



CITY OF BEND

City Manager's Report

Information and Updates for the Mayor and City Council

January 24, 2025

UPCOMING EVENTS AND MEETINGS

MEETING/EVENT	DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Council Goal Setting	February 3	8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.	OSU-Cascades
	February 4	11:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.	
Council Meeting	February 5	5 p.m. Work Session 7 p.m. Regular Meeting	Council Chambers / Virtual
Council Meeting	February 19	5 p.m. BURA Work Session 7 p.m. Regular Meeting	Council Chambers / Virtual

[VIEW THE FULL COUNCIL SCHEDULE](#)

PUBLIC AGENCY AND COMMUNITY PARTNER UPDATES

League of Oregon Cities Bulletin

Read the most recent LOC Bulletin [here](#). Of note:

- The 2025 Legislative session began this week as 2,284 bills were introduced with several hundred more expected in the coming weeks, including legislative concepts that the LOC will be advancing.
- Due to this week's Executive Orders rescinding previously approved EO's and broadly worded EO's (that include grant funding associated with the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act), the National League of Cities is requesting that cities let them know through a portal ([found here](#)), what projects, if any, are being delayed or cancelled. The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) has put a temporary hold on all federal funding.



Governor Tina Kotek hosts BRAND West Initiative workshop in Bend

Governor Tina Kotek kicked off the **BRAND West Initiative** workshop in Bend by emphasizing the state's commitment to addressing the housing crisis with innovative, collaborative solutions. Our very own Mayor Melanie Kebler and City staff, Chief Operating Officer and Assistant City Manager, Russ Grayson and Long-Range Planning Manager, Brian Rankin participated in the event. They highlighted the City of Bend's model leadership in affordable housing including middle housing development in Oregon. [View Affordable Housing Facts in Bend](#).

“Being here in Bend, in one of the fastest growing parts in our state, with a set of local government leaders, and community partners who have been on this issue from day one to take advantage of every option you had, to try to do new things and meet the housing needs in our community, that’s why we’re here in Bend. It’s also gorgeous! But the people here in Bend are doing great work so I’m glad we’re here.” – Governor Kotek



Bethlehem Inn

Gwenn Wysling, Executive Director of Bethlehem Inn, has announced her retirement after sixteen years, effective June 30, 2025. During her tenure, Gwenn led Bethlehem Inn with vision, dedication, and unwavering commitment to their mission of “transforming lives together through shelter, help, and hope.” Under her leadership, Bethlehem Inn has expanded its programs to serve thousands of people annually, secured significant funding for a \$10 million capital campaign to sustain long-term initiatives, and expanded services and capacity at two locations.

To ensure a seamless leadership transition, the Board has established a transition committee to oversee the process of identifying Gwenn’s successor and will share updates on the search process in the coming weeks. BOD President, Kevin Link, stated, “As we prepare for this transition, our commitment to the Inn’s mission and values remains steadfast. We are excited to continue building on the strong foundation that has been established with the Inn’s collaborative and community model.”

Envision Bend

Envision Bend held its 2025 Leadership Kickoff event on January 23. Next steps for this Spring are:

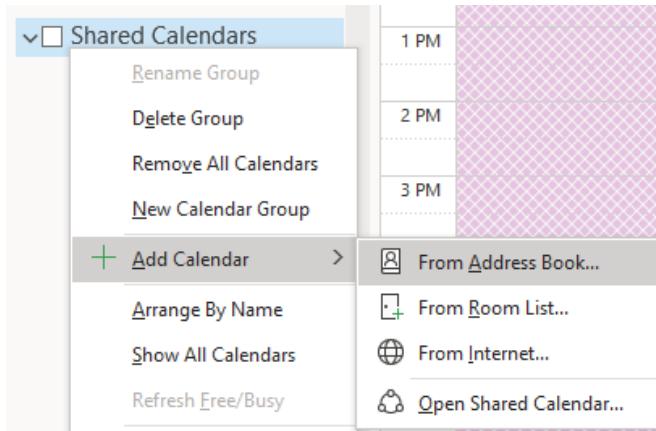
- Supporting the City's 13 Neighborhood Districts, especially those with low engagement currently.
- Bringing Belonging-focused organizations together to outline gaps and rally around a collective solution.
- Vision Lead Partner meetings to update the status, barriers, and next steps for the 28 vision strategies. Aiming to publish a 1st annual Vision Report Card in April.
- Creating a Vision Dashboard and Partner Directory on their website.
- Increasing awareness and access to resources through a Community Summit focused on Workforce Housing in partnership with Central Oregon City Club (April 17).

How to View Eric King’s Calendar

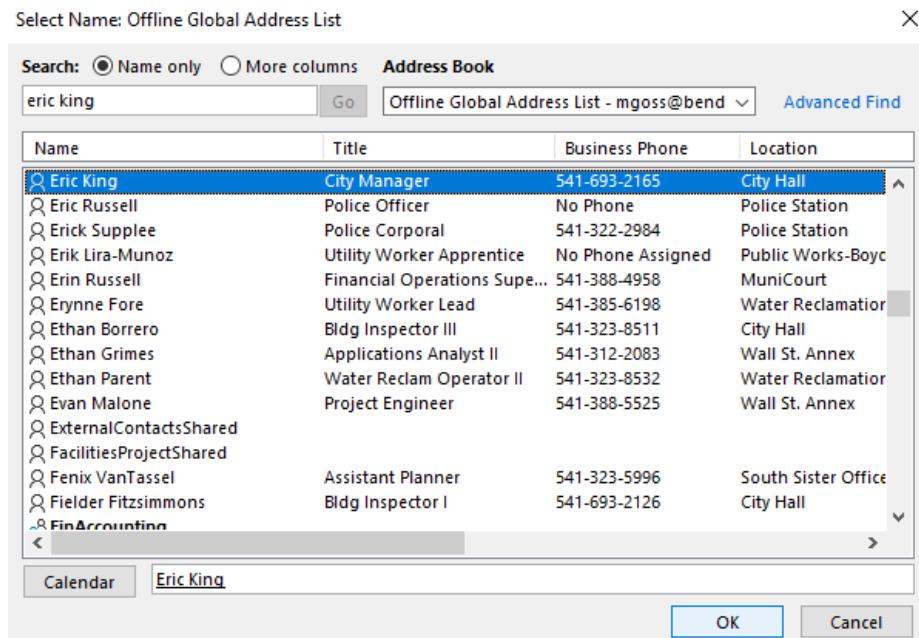
With new Councilors joining us, this is a great time for a friendly reminder on how to view Eric King’s calendar and schedule or request meetings with Eric. Eric’s calendar is visible in Outlook for anyone with a City of Bend email address. To view Eric’s calendar from Outlook, please follow these steps:

1. Access your Calendar in Outlook.
2. Right-click on Shared Calendars, select Add Calendar > From Address Book.





3. Type in “Eric King” to the Address Book search bar and double click on his name. His name will appear in the bottom text field. Select OK.



4. Eric King will appear under Shared Calendars. Check the box next to his name to view his calendar.

Please note, the above steps can be repeated to view any City of Bend staff member's calendar.

Scheduling Meetings with Eric

- If Eric's calendar is open, you are welcome to add a meeting to his calendar directly to schedule a phone call or in-person meeting in Eric's office.
- If you would like multiple people to be included in a meeting, please send an email to Eric King and Michelle Driggs with a scheduling request.

- Michelle Driggs is happy to assist with scheduling requests that involve Eric and other City of Bend Staff members.

If you have any questions or need assistance in viewing any City of Bend staff's calendar, please reach out to Michelle at mdriggs@bendoregon.gov.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Grants Update

The City of Bend was awarded \$765,711 from the ODOT Safe Routes to Schools Grant Program to improve shared use pathways and crosswalk enhancements near Bear Creek Elementary School. The City will complete the pathway improvements by June 30th, 2026. You can learn more about the City's award, and other communities' awards [here](#).

January Bend Buzz

The January Bend Buzz is now available. This issue begins with a message from Amanda Toms about new initiatives and programs coming out of the Organizational Development & Employee Experience Program, which include:

- A revised Employee Resource Group (ERG) Policy
- Launch of our Paid Community Service Hours Program
- Lunch & Learn on January 28 focused on “Creating Connection”
- The spring cohort of the City’s Supervisor Core Competency Training program
- New public sector training program, Aspire to Lead, offered this spring

[Read the full newsletter here.](#)

[VIEW PREVIOUS CITY MANAGER'S REPORTS](#)



Accommodation Information for People with Disabilities

To obtain this information in an alternate format such as Braille, large print, electronic formats, etc., please contact Michelle Driggs at mdriggs@bendoregon.gov or 541-678-6596. Relay Users Dial 7-1-1.