



Meeting Minutes

Bend Economic Development Advisory Board

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

Date: Monday, November 3, 2025

The meeting of the Bend Economic Development Advisory Board was called to order at 12:00 p.m. on Monday, November 3, 2025, in the City Council Chambers, 710 NW Wall Street, and online.

Roll Call: Gary North- Chair, DaWayne Judd- Vice Chair, Jillian Taylor, Chad Schlottmann, John Evons, Briana Manfrass

Sara Odendahl, Nate Wyeth, Don Myll, Mike Richards, Amy Bertram, Willie Hertford

Mayor Pro Tem Perkins-Council Liaison

1. Public Comment - None

2. Approve October 20 Meeting Minutes

Taylor moved to approve the October 20, 2025 Meeting Minutes. Judd seconded the motion.

The voice vote passed 6-0:

Yes: North, Manfrass, Judd, Taylor, Schlottman, Evons

No: none

3. Electrification Work Session Recap | Business Development Manager Cyrus Mooney

Mooney summarized the Council Work Session focused on the electrification policies. He noted that analysis of an electrification fee is moving forward and highlighted that Council would like to explore non-monetary options and that there is a Work Session planned on this topic in December 2025. He encouraged BEDAB to think creatively on this aspect of the policy. He noted that the electrification-focused Joint Committee will provide recommendations for Council and will include the Environment and Climate Committee, BEDAB, and the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee, and ex-officio seats for utility providers.



4. Visit Bend Post-Summer & Feasibility Study Presentation | Visit Bend Senior Vice president of Strategy Nate Wyeth

Wyeth presented the Summer Tourism Recap to the group.

He reviewed some of the relevant marketing goals, including boosting occupancy rates and emphasizing sustainability-focused travel. He stated that the summer strategy is inspired by data, highlighting that when the city's occupancy level hits 75% residents feel the congestion, and also that summer is the high point of the season for revenues.

Wyeth stated that Visit Bend utilizes marketing efforts and shared that the summer's economic impact was about \$11.7M and that those who were advertised to were 10 times more likely to visit Bend and likely to visit more than once, noting that advertising is working.

Regarding tourism spending, Wyeth stated it was up 4% this summer over last and that August's year-over-year increase regarding spending is 11%. He noted that regarding hotel occupancy, July and August 2025 were strong, and things returned to normal in the fall.

Evons asked about capacity changes compared to pre-pandemic and Wyeth responded that capacity has mostly stayed the same, and that Visit Bend only tracks hotels.

Judd asked if the spending increase was inflation adjusted and Wyeth responded that the increase when adjusted would be closer to 1.5% than 4%. Discussion included popular days of the week as well.

Wyeth shared a chart showing increased revenues for May and June and high demand in July and August. He also said that Visit Bend will be working with the City on a feasibility study for a public assembly venue in the north Mirror Pond parking lot. The study will be completed in January 2026.

Discussion included working towards a regular schedule for relevant studies and data collection, the need to keep funds in the community, and the effectiveness and purpose of Visit Bend grants.

Wyeth spoke about the Bend Sustainability Fund grant program, noting that grants will total \$500K this year.

Discussion included potential tourism levels during Winter 2025-26, levels of Visit Bend funds spent during different seasons, the focus of grants and investment in the non-summer months, and the concept of a Children's Museum of Central Oregon.

5. Opportunities, Deficits, and Impacts on Local Businesses (large, small, and/or historically marginalized) Report Out | Group



Judd introduced this topic and stated the desire to look at opportunities and practices across the State of Oregon regarding urban renewal and what economic development looks like across Oregon.

Cadence Petrose with ECO Northwest introduced herself, noting 25 years of experience in economic development and urban revitalization. She stated that in Oregon economic development funding at the local level centers around three resources, 1.) the general fund, 2.) transient lodging tax, and 3.) tax increment financing (TIF).

Petrose explained how cities in Oregon approach urban renewal, including how Bend approaches it, how Portland approaches it, which is through a board called Prosper Portland with no elected officials, which serves as the urban renewal agency and the economic development arm of the City. She then explained a third model, which is a hybrid, practiced in Beaverton: the mayor and the City Council serve as the members of the Beaverton Urban Redevelopment Agency, but there are also appointed community members. Those community members may have expertise in real estate development, sometimes special district participation.

She stated that many cities have structures like BEDABs and asked what are roles of citizen advisory boards and how do they interact?

Discussion included the need for BEDAB to have time to gather and convene, BEDAB's role moving forward vis-a-vis other City structures, if there are other models in existence which may be more effective, and potential available budgets.

Economic Development Director Katy Brooks highlighted that BEDAB is under the City Council and that their charter is to make recommendations to Council regarding economic development and any changes would require discussion and approval of Council and discussion with the Core Area Advisory Board (CAAB).

Taylor suggested that BEDAB include an agenda item on a future meeting.

Mooney reiterated that currently there is nothing in BEDAB's charter about urban renewal and re-definition would require discussion and approval of Council.

Mooney introduced the Professional Business Development Group (PBDG), a nonprofit out of Portland that the City has been meeting with over the past several months, through which he was connected to Jesus Rayas.

Rayas stated that he has been working with PBDG and aims to work more with State and Federal entities, which can be difficult due to bureaucratic hurdles and lack of resources. He stated that PBDG builds trust and provides opportunities to tap into larger projects, including relevant training and certifications. He mentioned the desire to recreate something similar in



Bend which could assist small businesses in areas including work on safety and quality, and the opportunity to access funds.

6. Invest Bend Update | Economic Development Director Katy Brooks (30 minutes)

Brooks provided an update on the City's Economic Development Strategy, stating that she would walk through the relevant work areas and solicit feedback from BEDAB. The plan is related to Council goals and she highlighted the following work areas:

Regarding the area of Business Retention, Growth and Recruitment, Brooks stated that there was a lot of focus on this, which includes permitting, engineering, land and lease costs, and supply chain work. She noted that the cost of business is high and increasing, that the labor supply is low in sectors, and that housing prices are high. She shared the following work plan elements: business retention and growth plan, entrepreneur retention, childcare, customer service, and business communications.

Brooks spoke about the area of Sustainability and Resilience, including stakeholder feedback focused on the need for a long-term focus on growth industries, the need for wildfire and natural disaster planning, wage disparity, and industry analyses. Work plan elements included developing: an economic resilience plan, a disaster resilience plan, and workforce analyses, including by sector.

Regarding Inclusive Prosperity, Brooks highlighted that stakeholder feedback noted the need to make Bend more affordable and the need to address the wage gap. Work plan elements include housing programs, upward mobility in the labor force, inclusive procurement structures and more effective transportation.

Brooks reviewed the area of Planning and Land Availability noting the need for more industrial and commercial land, and funds for infrastructure. Work plan elements included the Comprehensive and Growth plan, an industrial land inventory, a commercial land inventory, and transit and transportation.

Regarding Invest Bend and BURA investments, Brooks shared that feedback asked to generate more TIF revenue and the need to focus on the CORE area and the BCCD. Work plan elements include an investment strategy, a site location analysis, infrastructure investments, and community centered development.

Discussion included the need to strengthen trades and related skill development, understanding the impact of AI on the workforce, neighborhood commercial opportunities, next steps for the strategy, and the need to understand available budgets, including for contracts and grants, as well as timelines.

7. Ex-Officio Updates | Group - None



8. Roundtable and Future Topics | Group

North noted the need to have action items on a list before next meeting, including BEDAB's charter, priorities of economic plan, a CAAB conversation, and the next moves regarding the supplier diversity program. Mooney asked that members email him individually.

Judd suggested that during the next meeting the group take an hour to have a conversation about how the next year looks and priorities to focus on.

Brooks stated that BEDAB is charged with giving input on the City's economic development plan and provide recommendations to Council.

9. Adjourn Upcoming Meetings:

November 5: Bend City Council Work Session | Council Chambers, 4 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Trish Savage
Deputy City Recorder



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tsavage@bendoregon.gov or 541-323-8575. Relay Users Dial 7-1-1.



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