



Quick Facts: Deschutes Civic Assembly on Youth Homelessness

Deschutes County sits at a socio-political crossroads, and in many ways is a microcosm of our country's cultural divides. Bend is also one of the fastest growing cities in the United States with a population that has nearly doubled since 2000 - and is forecast to do so again in the next 30 years. Accompanying this is the fourth highest cost of living growth rate in the country, and a level of income inequality in the top 12% among all cities nationally in 2022. Furthermore, Central Oregon suffers from among the highest rates of homelessness among youth and families in the country. These numbers have risen dramatically since 2020, according to a 2022 report from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development ([pages 44, 53, 56](#)).

Many jurisdictions have tried and failed to address this issue. This year, elected officials in Bend and Deschutes County have asked residents to assemble, study the issue and develop effective solutions in a manner which will build trust and strengthen democracy. The Civic Assembly on Youth Homelessness will present its recommendations to the Central Oregon Youth Action Board, Deschutes County, and the City of Bend - all of whom will publicly discuss and consider implementation of the Assembly's recommendations.

A Citizens' Assembly is a group of people selected by lottery who are broadly representative of a community. They spend significant time learning and collaborating through facilitated deliberation to find common ground and form collective recommendations for policymakers, decision-makers, and the community. These Assemblies are sometimes

called Citizens' Juries, Panels, or Councils depending on their size and the country where they are taking place.

The Deschutes Civic Assembly on Youth Homelessness consists of **30 assembly members** selected by democratic lottery (sortition) to form a representative cross-section of the community, **5 days** of in-depth deliberation in September and October 2024, and **\$105/day stipends** and expense reimbursements for child/adult care.

When and Where

First weekend:

Saturday, September 14 - 9:00am-4:00pm

Sunday, September 15 - 9:00am-4:00pm

Second weekend:

Friday, October 4 - 9:00am-3:00pm

Saturday, October 5 - 9:00am-3:00pm

Sunday, October 6 - 9:00am-3:00pm

Edward J. Ray Hall, Atrium

Oregon State University–Cascades

1500 SW Chandler Ave

Bend, OR 97702

OSU Campus Map

Parking is free at OSU–Cascades on weekends

Media Orientation — first weekend

Media observers are required to attend an in-person orientation at **8 a.m. on Saturday, September 14 at Edward J. Ray Hall** to coordinate interviews and ensure robust media access to the deliberations without jeopardizing the integrity of the process or anyone's privacy. COCAP Director Josh Burgess and DemocracyNext Founder/CEO Claudia Chwalisz will be in attendance to take any initial questions.

Media observers are also encouraged to attend an informal dinner social with members of Assembly staff at **6:30pm at The Grove** on Saturday and Sunday.

Members of the media will play a vital role in bringing greater transparency and visibility to the work of the Assembly, which cannot succeed without support from outside the Assembly itself — linking the “mini-public” to the wider public.

The following is information about media, photos and video, tech-enhanced recordings and minors, which has *already been shared with Assembly delegates* via email:

Media Contacts

Local and national news media have expressed interest in the Civic Assembly on Youth Homelessness. Delegates may have the opportunity to be interviewed by journalists, researchers, or others interested in learning more about Civic Assemblies. Delegates are under no obligation to speak to news media (or anyone else) about their experience as a Delegate, and should not speak on behalf of the Assembly unless asked to do so by the Assembly as a whole. However, if you are willing to share your individual experience with the press, please feel free to do so. There will be a sign-up sheet for those willing to be interviewed.

Photo & Video Release

To enhance public transparency, the front of the room at the Assembly will be live-streamed on YouTube – so that presenters can be recorded. Delegates will not be in the field of view of the camera unless they choose to be, but Delegates’ voices will be audible in the live-stream broadcast whenever they speak into a microphone when the full Assembly is meeting. Work in small groups will never be broadcast.

In addition, photos and videos may be taken throughout the process to allow us to share the story of Civic Assemblies. A Photo and Video Release form is attached to this email, and printed forms will also be available the first day of the Assembly. If you do not wish to sign this form, you may still participate in the Assembly. We will attempt to avoid you when taking photos and videos, and we will check later that anyone who declined to sign a Release is removed from our files after the fact.

Academic Research

As an innovative democratic process, Civic Assemblies are of interest to academic researchers. This research adds to the public understanding of Assemblies, and provides insights that allow us to improve the process. Researchers from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)’s Center for Constructive Communication (CCC), OSU–Cascades’

Laboratory for the American Conversation, and CalPoly–Humboldt’s Community Action, Innovation and Research for New Societies (CAIRNS) Lab are involved in this project. As a Delegate, you will be asked to participate in surveys about your experience. Portions of the Assembly will be recorded for the purposes of the CCC’s research on “tech-enhanced” deliberative Assemblies. While you are not required to participate in the research, we hope you will be willing to contribute your perspectives. Consent forms are attached to this email describing the MIT research. There is one for adults and one for minors. Please review these forms, as you will be asked to fill them out on the first day of the Assembly if you are willing to participate.

Minors

Young people have a lot to contribute to important discussions about the future of our community. As you know, the democratic lottery for this Assembly was open to Deschutes County residents aged 16 and up, and we are excited to welcome a number of young Delegates to the Assembly. If you are under 18, your parent or guardian will need to sign a number of consent forms on your behalf, including permission to participate in the Assembly, a photo/video release, and consent forms related to research. There are two options for how they can do this:

- *Option 1: Your parent or guardian may come with you on the first day of the Assembly. Forms will be available in person and should only take a few minutes to fill out..*
- *Option 2: Your parent or guardian may fill out these forms beforehand. You may then either bring them with you on the first day of the Assembly or send them by email to grace@healthydemocracy.org. The consent forms are attached to this email.*

Parents and guardians (and anyone else!) may observe the Assembly from the public gallery at any time, but there are no requirements that they attend with you. In addition, family and friends will not be offered special privileges or access to the Assembly, except when specially arranged with project staff for accessibility or other reasons.

An Observer Gallery will be open to the public at all times:

- Saturday, September 14 | 9am-4pm
- Sunday, September 15 | 9am-4pm
- Friday, October 4 | 9am-3pm
- Saturday, October 5 | 9am-3pm
- Sunday, October 6 | 9am-3pm

Additionally, many frequently asked questions are posed and answered on the COCAP website in our FAQ section.

Food, Lodging and Accommodations near OSU-Cascades

Lodging:

- [Hotel Peppertree](#)
- [Tetherow](#)
- [Pine Ridge Inn](#)
- [Bend, OR Lodging Directory - Visit Central Oregon](#)

Food & Drink:

- Coffee
 - [Dilly Dally Coffee Co.](#)
 - [Still Vibrato Coffee Co.](#)
 - [Kevista Coffee](#)
- Breakfast
 - [The Original Pancake House](#)
 - [Life & Time - free range fast food](#)
 - [Jackson's Corner](#)
- Lunch & Dinner
 - [Pacific Pizza & Brew](#)
 - [Lifty's](#)
 - [Dear Mom](#)
- Happy Hour
 - [Peppertree Pub](#)
 - [The Flamingo Room](#)
 - [10 Barrel Brewing Westside](#)
- [Bend, OR Food & Drink Directory - Visit Central Oregon](#)

Transportation:

- [Cascade East Transit - Public Bus System](#)
- [Wheel Fun Rentals - Electric Bike Rentals](#)

Questions?

Please contact Ansel Herz, DemocracyNext Communications Director:

Call or text 206-841-8186

ansel@demnext.org

