



Mayor Melanie Kebler  
Bend City Council  
710 NW Wall Street  
Bend, OR 97702

Mayor Kebler and City Council Members,

On behalf of the Bend Chamber, thank you for the opportunity to participate in last week's electrification policy roundtable. We appreciate the City's commitment to a thoughtful and collaborative process, and we value the opportunity to engage in this important discussion.

We share the City's climate goals and offer the following perspectives to help ensure this policy is implemented in a way that is data-driven, sequenced appropriately, and responsive to Bend's local conditions.

First, housing affordability must remain a central consideration. More than half of Bend's workforce currently commutes into the city, largely due to the high cost of housing, which contributes significantly to transportation-related emissions. At the same time, the electrification fee is being considered alongside other policies, including wildfire hardening requirements and the Tree Code, that also increase the cost of housing. Even at reduced levels, the proposed fee adds approximately \$2,000 per home. We are concerned about the cumulative impact of these policies on housing production and affordability and encourage Council to evaluate and sequence these decisions holistically rather than in isolation.

Second, we strongly support the inclusion of a pilot program in advance of full implementation. The proposed 2028 timeline provides an opportunity to establish a public-private partnership with the development community to better understand real-world impacts. A local pilot would allow the City to evaluate construction costs, long-term homeowner costs, and emissions outcomes using Bend-specific data. This approach would support more effective, outcome-oriented policymaking while reducing the risk of unintended consequences.

Third, we appreciate the City's consideration of exemptions and flexibility within the policy framework. We encourage aligning exemptions with existing housing policies, including consideration of households in the 80–120% AMI range, in addition to deed-restricted affordable housing. We also support exemptions for dual-fuel systems and renewable natural gas, as these technologies provide practical and innovative pathways to reduce emissions while maintaining reliability and affordability. Additionally, we recommend including a sunset or review provision to allow the policy to be evaluated and adjusted over time based on performance and emerging data.

Finally, we encourage continued coordination with utilities to better understand grid capacity, infrastructure readiness, and the current energy mix. Electrification outcomes are closely tied to these factors, and ensuring reliability and meaningful emissions reductions will be critical to the policy's success.

We appreciate the City's leadership and look forward to continuing to work collaboratively to advance solutions that support both climate goals and housing affordability in Bend.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sara Odendahl", with a stylized, flowing script.

Sara Odendahl  
CEO  
Bend Chamber