

Meeting Minutes

City of Bend Accessibility Advisory Committee

December 18, 2025, from 1:00 to 2:30 PM

Council Chambers, 710 NW Wall, and Zoom

Chair Heylin called the **City of Bend Accessibility Advisory Committee** (COBAAC) Thursday, December 18, 2025, to order at 1:02 p.m. Please **watch livestream recording**.

1. Roll Call: Committee Members.

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

9 Voting members | 1 Absent Voting member | 2 Absent Non-Voting | 1 ex officio pending.

City Staff:

- Cassandra Kehoe, She/Her/Ella, Accessibility & Equity Manager / COBAAC Staff Liaison. (Chambers)
- Ariel Méndez, He/Him, City Councilor & COBAAC Liaison (Chambers)
- Derek Hofbauer, He/Him, Mobility Programs Manager, City of Bend (Chambers)
- Mellissa Kamanya, She/Her/Hers, Affordable Housing Coordinator, City of Bend (Zoom)
- Lisa Larsen, She/Her, Administrative Support Specialist (Chambers)

2. Minutes: Approval of November 20, 2025, Draft Minutes, John Heylin, Chair. **Timestamp 3:17**

November 20, 2025, draft minutes approved by all voting members attending this meeting, in chambers (5) and via Zoom (4), with no corrections or opposition.

3. City Council Update: Councilor Ariel Méndez, He/Him. **Timestamp 3:56**

Councilor's highlights:

- We are considering a climate fee on natural gas for new development. This is one of the pieces we are looking at to meet our greenhouse gas reduction targets; fee amounts, potential to

phase in, non-monetary incentives, and fiscal incentives to use the revenue to help transition people to higher efficiency electrical appliances.

- Atmospheric river and a glimpse behind how or why construction delays happen. The City is waiting for the railroad team to inspect the one corridor that is currently closed, before it is opened. The railroad team was called to Washington for intense flooding and return when they are available.
- Future talks about street standards and specifications, and an update on transportation safety. The Transportation Safety Action Plan on January 28, 2026.
- Councilor Méndez would like to know if COBAAC members would like to continue to hold informal lunches or meet for coffee to have discussions, in sub quorum groups, about ways to make COBAAC voices heard.

4. Public Comment:

There were no public members in attendance at this meeting.

5. 3D Modeling Project Overview: Derek Hofbauer, He/Him, Mobility Programs Manager. **Timestamp 11:40**

Manager Hofbauer is here to refine scopes of work and outreach for the 3D intersection modeling project. There are 5 basic intersections, roundabouts, and turning lanes in roundabouts. He shared physical models with committee members in attendance explaining the benefit as an accessibility tool. 3D printing for five intersections to be made available for community members, with Kittelson & Associates.

Hofbauer consulted with blind community member Sharlene Wells about this project, as a long-term advocate for accessible roundabouts. Navigating roundabouts often comes with challenges around each design, finding the walk button, and sounds bouncing around due to noise reflection. Driver awareness can also be a challenge for service animals.

COBAAC will be invited in the decision-making processes making up to five models and where to house the 3D models when completed.

6. 2026 COBAAC Workplan Workshop: COBAAC Members. **Timestamp 22:29**

Thoughts and suggestions

- **Member Hamer:** Biennium would work better than annual. The wisdom around the annual is not effective.
- **Member Utzman:** Create and vote on a list of objectives; members choose their interests.
- **Manager Kehoe:** Meeting half an hour before or after scheduled meetings. After the chosen meeting. This would have been scheduled in advance to ensure that council chambers availability. Or extend the meeting length. There are other options to meet at other city owned properties, have standing quarterly meetings.
- **Member Isaacson:** Concerns when you want to take part in more than one group.

Each COBAAC member was asked to share two items of interest for the 2026 Workplan:

- **Member Diether-Martin:** Transportation safety-sidewalk safety (pedestrians), and digital accessibility (WCAG).
- **Vice Chair Hamer:** Mentorship programming and how to support individuals with intellectual, developmental disabilities and others with disabilities to access leadership positions. Mentorship for voices heard and helps them get involved with the process. (Member Burnett: Add a COBAAC liaison to help others with the process of membership.)
- **Member Isaacson:** Establish an engagement process from this committee on various projects, planning, and infrastructure, throughout the city, at every agency county level, park district, private. A COBAAC member contacts when starting a new project, to ask if the member wants to be engaged or a stakeholder on projects. Then the committee needs to decide what the process will look like. Projects can take decades, and the committee can be spread too thin. This process of reasoning can be used for supporting letters.
- **Member Caruana:** Expanding the committee's involvement with intellectual developmental disabilities. Simplify the application process. Charter: maintain a certain number of committee members reserved for the IDD community. Have more city updates with the COBAAC council liaison or report COBAAC updates to the city council of our work. Being present in other areas of local government. Partner with other government-sponsored initiatives, food drives.
- **Member Utzman:** More enforcement of ADA parking spaces/ access-aisles. A lot of spaces relate to service building, Postal offices, where ADA spaces limited, UPS stores, especially around certain times of the day or holidays. Can we add a bollard somewhere in the access-aisle so cars cannot park in the aisles, or would that render it inaccessible? By the time enforcement can take care of the complaint, the issue is no longer there.

Manager Kehoe: Can this be added to a campaign awareness about when snow is shoveled into those ADA parking spaces/ access-aisles? Especially locations where we have no jurisdiction.

- **Member Rivers:** Letter of Support – Creating a COBAAC letter of support template for our process and reducing the turnaround time. Send out a letter of support about a topic once a month to notice opportunities for input and things done well.
- **Chair John:** COBAAC sends out a monthly letter of support with scheduled topics for the year. Allow people to submit recorded two-minute videos or a portal to submit videos to be played during the comment section. Member Isaacson: When sending these letters of support or bringing an issue to light – we could send these letters to editors, or guest columns as another to highlight issues in the community. Find out who would need to approve this letter before sending it if it is from COBAAC, unless sent as an individual.
- **Member Bennett:** Proceed with the Spring Walk and Roll Events for awareness. Integrate the lessons learned, and a planned route to make connections while we reach the destination, and in-depth conversations during the process. Invite media to join to broadcast that out. She would like to highlight the white cane awareness day. The city has created a White Cane Awareness Day Proclamation, and she would like to embed into the education system, adding the importance of navigation with the transportation system's specific group.

- **Member Burnett:** Transportation safety sidewalk safety (pedestrians). How can the committee influence city policies on public and private infrastructure, construction, and maintenance of our sidewalks? What can we do as a city to shift some of the burden from private owners to the public sector? It seems, if there is a private construction of sidewalks, we will not have a fully accessible system and add snow removal to this conversation. Add accessible exercise classes for people with disabilities in Bend Parks & Recreation facilities.
- **Member Townsend (ex-officio):** Continuing to be in support role, providing resourcing or support for transit related things and that CET is accountable to this group and the citizens the citizens it represents around accessibility. Would be happy to lead a transit-related accessibility event or in conjunction with member Bennett in the Walk and Roll.

7. COBAAC Roundtable: COBAAC Members. Timestamp 1:14:46

Chair Heylin motioned to table the COBAAC Roundtable in the interest of time. Member Burnett seconded. All in favor that attended today's meeting, no opposition.

(COBAAC had Roundtable later in the meeting, agenda item 9- at **Timestamp 1:18:22**.

8. Accessibility & Equity Manager Update: Cassandra Kehoe, She/Her/Elle. Timestamp 1:15:28

The next COBAAC meeting is on Thursday, January 22, 2026, from 1:00 to 2:30 PM.

9. COBAAC Roundtable: Timestamp 1:18:22

- **Member Heylin** is a housing advocate and interested in transportation and infrastructure. Tonight is the first meeting of the High Desert Urbanist at the Downtown library, starting at 5:00 pm.
- **Councilor Méndez:** It is helpful to hear COBAAC's members' reflections and goals for the 2026 COBAAC workplan. Couple of things stand out, transportation infrastructure and transit.

10. Adjourn: With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

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



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