



CITY OF BEND

October 16, 2025

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CITY MANAGER

Eric King

Dear Mayor Kebler, Mayor Pro Tem Perkins and Council--

On behalf of the Bend Economic Development Advisory Board, I am writing to express our points of consideration as you discuss options related to the Incentive and Disincentive of Electrification policies. Our main points of concern that we would like to share are below:

- **Lack of Housing Affordability and Access (Partially affected by a 50% increase in electrical utility cost since 2020)**
- **Energy Capacity, Reliability and Interdependency of Sources - There is no current path to increasing overall capacity. Any potential capacity increase will further increase consumer cost.**
- **Meeting the Intended Goal of Reducing Carbon - Explore less risky options to electrification.**

All of these topics have a direct correlation to the Economic Prosperity goal area that was adopted for the current biennium. Over the course of the last two years, Council has tasked BEDAB with mitigating the impacts of several policies and processes that have made doing business in the City of Bend increasingly more challenging. These include things like updating the System Development Charge methodology which resulted in significant increases in a majority of new development types, higher than forecasted permit fee increases due to fee schedule recalibration efforts, and two phases of the Transportation Fee that have now been implemented. At a time of extreme economic volatility, energy constraints for new housing and industrial and commercial developments, a housing crisis that causes over half of our workforce to commute into work every day (with transportation being the biggest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions), we strongly urge Council to think about the cascading impact of how all of these components work against the goal of providing economic prosperity for all.

In early 2025, BEDAB worked with the Joint-Committee that also included the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee and the Environment and Climate Committee to prioritize where to focus our resources and staff time between

exploring regulatory processes, fees and incentives and education and outreach efforts. As a result of that meeting, the recommendation was to focus on outreach and education as a start so staff can collect more data, monitor the legal landscape and gain a better understanding of how to most effectively reduce carbon emissions while not conflicting with other City aspirations. We urge you to revisit the priority that you have placed on the Incentive and Disincentive (fee) policy option and use the Joint-Committee structure again to talk about alternative options such as nonmonetary incentives prior to a fee, existing and future renewable energy options, and the possibility of scaling programs in our community that are already meeting the goal of reducing Bend's carbon footprint.

We agree with the points outlined in the feedback from the Bend Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development for Central Oregon as it pertains to the impacts to the economic prosperity of our community and economy.

Respectfully,

Gary North, Chair, BEDAB