

2011-2012 CITY COUNCIL GOALS

OVERVIEW

The City Council has set goals for the next 12 to 24 months to continue Ashland's history as a community that focuses on sustaining itself and its people. To us, sustainability means using, developing and protecting resources at a rate and in a manner that enables people to meet their current needs and also provides that future generations can meet their own needs. The City of Ashland has a responsibility towards sustainability in five areas:

- Economy
- Environment
- Social Equity
- Municipal Organization
- Infrastructure

ECONOMY

Adopt a comprehensive economic development strategy to: diversifying the economic base of the community; support businesses that use and provide local and regional products; increase the number of family-wage jobs; and leverage Ashland's tourism and repeat visitors

Adopt an action plan to ensure City programs and activities support the overall strategic direction by June 30, 2011.

Update September 2011:
Completed

Complete the feasibility study for urban renewal and tax increment financing as a method of funding infrastructure, public facilities, and economic development programs for the Croman Mill District, the railroad district, and the downtown.

Update September 2011:

On June 6th, the consultant presented the key findings with regards to the first step in determining the eligibility and financial feasibility of an area for urban renewal and tax increment financing. Findings of the first step included: boundaries of urban renewal study areas; real estate market assessment; tax increment revenue and financing capacity projections; analysis of major infrastructure needs in study areas; and a list and evaluation of financing alternatives.

On July 18, 2011, the consultant presented the draft Urban Renewal Feasibility Study and Existing Conditions Analysis reports, including the newly completed pieces of the study including the blight analysis, impacts on the overlapping taxing districts and preliminary financing plan

The presentation of the final report for the Urban Renewal Feasibility Study is scheduled for

late October or November 2011.

Completion Date: November/December 2011

Increase the clarity, responsiveness, and certainty of the development process. Develop a specific action plan to respond to the recommendations of the 2006 Zucker and Siegl Reports

Update September 2011:

The Community Development Department continues to build upon the work completed in the 2006 Organizational Audit, by Zucker Systems, as well as initiate the next phase of recommendations contained in the Siegel Report – development of a unified land use code.

In July through August 2011, staff identified recommendations of the 2007 Organizational Audit that have been completed, recommendations that were no longer relevant (i.e. suggested increases in planning staff) and a list of the remaining priorities to be implemented over the next several months. Additionally, approximately a dozen Oregon municipalities responded to a questionnaire staff developed to ascertain information about how other similar communities managed internal coordination of development services.

As recommended in the Land Use Ordinance Review by Siegel Planning Services, LLC in 2006, city staff is moving ahead with efforts to improve Ashland's Land Use Code's construction, organization, format and graphics by integrating Chapter 18 and all subsequent amendments into one seamless document. On September 6, 2011, the Community Development Department received approval for the Council to apply for a Technical Assistance Grant to assist in the production of a unified land use ordinance. If the department is unsuccessful in its grant request, completion of the unified land use ordinance will be completed using existing staff resources.

Completion Date: May 2012 (Organizational Audit Recommendations); **August 2012** (Unified Land Use Ordinance)

ENVIRONMENT

Adopt land use codes, building codes, green building standards, and fee structures that creates strong incentives for development that is energy, water, and land efficient and supports a multi-modal transportation system.

Update September 2011:

There are multiple parts to this goal, including the identification of regulatory barriers within Ashland's Land Use Ordinance, consideration of fee structures and priority processing to create incentives for green building practices and promoting green building through public education and outreach.

Planning staff has compiled a list of ordinance amendments that have been considered minor barriers to green building and sustainable planning. These code changes are identified in the scope of work for the Unified Development Code grant. If the city is unsuccessful in its grant request, a sort list of amendments will be introduced to the Planning Commission for

discussion in December 2011. Additionally, some of the “green design standards” adopted as part of the Croman Mill Redevelopment Plan will be considered by the Planning Commission in October 2011 for city-wide application.

In The State of Oregon Building Codes Division “Reach” code for commercial and residential construction are effective July 1st and October 1st, 2011 respectively. The Reach Code is a set of statewide *optional* construction standards for energy efficiency that exceed the requirements of the state's mandatory codes. Since the Reach Codes are optional and not mandatory, Ashland’s Building Safety Division is exploring ways to promote the integration of these new code provisions into new construction through staff training and pre-construction meetings, public education materials, consideration of modified fee structures and priority processing for permits incorporating green building practices (similar to what Ashland’s code allows for LEED construction).

Staff is considering forming an informal technical advisory committee consisting of local architects, builders and other involved in the construction trade to offer feedback throughout the project.

Completion Date: August 2012

Develop a strategy to use conservation and local renewable sources to meet Tier 2 power demands.

Update September 2011:

City of Ashland is not likely to have to use/pay for Tier 2 power in the next two years due to conservation efforts and flat or reduced usage during parts of the year. That leaves the City with “head room” between current demand and the high water mark during the coming 2 years. Continued conservation efforts and assisting large-use customers to avoid peak demands will help delay the need to use and pay for Tier 2 power. Sending a “pricing signal” to users who could force paying higher rates should be part of the electric rate study now being planned for 2012.

Completion Date: Ongoing

Implement specific capital projects and operational programs to ensure that City facilities and operations are a model of efficient use of resources.

Update September 2011:

City Staff continues to collect, analyze and maintain resource consumption data (energy, water, fuel, trash, etc) both by Department and facility/building in order to establish benchmarks by which improvements would be measured against. No comprehensive program has yet been drafted to prioritize or select specific resource consumption reduction actions or activities. Individual and independent actions and activities are being implemented by Department or Division as deemed appropriate by Department Head approval.

Conservation staff has assisted in the implementation of lighting retrofits and water

efficiency fixture change outs in a variety of City facilities and continue to work with City Facilities Staff to identify further conservation opportunities.

Completion Date: Ongoing

Develop a concise sustainability plan for the community and for City operations.

Update September 2011:

At the April 4 study session Council agreed to have the Conservation Commission take on a form of sustainability planning. Council will receive an update from the Conservation Commission at the October 4 City Council meeting.

Completion Date: Ongoing

SOCIAL EQUITY

Decide whether to develop or sell the remaining land on Clay Street.

Update September 2011:

On September 6, 2011, the Council approved by motion to land bank the property at 380 Clay until such time as land values and lending conditions are more favorable to maximize value through sale or development as affordable housing (approximately 12-months).

At the September 6th meeting, the Council approved by motion to transfer the city-owned property at the end of Chitwood Lane to the Parks Department for the amount of the original acquisition (\$125,059) and direct the proceeds to the Housing Trust Fund. In discussions with Don Robertson, Parks Department Director, he has indicated that the Parks Commission recently discussed the 0.32 acres of property and has indicated that they are interested in acquiring this property for parks purposes.

Complete: Staff will re-evaluate the lower Clay Street property in July/August 2012.

Appoint an ad-hoc committee to make recommendations to the City Council by December 31, 2011 about how the City and partner organizations can work together in the long run to address the needs of homeless people and to reduce homelessness in the community.

Update September 2011:

The ad hoc Homelessness Steering Committee has met several times over the past four months and will make a report to Council on October 4.

Completion Date: March 2012

ORGANIZATION

Develop plan for fiscal stability, manage costs, prioritize services, and insure key revenue streams. Adopt policies and targets to use surpluses in ending fund balances to fund longer-

term reserves. Implement 2010 Council direction on Ending Fund Balance targets.

Update September 2011:

The City has updated Ending Fund Balance Targets, Financial Management policies, internal controls/procedures and complied with the Government Accounting Standards Board Statement 54 on the categorization of revenues and corresponding restrictions in the fund balances. The June 2011 EFBs for most funds meet or exceed the targets set. The Reserve Fund EFB is over \$500,000 and budgeted to be over \$850,000 at June 30, 2012.

Updates on the goal will be scheduled for a future study session and Council can discuss what points of financial tracking are meaningful enough to them for inclusion in the quarterly report beyond what is currently provided. Some might be entity oriented like debt load, property values, operational metrics, etc. and others might be citizen oriented like cost per capita for a service, low-income assistance, average utility costs, service satisfaction, etc. Some “dash board” metrics may require data from outside the entity or investment (time or money) in systems to gather data or monitor changes outside of our existing systems.

Completion Date: Ongoing

Adopt a plan to increase the City’s ability to afford the cost of employee benefits while ensuring that employee benefits remain a tool for recruiting and retaining a high quality work force.

Update September 2011

City Staff were able to work with our Labor-Management Committee to implement a healthcare change from the City County Insurance (CIS) pool to Pacific Source Health Insurance April 1, 2011. We will be working with our Benefit Consultant and the Labor-Management Committee to evaluate our experience data over the next 2-3 years to determine if self-insurance is a viable option. During that time, the City will be able to look at trends and utilization data that wasn’t available in the CIS pool to help make decisions about our healthcare future.

We will be using the Labor-Management Committee to look at utilization data to make changes to our benefit program to ensure it is meeting the needs of our employees and remains valuable tool in recruitment and retention.

Completion Date: Ongoing

Recognize and affirm the value of the contribution of volunteers to the City and the Community.

Update September 2011:

Staff has discussed different ideas to recognize and celebrate volunteers but has not identified a specific idea for implementation.

Completion Date: Ongoing

Move to a biennial budget, with adjustments and policy discussion in the second year, with the first two year process for Fiscal Years 2012-2013 and 2013 -2014.

Update September 2011:

This was discussed during the FY 2011-2012 budget process. It is scheduled for a Study Session on September 19, 2011, and for approval at the October 4, 2011, Council meeting. The schedule for implementing advanced budget software is dependent and contingent upon validation of the goal no later than October 4th.

Completion Date: Adoption of budget in June 2012

Evaluate the need to revise the powers, duties, and membership of the Tree Commission, Housing Commission, Conservation Commission, Public Arts Commission, and Planning Commission.

Update September 2011:

At the April 4 study session Council agreed that a councilor and the council liaison to the listed commissions will work with each group to determine current issues, possible new charters and then forward that information to the Council for a decision. Once the changes/updates are identified, staff will draft ordinance language for Council approval.

Completion Date: Spring 2012

INFRASTRUCTURE

Adopt an integrated land use and transportation plan to increase the viability of transit, bicycles, walking and other alternative modes of transportation; reduce per capita automobile vehicle miles traveled; provide safe walking and bicycling routes to home, work, shopping and schools; implement environmentally responsible design standards, and minimize new automobile-related infrastructure.

Update September 2011:

The Transportation System Plan process has set forth five sets of white papers totaling 27 different transportation topics such as: green street standards, shared streets, roundabouts, railroad crossings, street patios and road diets. These topics have been discussed by the Transportation and Planning Commissions, by a Technical Advisory Committee and have been discussed at various public open houses. Some topics have been discarded while others have been selected for inclusion in the final TSP documents. One particular topic that was selected for further study was implementation of a trial road diet on North Main Street. This concept involves reducing vehicular travel lands from four lanes to three lanes. Following several public meetings and a hearing by the Transportation Commission, this topic was considered by the City Council on August 2, 2011. The council agreed that the realignment of the North Main, Hersery/Wimer intersection, a critical component of the proposed road diet, be implemented first and the trial road diet implemented next. This project will occur in the spring of 2012. Public Works staff is working with interested stakeholders to complete the design for the intersection to meet the spring construction schedule.

The Transportation Commission and the Planning Commission will meet jointly on Sep 27 to review technical memorandum No. 9 which addresses the preferred and financially constrained projects.

Completion Date: Early 2012

Adopt an integrated Water Master Plan that addresses long-term water supply including climate change issues, security and redundancy, watershed health, conservation and reuse, and stream health.

Update September 2011:

Council heard an update on the Water Master Plan at the September 6 City Council meeting. Council will review a draft Water Master Plan in December. A final Water Master Plan will be presented to the City Council for adoption early 2012.

Completion Date: Early 2012

Complete a feasibility and financing plan regarding renovating the Grove for the Ashland Police station. Evaluate use of the existing police station for other City office needs.

Update September 2011:

Parks and Recreation hosted a meeting with current users of the Grove on Wednesday September 7 to listen to user space needs should the programs be moved to a different location. P&R staff toured Lincoln Elementary school as a possible location for recreation programs. Straus and Seibert Architects have developed two design options for the police station: remodel and expand the current station and remodel the Grove. The Public Safety Bond Committee will review the two options and prepare a recommendation for the City Council. Council will review the options at a study session in November.

Completion Date: November 2011