

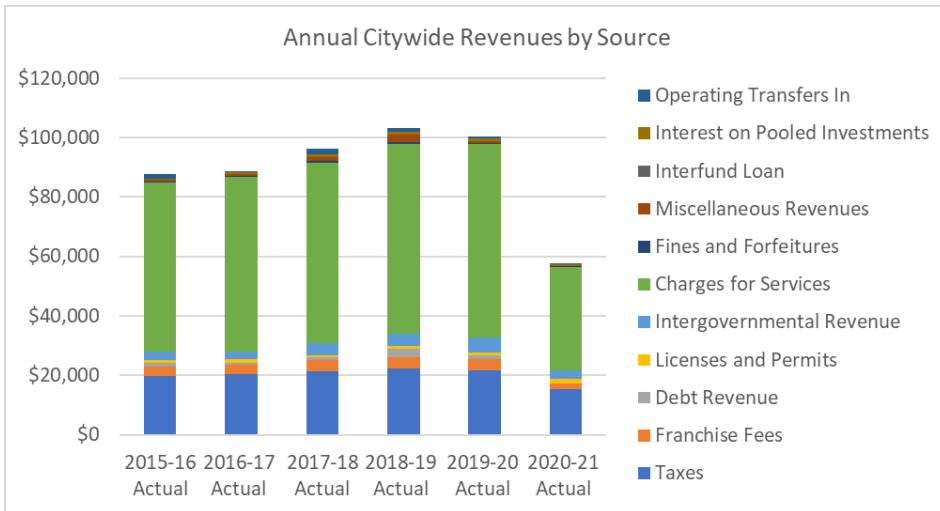
CITY OF ASHLAND

City Source

February 2021

FINANCES OF CITY SERVICES

Now that we've reviewed the City's financial structure, i.e. how funds are used to account for the money and operations, let's review the resources that are used to deliver City services.



Most of the City's revenues are charges for service within the Enterprise Funds including water, sewer, electric, stormwater, and fiber network, comprising near 65 percent of the total. Taxes are the second largest revenue source overall at almost 22 percent of City-wide revenues. The actual figures for fiscal year (FY) 2020-21 represent five months of activity compared with the five full years prior. Because revenues and expenditures are accounted for by fund, often due to legal restrictions, it is important to look at the breakdown of resources within the fund structure (See Annual City Revenues by Fund on page 2).

The General Fund includes the revenues and expenditures associated with the most traditional municipal services including Police, Fire, and Community Development, and totals just under \$35 million for FY2019-20. The General Fund is supported mostly by taxes, 54% of revenues coming from property taxes, similar to many cities in the United States. Of this, almost \$5.4 million in property taxes is transferred to the Ashland Parks Commission for dedicated parks support. Property owners within the Ashland City limits have a property tax rate \$4.4640 per \$1,000 of assessed value to the City of Ashland. *Continued on page 2...*

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STAY UPDATED ON THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Please note that City offices are still physically closed to the public. Staff is available to provide assistance over the phone, email and with limited appointments as needed. Go to the City Directory at www.ashland.or.us/contactus.asp to find contact information for each Department.

To help ease concern over the COVID-19 pandemic and spread correct information, the City has created a webpage ashland.or.us/coronavirus with the most up-to-date information from the Federal, State, County, and City governments. The webpage includes information on:

Prevention and Health—links to the CDC, Oregon Health Authority, and Jackson County Health and Human Services.

City Government Updates—including current City closures and how to attend virtual meetings and events.

Current Restrictions—offering a timeline of the Governor's orders including mandated closures.

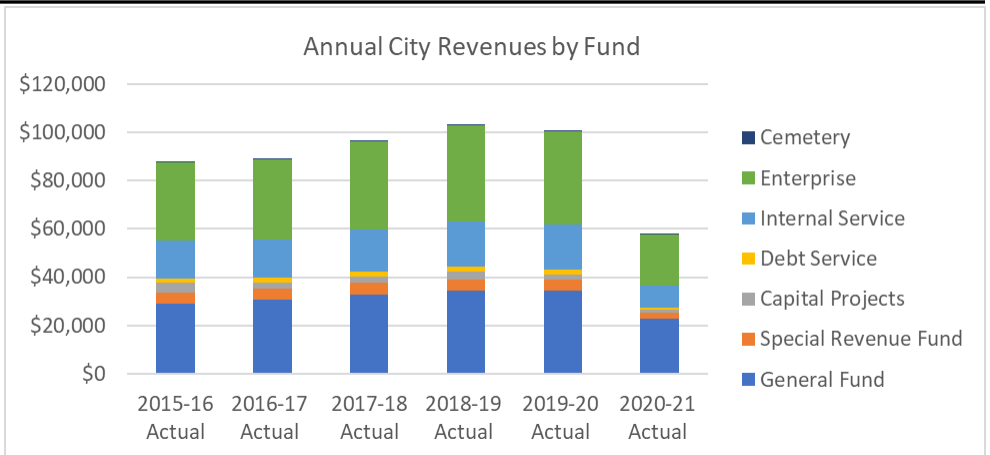
Local & Business Resources—where affected businesses and locals can go for help and information on how to support local businesses and organizations.



FINANCES OF CITY SERVICES

(continued from page 1)

This total includes 4.2865 for the general levy and 0.1035 for Fire Station No.1 General Obligation Bond and 0.0740 for Fire Station No. 2 General Obligation Bond. The remaining components of the overall property tax assessment goes to other governmental entities throughout Jackson County including the Ashland School District, Rogue Community College, Jackson County and others. The City of Ashland charges a 25 percent tax on electric bill. The electric utility tax has been in place since 1976 and relies on the utility usage of businesses and residents and can fluctuate depending on the weather experienced each year. It generates around \$3.3 million annually. Charges for Service represent the next largest source of revenues for the General Fund, approximately \$5.4 million. These charges are for services provided to individuals and includes ambulance billing, recreation, and planning, building, and zoning activities.



The Enterprise Funds make up the next large group of activities and include the utilities functions such as Water, Sewer, Electric, and Fiber Network. Because these services are directly paid for by users, expenditures and revenues are closely tied together and are affected by demand, weather, and long-term capital investments. Every few years, the City conducts a rate study to evaluate that the rates and the rate structure are appropriate and reflect the actual needs of the systems as well as the distribution of revenues from user groups. It is important to ensure that the system can meet customers' demands for services through effective operations, adequate capital investment, and compliance with regulatory standards. In addition, rates need to reflect the true cost of services, so each

user group pays according to the cost of providing the service to that group and subsidies between customer classes are avoided.

There are a number of revenues that are specific to their uses and include grants and specialty fees and taxes. These include the Gas Tax which is dedicated to street maintenance in the Streets Fund, grants in the CDBG Fund (Community Development Block Grant), grants and service fees in the Airport Fund, and transfers to support debt and internal services. Spread across several funds, Food & Beverage (F&B) and Transient Occupancy (TOT) taxes vary significantly with the economic conditions and behaviors, generating around \$3 million in FY2007 to a peak of just over \$6 million in FY2018-19 with a decline to \$4.9 million for FY2019-20. These two sources are restricted by state law and local ordinance in their use for parks, wastewater debt, streets, and tourism with limited flexibility for other activities. Please check out the City's current and historical revenue information at the City's website under the Finance Department using the OpenGov button or ashlandor.opengov.com/transparency#.

ADAPT YOUR HOME

Coming this spring is the Adapt Your Home campaign. This campaign focuses on taking climate action at home and in the community. Each month will focus on a different topic, ranging from responsible consumption, preparedness, reducing fossil fuel emissions, and renewable energy. The campaign will run from March to June. Check the city calendar for event details.

CLIMATE ACTION STORIES

Building a sustainable Ashland requires action at home and in the community. The Climate Action Stories project is focused on sharing empowering stories to inspire and connect with your neighbors. This is open to individuals and businesses that reside in Ashland. Our goal is to have a collection of local stories that highlight positive climate action. To share how you take climate action, fill out this form - <https://form.jotform.com/210066609409151>. We will be sharing these stories on our website and social media.



QUICK TIPS TO REDUCE YOUR WILDFIRE RISK REMOVE BARK MULCH!



For the next three months, we will feature three proven ways to reduce the wildfire risk to your home.

Remove bark mulch from the first five feet of any structure on your property. During a wildfire, embers will fall on your landscaping. Embers landing in bark mulch will easily ignite the mulch and then carry fire to anything the bark touches, making it very important that bark mulch is not placed in contact with your home or anything that attaches to your home, like decks and fences. Raking bark mulch five feet away from these structures is a good first step, but removal from your property entirely is better, to completely remove the source of wildfire fuel.



Instead, within the first five feet of your home, use rock, gravel, pavers or bare earth. This area does not need to be void of plants. Use popular fire-resistant plants like Rhododendron or Coffeeberry planted with space between them so they do not grow densely together as they mature. Use the visual below for mature fire resistant plant spacing within the first 5 feet of the home.



Once you've completed this work or other wildfire risk reduction projects around your property, report the completed effort at fireadaptedashland.org/myhome. If you live in Ashland city limits, you should have received a postcard in July 2020 with an ID code to access your home's unique wildfire risk information on this

website. Once logged in, you can request a reassessment of your home after you have completed wildfire risk reduction work. If you cannot find your postcard, contact wildfire@ashland.or.us and we will provide you with the access code to your property.

SAVING SPACE FOR ASHLAND'S WILDLIFE AT NORTH MOUNTAIN PARK AND BEYOND

Ashland is a great town for parks. The APRC now oversees approximately 800 acres of designated parks and open spaces. If you live in Ashland, there is most certainly a space to get outside, less than a five minute drive or walk from your house. You can choose your own adventure at parks with long grassy fields, playgrounds, hiking trails, tidy landscapes or wild, un-manicured spaces.

North Mountain Park (NMP) has a lucky combination of all of these things. With play fields, gardens, and walking paths, it is managed to offer a diverse recreational experience, while balancing the needs of visitors with the needs of local wildlife. Its proximity to Bear Creek, creates many opportunities to see wildlife, which is why dogs aren't allowed.

North Mountain Park is one of only two parks in the entire Ashland park system (Lithia Park is the other), that does not allow dogs, in order to protect resident wildlife. "The whole park?" people often ask. Yes, the whole park.

As it turns out, animals don't really see the boundaries between the wild habitat we maintain for them, and the manicured, high-use areas. Although the paved path that dissects the park and large, grass, play-fields may not seem like "habitat", many of the animals of North Mountain Park cross back and forth over open land and back into the wilder spaces in the park.

Big grass fields provide a wide open hunting and foraging space for nocturnal animals such as rodents, bobcats, foxes, owls or other nighttime predators. In fact, some animals don't even need the cover of darkness. In the spring, killdeer (adorable little ground-foraging birds) love the play fields for raising their young and we often see baby birds running across the field in the middle of the day. *Continued on page 4...*



SAVING SPACE FOR ASHLAND'S WILDLIFE AT NORTH MOUNTAIN PARK AND BEYOND

(continued from page 3)

Even the best intentioned dog-owners, who keep their dogs on the path, on a leash, and pick up after their pets, can't prevent the impact that the presence of their dogs can cause for wildlife species. Most people would never let their dog chase wildlife but pet waste can spread diseases that can kill certain species. And although it's not lethal, the scent-marking of dogs can stress wildlife enough to reduce the available habitat they need to find food and care for their young.

For park visitors, this can also translate into fewer wildlife sightings. The possibility of viewing wildlife while walking the trails is just one of the things that makes the natural area at NMP so special. Visitors get the sense that they are visiting an oasis of wildness while still in city limits, and the animals get a small refuge in an increasingly developed landscape.

Of course, you love your pup and they deserve to be happy too! Although NMP does not allow dogs, Ashland has more than 20 other parks and open spaces that welcome your dog with open arms! To learn more about these parks, visit ashland.or.us/dogfriendly or just leave your sweet dog at home and come see what's living in North Mountain Park.

EVENTS

Due to COVID-19 and social distancing measures in place, many of our events may need to be canceled or postponed.

Gentle Yoga for Adults 50 & Better

The focus of this one-hour hatha yoga class is to increase strength, flexibility and balance while simultaneously alleviating stress and fatigue. Additional benefits of regular yoga practice include an overall sense of well-being and an increase in self-awareness and self-acceptance. Participants must be aware of their own capabilities in order to participate safely. Ability to get up and down from the floor is encouraged. Each class will conclude with deep relaxation. Please have a mat, two blankets and a light-weight portable chair for each Zoom class. Taught by Linda-Grace Wilhelm. Register for one or both sessions at ashland.or.us/register or call the Senior Center at (541) 488-5342. A Zoom link will be emailed before the start of classes.

DATES Session 5: Wednesdays, March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31
Session 6: Fridays, March 5, 12, 19, 26

TIME 10:30 to 11:30 AM

PLACE Online (Zoom)

COST \$25 (Session 5; 5 classes) or \$20 (Session 6; 4 classes)

Check out this and past versions of the City Source online anytime at ashland.or.us/citysource.

For more information on different ways to "Connect with Us" go to ashland.or.us/connect.



CITY OF ASHLAND

20 East Main St., Ashland, OR 97520 | www.ashland.or.us

Check out how Ashland connects at www.ashlandfiber.net



March City Calendar

Due to COVID-19 and social distancing measures in place, many meetings might be canceled or held electronically. Please check ashland.or.us/calendar.asp for updates.

City Council

Business Meeting: Mar. 2 & 16 | 6 p.m.

Study Session: Mar. 1 & 15 | 5:30 p.m.

Airport Commission

March 2 | 9:30 a.m.

Conservation & Climate Outreach Commission

March 24 | 3 p.m.

Climate Policy Commission

March 11 | 4 p.m.

Forest Lands Commission

March 9 | 5:30 p.m.

Historic Commission

March 3 | 6 p.m.

Housing and Human Services Commission

March 25 | 4 p.m.

Parks and Recreation Commission

Business Meeting: Mar. 10 | 6:00 p.m.

Study Session: March 3 | 6 p.m.

Planning Commission

Business Meeting: March 9 | 7 p.m.

Study Session: March 23 | 7 p.m.

Public Art Commission

March 19 | 8:30 a.m.

Transportation Commission

March 18 | 6 p.m.

Tree Commission

March 4 | 6 p.m.

Wildfire Safety Commission

March 17 | 11 a.m.

▲ TTY 1-800-735-2900 ▲ Meetings are held electronically until further notice. Please check ashland.or.us/calendar.asp for information on how to view the meetings live or watch a recorded version. ▲ City Council, Parks, and Planning meetings are broadcast live on channel 9. Charter Communications customers will find city meetings on channels 180 and 181. Meetings also stream live on the internet at rvtv.sou.edu, select channel RVTV Prime.

