



April 21, 2021

Mayor Sally Russell
Bend City Councilors
Delivery via E-mail

Mayor Russell and Council Members,

The Bend Chamber of Commerce is pleased to submit this letter in support of the changes to the City's Room Tax to allow the use of tourism funds for tourism-related facilities. The Chamber represents over 1,650 small and medium sized businesses through the region, many of which are in hospitality and tourism sectors.

Our region is blessed with significant natural recreation amenities that add to the desire to visit and recreate in Bend and Central Oregon. Our trails, rivers and lakes are a significant draw and help define our identity as a premier outdoor destination. Ongoing maintenance and improvements to these natural recreation sites is key to their sustainability, and we appreciate the foresight of tourism stakeholders in recognizing this ongoing need.

The Chamber has participated in the conversations with stakeholders, including our members, as well as the Bend Economic Development Advisory Board (BEDAB) and support their recommendation to broaden the definition for allowable uses of the City's room tax. We support the change as it brings our local policies in line with other communities around the state that utilize room tax revenue for both tourism promotion and tourism related amenities.

With this important change comes a great opportunity to invest in different parts our community, and we hope the Council takes a holistic look at the variety of tourism related amenities and facilities. We feel there is the potential to use a portion of these funds to expand our current tourism related amenities and create more space for special events to draw tourism to the Downtown District and throughout the City boundaries.

We thank City Council members for bringing this important issue forward and appreciate the months of work done to get to this point. Chamber leadership looks forward to continuing to work collaboratively to support our business community and promote Bend as a premier destination for outdoor recreation and tourism.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katy Brooks". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned to the left of a vertical line.

Katy Brooks
President + CEO
Bend Chamber of Commerce

Creating an environment where businesses, their employees and our community excel together through collaboration, advocacy, resources and leadership to meet Bend's business challenges.