

# Council Communication

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## Status of Grant Applications for Sidewalk Construction on Laurel Street

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Meeting Date:	January 6, 2009	Primary Staff Contact:	James Olson 552-2412
Department:	Public Works	E-Mail:	olsonj@ashland.or.us
Secondary Dept.:	Community Development	Secondary Contact:	Nancy Slocum, 552-2420
Approval:	Martha Bennett	Estimated Time:	Consent Agenda

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### Question:

Does Council have questions regarding the funding status for sidewalk construction on North Laurel Street?

### Staff Recommendation:

This is an information action item and does not require a decision by Council.

### Background:

The need to construct sidewalks and other traffic calming measures on North Laurel Street was identified over five years ago and has been included on the Capital Improvements Project list since that time. The cost for the project, including engineering, is approximately \$400,000. The project would serve as the final sidewalk connection along North Laurel Street, an important neighborhood collector that serves Helman Elementary School, the dog park, the Greenway Bicycle Trail System and the downtown core. Neighbors have addressed the Traffic Safety Commission several times asking for improvements to make walking and biking to school safer.

Over the years Public Works staff has explored possible avenues of funding support including a local improvement district and two separate grants programs. Below is a summary of the grant opportunities.

#### Transportation Enhancement Grant

On April 25, 2008 the City submitted an application to ODOT for funding under the Transportation Enhancement (TE) Program. The TE program provides federal funds for projects that strengthen the cultural, aesthetic and environmental value of the existing transportation system in Oregon. In 1998 the TE program funded the construction of the Central Ashland Multi Use Path between Eighth Street and Tolman Creek Road. On October 21, 2008 we received notification (see attached) that the Laurel Street project was not accepted for funding under the TE program.

#### Pedestrian and Bicycle Grant Program

In anticipation of heavy competition under the TE Program, the City made a second application for funding. On July 23, 2008, a similar application was submitted to the ODOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Program. On November 20, 2008 we received notice (attached) that this grant application was not accepted.

#### Project Merits

The Laurel Street project is an excellent choice for either grant program and easily fulfills all of the conditions and requirements set forth in the grant prospectus. However, the competition for funds,



especially sidewalk construction projects, is unusually high with 159 applications being submitted statewide under the two programs.

Staff will continue to look for funding sources for the project.

**Related City Policies:**

The City is empowered to accept grants and enter into agreements to fund various capital improvement projects.

**Council Options:**

No action is necessary. This is an informational communication only.

**Potential Motions:**

No motions are required.

**Attachments:**

Letter of October 21, 2008

Letter of November 20, 2008

Project maps and typical sections

