



March 3, 2021

Mayor Sally Russell  
Bend City Councilors  
Delivery via E-mail

Mayor Russell and Council Members,

On behalf of the Bend Chamber's 1,300 members, we appreciate the opportunity to work with you and City staff to collaborate on shared goals and initiatives. The Bend Chamber has a long history of working alongside with our local government agencies and we look forward to continuing that relationship. We are writing to request that Council considers expanding upon economic recovery, resiliency and planning in your future goals, and moreover offer our continued partnership.

As you know, there are many businesses in Bend who have been greatly impacted by COVID, requiring changes in how they operate and services to customers that has resulted in loss of income to themselves and those who work for them. Addressing these challenges and the long-term impacts to our local economy will take time and attention, and the Chamber looks forward to partnering with Council to develop a path forward.

The Chamber applauds the inclusion of Goal #5 in the draft framework: *"Cultivate tomorrow's economy to assure that we are creating opportunity for all community members to equitably share in Bend's prosperity."* The business community in Bend has a rich history and entrepreneurial spirit to draw from as we define our future. Developing the Central District and creating a new Innovation District are two examples of investments from both public and private sectors in Bend, and the Chamber is well positioned to be a bridge to those conversations. We look forward to expanding upon this goal to also include tactical milestones upon which to measure success.

Much like the City, the Chamber has principles and strategic goals to guide our work and engagement in policy initiatives.

- *Assist in the recovery of Bend's businesses and employees related to the COVID-19 pandemic*
- *Increase the supply of workforce housing to support Bend's growing population*
- *Economic vitality, workforce development and innovation that lead to a vibrant business community*
- *A diverse, equitable and inclusive workforce and business community*
- *Access to affordable, high-quality child care for infants, toddlers and preschool age children*

- *Environmental sustainability and economic health*

Within these strategic goals lie many opportunities to create thoughtful and proactive public policy with a focus on equity and inclusivity for the entire Bend community. A healthy and vibrant community needs a healthy and vibrant business community to provide jobs and the economic backbone for shared prosperity. The Chamber and our small business members - your friends and neighbors - are that economic engine that can help propel the City forward and make progress on our shared policy initiatives.

In the coming months and years, we look forward to continuing our partnership with the City on projects both large and small, which will ultimately ensure Bend remains a unique and inspiring place for all of its residents.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katy Brooks", is positioned to the left of a vertical line that extends downwards.

Katy Brooks  
President + CEO  
Bend Chamber of Commerce