

Meeting Minutes

City of Bend Accessibility Advisory Committee

November 20, 2025, from 1:00 to 2:30 PM

Council Chambers, 710 NW Wall, and Zoom

COBAAC Chair Heylin call the November 20, 2025, **City of Bend Accessibility Advisory Committee** (COBAAC) meeting to order at 1:01 Please **watch livestream recording**.

1. Roll Call: Committee Members.

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| 1.1. John Heylin, Chair: Zoom | 1.8. Liz Woodfin: Absent |
| 1.2. Amanda Hamer, Vice Chair: Chambers | 1.9. Stephanie Utzman: Chambers |
| 1.3. Aaron Rivers: Zoom | 1.10. Whitney Bennett: Absent |
| 1.4. Andrew Caruana: Absent | 1.11. Mariah Tennison (alternate): Absent |
| 1.5. Carl Burnett: Zoom | 1.12. Alysa MacRae (alternate): Absent |
| 1.6. Ian Isaacson: Chambers | 1.13. Bob Townsend (<i>ex officio pending</i>): Zoom |
| 1.7. Liz Diether-Martin: Zoom | |

= 7 Voting members | 3 Absent Voting members | 2 Absent Non-Voting | 1 ex officio pending.

City Staff and Presenters:

- Cassandra Kehoe, She/Her/Ella, Accessibility & Equity Manager / COBAAC Staff Liaison. (Zoom)
- Ariel Méndez, He/Him, City Councilor & COBAAC Liaison (Chambers – left at 1:45 pm)
- Garrett Sabourin, Principal Engineer, (Zoom) (and project team)
- Derek Hofbauer, He/Him, Mobility Manager, attended as an attendee (Chambers)
- Mellissa Kamanya, She/Her/Hers, Affordable Housing Coordinator (Zoom)
- Lisa Larsen, She/Her, Administrative Support Specialist. (Chambers)

2. City of Bend Land Acknowledgement Statement: Read aloud by Chair Heylin. **Timestamp 3:27**

3. Minutes: Approval of October 23, 2025, Draft Minutes, John Heylin, Chair. **Timestamp 4:10**

October 23, 2025, draft minutes approved by all voting members attending this meeting, in chambers (3) and via Zoom (4), with no opposition, with the corrections emailed to members before today's meeting: Item 6, sixth paragraph, word updated from shred to shared. And item nine, adding the letter C to the end of the word COBAAC.

4. City Council Update: COBAAC Council Liaison, Ariel Méndez, He/Him. **Timestamp 5:18**

- We received an update on City Hall planning and have a lot of design considerations.
Discussion: We have outgrown the current building and first and foremost thinking of the

administration needs of the city and expanding in the core area. And the importance of accessibility in the current council chambers.

- Note - January 28, 2026: There will be discussions on standards and specifications for how we design roundabouts, including accessible aspects.
- Next year, two items related to sidewalk master plan and bicycle facility master plan. Councilor Méndez would like to take a different approach to maintenance, since we do rely on private owners to remove snow.
- Next year, Robert Townsend will be presenting to council on how to use the new funding legislature approved for transit. This is from the 2-year temporary increase in payroll taxes earmarked for transit.
- Councilor Méndez wants to continue to have lunch with committee members quarterly to gather input on what they want to gain by serving on their committees. He is also available for a cup of coffee or a chat by phone.

5. Public Comment: Timestamp 12:47

Nicholas Buesking, from Walker Macy, is working on a City of Bend project and will give input later in this meeting.

6. Hawthorne Ped/Bike Bridge: COBAAC Feedback. Timestamp 14:15

- Garrett Sabourin, Principal Engineer.
- Craig Totten, Consultant, Project Manager.
- Project Support Team: Mike Zillis, & Nicholas Buesking.

Hawthorne Overcrossing Project Update Slide Deck:

- 2022 Hawthorne Bridge Approach Options.
 - Concept 1: Straight Approach.
 - Concept 2: Switchback Ramps / Maintain 4.5% Slope.
 - Concept 3: Stair & Elevator Bridge Access / No Ramps.
- 2022 Public Survey – Feasibility Study.
 - 223 people responses.
 - 203 English speaking
 - 20 Spanish speaking
 - Surveyed concepts
 - What corridor should we work on first.
 - Hawthorne 42%
 - Concept 1: 100
 - Concept 2: 43
 - Concept 3: 8
- Hawthorne Bridge Overview.
- Hawthorne Bridge Structure.
- East Bridge Ramp – Option 1.
- East Bridge Ramp – Option 2.
- East Bridge Ramp – Option 3.
- West Bridge Ramp – Option 1.
- West Bridge Ramp – Option 2.

Please send any input to Principal Engineer, Garrett Sabourin: they would like to summarize input before they present this to council in January.

7. BPRD (Bend Parks and Rec Department) Letter Update: Timestamp 43:47

Chair, Heylin signed a letter as Chair of COBAAC, himself, not as the representative of COBAAC. This was outlined in the letter.

The letter outlined some of the issues that COBAAC had in asking to endorse the project so soon in the process. Given BPRD tradition of building accessible parks and the fact that this will open the entire stretch of the trail that is typically cut off from many users. COBAAC Chair endorsed this letter and an individual COBAAC member of the community.

Outgoing COBAAC Chair, Liz Woodfin, in her absence at today's meeting, emailed her positive input on this subject and was read aloud during the livestream.

8. 2026 COBAAC Workplan Workshop: COBAAC Members Timestamp 48:22

- **Timeline:**

- **October – December:** Draft 2026 Workplan
- **December 2025:** Submit Workplan for review by Eric King, City Manager by end of 2025 for feedback and approval
- **January 2026:** City Manager Approval/Edits

- **COBAAC 2026 Workplan:**

What projects or initiatives would COBAAC members like to see worked on, planned for and be a part of in 2026?

- **Do we want to keep the current format / groups?**
 - Community Engagement / COBAAC Representation
 - COBAAC Initiatives / Advocacy
 - Transportation and Infrastructure
- **What updates or changes can we make? What's working? Anything we want to stop?**
- **What do we want to achieve in 2026?**

- **COBAAC 2025 Work Plan Items Carried Into 2026**

- **Taxi Licensing Letter and Outreach -**
 - Opportunity for transportation roundtable led by COBAAC (subgroup?) in February 2026
 - Meeting with companies as a group, 1-1, review ADA requirements, look at grant funding opportunities, answer questions that owners may have
 - Review requirements ahead of renewal of licensing in January with 11 companies
- **Trauma-Informed Lunch + Learn: Winter 2026**
 - Collaborating with the City of Bend DEIA Advisory Committee on Lunch and Learn, in addition to evergreen training resources for City employees.

COBAAC's Collective Ideas for 2026:

- Create a process to help people support their voices to be heard. (Bring a community member that may have barriers to being involved in COBAAC's engagement efforts and city projects).
- Develop templates for RFP (Requests for Proposals & letters of support).
- COBAAC needs to be involved to add our accessible input from the beginning of projects. And set a goal for COBAAC to submit a letter of accessible suggestions.
- Add a portal to the COBAAC website for people to record public comments, upload/share a video comment and play those videos during the meeting.
- COBAAC involvement in the planning stages of a universal design for the new city hall. Not too early to start that discussion.
- How can we bring more attention to COBAAC.
- How can COBAAC get on the list of stakeholders at the beginning stages of project planning.

There was more discussion about changing the narrative to an accessible culture, inner city speed limits, accessible and inaccessible sidewalks and the importance of COBAAC involved in all construction projects.

COBAAC Staff Liaison / Accessibility Manager Kehoe: Suggested adding a Council Connector position. They have standing meetings with the who is dedicated to the committee. To meet robustly specifically around council initiatives and make them aware of future meetings and aware of potential accessibility considerations with a specific lens. This would need to be formalized within the COBAAC Charter.

9. COBAAC Roundtable: COBAAC Members. Timestamp 1:17

- Chair Heylin has started a group, High Desert Urbanism to talk about housing adjacent advocacy, public transit, bike lanes, pedestrian infrastructure, or anything important to housing. For more information email Hduoregon@gmail.com.
- Member Diether-Martin shared the passing of fierce accessibility advocate, Alice Wong.

10. Accessibility & Equity Manager Update: Cassandra Kehoe, She/Her/Ella. Timestamp 1:24:51

- Manager Kehoe will email the Hawthorne Ped/Bike Bridge Update asking for input to share with Garrett Sabourin, Principal Engineer
- Remember Alice Wong: Penned before she passed on November 14, 2025:
"Hi everyone, it looks like I ran out of time. I have so many dreams that I wanted to fulfill and plans to create new stories for you. There are a few in progress that might come to fruition in a few years if things work out. I did not ever imagine I would live to this age and end up a writer, editor, activist, and more."
"As a kid riddled with insecurity and internalized ableism, I could not see a path forward. It was thanks to friendships and some great teachers who believed in me that I was able to fight my way out of miserable situations into a place where I finally felt comfortable in my skin."
"We need more stories about us and our culture."
"Our wisdom is incisive and unflinching."
I'm honored to be your ancestor and believe disabled oracles like us will light the way to the future..."

11. Agenda Setting: COBAAC Members. **Timestamp 1:30:46**

No input from COBAAC members.

12. Due to the December holiday, the next COBAAC meeting will be on an alternate date, on Thursday, December 18, 2025, from 1:00 to 2:30 PM.

13. Adjourn: With no further business Chair Heylin adjourned the November 20, 2025, City of Bend Accessibility Advisory Committee at 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Larsen, She/Her, Administrative Support Specialist, Accessibility & Equity Program



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