

Meeting Minutes

Environment and Climate Committee



CITY OF BEND

Location: Council Chambers, 710 NW Wall Street

Date: November 13, 2025

The meeting of the Environment and Climate Committee (ECC) was called to order at 11:04 a.m. on Thursday, November 13, 2025, in the City Council Chambers, 710 NW Wall Street, and online.

- 1. Roll Call:** Kavi Chokshi (remote), Kenneth Davies, Laura Tabor, Mark Buckley, Neil Baunsgard, Nick Millar, Ray Hartwell, Robyn Breynaert, Rory Isbell, Scott Nordquist

Absent: Sasha Sulia (ex officio), Amy Leedham

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes

10/09/2025 ECC Meeting Minutes

Approved with no additions or corrections.

3. Public Comment (2 minutes each)

Visitors can use “Raise Hand” feature when prompted to provide public comment

John Heylin, Republic Services: Introduced himself, expressed appreciation for ECC’s work, and shared interest in future collaboration on reuse initiatives.

4. Staff Updates | Cassie Lacy

Presented by Senior Management Analyst Cassie Lacy.

Slides included:

- **Staff Updates**
 - **Electrification Policy**
 - 10/22 Council Work Session to discuss policy goals and preliminary data findings from work with consultant
 - Work Session scheduled for 12/10 to discuss scope of joint committee and public process

- **Climate Action Partner Grant Program**
 - Grant agreement development underway
- **Engagement updates**
 - October newsletter released
 - Working on grant awardee social media spotlights
- **Climate Action Partner Grant Program Feedback**
 - **Discussion Questions:**
 - Reflecting on the first year of the Climate Action Partner Grant Program, what do you see as key successes and challenges?
 - What changes or improvements would you recommend for the next round of the grant program?
 - **Some key notes for future rounds:**
 - Consider expanding eligibility beyond nonprofits and government entities (e.g., resident groups).
 - Clarify whether all CCAP actions are eligible and avoid having separate or conflicting lists.
 - Include climate adaptation and resilience projects, even if not explicitly listed in the CCAP.
 - Clearly define what constitutes an eligible project and list ineligible expenses.
 - Consider setting a maximum funding request (e.g., \$50–75K).
 - Provide ECC members with a scoring matrix to support review.

Chair Buckley: Asked whether partial funding was used too much and how to refine that approach in future rounds. Suggested considering a voting mechanism for resolving conflicts. Clarified that staff recommendations were helpful but did not influence ECC's final decisions.

Member Baunsgard: Supported minimizing reliance on partial funding and suggested building flexibility to carry funds forward to avoid partial allocations. Noted lack of opportunity for applicants to answer questions in real time but praised efficiency of the process and usefulness of staff scoring.

Member Davies: Requested that staff share progress data with ECC in future cycles.

Member Nordquist: Recommended prioritizing full funding. Cited AHAC's challenges with partial funding and suggested tracking applicants' ability to accept partial awards.

Member Hartwell: Agreed with restricting partial funding and expressed appreciation for the quality and quantity of applications. Advocated for increasing available funds in future budgets. Also noted that five members were conflicted out of voting, which was significant; suggested exploring ways to gather input from recused members earlier in the process.

Member Chokshi: Proposed creative partnerships to expand funding. Appreciated process efficiency but noted limited community and staff input. Recommended including equity and accessibility perspectives in internal review committees.

Member Tabor: Requested that the scoring matrix be shared with ECC members.

Lacy: Indicated willingness to revisit recusal rules.

Selkirk: Explained that the cautious approach was adopted when the resolution was created. Suggested considering Council approval for final decisions in future rounds to reduce conflicts and increase visibility.

Lacy: Agreed that Council involvement could enhance transparency and visibility but cautioned against potential unfair advantages.

5. City Council Update | Councilor Megan Norris

- Advisory Board Summit: Held last year and was successful; will be repeated. Date to be announced soon.
- City Website Branding: Rene Mitchell reported that new branding will launch January 2026.
- Development Liaison: A new liaison has been appointed to help move projects forward smoothly.
- Transportation Projects: Hawthorne Bridge trestle design reviewed—cost-effective, unique to Bend, and reflects natural landscape. Project moving forward. Reed Market Bridge discussed; significant project with recent open houses showing strong community support.
- City Hall: Previous plan to purchase properties in Bend Development Code deemed infeasible after consultant review. Council directed staff to explore on-site expansion options and short-term fixes to ensure staff comfort.
- Bend Parks and Recreation Projects: Mirror Pond revitalization planned to create space for concerts, farmers markets, and community events.
- Council Work Sessions: Weekly work sessions and business sessions continue to be effective for managing priorities.

6. Federal and State Policy Scan | Cassie Lacy, *Senior Management Analyst* | Informational and discussion

Slides included:

- **Key Federal Policy Shifts**
 - **Repeal of clean energy and electrification incentives through OBBBA**
 - Production and investment tax credits for solar, wind, and battery storage
 - Some consumer rebates for EVs and energy-efficient appliances
 - HOMES and HEAR programs intact but implementation is delayed and future is uncertain
 - Grants and other funding mechanisms for local clean energy projects
 - Solar for All Program
 - **Rollback of Environmental Justice and Climate Resilience Programs, including eliminating:**
 - The Justice40 Initiative
 - FEMA's climate resilience grants
 - EPA's environmental equity programs
 - **Legal and Regulatory Constraints**

- Preempting stricter state-level emissions standards (incl. revocation of California Clean Air Act waiver)
- Limiting ability of states and municipalities to hold fossil fuel companies accountable for climate-related damages
- Proposal to rescind the 2009 Endangerment Finding
- **Expansion of fossil fuel development**
 - Accelerated leasing for oil, gas, and coal on federal lands and offshore areas
 - Streamlined permitting for pipelines and refineries
 - Suspension of methane emission regulations for oil and gas operations
- **ECC Discussion Questions**
 - What other major federal or state policy changes have impacted our ability to address climate change?
 - How are you seeing your own industries navigate and adapt to this new federal environment?
 - What are opportunities for us to adapt our CCAP work to this new environment?

What other major federal or state policy changes have impacted our ability to address climate change?

Member Baunsgard: Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE) confirms HOMES and HEAR funding fully obligated for 2026. Three components: Tax credits, HOMES, & HEAR. Tax credit disappearing, but HOMES and HEAR moving forward confidently.

Member Hartwell: Unclear on Executive Order regarding official social cost of carbon assumptions; appliance performance standards murky and challenged under Congressional Review Act.

Member Davies: State building programs rely on Energy Star portfolio; bipartisan support suggests stability. New consultant engaged; an additional \$12M federal funding expected January.

Chair Buckley: Trump administration increased timber harvest aggressively; ripple effects for industries. Asked about Executive Order(s) on mining and rare earth minerals impacting watersheds; tribal support programs largely removed.

Member Baunsgard: State budget impacts could pressure climate programs; reliance on electricity generation for decarbonization noted as risk.

Member Tabor: Federal changes ripple into state budgets; cuts to social services and tax code changes squeeze affordability and energy programs.

Member Isbell: Governor Executive Order directs urgent climate adaptation actions by state agencies.

Member Tabor: Earlier Executive Order encouraged utilities to leverage remaining tax credits; tariffs impacting renewable supply chains.

Member Hartwell: Loss of 25C tax credit is significant (appliance tax credit); inflation and tariffs increase costs for heat pumps and appliances.

Member Breynaert: EV charger and solar incentives dwindling in California; pursuing private funding; Energy Star and Better Building Challenge remain intact.

Member Nordquist: Solar incentives expiring in 2025; Habitat for Humanity subsidies impacted; EPA environmental justice database offline.

How are you seeing your own industries navigate and adapt to this new federal environment?

Member Davies: State and federal funds for building incentives expected January rollout; heard funding is obligated and safe.

What are opportunities for us to adapt our CCAP work to this new environment?

Member Chokshi: Asked about collective action with other cities; Bend participates in coalitions and lawsuits per Lacy. Mentioned Mountain Towns conference and leadership role for climate resilience.

Lacy: Larger cities coordinate more; Bend is involved in lawsuits; coalitions mainly info-sharing currently.

Member Baunsgard: City submitted comments on Endangerment rule; opportunity to share impacts with elected officials. Wastewater plant improvement projects could be highlighted.

Member Millar: EV incentives replaced by manufacturer rebates; transportation and waste sectors stable; building electrification most impacted. Suggested weighing CCAP priorities accordingly.

Member Tabor: Resource allocation should consider volatility; smaller developers hurt more by tax credit loss.

Member Millar: Suggested city encourage planned renewable projects to prevent cancellations.

The committee recessed at 12:15 p.m. and reconvened at 12:25 p.m.

7. Electrification Policy Update | Cassie Lacy, Senior Management Analyst | Informational and feedback

Slides found here:

https://bend.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=14&event_id=1226&meta_id=91070

Member Davies: Asked if cost of running gas service to house was included in cost summary.

Lacy: No, but will look into including that. Explained challenges in reflecting full cost picture beyond equipment, noting lack of robust datasets for additional cost pieces. Actively refining cost analysis and seeking feedback on capturing all variables, especially where data sources exist.

Member Baunsgard: Shared that Cascade Natural Gas (CNG) presented Line Extension Allowances (LEAs) assuming \$6k line extension. Suggested illustrating examples and running scenarios instead of blanket analysis. Emphasized importance of recognizing least cost-effective approach is item-for-item replacement; people want most cost-effective option. Recommended prototypes priced in both directions for clarity.

Member Tabor: Asked if tax credits or incentives were excluded and requested clarity on what constitutes 'efficient.'

Member Baunsgard: Noted CNG hasn't filed a rate case in 5 years, so rates remain frozen.

Member Millar: Observed that if gap between gas and electrification scenario is too large for gas fee to cover, problem remains. Questioned accuracy of cost chart, citing anecdotal discrepancies.

Lacy: Reported Energy Trust of Oregon (ETO) validated most numbers but acknowledged difficulty in including all cost variables.

Selkirk: Clarified Council direction to treat this as a fee, not a tax, to offset climate change costs. Emphasized distinction between fee and tax.

Member Hartwell: Affirmed data sources used in Danielle's analysis are industry standard and comprehensive. Encouraged review of detailed workbooks with multiple scenarios.

Member Baunsgard: Expressed concern that data processing was rushed in one week, leaving room for deeper analysis. Highlighted anecdotal feedback from builders contradicting findings and stressed importance of incorporating such insights.

Member Hartwell: Noted 90% of people choose natural gas when given the option, likely due to cost advantage. Questioned assumption that electrification is cost-effective, despite industry-standard data.

Member Baunsgard: Reiterated anecdotal evidence from builders and emphasized value of gut checks alongside quantitative data.

Lacy: Confirmed plans to present anecdotal insights to Council to ensure they inform decision-making.

8. Agenda Review

9. Adjourned at 1:03 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Megan Lee
Management Analyst – Environment and Climate



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