Goal Setting began at 8:30 a.m. by Steve Bryant, Project Manager for Oregon Solutions.

Mayor Stromberg, Councilors Voisin, Morris, Lemhouse, Slattery, Rosenthal and Marsh were present. Staff: City Administrator Dave Kanner and City Attorney Dave Lohman (left 12:30 p.m.) were present.

Outline of presentation began as the following:

What outcomes will make today worth investing 8 hours of your time?

- A longer term plan for moving forward
- Agreement on long term goals
- Financial strategic ideas that look beyond the current budget cycle
- Begin to develop more of a strategic plan
- View this as the beginning of the planning process
- Get it off to a good start!
- Try to get to both the long term goals and some steps for getting there.
- Nothing wrong with the current set of goals
- Recognize that future councils will have their own thoughts and priorities
- Leave with some vision for the future that we can pass on
- Have some follow-up strategic planning with departments, boards and commissions, etc.
- Look at big picture
- Build bridges to other boards and commissions
- Strengthen regional relationships

Councilors were asked to consider the following:

In 2025 Ashland will be renowned as a city that…

- Embraces sustainability
- Supports arts, conservation
- A downtown that others would die to have
- A city that is resilient—systems that are diverse, families thrive, diverse economy and infrastructure that relies on a variety of sources
- Maintain what is already good!
- A more diverse economic portfolio
- Young families see themselves living here long into the future
- Capitalize on Oregon’s reputation as an innovative place to do business
• Ashland becomes the new place in Oregon where new sustainable high tech ideas are incubated
• A city that is willing to be and is known for innovation
• A place where people want to live and want to raise their families here
• A community that creates opportunity out of challenge
• A community that is innovative in approaching issues that are common among communities and is responsibly progressive.
• Is ahead of climate change in policy and infrastructure
• A community that is a cooperative city based on buying local and keeping wealth in our community
• Is a city that is affordable for the working class and working poor
• Ashland has one of the most rigorous conservation plans in the state for energy and water
• We will have achieved incorporation of a variety of ideas and views for making sustainability work
• Being in government is something that people are excited about and we draw the best people into government
• Increasing citizens recognize and appreciate the excellent exhibited by city government and as such they see themselves as part of good governance—citizens are fully engaged
• We are known as a model for other cities because we are forward thinking in our infrastructure management
• We are doing a good job in dealing with issues that previous councils didn’t want to deal with
• We buy local
• We grow internally and have good succession plans in place
• We tackle tough problems and take care of them!
• We are professional in all that we do
• We set an example of other communities

Observations shared on interviews with Council and staff:

• You have really good city council and staff members who want basically the same things for Ashland. In fact, the common themes were surprisingly similar and can provide the basis for consensus agreement on the general areas of needed emphasis.

• Each of you has a deep commitment to the city of Ashland based on its unique attributes that keep you engaged, and you are equally passionate about its future. That passion is commonly rooted in wanting to protect all that is good about living here while also desiring a future that promises a high quality of life for those who wish to call Ashland their home 20 years from now.

• You have similar interests in using this process as the beginning step of developing a more comprehensive strategic plan for guiding the future of the city— influencing both short and long-term decision making; however, the immediate focus of this process should be on longer-term goals.
To increase your effectiveness as a governing body in making progress toward the long-term goals, you agree that some future work may be needed to improve both internal communication dynamics and external communications with the public.

The following are typical elements of a good strategic plan for public organizations:

1. A focused effort to conduct a thorough SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis.
   a. Process should be integrated/iterative between council and staff
   b. Council leads community SWOT analysis
   c. Empower the staff the be honest with the council in the SWOT analysis
   d. Avoid “us vs. them” mentality
   e. Respect the roles of council and staff

2. A well crafted mission and organizational values statement that has a high level of ownership short list of major goal topics.
   a. Develop the mission statement after other elements of the strategic plan evolve.
   b. Develop organizational values from the bottom up.
   c. Council may need to articulate community values that guide development of long-term goals.
   d. Council may also need to articulate council values that guide group behaviors and actions
   e. Needs to happen after SWOT and before finalizing goals

3. Agreement on a relatively short list of high-priority mid to long-term goals (2-6 years, occasionally longer) and re-visit at least every two years.

4. Agreement on short-term (1-2 year) objectives necessary to make progress toward the mid to long-term goals.
   a. SWOT analysis annually
   b. Review short-term objectives annually

5. Listing of specific and measurable organizational tactics and implementation measures necessary to achieve the objectives and, ultimately, the goals.
   a. Quarterly reports
   b. Check in with City Council

6. A systematic plan for measuring progress and modifying, as necessary, the goals, objectives and tactics.
   a. Quarterly reports—put them on Council agendas
   b. Citizen surveys
   c. Administrative measures
   d. Both council and staff may need to seek clarification on how progress should be measured
   e. Council needs to provide feedback mechanisms for ensuring that staff has clarification
   f. Use boards and commissions as a primary information source for decision-making and measurement
   g. Develop both qualitative and quantitative measures
Frequently mentioned themes for Ashland’s future:

1) Leader in innovation in land use, economic development, and resource management

2) Maintain a continuous focus on community sustainability actions
   a) Seek energy independence/neutrality
   b) Seek to become more self-reliant
   c) Focus on measures to achieve a high level of self-reliance for goods and services
   d) Seek to achieve carbon neutrality
   e) Anticipate the effects of climate change and plan accordingly
   f) Engage in sustainable forestry practices
   g) Fully implement the Ashland Forest Resiliency Project
   h) Examine “STAR” Community Sustainability Planning Framework

3) Maintaining and improving Ashland’s high quality of life is paramount
   a) Protect and enhance the natural, cultural and recreational resources that make Ashland unique
   b) Build on Ashland’s “sense of place” and small town feel
   c) Strengthen partnerships and programs that enable all citizens to meet their basic needs

4) Promoting and achieving a “family friendly” community
   a) Pursue affordable housing opportunities, especially workforce housing commensurate with local employment opportunities
   b) Seek pathways for SOU graduates to remain in the community
   c) Address “aging in place” issues and needs

5) Overall excellence in governance becomes the recognized norm.
   a) A sustained focus on leadership development—both internally and externally
   b) Establishment of collaborative community and regional partnerships
   c) Effective citizen communication and engagement
   d) There is a high level of tolerance for all viewpoints
   e) Governance that is transparent
   f) Boards and commissions are fully engaged in supporting the strategic plan
   g) Increase effectiveness in regional and state policy arenas
   h) Become more regionally connected
   i) Charter is updated based on “best practices”
   j) Empower community partners to help achieve the goals

6) Achieve excellence in infrastructure management and modernization
   a) Recognize the constraints of the watershed and plan accordingly
   b) Complete the downtown transportation plan element
   c) Replace City Hall with consolidated office space that is safe, welcoming, fosters improved communications and serves the community long into the future
   d) Work to keep utilities efficient and affordable

7) Creation of new economic opportunities and diversification while strengthening support of Ashland’s existing economic base
   a) Examine and remove certain barriers to business start-up opportunities
   b) Create predictable pathways for development of employment lands
c) Take advantage of new technologies for which Ashland is primed based on its fiber network, workforce, and other assets

8) **Efficient, innovative and affordable public services**

9) **Comprehensive review and common understanding of core services, service levels and financial resources**
   a) The community is engaged in a conversation about core services, desired service levels and alternative or more efficient funding mechanisms.
   b) A sustainable model is developed for parks and recreation services that commensurate with the prioritization, funding and administration of other core city services.

10) **Provide for the immediate and long-term public safety needs of the community**

**Ashland SWOT (Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats) - EXERCISE**

1) **Strengths**
   a) Talented citizens
   b) Purity of the water
   c) Cultural opportunities
   d) Full spectrum of education opportunities
   e) People feel safe here
   f) Innovative businesses
   g) Lively downtown
   h) Natural environment
   i) Walkability
   j) Climate
   k) Abundance of world-class parks
   l) Cultural assets
   m) Know our neighborhoods—strong neighborhoods
   n) Small town feel
   o) The Shakespeare festival alone has over 100,000 visitors each year
   p) City staff is experienced and excellent
   q) Ashland is well-known
   r) People come from everywhere to be here—both visitors and permanent residents
   s) The same people have been coming to visit here for many years
   t) Involved citizenry
   u) The town is small enough that our problems are not intractable
   v) We have a very charitable community
   w) Our citizens are self-confident
   x) We are at a size where it is still possible to do things face to face
   y) The community holds their elected officials accountable
   z) We are an easy one-day drive to Portland and S.F.
   aa) We are forward thinking/progressive
   bb) Unique political make-up
   cc) High diversity of activities
i) Recreation  
ii) Tourism  
iii) Social activities  
iv) Political activities  
v) Faith-based  

dd) High quality and diverse/alternative health care systems  

ee) Proximity to increasingly strong and well-know wine industry  

ff) Excellent culinary options  

gg) Smithsonian Lemelson Center for American History Museum 2015 exhibit studying AFR and other local creative invention and innovation ideas  

hh) Building film industry  

ii) International businesses  

jj) City services not found in other places  

kk) Local control over critical infrastructure  

ll) City amenities and services that many cities don’t have  

mm) Relatively low property taxes  

nn) Unique chamber of commerce  

oo) Large number of community activities and festivals  

pp) Long history of socially responsible chamber of commerce  

qq) Large number of service organizations that are focused on the community  

rr) Healthy, active, highly educated senior population  

ss) Compact urban form  

tt) Excellent community facilities  

uu) High citizen retention rate  

vv) Strong financial position compared with other jurisdictions  

ww) Proximity to Medford  

xx) City is visually attractive  

2) **Weaknesses**  

   a) We lose families when they reach their 30s  
   b) We have a male-dominated senior staff  
   c) The community lacks racial diversity  
   d) Public discourse can get hurtful/disrespectful  
   e) Huge gap between town and gown  
   f) We lack economic diversity  
   g) We are not view as an easy place to develop  
   h) High cost of living/affordable housing/land/etc.  
   i) Lack of family wage jobs  
   j) Drug and alcohol addiction  
   k) Lack of available and appropriate mental health treatment options  
   l) I-5 location attracts transients  
   m) We are perceived as “weird”  
   n) Lack of good transit system
o) Lack diverse resources to fund all our system needs
p) Lack of water security
q) Tourist economy is fragile
r) Rats and deer
s) Aging infrastructure
t) Future financial capacity will be challenging
u) Airshed can be problematic
v) Lack of retail diversity
w) Negative perception of our land use regulations
x) We tend to over-regulate in order to solve problems
y) Perception of arbitrary and capricious land use decision making
z) Downtown is at risk for fire and earthquakes
aa) Small vocal groups/individuals can make or break development projects
bb) We are sometimes too involved in process and not involved enough in results
cc) It’s difficult logistically for families to live here
dd) School schedules are inconsistent
ee) Students lack local social opportunities
ff) SOU instability (especially funding model)
gg) Uncertainly around Mt. Ashland
hh) Lack of workforce housing
ii) NIMBY issues
jj) Resistance to change
kk) Desire to change Ashland in the image of where others came from
ll) Stalled conservation plan
mm) Failure to integrate newcomers into the community
nn) Staff near retirement
oo) Thin on administrative staff
pp) Lack of council support staff
qq) Potential loss of institutional memory
rr) Lack of succession planning/funding
ss) High incidence of drug and alcohol abuse among young people
tt) Difficulty in providing competitive pay and benefits to employees
uu) Employees can’t often afford to live here
vv) Lack of diverse stock of housing supply
ww) Lack of parking and multi-modal transportation plan
xx) Gaps in the health care system

3) **Opportunities**
   a) To recognize SOU as a generator of business opportunities
   b) SOU/city relationships
   c) E-commerce overlay
   d) Nurture tech industries and other start-ups
   e) Nurture emerging markets
f) Market and further develop AFN. Improve penetration/increase related revenues. Retire the debt in 2024.
g) Opportunity for energy aggregation
h) Engage an educated and resource heavy public in conservation measures
i) Make our airport more robust as an enterprise
j) Plan for climate change
k) To make the watershed safer and increase multi-use opportunities while also protecting its integrity
l) To make better use of our Imperatrice property.
m) Croman property redevelopment
n) Film industry growth
o) City hall replacement
p) Clean-up the railroad district and re-use
q) Examine underperforming assets
r) Take advantage of local talent
s) Strengthen local non-profits
t) Develop food security locally and regionally (promote local farms, community gardens, friendly ordinances, etc.)
u) Optimize the downtown—guide the reinvestment opportunities
v) In addition, reinvest and optimize opportunities in other commercial districts
w) Position ourselves as an incubator of high-tech
x) Leverage our high profile to have more influence in our county and state
y) Leverage existing regional relationships to a much greater degree
z) Use our relationship with the parks commission to develop a long-term collaborative plan for moving forward
aa) To continue to build social equity assets/ideas (example: resource center) to help those in the community at risk
bb) Leverage funding and building partnerships to explore new funding opportunities
cc) Use existing financial tools to support economic development (e.g. urban renewal, enterprise zones, tax credits, etc.)
dd) Use existing experienced leadership to do train and mentor employees
ee) Opportunity to use dry seasons to get the community to adopt “water smart” habits
ff) Develop freight rail opportunities
gg) Review the charter

4) Threats
   a) Natural disaster
   b) PERS
   c) Lack of meaningful home preparedness
d) Climate change
e) Instability of financial systems
f) Water supply insecurity
g) Changing economy
h) Technology—keeping pace
i) Neighboring counties--insecurity
j) Aging population
k) SOU insecurity/uncertainty
l) Drugs and alcohol culture among youth
m) Communication—finding best ways to communicate with our population
n) Secure methods of protecting our technology infrastructure
o) Pending timber legislation
p) Mt. Ashland instability
q) Increasing utility rates
r) Changing tax base based on relative value of newly created housing
s) Future revenue streams don’t match up with anticipated service levels
t) Future of library services
u) State legislation and/or constitutional amendments/initiatives that affect local revenue streams and/or local control
v) Federal gridlock
w) We have a tendency to be destructive in our public discourse
x) Tourism industry disruptions
y) Aging tourists
z) Uncertainty with rail
aa) Lack of participation in government by younger adults

We value:

1. Meaningful engagement by Boards, Commissions and members of the public.
2. Ashland as a viable family community.
3. Our institutional, community and regional partnerships.
4. Innovation.
5. Our natural environment.
7. Being prepared for climate change.
8. Economic opportunities that sustain a diversity of workers.
9. Excellent city services and infrastructure.
10. Diverse views
Goal Topics

Governance
Organization
Physical Infrastructure
Public Safety
Economy
Health and Human Service
Natural and built environment
Climate and energy

Ashland 2020 - To be completed by June 30, 2014

Next steps:

1) Organize opportunities by goal topic
2) Finalize goal topics
3) Filter opportunity subjects
4) Express surviving opportunities as potential goal statements
5) Choose preliminary goals by consensus or majority vote, if necessary [weed out items for which there isn’t agreement]
6) Identify specific objectives for each preliminary goal including measures, resources, and timeline
   a) Seek feedback from boards and commissions and public [at some point before finalizing]
   b) Invite staff input
   c) Make adjustments as appropriate
7) Tactics are developed by operational departments/entities and review by council
8) Finalize the values list in consideration of the selected goals
9) Consider crafting and adopting mission statement
10) Final adoption by 6/30/14
11) Compare final strategic plan with 2025 aspirations

Session ended 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Christensen, City Recorder
Government

Leverage our regional and state relationships to increase effectiveness in relevant policy arenas.

Promote effective citizen communication and engagement
- Engage boards and commissions in supporting the strategic plan
- Engage community in conversation about core services, desired service levels and funding mechanisms
- Develop leadership that sustains both commissions and council

Support and empower our community partners; for example:
- SOU
- Mt. Ashland
- Parks – develop a long term sustainable plan for P&R services

Identify and support core City services

Organization

Use our assets to strategically support city mission and goals.
- Cultivate external funding opportunities
- Examine city hall replacement.
- Look at underperforming assets.
- Examine long term use of Imperatrice property.

Ensure that we have a trained staff adequate to support the organization’s work.
• Use existing leadership to train and mentor.
• Grow leadership within.
• Develop appropriate succession plans.
• Match staffing with work plans.

People

Seek opportunities to enable all citizens to meet basic needs.
• Pursue affordable housing opportunities, especially workforce housing
• Leverage partnerships to build social equity programming to help those at risk
• Address gaps in mental health treatment options.

Develop supports to enable citizens to age in place.

Make Ashland an even more family-friendly community
• Seek pathways for SOU students to remain in the community.

Strengthen and support local nonprofits.

The City supports and promotes, through policy, programs that make the City affordable to live in.

Environment

Protect the integrity and safety of the watershed.
• Implement and maintain the Ashland Forest Resiliency Project.
• Educate and engage the community in watershed stewardship.
Enhance and expand natural and recreational resources.

Prepare the community, especially the downtown district, from the community for the risk of fire, flood, earthquakes and natural disasters.
- Address the seismic vulnerability downtown.

Empower Community Development Department to effectively develop and implement land use planning.
- Complete land use revisions.
- Examine form-based planning approach.

Cultivate Ashland’s “sense of place” and small town feel.

Develop and support land use and transportation policies to achieve sustainable development.
- Develop infill policies.
- Support alternative transportation choices.
- Create incentives for energy efficient buildings.

Encourage and/or develop public spaces that build community and promote interaction.

**Economy**

Seek opportunities to diversify the economy.
- Support film industry growth.
- Promote local talent.
- Partner with SOU to generate business opportunities.
- Strengthen local nonprofits.
- Examine and remove barriers to business start up opportunities.

Nurture emerging new technologies.
• Position ourselves as a high tech incubator.
• Promote e-commerce zone.

Support innovative organizations and enterprises.

Market and further develop Ashland Fiber Network.
• Complete and implement the 5-year plan.

Diversify transportation options.
• Strengthen airport as an enterprise.
• Develop freight rail opportunities

Ensure that commercial and industrial areas are available for development.
• Create predictable pathways for development of employment land.
• Examine Croman redevelopment plan.
• Re-use railroad district.
• Optimize downtown and other commercial districts by guiding reinvestment opportunities.
• Use existing financial tools to support re-development.

Focus on measures to achieve a high level of self-reliance for goods and services.
• Develop food security locally and regionally.

Keep our treasure in the area. Buy local.

Continually examine, evaluate and update the economic development strategy

Embrace and plan ahead for emerging social trends that might impact the economy and vitality of the community
Energy and Infrastructure

Be proactive in using best practices in infrastructure management and modernization.
- Re-examine and review master plans on regular basis.
- Complete downtown transportation plan element.
- Expand transit.
- Work to keep public services efficient, innovative and affordable.

Prepare for climate change.
- Seek energy independence/neutrality.
- Seek carbon neutrality.
- Develop rigorous conservation plans for energy and water.
- Complete internal and community-based sustainability plans.
- Recognize impact of climate change on the watershed.

Public Safety

Other

The Parking Lot
Succession planning