



MEETING MINUTES

Joint Park & Recreation District Board and Bend City Council Meeting

Location: BPRD District Office Building, 799 SW Columbia, Bend, OR

Date: March 17, 2026

Time: 4:00 p.m.

Joint Park & Recreation District Board and Bend City Council Meeting

Called to order at 4:02 p.m. by roll call

Present from Bend Park and Recreation District Board (BPRD): Chair Donna Owens, Vice Chair Carey Schneider, Director Nathan Hovekamp, Director Jodie Schiffman, and Director Deb Schoen (online).

Present from Bend City Council: Mayor Melanie Kebler, Mayor Pro Tem Megan Perkins, Councilor Gina Franzosa, Councilor Ariel Méndez, Councilor Mike Riley, Councilor Megan Norris (arrived late) and Councilor Steve Platt.

- 1. City and BPRD Growth Plan and Updates – Brian Rankin and BPRD Staff, (30 min)**
 - a. Climate Friendly Area (CFA) requirements**
 - b. BPRD park planning**
 - c. Tax Exemptions and Cost Mitigation**

Presentation by City of Bend Chief Operations Officer Russ Grayson, City of Bend Senior Strategist Brian Rankin, City of Bend Transportation Planner Susanna Julber and BRPD Principal Planner Henry Stroud.

Grayson provided an introduction to the agenda items.

Rankin provided current land use context and reviewed state requirements for 20-year plans for land use in the urban area, including housing, parks, schools, industrial, etc. Rankin noted that last comprehensive update was in 2016, and the Transportation System Plan was last



updated in 2020. Rankin noted that the City learned lessons about infill and expansion during the last growth plan, for example, that greater coordination is required with BPRD before the City set aside land for parks. Rankin noted that the BPRD plan isn't adopted specifically into the City's Comprehensive Plan, but is included as reference.

Stroud discussed Urban Service Agreement, Goal 8, which requires local governments to plan for the recreation needs of residents and visitors. Stroud recapped the BPRD Comprehensive Plan's adoption in 2018 and update in 2024, which coordinated park search areas with the City's anticipated growth areas, including infill and climate friendly areas.

Rankin noted the City's Growth Plan update will take more than four years of work and will plan land use for the next 20 years. This will lead to an update to the City's Comprehensive Plan, including a community visioning element, and noted that this work will be done in coordination with the public and other agencies.

Rankin noted that the Growth Plan will shape the future of housing, jobs, transportation, equity, accessibility, climate and resiliency. Key planning drivers for the Growth Plan include community input and Council goals, State housing targets, State climate targets, and State-mandated deadlines. Rankin provided data on the housing requirements, which includes planning to accommodate over 34,000 new dwelling units, and specific target levels of affordability. Rankin reviewed consequences if targets are not met.

Stroud reviewed the future BPRD Comprehensive Plan, which is due for a full re-write with adoption in 2028 or 2029. Stroud noted that the plans typically have a 10-year horizon, but are living documents that can involve updates. Community input that will be considered in the future comprehensive plan includes that new parks and trails should be developed in conjunction with new growth, urgent calls for open space preservation, and the importance of trails and connectivity.

Stroud identified the following future collaboration needs between the City and BPRD: Park and trail development in areas with proposed higher density, open space preservation, trail development, and housing program impact to parks funding.

Mayor Kebler suggested centering the discussion around housing needs and goals, their impacts on parks, and the need for support from BPRD. Mayor Kebler asked Council and Board for concerns and ideas for collaboration.

Councilor Franzosa noted that tax and System Development Charges (SDC) exemptions are critical for developers of affordable housing, but recognized that it puts pressure on the Park District. Councilor Franzosa suggested BPRD quantify what amount of exemption to affordable housing is feasible for BPRD, and for the City to work with affordable housing developers to help prioritize what is most needed in the city.



Director Schiffman stated that BPRD does have a limit for exemption capacity and noted that affordable housing is outside of the scope of BPRD. Schiffman suggested creative alternatives.

Councilor Platt recognized that Bend's parks help attract and retain residents, but stated that the problem for the City is the challenge in building housing for 0-60% Area Median Income (AMI) and 60-80% AMI and stated that the City is not close to achieving those housing goals. Councilor Platt stated that housing development for these affordability levels rely on exemptions.

Vice Chair Schneider recognized that this was a difficult topic, but that the community feedback to BPRD prioritizes parks and open space. Vice Chair Schneider echoed Director Schiffman's suggestion of non-monetary collaboration or alternatives to allow cost savings in other areas to free up BPRD funds to support housing. Vice Chair Schneider's suggestions included allocating some Transient Room Tax funds to support BPRD, waiving BPRD permit fees or reducing the City's Transportation Fee to help offset exemption costs.

Councilor Méndez noted that housing exemptions are not asking for existing funds, but foregone funds and felt that housing needs do impact parks and should be considered within the scope of BPRD. Councilor Méndez did not feel that the City could achieve an affordable community without the support of BPRD.

Mayor Kebler felt that both entities receive differing feedback on community priorities. Mayor Kebler suggested bringing some of these topics and suggestions back to the BPRD and City leadership joint group that meets regularly to develop a compromise and come to agreement.

Mayor Pro Tem Perkins suggested defining a joint vision for the community as a starting point with a full understanding of the constraints both bodies are under.

Councilor Riley asked for more information on Tax Increment Financing (TIF) areas and associated park development.

City Manager Eric King shared an example of a development at Murphy Crossing that set aside funding for a park in that area and suggested utilizing this tool in the future.

Councilor Franzosa stated that she does not support Tax Increment Financing exemptions.

Director Hovekamp commented on the BPRD survey results, sharing that 89% of constituents are satisfied with BPRD services and most rate BPRD as the best local government entity, trust BPRD, believe BPRD uses tax money wisely, and oppose tax exemptions. Hovekamp raised issues of fairness around burdens placed on residents and taxpayers supporting new housing.



Hovekamp would like to continue to support affordable housing, but did not feel it should or needs to be at the expense of providing other services.

Board Chair Owens supported the idea of meeting as a smaller group to discuss some of the options.

Mayor Kebler shared that because of BPRD's assistance and City programs, Bend is able to build 10% deed-restricted affordable housing and due to the City's focus on multi-family housing, Bend saw a 4% drop in rent growth since 2023.

2. Transportation System Plan (TSP) Update and Trail System Integration – *Susanna Julber and Henry Stroud (30 min)*

- a. TSP Update: map and trails**
- b. Joint planning efforts**
- c. Transportation Fee**

Julber introduced the City's upcoming update to the Transportation System Plan (TSP). Julber reviewed the 2020 TSP update and noted that it established a system of key routes and low stress networks, included the BPRD Comprehensive Plan by reference, and planned bike/pedestrian system links to existing and planned BPRD trails.

Stroud discussed how BPRD and the City have been coordinating on trail systems. Stroud noted that the 2003 large urban services agreement with the City broadly outlined trail development and planning responsibilities.

Stroud noted that the City's 2020 TSP included more City involvement, particularly in urban trails, which led to the need of the Trail Planning & Maintenance Intergovernmental Agreement to identify which entity is responsible for which trails. Stroud added that BPRD's 2024 Trail Plan update included planned safe trail crossings to help enhance connectivity of the trail system. Stroud noted that BPRD focuses on off-road trails and has worked with the City to plan trail connections through new developments.

Julber outlined how trails are developed, which can be through private development, City Capital Improvement Projects and through Park Capital Improvement Projects. Julber noted the primary method at this time is through master plan development and identified the continued need for collaboration between City and BPRD. Julber added that City and BPRD plan to collaborate in the City's upcoming TSP Plan update, which will include an Agency Advisory Group and continued regular staff level coordination meetings.

Julber and Stroud shared input received from the community regarding trails, which include desire for safety, a variety of trail types (paved and gravel), and e-bike rules. Stroud identified future collaboration needs, including updates to the City's development code to strengthen



trail development, better incorporation of BPRD's trail plan into the City's comprehensive plan, strengthened coordination on project design and connectivity, evaluating e-mobility needs and rules, and updating the Trail Planning and Maintenance IGA to include wayfinding.

Mayor Kebler was supportive of a unified enforcement program to ensure a consistent message around things such as e-bikes and off-leash dogs.

Councilor Riley asked if trail standards will be considered in the City's upcoming roadway design standard review and update process. Grayson responded that the topic of trail design standards will be coming to Council in June 2026, and further considerations regarding code updates, Comprehensive Plan policy and TSP policy will also need to be explored. Grayson confirmed that City staff will collaborate with BPRD.

Director Schiffman expressed appreciation for staff collaboration on recreational immunity.

Councilor Méndez asked BPRD how the City can fill in trail gaps regarding new development. Stroud identified canals as areas for opportunities.

Owens asked about Council's consideration of a partial or full waiver of the Transportation Fee. Mayor Kebler suggested having the small leadership group discuss this.

3. Joint Projects with BPRD and the City – *Various staff, (30 min)*

- a. Riverfront Street**
- b. Drake Park Bridge –IGA preview**
- c. Gilchrist Bridge (Approve IGA)**

Grayson provided an overview of each project, including costs, funding and project statuses.

Grayson noted that Riverfront Street Project funding is slightly below estimated costs, and the City is pursuing grants.

Grayson identified the community need for improvements to the Drake Park Bridge, and staff's recommendation to move forward with improvements with the City funding design and BPRD managing design and accepting ownership following construction. Grayson identified next steps, if both bodies are in support of this direction. Council and Board provided support of moving forward with next steps.

Grayson provided information on Gilchrist Bridge. Grayson noted that this bridge is a critical crossing for the Bend Bikeway and is in need of widening and improvements to meet current standards. City and BPRD staff have drafted an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) for approval by both City Council and BPRD Board. Grayson summarized the specifics



regarding proposed roles and responsibilities of City and BPRD, assigning BPRD to manage project, the City to fund final design and construction, and BPRD to accept ownership.

City of Bend Motion

Councilor Riley moved to authorize an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Bend Park & Recreation District for replacement of the Gilchrist Bridge and the transfer of ownership from the City to the District. Councilor Platt seconded the motion.

The Voice Vote passed 7-0:

Yes: Kebler, Franzosa, Méndez, Norris, Perkins, Platt, Riley

No: none

Bend Park and Recreation District Motion

Director Schiffman moved to authorize the Executive Director to negotiate and execute an Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Bend for replacement of the Gilchrist Bridge and the transfer of ownership from the City to the District. Vice Chair Schneider seconded.

The Voice Vote passed 5-0:

Yes: Owens, Hovekamp, Schiffman, Schneider, Schoen

No: none

Adjourned at 5:32 p.m.



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