



MEETING MINUTES

City Council & Neighborhood Roundtable

Location: Bend Municipal Court, 555 NE 15th Street, Bend, OR

Date: June 12, 2025

Time: 7:00 p.m.

City Council & Neighborhood Roundtable

1. Welcome & Introductions (10 minutes)

Members of City Council and representatives from Neighborhood Districts met in roundtable format to discuss community wildfire concerns. Present from Bend City Council were Mayor Melanie Kebler, Mayor Pro Tem Megan Perkins, Councilor Gina Franzosa, Councilor Ariel Méndez, Councilor Megan Norris, Councilor Mike Riley and Councilor Steve Platt.

2. Purpose & Ground Rules (5 minutes)

3. Menti Poll Results & Discussion (10 minutes)

Neighborhood District representatives discussed the following regarding wildfire:

- evacuation and emergency planning concerns
- neighborhood survey results
- concerns over inadequate codes for home hardening, defensible space and development
- call for more outreach, education and communication
- call for wildfire-related code enforcement
- call for a defensible space support program
- clarification around deadlines for code compliance and impacts for non-compliance.
- challenges for renters around flammable vegetation code compliance

Robin Church, Firewise coordinator, emergency preparedness lead for Summit West Neighborhood District, secretary for Project Wildfire Neighborhood Coalition, and trained assessor, stated that she supports Bend Fire Department and completes wildfire risk assessments for people in the community. Church has completed 68 wildfire assessments this year. Church explained that she evaluates the property, points out vulnerabilities, and prioritizes actions for the residents to take to mitigate risk. Church noted that education is paramount, as is taking personal responsibility for your own home and your community.



Church identified primary steps to take to reduce risk, such as addressing foundation vents, wood fencing, decks and stairs, and flammable vegetation. Church discussed development and transportation considerations that can reduce wildfire risk.

4. Wildfire Risk Considerations in the Bend Municipal Code, Bend Development Code Discussion (15 minutes)

Mayor Kebler asked the participants to identify barriers to making our community more wildfire resilient at the neighborhood level. Barriers included:

- educational barriers
- financial barriers
- lack of communication from County for residents outside Bend City limits
- lack of awareness around alternate driving routes for evacuation in the event of road closures
- need for resources for and specifics on how to harden your home, for example what materials to buy, where to buy, or how to install.
- need for updated fire and vegetation codes
- communication challenges
- need for web resources regarding evacuation routes
- HOAs, CCNRs, deed restrictions, and ARC guidelines that do not align with fire mitigation practices

5. Regional Emergency Planning, Evacuations and Alerts Discussion (15 minutes)

Mayor Kebler asked the participants how do we engage community members around preparedness? Suggestions included:

- involvement of school districts for communication support
- more engagement with younger members in neighborhood districts
- digital presence and accessible information
- having an emergency preparedness lead for each neighborhood district
- video presentations of real-life examples of home hardening
- neighborhood fire risk inspections coordinated by the City
- City presence at neighborhood events to share information or sign people up for Deschutes Alerts

6. Wrap-up (5 minutes)

Councilors shared input.

Councilor Megan Norris spoke about her experience in a Firewise community and suggested making that a requirement for neighborhoods.

Ariel Méndez supported the idea of fast-tracking certain code updates.

Mayor Pro Tem Perkins supported the idea of improved communication.



Councilor Steve Platt was supportive of removing financial barriers for home hardening.

Councilor Mike Riley was supportive of communication, education and moving assertively on code updates.

Councilor Franzosa saw this as an opportunity to elevate neighborhood districts and build community.

Mayor Kebler appreciated the feedback regarding addressing flammable vegetation code for renters.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ashley Bontje, City Recorder



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