Member Utzman did mention initiatives she could talk to her group when they meet. Manager Kehoe reminded the group that Hamer and Utzman will be joining the HREC Subcommittee group of Reporting and Resources for Discrimination.

10. COBAAC Business // COBAAC Roundtable: **Timestamp 1:00:41**

- **Meetings attended, shared information, and/or firsthand experiences impacted by accessibility.**

The following COBAAC members attended the roundabout event, where people were blind folded and guided across the street as a pedestrian, at different roundabout locations:

- **Member Hofbauer:** This was a wonderful opportunity, we should find a way to make the event shorter, not the entire day; they may get more participation. Focusing on inspired goals and highlighting problem areas. And invite elected officials, engineers, community members, and other advocates. The media is helpful, there was good coverage of the event, and it helps raise awareness.
- **Member Diether-Martin:** This event made member Diether-Martin realize how different every single roundabout design shape is different in size, the crosswalk buttons placement is different for each location, and button noises are different. It was helpful to hear the differences between each crossing when trying to cross the street while wearing the blindfold. If you are blind and you have made three turns, because of the shape of the sidewalk/ pedestrian access, you get very disoriented because the traffic does not sound the same. There should be more of these kinds of events, great for networking, experiencing them firsthand and having consistency in our approach.
- **Member Bennett:** Seconding what members Hofbauer and Diether-Martin said, realizing that consistency was not present and would be helpful.

Member Bennett contacted one of the event organizers, asking for a summary and where the next steps for that group. And there are conversations from the different entities and participants for the next event and with the suggested date in May. It would be better for COBAAC to brainstorm, sooner than later, and get COBAAC's request in, focusing on wheelchair access and connected sidewalks.

- **Councilmember and COBAAC Liaison Campbell:** She agrees there is a need for consistency, especially with what the message conveys after the crosswalk warning starts. COBAAC Liaison Campbell crossed Butler Market Road with a blindfold and pressed the button for the pedestrian activated light. After you press the button, a man's deep voice recording activates, telling you, 'Danger, traffic may not stop, caution, danger' is all you hear. From that point on, you have no idea if the lights are still flashing or if you have more time to get across the street.

COBAAC Council Liaison Campbell talked about her conversation with ODOT, who controls all the traffic signals at intersections for the entire state, but the city controls the pedestrian crossing signals.

COBAAC Council Liaison Campbell suggested that COBAAC advocate for a process to inventory the city's signals, what the street crossing message says and find out if there are any ADA suggested requirements for what crosswalk messages say.

- **COBAAC Members Shared Information:**

Member Hofbauer: Cascades East Transit (CET) launched the Mt Bachelor summer shuttle, called **Transit to Trails - Cascades East Transit**. It stops at the welcome station, is ADA accessible, they have eight bikes on the racks, wheelchair ramp and room for accessible trikes.

CET is also working on a new Dial-A-Ride accessible form. They are having trouble creating an accessible form that is ADA compliant after converted to pdf.

- **Future agenda setting:**

- **Member Radon:** would like an update on the Hawthorne Bridge, inviting the design team and the individuals responsible, since it is getting more traction and funding.

11. Accessibility and Equity Manager Update: Timestamp 1:18:10

Cassandra Kehoe (She, Her), Accessibility and Equity Manager & COBAAC Staff Liaison

- **ADA turns 33:**

Accessibility and Equity Manager Kehoe stated it is our civil rights legislation that necessitates equal treatment of those individuals with disabilities.

Manager Kehoe credited community member Nancy Stevens, who is blind, and expressed her appreciation for her work and her advocacy for all things to do with accessibility.

Something Manager Kehoe took away from the Roundabout Event was a statement Nancy Stevens made during this activity: That she essentially and effectively avoids the entirety of the west side of Bend because there are so many roundabouts.

Manager Kehoe said we should consider what implications that means for us when we are talking about equal opportunity and full access for all its citizens.

- **HREC and COBAAC Received Funding to Co-Host a Welcoming Week Event in September:**

COBAAC volunteers needed for the party planning committee for the Welcoming Week Event. Details to follow.

- **COBAAC Member Bios Needed to Add to the COBAAC Website:**

We want to display your diverse talent, knowledge, background, and what got you into this work to engage with the community.

- **August Mixer – input/feedback requested from members:**

Members, email your ideas to Manager Kehoe. A COBAAC member suggested taking a picnic and ride the bus to Mt Bachelor.

- **Seeking 1 COBAAC members to join the Transportation Fee Roundtable listening sessions in August, September, and October**

This is an opportunity to lend an accessibility and equity lens to the work you are doing in terms of listening to the transportation fee they may put in place. Please email Manager Kehoe so she can connect you with the people hosting these listening sessions.

- **Manager Kehoe shared the Disability Visibility Project + Story Corps, in the spirit of the 33rd anniversary of the ADA:**

Starting with a book, came out about three years ago, by Alice Wong called Disability Visibility: First-Person Stories from the Twenty-first Century. It is a collection of essays from disabled authors of various backgrounds and the diversity they bring.

The Disability Visibility Project is partnering with Story Corps for the 33rd anniversary of the ADA. There are different ways to record remotely and share your personal story of disability or the impact that it's had on your life.

Disability Visibility Project – "Creating, sharing, and amplifying disability media and culture"

- **Section 504 at 50 – Partners – Rethink the Commitment/ Capacity to this Project:**

For the sake of time, Manager Kehoe will send COBAAC members an email about the information, questions, and volunteers needed to her updates.

12. COBAAC Councilmember Liaison Update: Timestamp 1:24:17

Barb Campbell (She, Her, Hers), Councilmember and COBAAC Council Liaison

COBAAC Council Liaison Campbell talked about the importance of Drake Park footbridge and the funding coming from the transient room tax linking to tourism. And she answered a question about the new update/ process to submit a Barrier Removal Request.

13. The August 24, 2023, City of Bend Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting CANCELED for a summer break, and will reconvene, Thursday, September 28, 2023, from 1:00 to 2:30 PM.

14. Adjourn:

With no further business, Chair Heylin Adjourned the City of Bend Accessibility Advisory Committee (COBAAC), July 27, 2023, hybrid meeting at 1:31 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Larsen
Administrative Supports Specialist



Accommodation Information for People with Disabilities

To obtain this information in an alternate format such as Braille, large print, electronic formats, etc., Please contact the Accessibility and Equity Department at accessibility@bendoregon.gov 541-693-2198. Relay Users Dial 7-1-1.