



Board Meeting Summary

March 17, 2026

District Office Building | 799 SW Columbia | Bend, Oregon



BOARD PRESENT

- Cary Schneider
- Deb Schoen
- Donna Owens
- Jodie Schiffman
- Nathan Hovekamp

Summary of March 17 Bend Park & Recreation District–City of Bend Joint Board Meeting

The BPRD board of directors and the Bend city council met jointly on March 17 to coordinate on growth planning, transportation and trails, and shared capital projects affecting parks, mobility and riverfront access across the city. A [video recording](#) is available.

Coordinating for Growth and Housing

City and BPRD staff reviewed Bend’s ongoing update to its 20-year Comprehensive Growth Plan, known as *One Bend. Built Together.*, which integrates land use, transportation, equity and climate planning. City officials outlined state housing requirements showing Bend must plan for more than 34,000 new housing units across income levels. BPRD highlighted how rapid growth increases demand for parks, trails and open space, and emphasized early coordination so new neighborhoods include access to recreation and connected trail systems. Discussion included potential tools such as tax exemptions, system development charge (SDC) exemptions, tax increment financing, and code updates to help align housing goals with park and trail investments.

Transportation System Plan and Trails

Staff provided an update on the City’s Transportation System Plan (TSP) and how it integrates with BPRD’s comprehensive trail planning. The focus is on expanding a low-stress network for walking and biking, improving trail connectivity, and coordinating maintenance responsibilities under existing intergovernmental agreements. BPRD board and city council members discussed future collaboration needs, including unified design standards, wayfinding and addressing

emerging issues such as e-mobility use on trails. Funding and policy implications of the City's transportation fee were also part of the discussion.

Joint Capital Projects

Several collaborative joint projects were reviewed.

- The Riverfront Street project, the last unimproved section of the Deschutes River Trail through downtown, is advancing through design while partners pursue additional construction funding.
- For the Drake Park pedestrian bridge, the city and BPRD expressed shared interest in replacement, with the city potentially funding design and BPRD managing the project and accepting future ownership.

Gilchrist Bridge Action

The primary action item of the joint meeting was approval of an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) for replacement of the Gilchrist Bridge, a key pedestrian and bicycle crossing over the Deschutes River. The agreement authorizes BPRD to manage design and construction, incorporates a bridge replacement into a nearby Columbia Park riverbank restoration project, and transfers ownership and long-term maintenance from the city to BPRD after completion.

The city would fund project costs not to exceed \$1.48 million. Both boards approved motions to negotiate and sign the agreement, marking a significant step toward improving safety and connectivity along the Bend Bikeway and Deschutes River Trail system.

Councilor Riley made a motion “to authorize an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Bend Park & Recreation District for replacement of the Gilchrist Bridge and the transfer of ownership from the City to the District.” Councilor Platt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Director Schiffman made a motion to authorize the Executive Director to finalize and execute an Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Bend for replacement of the Gilchrist Bridge and the transfer of ownership from the City to the District. Director Schneider seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 5-0. (Owens, Schneider, Schoen, Schiffman, Hovekamp)

The next BPRD board of directors meeting is on April 7.