



# MEETING MINUTES

## Bend Economic Development Advisory Board

City Council Chambers, 710 NW Wall Street, and online  
02/02/2026, 12:00 p.m.

## Bend Economic Development Advisory Board

The meeting of the Bend Economic Development Advisory Board was called to order at 12:02 p.m. on Monday, February 2, 2026, in the City Council Chambers, 710 NW Wall Street, and online.

**Roll Call:** Gary North- Chair, DaWayne Judd – Vice Chair (online), Amy Bertram, Mark Kroncke (online), Jillian Taylor, Chad Schlottmann, John Evons, Jenn Lynch (online).

Willie Hertford was excused.

Heather Fitch, Sara Odendahl, Nate Wyeth, Don Myll, Rebecca Robinson, Agatha Ventura- Ex Officio

Mayor Pro Tem Perkins-Council Liaison

**1. Public Comment** – there was no Public Comment.

### **2. Approve November 3, December 1 and January 5 Meeting Minutes | Group**

Member Evons moved to approve the November, December and January meeting minutes.

Member Schlottman seconded the motion. The voice vote passed, 8-0.

### **3. Mayor Pro Tem Perkins Updates**

Mayor Pro Tem Perkins provided updates from recent City Council meetings:

#### 01/21/2026 Business Meeting

- The City's legislative delegation spoke to Council and shared focus bills and priorities, which include flexible use of lodging tax, ensuring allocations for shelter funding, balancing neighborhood commercial and affordable housing, and recreational liability advocacy

#### 01/28/2026 Work Session

- Council received a report from a consultant on the City's equity program, which included recommendations in internal and external improvements
- Regarding the transportation standards conversation, Council is aiming for slower speeds with an emphasis on safety



- Council received an update on progress related to the Hawthorne Bridge Overcrossing.

02/04/2026 Business Meeting

- Council will receive a presentation on and asked to approve the Economic Development strategy

02/11/2026 Work Session

- Council will receive an update on the electrification policy

Discussion included details on the City’s equity program, the development of a new Equity Director position, and utilization of equity tools. Mooney also mentioned that there will be upcoming discussions on wildlife resiliency and home guardian standards.

#### **4. Economic Development Strategy Recommendation | Katy Brooks**

*Purpose: Review and Motion to Recommend Approval*

Brooks provided an overview of the Bend Economic Development Strategy, sharing the three main objectives, the report contents, feedback from stakeholders which informed the strategy, guiding principles garnered from the stakeholders, factors which impacted the strategy such as the state and federal economy and policies, and factors impacting Bend’s economy.

Brooks shared the five goals of the strategy and provided details relevant to each and then highlighted efforts and actions to implement and advance each goal, including information about the Bend Urban Renewal Agency (BURA) and how economic growth interacts with BURA. Brooks spoke about staff capacity as well as items the City contracts out to partners such as EDCO and Visit Bend.

Brooks spoke to the importance of monitoring the strategic goals over time and explained how staff will do that, including what will be measured and monitored. Brooks then shared a timeline with relevant strategy related items, including finalizing BEDAB’s workplan. Discussion included grants processes and related funds, target industries and relevant metrics, utilizing information in specific reports with backward looking vs. forward looking data, and BEDAB’s involvement in the biennium budgeting process and the Council goal setting process.

Member Taylor moved to recommend on behalf of BEDAB that the Economic Development Strategy be adopted by City Council as presented on February 2. Member Kronke seconded the motion. The voice vote passed 8-0.

#### **5. BEDAB Work Plan & Code Update | Cyrus Mooney and Brooke Olson**

*Purpose: Process-Based Information*

Mooney spoke about how BEDAB fits into the broader economic development strategy and the BEDAB work plan development process, noting that Council will discuss potential code updates impacting BEDAB and other advisory bodies at the February 18, 2026 Work Session. Mooney



noted that the group will spend more time discussing a draft BEDAB workplan in March. Olson mentioned that the current BEDAB workplan is available on the website and spoke about the code updates.

## **6. Electrification Policy Update | Group**

*Purpose: Informational with Next Step Action Items*

Mooney provided information regarding actions which have occurred:

### 01/07/2026 Council Business Meeting

- Council discussed establishing a joint committee and added elements to the scope of the group, including data collection needs. BEDAB had influence in this decision
- Council also decided to add an HREC representative, expanding representation from 3 advisory bodies to 4. Council decided not to establish joint committee at that time

### 02/11/2026 Council Work Session

- Council will hear from staff regarding analysis of the impacts of the fee at different potential fee levels, including a presentation by Pacific Power, and the impacts of the fee on the grid, and pathways to public engagement

### 01/30/2026 Advisory Body representatives and staff meeting

- Electrification project manager Cassie Lacy provided an update to representatives from BEDAB, the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC), the Human Rights and Equity Commission (HREC), and the Environment and Climate Committee (ECC)
- Provided a consistent understanding of what data has been shared with Council.

Mayor Pro Tem Perkins stated that the Oregonian did a four-part series on electrification and the impact of data centers and how that relates to what is happening in Bend. Mayor Pro Tem Perkins mentioned that the majority of Council wanted to get further in the process prior to finalizing the joint committee structure.

Discussion included cost implications and how new data has impacted that, where the City is in terms of a timeline, and potential deadlines. Mayor Pro Tem Perkins stated there are differing opinions and that there is currently much that is to be determined.

## **7. Community Development Department Fee Memo | Colin Stephens**

*Purpose: Informational with Opportunity to Provide Feedback*

Director of the Community Development Colin Stephens provided information regarding the funds in the Department. Stephens explained that the funds are fee-supported and gave background on the relevant fees noting that the Department recently increased a fees and then via a focus group, established a plan to raise them over time at a more gradual pace. Stephens stated that a recalibration of fees has had a positive effect. Stephens explained that the memo shared frames where the Department is now regarding the fees, noting where fees



were increased and explained the tiers of engineering fees and adoption dates. He stated that the Department is in the process of reevaluating fees to meet requirements on Senate Bill 974.

### **8. Ex-Officio Updates | Group**

Heather Ficht, the Executive Director of the Local Workforce Development Board, provided a self-introduction and stated that the top 3 goals in the Bend Economic Development Strategy involve workforce development. Due to lack of state and federal funds, Ficht advocated for Senate bill 1512, which will allocate \$15M towards workforce development statewide.

Nate Wyeth, with Visit Bend, provided tourism updates from Visit Bend's new dashboard, including that Bend's tourism industry November 2025 was stronger than November 2024, lodging tax collections are 28% higher than they were at this time last year, and hotel demand is down 2-4% but rates are up so the impact is nominal. Wyeth also reported the Bend Cultural Tourism Fund, a grant program, has launched, meaning there are \$300,000 of visitor tax dollars to put towards arts and cultural organizations. The Bend Sustainability Fund program received 16 applications totaling \$1.6M.

Don Myll, with EDCO, updated that Serán Bioscience in Juniper Ridge completed the new manufacturing facility, City Council Tours are on-going, the EDCO annual luncheon is coming up, and Myll announced he is retiring in March. Rita Hansen, EDCO Director of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, reported that she will continue collaboration to strengthened regions' capacity to scale innovation companies, help future entrepreneurs, work with various partners, bring people together, coordinate and support new businesses, and create a one stop shop.

Rebecca Robinson, with OSU Cascades, stated that the largest OSU Cascades priority in the legislative short session is the development of the Student Health and Recreation Center, an \$84M project. Robinson also reported that the campus Innovation District reclamation is nearly complete, and that the school will pilot a program to integrate career opportunities in the classroom in Spring 2026.

Sara Odendahl, with Bend's Chamber of Commerce, updated that the Chamber published the short session legislative agenda, and will track 50-90 bills, that the Regional Business Alliance launched their agenda, with advocacy focused on economic development, housing and workforce issues, that the Chamber's Bend 101 event, Waste in Bend, is on February 12, 2026.

Agatha Ventura, with the COCC Small Business Development Center (SBDC), highlighted that the SBDC is now under the Community Education Department, and there is also a Center for Business, including the Workforce Training Department, which presents an opportunity to connect and collaborate regarding the future opportunities for small businesses, and expressed interest in increasing representation at EDCO events

### **9. Roundtable and Future Topics (Draft Work Plan, Board Elections, etc.) | Group**



Mooney reiterated that the March BEDAB meeting will focus on the BEDAB draft work plan, a presentation from Visit Bend, and the BEDAB annual board elections, for Chair and Vice Chair.

Chair North announced that this will be his last meeting with BEDAB. Mooney expressed appreciation for North.

Taylor asked about the status of access to childcare and asked if BEDAB could include it as a future agenda topic. Odendahl mentioned that NeighborImpact supports a dashboard showing daycare openings and that the Chamber is tracking funding for employment related daycare in the legislative session.

**Upcoming Meetings:**

**February 4:** Bend City Council Business Meeting | Council Chambers, 6 P.M. (Economic Development Strategy)

**10. Adjourned at 1:30 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

Trish Savage  
Deputy City Recorder



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