

The citizen's source of information about the City of Ashland

BUDGET BYTE

The previous Budget Byte vignette explained how your City plans for capital infrastructure projects, such as a water treatment plant or an electric system (including electric poles and lines). Remember, the City develops a 20-year capital plan identifying all the infrastructure projects that staff anticipates needing to be completed in that 20-year period and attaches a cost to those projects. This month's vignette is about how the City funds capital infrastructure. Your City uses funds that are collected and saved (your user fees), grants through the State or Federal governments (taxes you pay), and/or loans (paid for by your future fees). Do you see a common thread here? That thread is you. Ultimately the funding for our capital infrastructure comes from you, the utility rate/property tax payers. You may know, your City is moving toward the construction of a new water treatment plant. There are many reasons for needing to construct a new plant, but I'm not going into that right now because the focus of this article is on paying for the new plant. The funding for the water treatment plant comes out of the Water Fund, where the water portion of your utility bill payments also go.

A quick question harkening back to the first Budget Byte vignette – can funds from the Water Fund pay for a Police Officer? No, Water Fund monies can only be spent on water related services/infrastructure.

Utilizing our Water Master Plan, the City has raised water fees over the last several years with an eye toward saving money to pay for a new water treatment plant. This is akin to you setting aside money for a new car while continuing to drive your old one. You do this so you don't have to finance the total cost. It is no different for the City. In fact, the City has saved a little over \$10 million and it is likely that \$7 million will be used for the new plant. There has been some criticism of the City for not borrowing the full amount which is now estimated at \$35.9 million, thereby placing all the cost on future rate payers. That is certainly a financial philosophy, however the debt must be paid back with interest, which is an additional cost to the rate payers. For example, if the City had no savings and had to borrow that \$7 million even with acquiring a low interest loan through the State of Oregon at 1.79 percent for 30 years, the interest for the loan would be an additional \$2.1 million. That is a considerable amount of interest. Therefore, the City takes a balanced approach to paying for large capital infrastructure projects with both savings and borrowing.

If you have any other questions about how the City finances large projects don't hesitate to contact City Administrator Kelly Madding at (541) 488-6002 or email at administration@ashland.or.us.

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COMMITTEE



Would you like to serve on a committee for
ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION

**Open application process for the new
Recreation Division Advisory Committee**

Deadline to apply is Nov 14, 2019
Complete info at ashland.or.us/RDAC
ParksInfo@ashland.or.us | 541.488.5340



THE SUSTAINABILITY OF SHOPPING SECONDHAND FROM OUR PARTNERS AT RECOLOGY

As the weather changes, many of us are ready for a new wardrobe or change in style. It's easy to tell ourselves we should head out to the mall or hop online to grab some new garb, but it never hurts to try looking for new (well, new for you) clothing at secondhand stores and thrift shops!

As we become more conscious of how our consumption patterns affect our environment, we can feel good about making a decision to purchase many of our items secondhand. By doing this, no additional resources are used beyond transportation when compared to new clothing. Some additional benefits to giving used clothes and items new life are:

It's Better for the Budget: Even if you shop for new, ethically sourced and manufactured clothes and items, you're almost certainly paying more than you would for their comparable, secondhand alternatives!

It Prevents Waste: Without secondhand or thrift options, we would either have items left unused and stockpiled in the closet, or they'd go to the landfill. Some estimates say that the average American throws away around 80 pounds of clothing per year! By both donating the items you no longer need and purchasing used items, you can keep from contributing to this wasteful practice!

It Can Be a Great Way to Express Your Style: Instead of getting a mass-produced outfit, shopping secondhand or thrifting can be a fun way to create a unique, stylish wardrobe!

Your Clothes Will Tell an Important Tale: Your outfit can serve as a great way to open up a conversation about reuse! When someone compliments your new look, consider taking the opportunity to discuss the benefits of buying secondhand.

With the same amount of effort that it takes to shop for new items, giving used items a second life makes a huge difference! Have fun, and happy reusing!

TIME TO BOOK YOUR *Holiday Party*

Oak Knoll Golf Course is a great place to host your holiday party. If you book your event* between November 1 and 30, you can select one free gift with your reservation.

For a free gift, you can select from:

- Free Additional Hour
- Free Vegetable Crudit 
- Free Kids Art Station
- Free Coffee, Tea, Soda
- Free Fruit Display
- Four Rounds of Golf

Book your event today by contacting the Oak Knoll Golf Course at (541) 482-4311 or by emailing patrick.oropallo@ashland.or.us.

*Not valid on previously booked events. May not be combined with any other offer. Event must take place prior to December 31, 2019.

ROUND UP YOUR CHANGE

Many of Ashland's low-income residents have difficulty paying their basic monthly utility services. The City of Ashland's Round Up program allows Ashland utility customers to voluntarily round up their utility bills to the nearest dollar. The additional funds accumulated will be devoted to assisting low-income Ashland residents with their monthly utility bills.

Customers who qualify for low-income assistance are screened to determine eligibility using the current Federal poverty guidelines. In addition, occasionally customers who don't necessarily qualify as low-income may need some assistance due to personal difficulties. These funds will be used in an emergency to help others on a one time per year only basis.

Many public utilities around the country operate a "round up" program to provide public purpose funding to assist others. This is a voluntary program. Please join the Ashland Round Up program by completing the coupon and returning it with your utility payment or by dropping it off at City Hall, 20 E. Main Street.

YES, I WANT TO JOIN THE ASHLAND ROUND UP PROGRAM

Yes, please round up my monthly utility bill to the nearest dollar. I understand the funds will assist Ashland residents in need with their utility bill.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Service Address: _____

Account Number: _____

Phone Number: _____

Please complete this form and return it with your utility payment or drop it off at City Hall, 20 E. Main Street.

2020 JAMES M. RAGLAND "VOLUNTEER SPIRIT" COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

Please answer the questions listed below on a *separate sheet of paper* and return it by **December 6, 2019**, to
Attn: Mayor Stromberg, 20 E. Main Street, Ashland, OR 97520

Name of Nominee: _____ Organization: _____

Address: _____ Phone or E-mail: _____

Name of Person Making Nomination: _____

Address: _____ Phone or E-mail: _____

- 1) Please describe the nominee's public sector volunteer service.
- 2) How long has the nominee performed that service?
- 3) How has this effort benefited the community?
- 4) What awards or recognition has the nominee received for their service in the past?
- 5) What other information about the nominee should be considered?

BE WINTER WISE – WINTERIZE YOUR IRRIGATION SYSTEM!

Fall is officially here. The daylight hours are getting shorter and plants are going dormant for the winter season. The summer watering season has come to an end and now it's time to prepare your irrigation system for winter temperatures. The best way to protect your irrigation investment from potential freeze damage over the winter is to "winterize" all system components. This process involves removing water from pipes, valves and sprinkler heads before freezing occurs. Follow these basic steps to assist you in winterizing your irrigation system.

- 1) Shut off water to your sprinkler system. This can typically be done at the backflow prevention device.
- 2) Turn on each of the sprinkler valves to release the pressure in the pipes.
- 3) Drain sprinkler components as much as possible. Remove the cap and riser from the highest and lowest sprinkler in each irrigation zone to help water drain out.
- 4) Some systems are equipped to be blown out with compressed air. Contact an irrigation professional who offers this service.
- 5) After purging the system of all water, leave all the valves on your backflow preventer half open. Make sure to close them when you turn the system back on in the spring.
- 6) Turn your sprinkler controller to the off position.
- 7) In addition, any above ground piping, backflow preventers and valves need to be insulated. Disconnect garden hoses and place insulation caps on hose bibs.

Properly preparing your system for the winter can be far less costly than repairing damaged equipment in the spring. Consider contacting an irrigation professional to assist you with winterizing your system. If you have any questions or would like more information on the City's water conservation programs please call (541) 552-2062 or visit our website at www.ashlandsaveswater.org.

Did You Know?

The City of Ashland is still giving out showerheads and faucet aerators **free of charge**. Just stop by the Community Development building at 51 Winburn Way to pick them up. Remember, even small hardware changes can make a big difference in how much water we use. So, why not take advantage of this opportunity and take that little step to save water today!

The Ashland Forest Resiliency Stewardship Project (AFR) is a collaborative forest restoration project that reduces the risk of severe wildfire across public and private land in and around the Ashland Watershed.

We work to protect old trees, wildlife habitat, homes, trails and our water source by thinning overcrowded forests and conducting controlled burns.



Get Connected

Receive controlled burn notifications by text message! Text WATERSHED (message line) to 888777 (recipient)

Sign up for emails at ashlandwatershed.org

Find health recommendations at smokewiseshland.org



ashlandwatershed.org

City offices will be closed on Wednesday,
December 25 in observance of Christmas Day.

Check out how Ashland
connects at
www.ashlandfiber.net



EVENTS

First Frost Celebration at the Ice Rink

Don't miss FIRST FROST, a seasonal gala special event at the Ice Rink. Highlights will include a hockey exhibition game at 2:30 p.m., discounted family skate from 5 to 7 p.m., figure skating performances at 7:30 p.m., and recreational skate & live DJ 8 to 10 p.m. Skate rentals accommodate toddler size 9 and up to men's size 15. Please come prepared to skate, as changing rooms are not available. Hot chocolate, coffee and a variety of snacks will be available for purchase.

DATE December 14
TIME 2:30 p.m. to 10 p.m.
PLACE Rotary Centennial Ice Rink, 95 Winburn Way

Project FeederWatch

Help count birds that visit the feeders at North Mountain Park, while learning to identify species with expert birders. The information collected will be submitted to Cornell University's FeederWatch project, a nationwide citizen science bird monitoring effort. Pre-registration is not required for this free program.

AGES 10 and up
DAY Alternate Saturdays
DATE December 7, 21 (and continuing through March 2020)
TIME 9 to 10 a.m.
PLACE North Mountain Park Pavilion, 620 North Mountain Ave.

Preschool Puppet Theater

Join Brenda Bear and friends as they discover the wonders of our natural world. A brief lesson will lead into a fun puppet performance and playtime. Snack and a hands-on craft activity will follow. Reservations are guaranteed only until 10:30 a.m. Please arrive early, as space and parking are limited (no late seating). Children must be accompanied by an adult at all times during the program. Register at ashland.or.us/register or call the Nature Center at (541) 488-6606.

AGES 3 to 5 years old
DAY Second Friday of each month
DATE December 13
TIME 10:30 to 11:45 a.m.
PLACE North Mountain Park, 620 North Mountain Ave.
COST \$6

Holiday Luncheon Party for Seniors

Join us for a free, fun holiday party! There will be gifts and seasonal live music. Registration is required and space is limited, so please sign up soon by calling the Senior Center at (541) 488-5342 or emailing seniorinfo@ashland.or.us. A delicious lunch will be provided by our sponsor: the Village at Valley View.

DATE December 24
TIME 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
PLACE Ashland Senior Center, 1699 Homes Ave.

DECEMBER CITY CALENDAR

City Council
Business Meeting: Dec. 3 & 17 | 6 p.m.
Study Sessions: Dec. 2 & 16 | 5:30 p.m.

Airport Commission
December 3 | 9:30 a.m.

Conservation & Climate Outreach Commission
December 18 | 6 p.m.

Climate Policy Commission
December 12 | 4 p.m.

Forest Lands Commission
December 10 | 5:30 p.m.
Fire Station #2, 1860 Ashland Street

Historic Commission
December 4 | 6 p.m.

Housing and Human Services Commission
TBD

Parks and Recreation Commission
Business Meeting: December 23 | 7 p.m.

Planning Commission
Business Meeting: December 10 | 7 p.m.

Public Art Commission
December 20 | 8:30 a.m.

Transportation Commission
December 19 | 6 p.m.

Tree Commission
December 5 | 6 p.m.

Wildfire Safety Commission
December 18 | 11 a.m.
Fire Station #1, 455 Siskiyou Boulevard

▲ TTY 1-800-735-2900 ▲ Meetings are held in the Council Chambers (1175 E Main Street) or the Siskiyou Room (51 Winburn Way) unless otherwise noted. ▲ City Council and many other City meetings are broadcast live on channel 9. Charter Communications customers will find city meetings on channels 180 and 181. Meetings also stream live on the internet at rvtv.sou.edu select channel RVTV Prime.



20 East Main St., Ashland, OR 97520 | www.ashland.or.us

