



July 31, 2020

Dear Mayor Russell and City Councilors:

Thank you for your continued work during these difficult times. We are grateful for the partnership between the Bend Chamber and the City of Bend in collaborating to serve our businesses and community. Although COVID has taken much of our energy and focus, the Bend City Council's attention to managing our ongoing growth remains critical.

We understand that council is considering sending the transportation bond to voters. The Bend Chamber Board of Directors supports a decision to place it on the November ballot. We see the bond, and the transportation work it will finance, as essential to managing the continued growth of Bend, and believe our transportation connectivity and safety would be greatly improved with its passage.

As part of the GOBend2020 Coalition, we have reviewed the public poll and conducted outreach that indicates significant support from the community to place the bond on the November ballot. We also know that Bend businesses are looking to the City Council for leadership that both acknowledges the difficulties so many are facing, while addressing issues related to a city that is growing despite these difficulties. Further, the passage of this bond will create jobs and economic activity that will result in long-term transportation benefits to all citizens of Bend.

We also believe it is important to listen to community voices on the human impacts of the virus. We agree with the coalition that while there is wide support for a transportation bond, it is prudent and responsive to delay the first tax increase until the fall of 2022 to allow the community and businesses to recover. Designing and constructing the many projects included in this bond will take a great deal of preparation, often taking many months before a project can begin. We believe a delay in implementing this tax will not overly impact construction of projects included in the bond package, as preparation work can continue with an approved bond.

To conclude, the Bend Chamber supports placing the transportation bond on the November ballot, with tax collection beginning in 2022. We stand ready to assist in advocating for its importance to managing growth, creating jobs and improving Bend's transportation challenges.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katy Brooks", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Katy Brooks, CEO