



CITY OF BEND

Meeting Minutes

Bend Economic Development Advisory Board

Location: City Council Chambers, 710 NW Wall Street, and online

Date: Monday, April 7, 2025

The meeting of the Bend Economic Development Advisory Board was called to order at 12:00 p.m. on Monday, April 7, 2025, in the City Council Chambers, 710 NW Wall Street, and online.

Roll Call: Gary North (Chair), DaWayne Judd (Vice Chair), Briana Manfrass, Mark Kroncke, Jillian Taylor, Jenn Lynch, Tierney Booker

Ex officio members: Chad Young, Sara Odendahl, Katy Brooks, Jennifer Gould, Nate Wyeth, Don Myll

Council Liaison: Councilor Perkins

Absent: Petra Oroslanova, Ryan Andrews

1. Approve Meeting Minutes

- a. February 24, 2025, Joint ECC/BEDAB/AHAC Meeting Minutes
- b. March 3, 2025, Modified Meeting Minutes
- c. March 17, 2025, Meeting Minutes

Member Lynch moved to approve the February 24, March 3, and March 17, 2025, Meeting Minutes.

Member Taylor seconded the motion.

The voice vote passed 7-0:

Yes: North, Manfrass, Judd, Lynch, Taylor, Kroncke, Booker

No: none

2. Public Comment

none

3. Council Liaison Report

Mayor Pro Tem Megan Perkins gave a recap of the April 2, 2025, Council Meeting and Council's response to BEDAB's recommendation regarding phase 2 of the transportation utility fee. Council supported a majority of BEDAB's recommendation, but a majority of Council was not supportive of BEDAB's suggestion to adjust the residential/non-residential fee allocation to 60%/40%, requested childcare be moved down a bin, and requested a full doubling of short-term rental fees per room.

4. Economic Development Strategic Plan and Urban Renewal Investment Strategy Framework

Presentation by Business Advocate Cyrus Mooney and Urban Renewal Project Manager Jonathan Taylor.

Slides included:

- Invest Bend – An Economic Development Strategic Plan Project
- Project Purpose – Develop the first Economic Development Strategic Plan to guide the City's economic development programs, policies, partnerships and investments for the next ten years.
- Project Goal – Identify objectives that cultivate stable, long-lasting, and equitable opportunities for upward economic mobility for all who reside in Bend
- The Final Plan will:
 - Set a vision for a sustainable and equitable economic development in Bend through 2035
 - Provide key focus areas, strategies and actions to achieve that vision
 - Facilitates implementation by recommending priority strategies and actions for the next five years
 - Assists with the Bend Urban Renewal Investment Strategy
 - Recommend roles and structures for the City and external partners
- Plan Overview
 - Business
 - People
 - Place
- Growing Our Businesses
 - Business is the primary method of achieving economic growth and prosperity. Recruiting, retaining, and fostering business growth will provide access to upward mobility for area workers, assists with stabilizing and diversifying the local tax base, and reduces tax burdens on residential residents
 - Example areas:
 - Promote entrepreneurial growth
 - Encourage retail and commercial growth
 - Cultivate target industry clusters
- Supporting our Neighbors
 - People are the primary reason why a community wants to enhance its economic development efforts. Access to housing, better paying jobs, quality education, and healthy community resources encourage life-long residents while attracting new neighbors.
 - Example Areas:
 - Ensure housing development and affordability

- Build a strong workforce
 - Enhance recreational and cultural opportunities
- Securing our Future:
 - Place is the historic character and soul of the community. Preserving and enhancing what makes a community unique must be central in ongoing development and growth. Access to parks and cultural amenities, restaurants, retail, and sustainable infrastructure systems increases happiness, reduces community stressors, and fosters safety.
 - Example Areas:
 - Infrastructure Development
 - Neighborhood Beautification
 - Economic and Environmental Resiliency
- Development Structure
 - Community Foundation Assessment and Data Analysis
 - Community Engagement
 - Core Team and City Council
- Invest Bend Campaign
 - Investing in our community where nature meets prosperity
- Strategy Timeline
 - Determine Position – November 2024-July 2025
 - Develop Strategy – June 2025-September 2025
 - Build Plan – August 2025-November 2025
 - Perform & Monitor – December 2025- Onward
- Focus Group
 - Plan development will rely on key partners in identified areas to reveal community priorities for economic growth. Selected by BEDAB, the members of the focus group will participate in three sessions
 - Session 1: Where are we going and what do we bring?
 - Session 2: Where are we going and what do we want to be?
 - Session 3: How do we get there?
- Broad Engagement
 - The development of the plan will also incorporate broader community collaboration and input. While key stakeholders can provide valuable information, key feedback may be missed. Providing opportunities for all residents and workers in Bend will be pivotal in the development of this plan.
 - Example Outreach Efforts:
 - Local Bank Consortium Lunch
 - Cultivate Bend
 - Bend Outdoor Worx
 - Local CEO Roundtable
 - Worker Survey
 - Business Survey
- Plan Development Team
 - City Council and BURA Champions – Mayor Pro Tem Megan Perkins and BURA Chair Mike Riley
 - These individuals will bring spirited advocacy for internal and cross-elected collaboration. These individuals should be interested in economic development

policies and investments. Champions should have the ability to create and maintain strong business relations, understand the value of the project, and can effectively communicate the position of the City.

- Main Advisory Board – Bend Economic Development Advisory Board
 - The advisory board will provide strategic advice during plan development, assist in making informed decisions about project direction and formation, identify new opportunities for community engagement, provide feedback on draft documents and data, and recommend final product to City Council.
- Project Managers - The project managers will have the responsibility of planning, developing, coordinating, and executing the development of the Economic Development Strategic Plan.
- Project Team - The project team will have the responsibility of providing continued feedback on information gleaned and developed in the process.
- Questions for BEDAB
 - Approve Economic Development Strategic Plan Framework
 - Identify Key Stakeholders for one-on-one interviews by April 21
 - Identify focus group organizations by April 21
 - Appoint BEDAB Members to Project Management Areas:
 - Data Review
 - Stakeholder Interviews
 - Focus Groups Meeting
 - Broad Engagement
 - Vision
 - Mission/Values
 - Goals/Objectives
 - Document Creation

Member Lynch identified government bodies that control funding opportunities, such as Genuine Progress Indicators (GPI's) Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council (COIC) and Business Oregon, as important community partners and requested engaging them in the feedback process.

Jonathan Taylor explained that staff is asking BEDAB to identify individuals or regional partner representatives for the focus group, that the focus group will be limited to 20 people, and that the City will hire a private facilitator to conduct the focus group sessions. Taylor stated that the larger the focus group, the more diluted the feedback, which is why staff is limiting the size. Taylor stated that this Economic Development (ED) strategy is city-focused and cautioned that that regional partners represent a broader region and may be less locally-focused.

Jonathan Taylor provided more information on the public engagement process. Staff is planning an online open house and is working with the City Attorney's Office to identify incentivization options to encourage workers to respond to a survey.

Member Lynch requested including language on how Economic Development Agencies (EDA's) fit into the strategic plan.

Mooney provided more information on how staff will engage historically marginalized groups. Staff is engaging Communications & Engagement Director René Mitchell to help provide an equity lens and engage under-represented voices early on.

Member Taylor suggested working with organizations such as the Latino Community Association (LCA) or NeighborImpact.

Jonathan Taylor clarified that the goal of the plan is upward economic mobility for all through the lens of what the City can do.

Mooney requested members of BEDAB take ownership of each Project Management Area identified in the final slide.

Member Lynch moved to approve the Economic Development strategic plan framework as presented to BEDAB on April 7, 2025. Kroncke seconded the motion.

Voice vote passed 7-0:

Yes: Kroncke, Lynch, Judd, Taylor, Booker, North, Manfrass
No: none

Mooney requested members submit their suggestions for key stakeholders and focus group organization via email by April 14, 2025, and consider project management area assignments for discussion at the BEDAB meeting on April 21, 2025.

Ex-Officio Member Brooks suggested staff reference the Horizon report put out by the Bend Chamber of Commerce.

Member Lynch suggested referencing Envision Bend data.

5. Visit Bend Business Plan

Presentation by Visit Bend CEO Jeff Knapp and Visit Bend Senior Vice President, Strategy Nate Wyeth.

Slides included:

- Visit Bend – Midyear Tourism Updates
- Visitor Room Tax (TRT) [graph]
- A balanced Bend is a Thriving Bend
 - Economy – Tax revenue, consumer spending, wages earned
 - People – Equity & access, resident sentiment, guest satisfaction
 - Place – Environmental stewardship, responsible recreation, thriving spaces
- Lodging Occupancy Numbers – Running 12 months [map/graph]
- FYTD Tourism in Bend – Key Takeaways
 - Hotel Occupancy: +3.4 year over year (YOY)
 - Hotel Average Daily Rate: -2% YOY
 - TRT Collections to General Fund, Police and Fire: \$5,509,331
 - -0.8% YOY / \$-43,000

- TRT Collections to Visit bend: \$3,019,045
 - -0.8% YOY / \$-23,564
- Tourism Metrics – Fiscal year to Date
 - A smoke-filled summer, when hotel occupancy and rates are highest, hampered collections and tourism, leading to July + August significantly underperforming.
 - A strong fall and winter, particularly a very strong January helped the industry to dig out, now leaving us in a place where occupancy is up 3.4% year over year, but collections are essentially flat and expected to trend slightly more positively for the remainder of the fiscal year.
 - Fiscal Year to Date, lodging demand is up 3.1% but the average rate being paid is down - 2%, leading to an overall room tax collection amount slightly off FYTD by about \$66,000 in total.
- Shoulder Season Marketing Results:
 - Total Impressions: 18,473,798 | Unique Reach: 5,822,088 | Attributable Trips: 26,695 | Est. Campaign Impact: \$6,708,661
 - Total Visit Bend spend of \$441,877 generated an ROI of 1419.9%
 - For every dollar spent, it resulted in \$15.19 in local spending.
 - Visit Bend Advertising from October 1 through the end of March resulted in Trips 3,201 overnight stays with an average of 3 days per stay, or a total of 9,523 visitor days. Estimated lodging financial impact is \$1,081,510.90
- Group Sales Efforts - Earlier this year, Visit Bend launched a new Group Business page with a unique offering and RFP system to attract groups not currently finding Bend. Since launching that page, with zero paid advertising efforts attracting inquiries, Visit Bend has already received nearly two-dozen RFPs for group business representing nearly 8,000 room nights in the city of Bend.
- Destination Stewardship Updates
- Bend Sustainability Fund Funded Projects: \$56,615
 - Old Mill LLC: Installation of four, level 2 EV charging stations to meet the growing demand for EV changing while encouraging visitors to engage with Old Mill District amenities.
 - Bend Pickleball Club: Construction + lighting for eight new pickleball courts at Pine Nursery Park, bringing the total number of lighted courts to 16 for nighttime play.
 - Deschutes Trails Coalition: Installation of two new, permanent docks at Cultus Lake + Paulina Lake, improving access for all users, extending the season, improving on accessibility, and enhancing riparian areas.
 - Nature Connect Central Oregon: Roof replacement for Skyliner Lodge, a community asset supporting tourism by hosting weddings and other events, to maintain and grow existing use.
 - Central Oregon Trail Alliance: Develop a comprehensive mountain bike hub at Wanoga Sno-Park addressing the needs of a diverse population of mountain bikers.
 - Deschutes County Department of Solid Waste: Infrastructure to improve recycling services and minimize waste sent to the landfill at events in and around Bend.
- Visit Bend X OSU Sustainable Tourism Lab [graphs]
 - Satisfaction with Visit Bend
 - Satisfaction Benefits vs Costs
- What's Next

- Occupancy x Tax Collections
 - Transient Room Tax Collections vs Lodging Occupancy Rates [graph]
- Looking Forward [Timeline]
 - April 7 – Visit Bend Midyear Update to BEDAB
 - April – Visit Bend Budgeting and Planning
 - May 5 – Visit Bend FY26 Business Plan and Budget Presentation to BEDAB
 - June 4 – Visit Bend FY26 Business Plan and Budget presentation to Bend City Council
 - June 6 – Visit Bend Board of Directors adopts budget and plan

Chair North asked for insights on the reasons for decreased hotel occupancy, and how much increased daily rates affect occupancy rates.

Wyeth and Knapp responded that rate increases in Bend are similar to increases nation-wide. Wyeth and Knapp shared marketing ideas, such as summer marketing, targeting new audiences and focusing on group business, to increase hotel occupancy rates.

Member Lynch requested putting the data in context with competing tourism destinations.

BEDAB received the report.

6. Economic Development for Central Oregon (EDCO) Quarterly Update

Presentation by EDCO Bend Area Director Don Myll.

Slides included:

- EDCO Update – Q2 FY2024/25
- FY 2024/25 Actual vs. Goal Event Attendance [graph]
 - Bend Venture Conference
 - Central Oregon Pub Talk
 - Annual Luncheon
 - Other
- Regionwide Leads Generated by Lead Source: FY2024/25 [graph]
 - Organic Leads – 15
 - EDCO Digital Marketing – 12
 - Business Oregon Responses – 17
- Bend “Grow” results: cumulative through Q2 FY 2024/25 [graph]
 - Outreach & Visits
 - Artists & Referrals
- Regionwide Pending Projects: FY 2024/25, Q2 [graphs]
 - Total Projects by Community
 - Anticipated Jobs by Community
 - Anticipated Capital Investment by Community
- Bend Pending Projects: Q2 FY 2024/25 [graphs]
 - Current Projects – 100
 - Anticipated Jobs – 659
 - Anticipated Capital Investment - \$206.9 M
- Bend Pending Projects by Industry [graph]

- Scientific (mainly bioscience) represents 6% of total projects, but 53% of anticipated new jobs, representing a potential 350 new positions in Bend, the majority of which are from existing local businesses or “Grow” projects
- High Technology activity is predominantly “Start” pending projects
- Cumulative “Start” Done Deals Q2 FY 2024/25 [graphs]
 - New Ventures Started
 - Jobs Created by New Ventures
- Bend Cumulative “Grow” Done Deals FY 2024/25 [graphs]
 - Companies: 2
 - Cumulative Capital Investment: \$11.4M
 - Jobs Created / Retained: 32
- “Table Setting” Efforts
 - Bioscience Training
 - Cultivate Bend
 - Juniper Ridge
 - Deschutes Regional Housing Council
 - KBDN Tower
 - Tiny Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
- Discussion Topics
 - Target Sector Analysis
 - Juniper Ridge
 - Advisory Board Summit / Joint Advisory Committee
 - Legislative Session Priorities
 - Housing
 - City Council Goals
 - EDCO Strategic Plan

Ex-Officio Member Myll reported feeling optimistic about housing (Bend statistics on housing per capita is highest in the state, which shows Bend is making progress), Bioscience training (Bend has local partners to help with this), and development projects at Stevens Ranch and Juniper Ridge. Myll stated the importance of focusing on housing, education, workforce development and identified the impact of remote workers as a possible area of vulnerability.

Ex-Officio Member Brooks identified vulnerabilities in manufacturing and bio-pharming sectors due to recent tariffs.

BEDAB received the report.

7. Roundtable and Future Topics | Group

none

8. Adjourned at 2:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ashley Bontje
Deputy City Recorder



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