Council Communication
April 3, 2012 Business Meeting

First reading of an ordinance adding new sections to the Definitions Chapter 18.08 and amending the Site Design and Use Standards’ Historic District Design Standards and Downtown Design Standards for greater clarity and consistency with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation.

FROM: Derek Severson, Associate Planner, derek.severson@ashland.or.us

SUMMARY
The ordinance being presented to the City Council for First Reading includes the addition of new sections 18.08.622 “Rehabilitation” and 18.08.636 “Restoration” to the Definitions Chapter (AMC 18.08) of the Ashland Land Use Ordinance, and amendments to the Historic District Design Standards and Downtown Design Standards of the Site Design and Use Standards for greater clarity and consistency with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation.

BACKGROUND AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS:
The City of Ashland is a Certified Local Government (CLG) as part of a federal program administered by the State Historic Preservation Office to promote historic preservation at the local level. Through Ashland’s participation as a CLG, the City qualifies to receive matching grants. In keeping with the City’s role as a CLG, the “Ashland Preservation Plan 2009-2018” was developed using grant funds in 2008. This plan set forth a number of goals to further historic preservation planning in Ashland, along with an implementation plan to achieve those goals. Among the goals identified was the, “Need to Revise and Expand Existing Residential Standards.”

Comprehensive Plan Policy I-7 provides that, “The City shall develop and implement through law design guidelines for new development as well as for alteration of existing structures within the historic interest areas for structures and areas that are historically significant.”

To move the Preservation Plan goal forward, in 2010 the City received and the Council accepted a grant to engage a consultant to evaluate and revise Ashland's Historic District Design Standards in order to bring the standards more into line with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation, the national standards for historic preservation, while also providing for greater internal consistency within our own Site Design and Use Standards. The project was not envisioned to be a substantial modification of the existing standards but rather as a fine-tuning of standards which have served the city well in guiding development in the historic districts since their adoption in 1985.

City staff, the Historic Commission and Planning Commission worked with the consultant team of J. Todd Scott, a preservation architect, and Julie Koler, an architectural historian, to craft revisions to the standards over six months in 2011. The changes proposed are primarily to “Section IV: Historic
District Development” of the Site Design and Use Standards (fully detailed in the Ordinance’s Exhibit A, attached), with limited changes to “Section VI: Downtown Ashland” of the Site Design and Use Standards (fully detailed in the Ordinance’s attached Exhibit B), and the addition of definitions for “rehabilitation” and “restoration” in the Land Use Ordinance’s Definitions Chapter 18.08.

In addition to these proposed revisions, five “Historic Building Briefs” have been created to provide issue-specific supplementary educational materials to support the revised standards. The five “Buildings Briefs” developed include:

- Living with Historic Buildings
- Windows
- Exterior Materials
- Additions
- Garages & Outbuildings

These are intended to be counter hand-out’s to provide guidance to homeowners and contractors in implementing the standards relative to specific topics, and are not proposed to be codified. These five building briefs are included in the attached exhibits.

A draft of the proposed revisions was presented to Council on August 2, 2011 at which time staff was directed to bring the revisions back for adoption. The revisions in ordinance form were reviewed by the Historic Commission and Planning Commission at their March 2012 meetings, and both bodies unanimously recommended approval and adoption by Council. Draft minutes of these meetings are attached; adopted minutes are not yet available as neither body has met for their April meeting.

**FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:**
N/A.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND REQUESTED ACTION:**
Staff recommends that Council approve first reading by title only of the ordinance and move it to second reading.

**SUGGESTED MOTION:**
Move to approve first reading by title only of the ordinance titled, “An Ordinance Adding New Sections 18.08.622 and 18.08.636 to the Definitions Chapter (18.08) of the Ashland Land Use Ordinance and Amending the Historic District Design Standards and Downtown Design Standards of the Site Design and Use Standards for Greater Clarity and Consistency with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation” and move it on to second reading.

**ATTACHMENTS:**
Proposed Ordinance
Exhibit A – Ordinance’s Proposed Changes to the Site Design & Use Standards
Exhibit B – Ordinance’s Proposed Changes to the Downtown Design Standards
Exhibit C – Matrix of the Proposed Changes
Exhibit D – Map of Ashland’s Four National Register-Listed Historic Districts
Exhibit E – Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation
Exhibit F – Proposed Building Briefs
Exhibit G – Planning Action #2011-01523 Staff Report date March 13, 2012
Exhibit H – DRAFT Historic Commission Minutes of March 7, 2012
Exhibit I – DRAFT Planning Commission Minutes of March 13, 2012
Exhibit J – Existing Historic District Design Standards (*clean copy for reference*)