



CITY OF BEND

BEND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD

Subject: MINUTES

Meeting date: May 17, 2016

The Bend Economic Development Advisory Board held its regular meeting on Tuesday, May 17, 2016 in the Council Chambers at 710 NW Wall, Bend, OR. The meeting was called to order at 8:03 AM by Vice Chair Schultz.

Those present included:

Committee:

Erich Schultz
Dale VanValkenburg
Van Lewing
Katie Tank
Wendy McGrane
Tom Rowley
Jamie Christman
Doug LaPlaca
Steve Curley

Guests: Roger Lee, EDCO; Damon Runberg, Regional Economist with the Oregon Employment Department; Keith Dodge, Keith Dodge, CPA

Staff: Carolyn Eagan, Economic Development Director; Ben Hemson, Bend Business Advocate; Kathy Montgomery, Administrative Specialist

Overview and Goals of Meeting

Carolyn Eagan recapped her presentation at City Council in which she explained Economic Development and industry sectors and tried to flush out what outcomes Council wanted. The goal of this BEDAB meeting and the second meeting in June is to come up with a final recommended set of goals to present to Council.

Employment & Economic Trends

Damon Runberg, Regional Economist with the Oregon Employment Department, shared data for Bend and Deschutes County. Damon touched on the growth rate of Bend and the county in terms of population and the labor force. Unemployment numbers are very low. He noted that it is difficult to attract businesses because the available labor force is so low. Affordability is also an issue. It was noted that local colleges and universities will hopefully matriculate students who can be hired locally. Question was asked as to whether downtown data can be broken out by broad industry – retail/hospitality/other.

Measuring Outcomes

Discussion regarding outcome and performance measures. Make sure measuring what you have an effect on. Separate economic cycles from policy. Make sure outcome is measurable, readily available

and timely. It was noted that economic development does not create jobs, it facilitates businesses making it easier for business to create or keep jobs.

What is the City's role? Role is to get infrastructure in place so businesses can build on land. BEDAB's role is to get Council to understand they need to facilitate businesses. It was noted that density is important. Question was brought up asking at what point is economic development is no longer needed or maybe even having a negative impact.

Here population growth is driving job growth, unlike states with energy jobs which draw the population. Here jobs are need to support the population. Affordable housing was mentioned as a concern.

Need to identify tools in the toolbox, our spheres of influence and focus on those areas. What BEDAB can do is to influence council especially in terms of UGB and land use. Make policy recommendation so that businesses are accommodated with friendly policies and infrastructure is in place. Carolyn Eagan stated that we must be ready. She noted the example of Juniper Ridge and the lack of industrial sites. Roger Lee commented there is a lack of vacancy for businesses and noted the increasing rates.

It was suggested to research the difference between tax revenues of residential versus industrial/commercial and relationship to percentage of land. Might want to ask tax accessor if data can be pulled. Carolyn Eagan mentioned that the City is sending mixed messages. Especially in the downtown core. UGB will provide more certainty. Development costs are unknown due to use changes. Need to change business processes and adopt technology.

Review of Proposed Economic Development Outcomes and Group Discussion

Carolyn Eagan asked if any goals are unnecessary, not strong enough or missing. Erich Schultz asked about the right balance – increase wages versus availability of workers. Wendy McGrane said she feels the bottom three (increase density of employment lands, increase number of jobs and companies at the Bend Airport, and develop and expand Downtown to maintain employment and density superiority). They will affect the top two (increase average wage in Bend and increase the percent of jobs in non-service sector industries). Doug LaPlaca mentioned a goal of finding ways to have the tourism industry support the infrastructure they are burdening. Fund needs with tourism dollars as they do in Park City and Ashland. Doug also mentioned the link between visitors and economic development. Mentioned the Bridge Campaign and how it might want to be resurrected. Katie Tank wants to keep the goal of increasing jobs in non-service sector industries.

Carolyn Eagan will revise language for next time.

City Council Meeting and Climate Action Ordinance

Ben Hemson mentioned that the working session of City Council on May 18th will include a draft of a climate action ordinance which poses new requirements on city and business as well as new city staff and commission. Need to spread the word and attend if possible and slow down the process so there is input by the business community.

Ben Hemson will draft a letter for Erich Schultz to sign on BEDAB's behalf.

Adjournment

Vice Chair Schultz adjourned the meeting at 10:09 AM.