



Council Business Meeting

March 5, 2024

Agenda Item	Second Reading of Ordinance 3232, an ordinance adopting amendments to the Parks and Open Space Map.		
From	Brandon Goldman Leslie Eldridge	Community Development Director Interim Parks Director	
Contact	Brandon.Goldman@ashland.or.us Leslie.eldridge@ashland.or.us	541-552-2076 541-552-2251	
Item Type	Requested by Council <input type="checkbox"/> Update <input type="checkbox"/> Request for Direction <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input type="checkbox"/> Consent <input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing <input type="checkbox"/> New Business <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Old Business <input type="checkbox"/>		

SUMMARY

Second Reading and adoption of Ordinance #3232 to adopt the proposed Park, Trails, and Open Space Map as an official map in support of the Ashland Comprehensive Plan’s ‘Parks, Open Space, and Aesthetics’ element (Chapter VIII).

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED

Statewide Planning Goal 8: Recreational Needs recommends that local jurisdictions inventory recreation needs and opportunities, and develop long range plans and action programs to meet the recreational needs. Cities and counties are allowed but not required to amend acknowledged comprehensive plans to address Parks and Open space needs.

Chapter VIII Parks, Open Space, and Aesthetics of the *Ashland Comprehensive Plan* includes a goal: **“To provide the people of Ashland with a variety, quantity and quality of parks, park facilities, open spaces, trails, and visual resources sufficient for their needs.”** In addition, the following policies specifically address the planning for parks, trails and open space.

- **Policy 6:** The City shall adopt an official map that will identify the planned areas for parks, new natural areas, conservation areas and trails.
- **Policy 7:** Develop the system of corridors, linear park routes and trails outlined in the Park and Open Space map. Encourage interconnections between parks, open spaces, bicycle paths, easements, irrigation ditches, scenic roadway routes, railroad right-of-way, etc.
- **Policy 8:** Establish, where possible, trails along non-urbanized sections of stream corridors, ensuring the stream ecology and any residences are protected.

BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The City Council approved First Reading of Ordinance #3232 as presented following a public hearing on February 20, 2024. Adoption of the ordinance at second reading will make the Parks, Trails, and Open Space Map an official City map, replacing the current “Parks, Trails and Open Space Program 2002–2012 map” which was approved by the City Council in July of 2002. In approving the First Reading of the ordinance, the City Council not only advanced the Ordinance to second reading advancing the legislative process, but also provided separate direction to Staff





Council Business Meeting

focused on two key areas: the pursuit of grant opportunities to fully fund the Central Bike Path (CBP) and the integration of the CBP project into the forthcoming Biennium Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). It is important to note that this explicit directive is distinct from the ordinance's adoption itself. The Council's decision to pursue these additional steps was unanimously approved during their session on February 20, 2024.

Before the Council this evening for consideration is the adoption of Ordinance 3232 without amendment, as was approved at First Reading.

A summary of the proposed map amendments is included in the attached *Staff Report for Planning Action PA-T3-2023-00007* dated January 23, 2024, and is further addressed in memorandum provided by Interim Director Leslie Eldridge, and as shown on the Draft Parks, Trails, and Open Space Map presented for adoption.

The Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission (APRC) held public meetings on [October 4th 2023](#), [October 11th 2023](#), [December 6th 2023](#), [January 3rd 2023](#), and January 17th 2023 to review the proposed ordinance and updated map and recommended the Council adopt these proposals without any modifications.

The Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on [January 23, 2024](#), and recommended approval of the draft ordinance with an amendment to incorporate an additional "Whereas Clause" as was presented to the Council for consideration at First Reading.

FISCAL IMPACTS

There are no direct fiscal impacts for the City resulting from the adoption of the proposed Parks, Trails and Open Space Map.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This proposed ordinance was discussed during the Council public hearing conducted on February 20, 2024, and was approved as presented and forwarded to second reading by the City Council.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS, MOTIONS and/or OPTIONS

A Potential motion for approval of second reading of the ordinance is detailed below:

Motion for Approval of Ordinance

I move to approve second reading by title only of Ordinance 3232, which is titled, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY OF ASHLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO ADOPT THE PARKS, TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE MAP AS AN OFFICIAL MAP IN SUPPORT OF THE PARKS, OPEN SPACE, AND AESTHETICS ELEMENT OF THE ASHLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN."



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If the Council decides against adopting the proposed Parks, Trails and Open Space Map during its second reading, the original map from 2002-2012 will remain in effect and will continue to serve as the official Parks, Trails and Open Space Map.

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Draft Ordinance #3232 for Council Adoption

1.1: Exhibit A 'Parks, Trails, & Open Space Map' for Council Adoption (Ord. #3232, Exhibit A)

1.2: Exhibit B Technical Memo from Interim Parks Director Leslie Eldridge Dated 1/10/2024

Attachment 2: Planning Staff Report Dated 1/23/2024

Attachment 3: Memo from Interim Parks Director Leslie Eldridge Dated 1/23/2024

ORDINANCE NO. 3232

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY OF ASHLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO ADOPT THE PARKS, TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE MAP AS AN OFFICIAL MAP IN SUPPORT OF THE PARKS, OPEN SPACE, AND AESTHETICS ELEMENT OF THE ASHLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.

Annotated to show deletions and additions to the Ashland Municipal Code sections being modified. Deletions are ~~bold-lined through~~, and additions are **bold underlined**.

WHEREAS, Article 2, Section 1 of the Ashland City Charter provides:

Powers of the City The City shall have all powers which the constitutions, statutes, and common law of the United States and of this State expressly or impliedly grant or allow municipalities, as fully as though this Charter specifically enumerated each of those powers, as well as all powers not inconsistent with the foregoing; and, in addition thereto, shall possess all powers hereinafter specifically granted. All the authority thereof shall have perpetual succession.

WHEREAS, the above referenced grant of power has been interpreted as affording all legislative powers home rule constitutional provisions reserved to Oregon cities. City of Beaverton v. International Association of Firefighters, Local 1660, Beaverton Shop 20 Or. App. 293; 531 P 2d 730, 734 (1975); and

WHEREAS, the Ashland Comprehensive Plan contains a policy within the Parks, Open Space and Aesthetics Element (Chapter VIII, policy 8.16.6)) directing the City to adopt an official map that will identify the planned areas for parks, new natural areas, conservation areas and trails.

WHEREAS, the City approved a Parks, Trails and Open Space Map on July 2nd, 2002, and updated the map in 2012, which are now outdated and no longer reflect the existing inventory of parks lands or adequately identify those properties that could be acquired or developed in furtherance of the Comprehensive Plan goal to provide the people of Ashland with a variety, quantity and quality of parks, park facilities, open spaces, trails, and visual resources sufficient for their needs.

WHEREAS, the City of Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission considered the above-referenced amendment to the Comprehensive Plan to adopt of the Parks, Trails and Open Space Map as an official map on December 6, 2023, January 3, 2024, and January 17, 2024, and following deliberations, recommended approval of the amendment by a unanimous vote; and

WHEREAS, the City of Ashland Planning Commission considered the above-referenced amendment to the Comprehensive Plan to adopt of the Parks, Trails and Open Space Map as an official map at a duly advertised public hearing on January 23, 2024, and following deliberations, recommended approval of the amendments by a unanimous vote; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Ashland conducted a duly advertised public hearing on the above-referenced amendments on February 20, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Ashland, following the close of the public hearing and record, deliberated and conducted first and second readings approving adoption of the Ordinance in accordance with Article 10 of the Ashland City Charter; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Ashland has determined that in order to protect and benefit the health, safety and welfare of existing and future residents of the City, it is necessary to amend the Ashland Comprehensive Plan in manner proposed, that an adequate factual base exists for the amendments, the amendments are consistent with the comprehensive plan and that such amendments are fully supported by the record of this proceeding.

THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF ASHLAND DO ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. The above recitations are true and correct and are incorporated herein by this reference.

SECTION 2. The City of Ashland Comprehensive Plan, Chapter VIII, [PARKS, OPEN SPACE, AND AESTHETICS] is hereby amended to replace the *2002 Parks, Trails and Open Space Map*, with the *Parks, Trails and Open Space Map*, attached hereto as Exhibit A, as an official City map and made a part hereof by this reference, and the Technical Memorandum is included as technical support document to the *Parks, Trails and Open Space Map*, attached hereto as Exhibit B.

SECTION 3. Severability. Each section of this ordinance, and any part thereof, is severable, and if any part of this ordinance is held invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this ordinance shall remain in full force and effect.

The foregoing ordinance was first ready by title only in accordance with Article X, Section 2(C) of the City Charter on the _____ day of _____, 2024, and duly PASSED and ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 2024.

PASSED by the City Council this _____ day of _____, 2024.

ATTEST:

Alissa Kolodzinski, City Recorder

SIGNED and APPROVED this _____ day of _____, 2024.

Tonya Graham, Mayor

Reviewed as to form:

Douglas M. McGeary, Acting City Attorney



PARKS TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE

3
Grizzly Peak
(off map extent)

- Urban Growth Boundary**
- Urban Growth Boundary
 - Ashland City Limits
- Public Land Ownership**
- City-Owned Forest Lands
 - City-Owned Non Forest Lands
 - U.S. Forest Service
 - Ashland Parks Land

- Park Property to Acquire**
- Portion of Area to Acquire for Riparian/Connectivity**
- *Trails Master Plan Corridors**
- *This map is intended to be used in conjunction with the APRC Trails Master Plan, which identifies critical connectivity corridors for acquisition or easements.*



- (#1) Billings Property. North part of property for possible sports fields and riparian zone protection
- (#2) Wrights Creek Parcel. Trail corridor and protection for riparian zone.
- (#3) Grizzly Peak. Conservation easements on the south slopes of Grizzly visible from most of Ashland but would also reduce development pressure on rare and sensitive flora and on large mammals.
- (#4 & #5) Ashland Creek Corridor - Year-round stream, significant wildlife habitat and potential pedestrian/bicycle connection
- (#6) Nevada St to North Mountain Ave. (Bear Creek Corridor) Riparian area.
- (#7) Property across from Riverwalk Riparian area.
- (#8) Willows area potential trail connection and riparian zone
- (#9) Bear Creek riparian/floodplain corridor from east of North Mountain Park. Significant wildlife habitat, natural area that is potentially a part of the Greenway extension.
- (#10) Walker Ave. East Main Street. Possible sports fields
- (#11) Talent Irrigation Ditch Segment connectivity.
- (#12 & #13) West side watershed (Hitt road) Trail connectivity.
- (#14) 440 Granite Street. Surrounded on three sides by Lithia Park. Only private property on east side of Granite above Nalley not part of Lithia Park. Lithia Park Master Plan recommends purchase of property.
- (#15) Lincoln School. Critical to goal of neighborhood park within 1/2 mile of all residents. Many low-income residents in the area.
- (#16 & #17) Upper Liberty St/ Ivy Ln Forest/Urban Interface. Connects southern residential neighborhoods with trail network.
- (#18) Tolman Creek/Mistletoe Road Area potential neighborhood park site

This is to Certify that this is the approved final version of the official Parks and Open Space Map.

Signed: _____
Mayor _____
City Recorder _____

Date _____
Date _____

Mapping is schematic only and bears no warranty of accuracy. All features, structures, facilities, easement or roadway locations should be independently field verified for existence and/or location.

↑ INSET MAP:
Northwest USB



EXHIBIT B

ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

340 S PIONEER STREET • ASHLAND, OREGON 97520

COMMISSIONERS:

Rick Landt
Jim Bachman
Justin Adams
Jim Lewis
Stefani Seffinger



Leslie Eldridge
Interim Director
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STAFF MEMORANDUM

TO: Ashland Parks and Recreation Commissioners

FROM: Interim Director Eldridge

DATE: Jan 10, 2024

SUBJECT: Technical Support Document to Parks, Trails, and Open Space Map

A goal of the Ashland Parks & Recreation Commission (APRC) Board of Commissioners' (the "Commissioners") is to update the Parks, Trails, and Open Space Map (the "map") every ten years. Although a "Light Update" was done by APRC in 2012, it was not reviewed and approved by City Council. The last official update of the map was done in 2002.

In preparation for the 2002 update, APRC held a series of community meetings to gather input from citizens on updating the 1991 map. Following the meetings, Commissioners developed an updated map that included changing the name of the program to the "Parks, Trails, and Open Space Map". For the 2023 update, a Parks, Trails, and Open Space Subcommittee (the "Subcommittee") was formed by the Commissioners to review the map and make recommendations. The Subcommittee has prepared the 2023 update, and that body has recommended the 2023 map for approval by the Commissioners and City Council. There have been five subcommittee meetings and three APRC meetings where public input was solicited. This Map was approved by Commissioners on January 17, 2024 and by City Council XXXX.

The current situation with Ashland's park land is very different than in 1991 when the Comprehensive Plan was first developed and approved by City Council. In 1991, Ashland had less park land per capita than Roseburg, Medford and Klamath Falls. Now, after 30-plus years of effort, Ashland's per capita park land ranks it among the State's leaders. It has been determined that procurement of land for developed parks is no longer a high priority. Additionally, since the City Charter states that "the City

Council shall not use the power of condemnation to acquire fee simple ownership of land for Open Space purposes or for trails," (Article 19a, section 2) originally more property than needed was on the map to ensure sufficient land could be acquired from willing sellers. For the reasons stated and after careful review by the Subcommittee and approval by APRC Commissioners, roughly 277 acres of property projected for purchase from the 2002 map has been removed from this updated 2023 map.

One of the goals of the City's Comprehensive Plan is to have a neighborhood park located within a 1/4 mile of every resident living inside the current city limits. With the exceptions of the Mistletoe (Croman) neighborhood, fully developed sections of the City where no open lands exist, and areas in the urban-forest interface characterized by large lots where Commissioners have deemed that the benefits are not great enough to justify the costs, sufficient property has been obtained to meet this goal. If the City's boundaries are expanded, additional property may need to be identified, for example, a part of the Billings Ranch, and acquired to meet the neighborhood goal.

The majority of properties left on the map for future purchase provide protection of significant natural areas like streams and riparian areas and/or are land and easements that provide trail connectivity. The connectivity goal is to secure land, through outright purchase, donation, grants, or easements, on which to develop a trail system that would provide connecting links to neighborhoods and additional trails throughout the City and surrounding area for non-motorized, recreational use. Efforts to accomplish this goal will be advanced through collaboration with other organizations, such as the Ashland Woodland and Trails Association, Rogue Valley Mountain Bike Association, and Southern Oregon Land Conservancy.

The APRC Trails Master Plan, which identifies critical bike and pedestrian corridors in Ashland, was approved by City Council in 2020 as a technical report supporting the Parks, Open Space, and Aesthetic Chapter (Chapter VII) of the City of Ashland Comprehensive Plan. The Parks, Trails, and Open Space Map includes a layer that represents the Trails Master Plan corridors. The map is intended to be used in conjunction with the Trails Master Plan.

ASHLAND PLANNING DIVISION

STAFF REPORT

January 23, 2024

PLANNING ACTION: PA-T3-2023-00007

APPLICANT: Ashland Parks & Recreation

ORDINANCE REFERENCES:

AMC 18.5.9 Comprehensive Plan, Zoning and Land Use Ordinance Amendments

Ashland Comprehensive Plan “Parks, Open Space, and Aesthetics” Element (Chapter VIII)

REQUEST: The application requests the adoption of an updated version of the Parks and Open Space Map by ordinance as an official map in support of the Ashland Comprehensive Plan’s ‘Parks, Open Space, and Aesthetics’ element (Chapter VIII). This map would replace the current “Parks, Trails and Open Space Program 2002-2012” which was approved by the City Council in July of 2002.

I. Ordinance Amendments

A. Project Background

Ashland’s Comprehensive Plan contains a policy within the ‘Parks, Open Space and Aesthetics’ Element (Chapter VIII, policy 8.16.6)) directing the City to adopt an official map that will identify the planned areas for parks, new natural areas, conservation areas and trails.

The city approved a Parks, Trails and Open Space Map on July 2, 2002, and updated the map in 2012. These maps are now outdated and no longer reflect the existing inventory of parks lands or adequately identify the properties that could be acquired or developed in furtherance of the Comprehensive Plan goal to provide the people of Ashland with a variety, quantity and quality of parks, park facilities, open spaces, trails, and visual resources sufficient for their needs.

Since May of 2022, the Parks, Trails, and Open Space Map Update Subcommittee has been working on assessing the current map and identifying necessary updates. The subcommittee completed its work in October of 2023 and sent its recommendations to the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission (APRC). APRC will consider adoption of the updated map as an official map to support the Comprehensive Plan at its next meeting on January 16, 2024 and their recommendations from this meeting will be provided to the Planning Commission.

The Planning Commission conducted a study session to consider the proposed revisions to the existing map on November 28, 2023, and the map now comes to the Planning Commission for a public hearing to consider the proposed recommendations and make a formal recommendation to the City Council on the map's adoption.

B. Summary of Proposed Amendments

In discussing the proposed map update, Parks staff have noted that the current situation with Ashland's parkland is very different than it was in 1991, when the Comprehensive Plan was first developed and approved by the City Council. At that time, Ashland had less park land per capita than Roseburg, Medford, or Klamath Falls. Now, after 30-plus years of effort, Ashland's per capita park land ranks it among the State's leaders. One of the goals of the City's Comprehensive Plan is to have a neighborhood park located within a ¼-mile of every resident living inside the current city limits, and with the exception of the Mistletoe/Croman area, APRC has determined that sufficient property has been obtained to meet this goal.

The proposed updated map presented represents a shift in priorities from seeking to acquire park land within ¼-mile of every residence to focus much more on seeking to conserve sensitive areas along riparian corridors while improving the connectivity of Ashland's trail system. As presented, the updated map reflects the removal from the map of approximately 277 acres of property that had formerly been identified for purchase including:

- **(A) Billings Property southern portion** – only northern portion of property has potential for sports fields
- **(B & C) Helman Street Property** – within ¼ mile of Ashland Creek Park
- **(D) Helman to Oak partial corridor** – no longer available as corridor
- **(E) Cottle Phillips tiny portion to the West** – park within ¼ mile
- **(F) Upper Elkader/Roca Canyon** – developed
- **(G) Willow Wind school site** – Ashland School District owned
- **(H) Property on lower Clay Street** – developed
- **(I) Property on lower Clay Street** – park within ¼ mile
- **(J) Snowberry Brook** – developed
- **(K) Middle Clay** – park within a 1/4 mile
- **(L) Chitwood Property on Upper Clay Street** – developed
- **(M) Crowson Road Extension** – no longer needed no plans to expand
- **(N) Normal Street extension** – park within ¼ mile
- **(O) Upper Paradise Creek** – developed
- **(P) Ashland Loop Road** – acquired trail easements, no longer needed

Parks staff have indicated that the majority of properties left on the map for future purchase provide protection of significant natural areas like streams and riparian areas and/or are land and easements that provide trail connectivity. The connectivity goal is to secure land,

through outright purchase, donation, grants, or easements, on which to develop a trail system that would provide connecting links to neighborhoods and additional trails throughout the city and surrounding area for non-motorized, recreational use. Efforts to accomplish this goal will be advanced through collaboration with other organizations such as the Ashland Woodland and Trails Association, Rogue Valley Mountain Bike Association and Southern Oregon Land Conservancy.

The following properties are proposed to be designated for purchase or easement acquisition, along with their projected use:

- **(#1) Billings Property.** North part of property for possible sports fields and protection for riparian zone
- **(#2) Wright's Creek Parcel.** Trail corridor and protection for riparian zone.
- **(#3) Grizzly Peak.** Conservation easements on the south slopes of Grizzly visible from Ashland would not only protect iconic view visible from most of Ashland, but would also reduce development pressure on rare and sensitive flora and on large mammals.
- **(#4 & #5) Ashland Creek Corridor** – Year-round stream, significant wildlife habitat and potential pedestrian/bicycle connection
- **(#6) Nevada St to North Mountain Ave.** (Bear Creek Corridor) Riparian area.
- **(#7) Property across from Riverwalk.** Riparian area.
- **(#8) Willows area** – potential trail connection and riparian area.
- **(#9) Bear Creek riparian/floodplain corridor from east of North Mountain Park.** Significant wildlife habitat, natural area that is potentially a part of the Greenway extension.
- **(#10) Walker Ave. East Main Street.** Possible sports fields
- **(#11) Talent Irrigation Ditch Segment**
- **(#12 & #13) West side watershed (Hitt Road)** Trail connectivity.
- **(#14) 440 Granite Street.** Surrounded on three sides by Lithia Park. Only private property on the east side of Granite above Nutley not part Lithia Park. Lithia Park Master Plan recommends purchase of property.
- **(#15) Lincoln School.** Critical to goal of neighborhood park within ¼ mile of all residents. Many low-income residents in the area.
- **(#16 & #17) Upper Liberty St/Ivy Ln Forest/Urban Interface.** Connects southern residential neighborhoods with trail network.
- **(#18) Tolman Creek/Mistletoe Road Area** – potential neighborhood park site.

The Parks, Trails, and Open Space Map Update Subcommittee recommended adding approximately 98 acres to the map including properties numbered 12,13,14,16 and 17 in the list above.

II. Procedural

Applications for Type III (i.e., Legislative) Plan Amendments and Zone Changes are described in the Ashland Land Use Ordinance section 18.5.9.020 as follows:

- B. Type III.** It may be necessary from time to time to make legislative amendments in order to conform with the Comprehensive Plan or to meet other changes in circumstances or conditions. The Type III procedure applies to the creation, revision, or large-scale implementation of public policy requiring City Council approval and enactment of an ordinance; this includes adoption of regulations, zone changes for large areas, zone changes requiring comprehensive plan amendment, comprehensive plan map or text amendment, annexations (see chapter 18.5.8 for annexation information), and urban growth boundary amendments. The following planning actions shall be subject to the Type III procedure.
1. Zone changes or amendments to the Zoning Map or other official maps, except where minor amendments or corrections may be processed through the Type II procedure pursuant to subsection 18.5.9.020.A, above.
 2. Comprehensive Plan changes, including text and map changes or changes to other official maps.
 3. Land Use Ordinance amendments.
 4. Urban Growth Boundary amendments.

In this instance, the build-out of a parks system that previously lagged behind many other cities in the region in terms of park land per capita and that has now, 30 years later, become a leader in the state and the associated shift to seeking to conserve sensitive streams and riparian corridors while also expanding trail system connectivity are the changes in circumstances that necessitate this map update. Staff believes that the proposed map update is clearly in line with the standards described for an update of an official map supporting the Comprehensive Plan.

III. Conclusions and Recommendations

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend approval of the attached draft ordinance and adoption of the Parks, Trails & Open Space Map as an official map supporting the Ashland Comprehensive Plan's Chapter VIII 'Parks, Open Space & Aesthetics'.

If the Planning Commission recommends approval of the attached ordinance and adoption of the updated Parks & Open Space Map, staff will prepare written findings for adoption at the Commission's February 20, 2024, meeting. The Planning Commission's recommendations regarding the attached ordinance and updated Parks & Open Space Map will be forwarded to the City Council for consideration at the public hearing and First Reading of the draft Ordinance in early 2024.

Attachments

- January 10 Technical Memo from Interim Parks Director Leslie Eldridge
- January 23 Memo from Interim Parks Director Leslie Eldridge

- Adopted Parks & Open Space Map 2002-2012 for reference
- Comparison Map (Changes from 2002 to 2023) for reference
- Draft Ordinance #3232 for Council Adoption
- Draft 'Parks & Open Space Map' for Council Adoption (Ord. #3232, Exhibit A)
- Public Comments Received
 - Amy Gunter
 - Gary Schaff (2)
 - Streets for Everyone

ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

340 S PIONEER STREET • ASHLAND, OREGON 97520

COMMISSIONERS:

Rick Landt
Jim Bachman
Justin Adams
Jim Lewis
Stefani Seffinger



Leslie Eldridge
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STAFF MEMORANDUM

TO: Ashland Parks and Recreation Commissioners

FROM: Interim Director Eldridge

DATE: January 23, 2024

SUBJECT: Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission: Parks and Open Space Map Update

SUMMARY

The Parks and Open Space Map is a part of the City of Ashland's Comprehensive Plan. The map is a guide for APRC land acquisition and designates properties for different usage including neighborhood parks, potential sports fields, open spaces, trail connectivity, and riparian areas. It is intended to be used in conjunction with the APRC Trails Master Plan, which was approved by APRC, City Planning, Public Works and Transportation Commission in 2020 as a technical report supporting the Parks, Open Space, and Aesthetic Chapter (Chapter VII) of the City of Ashland Comprehensive Plan.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED

APRC Goal #6: Continue to improve and develop our watershed pedestrian and MTB trail network, including connectivity to adjacent National Forest Land and town centers on city ownership, as well as securing easements on private property that protect public access to this network.

Council Priorities:

Planning and Growth- Protecting the community's character; community land use planning.

Quality of Life: Open space and parks improvements (trails, wildlife habitat protection, etc.)

Economic Opportunity/Vitality: Attract more families to live in Ashland.

BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The last official update of the Map was done in 2002 with a "Light Update" done by APRC in 2012. The current situation with Ashland's park land is very different than in 1991 when the Comprehensive Plan was first

developed and approved by City Council. At that time, Ashland had less park land per capita than Roseburg, Medford, and Klamath Falls. Now, after 30-plus years of effort, Ashland's per capita park land ranks it among the State's leaders. One of the goals of the City's Comprehensive Plan is to have a neighborhood park located within a 1/4 mile of every resident living inside the current city limits. Except for the Mistletoe (Croman) area Commissioners have deemed that sufficient property has been obtained to meet this goal.

The APRC Trails Master Plan, which identifies critical bike and pedestrian corridors in Ashland, was approved by City Council in 2020 as a technical report supporting the Parks, Open Space, and Aesthetic Chapter (Chapter VII) of the City of Ashland Comprehensive Plan.

Since May of 2022 the Parks, Trails, and Open Space Map Update Subcommittee has been working on assessing the current map. The subcommittee completed its work in October of 2023 and sent its recommendations to the Parks Commissioners. At the October 5 APRC Business Meeting, Commissioners unanimously recommended the updated map for review by the Planning Commission and approval by City Council.

APRC Recommendations

APRC recommends that approximately 277 acres of property that had been formerly identified for purchase be removed from the Map.

Properties Removed from Map (shown on the "Comparison Map" only)

- (A) Billings Property southern portion – only northern portion of property has potential for sports fields
- (B & C) Helman Street Property – within ¼ mile of Ashland Creek Park
- (D) Helman to Oak partial corridor – no longer available as corridor
- (E) Cottle Phillips tiny portion to the West – park within ¼ mile
- (F) Upper Elkader/Roca Cannon – developed
- (G) Willow Wind school site – Ashland School District owned
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- (J) Snowberry Brook – developed
- (K) Middle Clay – park within a 1/4 mile
- (L) Chitwood Property on Upper Clay Street – developed
- (M) Crowson Road Extension – no longer needed no plans to expand OKGC
- (N) Normal Street extension – park within ¼ mile
- (O) Upper Paradise Creek – developed
- (P) Ashland Loop Road – acquired trail easements, no longer needed

The majority of properties left on the map for future purchase provide protection of significant natural areas like streams and riparian areas and/or are land and easements that provide trail connectivity. The connectivity goal is to secure land, through outright purchase, donation, grants, or easements, on which to develop a trail system that would provide connecting links to neighborhoods and additional trails throughout the City and surrounding area for non-motorized, recreational use. Efforts to accomplish this goal will be advanced through collaboration with other organizations, such as the Ashland Woodland and Trails Association, Rogue Valley Mountain Bike Association and Southern Oregon Land Conservancy.

Properties Designated Purchase or Easements and Projected Use

- (#1) Billings Property. North part of property for possible sports fields and protection for riparian zone
- (#2) Wright's Creek Parcel. Trail corridor and protection for riparian zone.
- (#3) Grizzly Peak. Conservation easements on the south slopes of Grizzly visible from Ashland would not only protect iconic view visible from most of Ashland, but would also reduce development pressure on rare and sensitive flora and on large mammals.
- (#4 & #5) Ashland Creek Corridor – Year-round stream, significant wildlife habitat and potential pedestrian/bicycle connection
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- (#16 & #17) Upper Liberty St/Ivy Ln Forest/Urban Interface. Connects southern residential neighborhoods with trail network.
- (#18) Tolman Creek/Mistletoe Road Area – potential neighborhood park site.

FISCAL IMPACTS

No fiscal impacts

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS