

Meeting Minutes

City of Bend Accessibility Advisory Committee

September 25, 2025, from 1:00 to 2:30 PM

City Council Chambers, 710 NW Wall, and Zoom

Chair Woodfin called the **City of Bend Accessibility Advisory Committee** (COBAAC) hybrid regular meeting to order at 1:01 PM. virtually through Zoom and in person in Council Chambers. Please **watch the livestream recording**.

1. Roll Call and Welcome: Committee Members.

Chambers 3 Voting (+1)	Zoom 4	Absent 3 Voting (+2)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Liz Woodfin, Chair• Amanda Hamer• Stephanie Utzman• Bob Townsend (ex officio status pending)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aaron Rivers• Andrew Caruana• Carl Burnett• Liz Diether-Martin	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ian Isaacson• John Heylin• Whitney Bennett• Alysa MacRae (alternate)• Mariah Tennison (alternate)

City Staff:

- Cassandra Kehoe, She/Her/Ella, Accessibility & Equity Manager / COBAAC Staff Liaison. (Zoom)
- Stephanie Betteridge, She/Her, Bend Assistant City Manager. (Chambers)
- Ariel Méndez, He/Him, City Councilor & COBAAC Liaison (Chambers)
- Ian Leitheiser, He/Him, City Attorney (Chambers)
- Mellissa Kamanya, Affordable Housing Coordinator. (Chambers)
- Lindsay Wengloski, She/They, Equity Management Analyst. (Zoom)
- Lisa Larsen, She/Her, Administrative Support Specialist. (Chambers)

Public in Attendance:

- Olivia Martens

2. City of Bend Land Acknowledgement: **Timestamp 3:35**

Member Utzman volunteered to read the City of Bend Land Acknowledgement in English.

3. Minutes: Approval of August 28, 225 Meeting Minutes will be Approved at the October Meeting

4. Public Comment: Olivia Martens was a visitor, left no comment. **Timestamp 5:16**

5. City Council Liaison Update, Council Ariel Méndez. **Timestamp 5:55**

Councilor Méndez is providing his update early on the agenda, as noted in agenda item 12 with the same timestamp.

- Resignation of the city's Equity Department Manager. The city continues to be committed to equity.

The city has joined two lawsuits to challenge some of the legal federal actions that the current administration has taken issue with, immigration, DEI, gender ideology, and sanctuary jurisdictions.

Conversations about the 2025-2027 Council goals: They decided the commitment to equity and the principles they thought were right for the community, and explicit in those council goals. Including conversations about equity in water utility rate methodology, wildfire planning & evacuation, transit fare increases.

- Councilor Méndez had lunch conversation with the members of committees where he is the liaison. He will be hosting another lunch meet up and will send out an email.

6. City Sponsorship Program, Stephanie Betteridge, She/Her, Assistant City Manager, Chief Innovation Officer. Timestamp 13:02

Slides:

- **Sponsorship & Grant Program:** The City of Bend offers funding to support community programs, services, and events that promote community outreach and education regarding city initiative and council goals.
- **Events, Programs and Projects:** Community events, Holiday events, City programs and projects promoting outreach & education about City initiatives and council goals, and eligibility criteria.
- **2024-2025 Highlights of Contribution Amounts:**
 - Community Leadership and Work Enforce Development: Contribution - \$35,000.
 - Cultural and Diversity Celebrations: Contribution - \$58,200.
 - Environmental Initiatives: Contributed - 22,500.
 - Social Services and Support: Contributed - \$6,750.
 - General Community Engagement and Events: Contributed - \$38,268.
 - Total Amount of 2024-2025 Highlighted Contribution - \$160,718.
- **We need your help to share this information:**
 - **Upcoming application deadline September 30th:**
 - For events and programs held in January - May
 - Applicants notified in mid-October, and award payments completed by November.
 - **Additional Information:**
 - **Community Sponsorship & Grant Program | City of Bend**
 - Questions?
 - **sponsorship@bendoregon.gov**

7. Impact on Regional Accessibility Funding, General Conversation. **Timestamp 23:53**

Slides:

- **Federal Grants + Accessibility Funding:** The Local Impact, CODSN (Central Oregon Disability Support Network) email, Amanda Hamer.
- **CODSN: Central Oregon Disability Network:** In 2021, Central Oregon Disability Support Network applied for and was awarded a 5-year grant from the Federal Office of Special Education Programs to implement work as a Community Parent Resource Center (CPRC) serving 8 rural counties in Central and Eastern Oregon.

CODSN was notified on Friday, September 5th by the Department of Education that the CPRC grant will not be continued for its final year. The reason cited for non-continuation is that CODSN's 2021 application for funding contained information proposing project activities that conflict with the Department's policy of prioritizing, merit, fairness, excellence in education.

Member Hamer mentioned this was based on some Diversity Equity and Inclusion wording and their goals for this funding. CODSN also served Southern and Eastern Oregon that otherwise do have representation/ advocacy for the disability community.

- **Contact your Congress by phone or email** and share the impact this will have and of what CODSN means to our community:
 - Cliff Bentz - (202)-225-6730 or (541)-709-2040
 - Janelle Bynum - (202)-225-5711 or (503)-38 78651
 - Jeff Merkley - (202)-224-3753 or (541)-318-1298
 - Ron Wyden - (202)-224-5244 or (541)-330-9142

8. COBAAC Workplan Overview: **Timestamp 41:22**

Upcoming Events:

a. **Trauma Informed Lunch + Learn:** Fall/Winter 2025

- Collaborating with city of bend DIA advisory committee on lunch and learn, in addition to Evergreen training resources for city employees.

b. **Accessibility Community Mixer:** Spring 2026

c. **2026 COBAAC Work Planning Drafting Session:** October or November.

9. COBAAC Roundtable: **Timestamp 44:55**

Members shared: An informative book, The Molecule of More (can be applicable to caregivers who work with people with disabilities). | Sprouts Film Festival date is May 8, 2026. | **Diversability** has three programs. | Member Burnett mentioned, Heylin has announced he is running for County Commissioner.

10. Accessibility & Equity Manager Update: Cassandra Kehoe, She/Her/Ella. **Timestamp 49:56**

- a. October COBAAC Elections: Chair and Vice Chair
- b. Planning Accessibility Mixer – Seeking COBAAC Volunteers
- c. WCAG 2.1 AA Preview

11. Vehicles for Hire: Ian Leitheiser, He/Him, City Attorney. **Timestamp 59:26**

Slides:

- Taxi Services and the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Federal Law:
 - § 37.29: Private entities providing taxi services. Important to note Part (b). Providers of taxi service are not required to purchase or lease accessible automobiles. When a provider of a taxi service purchases or leases a vehicle other than an automobile, the vehicle is required to be accessible unless the provider demonstrates equivalency as provided in § 37.105. A provider of taxi service is not required to purchase vehicles other than automobiles in order to have a number of accessible vehicles in its fleet.
- City Code:
 - E. Taxi companies and TNC's must provide reasonable accommodations to passengers with disabilities, including passengers accompanied by a service animal, passengers with hearing and visual impairments, and passengers with mobility devices, and must comply with all applicable requirements of the Americans with Disability Act.
- **Discussion Timestamp 1:04:15**

12. Agenda Setting: COBAAC Members. **Timestamp 1:23:13**

- Stacy Witty, the director of Reach. Discuss the intersectionality needs for our community in the Juniper Ridge area.
- Write a letter to representatives, sharing the impact of what CODSN means to our community.
- Create a universal letter template for COBAAC.

Chair Woodfin asked Bob Townsend for a quick update on bus fares: The board has approved the fares, and the estimation is effective mid-January. Education on how fare will work will begin Mid-December to December.

13. The next COBAAC meeting will be held on October 23, 2025, from 1:00 to 2:30 PM.

14. Adjourn: With no further COBAAC business, Chair Woodfin adjourned the September 25, 2025, COBAAC meeting at 2:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Larsen, (she/her), Administrative Support Specialist, Accessibility



Language Assistance Services & Accommodation Information for People with Disabilities

You can obtain this information in alternate formats such as Braille, electronic format, etc. Free language assistance services are also available. Please contact the Accessibility & Equity Program at accessibility@bendoregon.gov or 541-693-2198. Relay Users Dial 7-1-1.



Servicios de asistencia lingüística e información sobre alojamiento para personas con discapacidad

Puede obtener esta información en formatos alternativos como Braille, formato electrónico, etc. También disponemos de servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Póngase en contacto con Gestor del proyecto o creador del documento en equity@bendoregon.gov. Los usuarios del servicio de retransmisión deben marcar el 7-1-1.