

Council Business Meeting

January 21, 2020

Agenda Item	Public Hearing and First Reading of Trails Master Plan	
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SUMMARY

This agenda item is to hold a public hearing on the adoption of the 2018 Trails Master Plan (TMP) as a supporting document to Chapter VIII Parks, Open Space, and Aesthetics of the City of Ashland Comprehensive Plan. The plan addresses trail connections to existing systems such as the Bear Creek Greenway and Central Ashland Bike Path, trails in creek corridors such as Wrights Creek and Hamilton Creek, and connections to trails on Forest Service lands and to Forest Service Road 2060. In addition, the plan includes chapters on trail standards, safety and protocols, indigenous peoples, geology, and flora and fauna.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED

Statewide Planning Goal 8: Recreational Needs recommends that local jurisdictions inventory recreation needs and opportunities, and develop long range plans and action programs to meet the recreational needs. Cities and counties are allowed but not required to prepare master plans for recreation facilities and amend acknowledged comprehensive plans to include the master plans.

Chapter VIII Parks, Open Space, and Aesthetics of the *Ashland Comprehensive Plan* includes a goal “**To provide the people of Ashland with a variety, quantity and quality of parks, park facilities, open spaces, trails, and visual resources sufficient for their needs.**” In addition, the following policies specifically address planning for trails.

- **Policy 6:** The City shall adopt an official map that will identify the planned areas for parks, new natural areas, conservation areas and trails.
- **Policy 7:** Develop the system of corridors, linear park routes and trails outlined in the Park and Open Space map. Encourage interconnections between parks, open spaces, bicycle paths, easements, irrigation ditches, scenic roadway routes, railroad right-of-way, etc.
- **Policy 8:** Establish, where possible, trails along non-urbanized sections of stream corridors, ensuring the stream ecology and any residences are protected.

Chapter X Transportation of the *Ashland Comprehensive Plan* includes a goal (10.15.01) “**To raise the priority of convenient, safe, accessible, and attractive walking and bicycling networks.**” In addition, the following policy specifically addresses pedestrian and bicycle connections to recreation areas.

- **Policy 10.15.02.5:** Target walkway and bikeway improvements that link neighborhoods, schools, retail and service areas, employment centers and recreation areas.

The TMP also relates to policies included in the *City of Ashland Climate and Energy Action Plan (CEAP)*. Specifically, the *CEAP* includes a strategy to implement bicycle and pedestrian friendly actions including expanding urban trails.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION

This item has not previously been reviewed by the City Council.

BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ashland residents have a long tradition of enjoying the forest interface and the Ashland watershed through running, hiking and biking on trails and forest service roads. The work and dedication of Ashland Parks and Recreation and the Ashland Woodlands and Trails Association has strengthened those connections to the city and expanded the trail network in the past two decades. The 2006 plan provided a valuable framework for advancements in these areas and the proposed update, the TMP, provides the template for increasing trail connectivity between neighborhoods, the city and surrounding natural areas.

The original Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the City Council in November 1982 and included Chapter VIII Parks, Open Space, and Aesthetics. The same chapter was amended and replaced in 1991 (Ordinance 2652). The existing Parks, Open Space and Trails Program map was approved by the Parks and Recreation Commission and City Council in July 2002. Subsequently, the same map was updated in April 2005. Most recently, the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission worked with the Ashland Woodlands and Trails Association (AWTA) to develop the 2006 Trails Master Plan.

1. Comprehensive Plan Amendment

The item before the City Council is to hold a public hearing and make a decision on the adoption of the 2018 TMP as a supporting document to Chapter VIII Parks, Open Space, and Aesthetics of the City of Ashland Comprehensive Plan.

Ashland Municipal Code (AMC) 18.5.9.020.B permits amendments to the Comprehensive Plan to meet changes in circumstances and conditions. The Planning Commission makes a recommendation to the City Council and the City Council makes the final decision.

The existing TMP was developed in 2006 with a goal of creating a grid of trails that unified the urban area and reached outward to the greater regional open spaces. After ten years of implementation, the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission recognized the need for a ten-year update.

Examples of documents that are adopted as supporting documents to the Comprehensive Plan include the Housing Needs Analysis (2012), Local Wetlands Inventory (2005/2007) and the Normal Neighborhood Plan Framework (2015). The documents are identified as a supporting document to a specific Comprehensive Plan chapter. In turn, the Comprehensive Plan chapters address the Statewide Planning Goals. For example, the Local Wetlands Inventory (2005/2007) was adopted as a supporting document to Chapter IV Environmental Resources of the Comprehensive Plan, and Chapter IV Environmental Resources addresses Statewide Planning Goal 5: Natural Resources, Scenic and Historic Areas, and Open Spaces.

Technical studies that are required by state law (e.g., local wetlands inventory, housing needs analysis) are adopted as supporting documents to the Comprehensive Plan because the data collection and analysis is updated more frequently than the Comprehensive Plan. Master plans are similar to technical studies in that the documents tend to be updated more frequently and involve data collection and analysis that is time specific and more detailed than the Comprehensive Plan. The supporting documents do not create policy but rather the information, data and findings contained within the documents may be the basis for new policies or amending policies (see *Appendix A: Technical Reports and Supporting Documents*).

2. Plan Development and Public Meetings

The TMP was updated by the TMP Update Committee at a series of regularly scheduled public meetings in 2017 and early 2018. In May 2018, a public open house and listening session was held to review the draft plan. Chapter 1 of the attached TMP includes a detailed description on the history of the TMP and on the update process.

The Transportation Commission reviewed the TMP at the [January 17, 2019](#) meeting and recommended the City Council accept the TMP for future guidance of trails in Ashland.

The Planning Commission reviewed the draft TMP at the [May 28, 2019](#) study session and held a public hearing and recommended approval of the TMP as a supporting document to the City of Ashland Comprehensive Plan at the [June 25, 2019](#) meeting. The Planning Commission recommended several minor changes to the document that have been incorporated into the attached document.

The Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission approved the TMP at the [December 9, 2019](#) meeting.

FISCAL IMPACTS

The review of future transportation and trail connections that are included in adopted long-range planning documents (i.e., Transportation System Plan, Open Space and Trails Program map) is a routine step in the review of development proposals and is currently part of the normal work flow for Planning Division staff. In addition, Parks Department staff is included in the review of development proposals from initial concept at the pre-application throughout the planning application process. As a result, the work of reviewing the TMP can continue to be covered with existing resources.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff supports the Planning Commission recommendation to approve adoption of the 2018 TMP as a supporting document to Chapter VIII Parks, Open Space, and Aesthetics of the City of Ashland Comprehensive Plan.

ACTIONS, OPTIONS & POTENTIAL MOTIONS

I move to approve first reading of an ordinance titled, “An Ordinance amending the City of Ashland Comprehensive Plan to adopt the Trails Master Plan as a supporting document to the City of Ashland Comprehensive Plan,” and move the ordinance to second reading at the February 4, 2020 meeting.

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Ordinance 3187 amending the City of Ashland Comprehensive Plan to adopt the Trails Master Plan (2018) as a supporting document to the City of Ashland Comprehensive Plan

Attachment 2: Trails Master Plan (2018)

[Record for Trails Master Plan, PA-L-2019-0005](#)

1 **ORDINANCE NO. 3187**

2 **AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY OF ASHLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**
3 **TO ADOPT THE TRAILS MASTER PLAN (2018) AS A SUPPORTING DOCUMENT**

4 Annotated to show deletions and additions to the Ashland Municipal Code sections being
5 modified. Deletions are ~~bold-lined through~~, and additions are **bold underlined**.

6 **WHEREAS**, Article 2. Section 1 of the Ashland City Charter provides:

7 Powers of the City The City shall have all powers which the constitutions, statutes, and common
8 law of the United States and of this State expressly or impliedly grant or allow municipalities, as
9 fully as though this Charter specifically enumerated each of those powers, as well as all powers
10 not inconsistent with the foregoing; and, in addition thereto, shall possess all powers hereinafter
11 specifically granted. All the authority thereof shall have perpetual succession.

12 **WHEREAS**, the above referenced grant of power has been interpreted as affording all
13 legislative powers home rule constitutional provisions reserved to Oregon Cities. City of
14 Beaverton v. International Ass'n of Firefighters, Local 1660, Beaverton Shop 20 Or. App. 293;
15 531 P 2d 730, 734 (1975); and

16 **WHEREAS**, the City of Ashland Planning Commission considered the above-referenced
17 recommended amendments to the Ashland Comprehensive Plan at a duly advertised public
18 hearing on June 25, 2019, and following deliberations, recommended approval of the
19 amendments by a vote of 4-0; and

20 **WHEREAS**, the City Council of the City of Ashland conducted a duly advertised public hearing
21 on the above-referenced amendments on January 21, 2020; and

22 **WHEREAS**, the City Council of the City of Ashland, following the close of the public hearing
23 and record, deliberated and conducted first and second readings approving adoption of the
24 Ordinance in accordance with Article 10 of the Ashland City Charter; and

25 **WHEREAS**, the City Council of the City of Ashland has determined that in order to protect and
26 benefit the health, safety and welfare of existing and future residents of the City, it is necessary
27 to amend the Ashland Comprehensive Plan in manner proposed, that an adequate factual base
28 exists for the amendments, the amendments are consistent with the comprehensive plan and that
29 such amendments are fully supported by the record of this proceeding.
30

1 **THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF ASHLAND DO ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:**

2 **SECTION 1.** The above recitations are true and correct and are incorporated herein by this
3 reference.

4 **SECTION 2.** The document entitled “Trails Master Plan (2018)” attached hereto as *Exhibit A*,
5 and made a part hereof by this reference is hereby added to the above-referenced Appendix to
6 support Chapter VIII, [PARKS, OPEN SPACE, AND AESTHETICS] of the Comprehensive
7 Plan.

8 **SECTION 3. Codification.** In preparing this ordinance for publication and distribution, the
9 City Recorder shall not alter the sense, meaning, effect, or substance of the ordinance, but within
10 such limitations, may:

- 11 (a) Renumber sections and parts of sections of the ordinance;
- 12 (b) Rearrange sections;
- 13 (c) Change reference numbers to agree with renumbered chapters, sections or other parts;
- 14 (d) Delete references to repealed sections;
- 15 (e) Substitute the proper subsection, section, or chapter numbers;
- 16 (f) Change capitalization and spelling for the purpose of uniformity;
- 17 (g) Add headings for purposes of grouping like sections together for ease of reference; and
- 18 (h) Correct manifest clerical, grammatical, or typographical errors.

19 **SECTION 4. Severability.** Each section of this ordinance, and any part thereof, is severable,
20 and if any part of this ordinance is held invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the
21 remainder of this ordinance shall remain in full force and effect.

22 The foregoing ordinance was first read by title only in accordance with Article X, Section
23 2(C) of the City Charter on the ____ day of _____, 2020, and duly PASSED and
24 ADOPTED this ____ day of _____, 2020.

25 ATTEST:

26 _____
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28 Melissa Huhtala, City Recorder
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SIGNED and APPROVED this ____ day of _____, 2019.

John Stromberg, Mayor

Reviewed as to form:

David H. Lohman, City Attorney



TRAILS MASTER PLAN

A LONG-RANGE VISION OF CONNECTING ASHLAND'S TRAILS



CITY OF
ASHLAND





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With the acquisition of Lithia Park in 1908, Ashland citizens initiated a vision to protect scenic landscapes and give residents and visitors access to many of the area's natural features. In recent years, citizens aspired to improve upon the area trails. Aware of development pressures and other challenges to the existing trails, a group of citizens formed the Ashland Woodlands & Trails Association (AWTA) in 2001.

In 2006, the AWTA and the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission (APRC) formed a sub-committee and authored a Trails Master Plan (TMP) as an essential component to the city's Open Space Plan. (The use of the term "master plan" for purposes of this document implies a long-range, over-arching plan that is not project or cost specific.) They envisioned a trail system built around a trio of west to east main trails with longitudinal connections to key civic areas and upland forestlands. Building on public input from community workshops and neighborhood forums, the 2006 TMP Committee had identified four themes of interest which were used to generate a framework of goals. The TMP was approved by the APRC and the City Council in the spring of 2006 and became part of the City of Ashland Comprehensive Plan.

The overarching goals of the TMP were as follows and continue to guide the TMP update:

- Develop and maintain a system of trails for pedestrians and non-motorized vehicles;
- Increase trail connectivity between neighborhoods, civic features and surrounding natural areas;
- Enhance the quality of life through improved trail opportunities in support of our health, wellness, and environmental enjoyment;
- Continue use of accepted trail standards based on approved uses, site opportunities, and historical and safety constraints.

Any "trails master plan" should be seen as a dynamic document that will evolve over time. The 2006 TMP had identified key parcels and corridors for purchase or easement acquisition. It contained recommendations to expand the existing trail system, to fill in gaps, and to connect neighborhoods, business districts, parks, schools, public facilities, and natural features. A key 2006 TMP goal was to create a grid of trails that unified the urban area and reached outward to the greater regional open spaces.



In the fall of 2016, the APRC, recognizing the need for a ten-year update, formed the TMP Update Committee. The target date for completion and approval of the TMP update was set for late summer of 2018. The process unfolded in 2017 and early 2018 with the TMP Update Committee holding regularly scheduled, public meetings. A citizen comment link was inserted into the City website. The editing process was made fully available for public viewing via a Google Docs link on the City website and an open house public meeting was held in early May of 2018. The approval and adoption process began with the formal approval by the APRC, followed by the City Planning, Public Works and Transportation Commission protocols that would allow for presentation to the City Council for final approval as a technical report supporting the Parks, Open Space, and Aesthetics Chapter (Chapter VIII) of the City of Ashland Comprehensive Plan.

The design, construction and maintenance of the city trail systems should be an integral factor in the planning of all applicable future building, roadway, and infrastructure projects. The trail enhancement opportunities identified in the TMP should be given intentional consideration by City staff from initial project planning to completion. Trails will be designed and constructed to pertinent accessibility standards, best practices, and current professional guidelines at the time of implementation. The City of Ashland and the APRC will continue to be responsible and collaborative neighbors when determining

locations for new trails and maintenance of existing trails and will continue to work with adjacent property owners to reduce possible undesirable impacts of trails.

Trail width, surfacing, and other trail standards may vary from accepted standards based upon issues around available land, adjacent development, site-specific concerns, appropriate uses, and wetland/riparian preservation. Opportunities to enhance the urban trail system should include similar programs and considerations specified in the adopted 2012 Transportation System Plan (TSP). Consistent with the TSP, the TMP recommends a trail connection to every school in Ashland.

Within this plan, three chapters offer context to the individual trail corridor chapters as they address the historical, physical and biological foundations of our area trails. Individual corridor descriptive information is provided in the individual corridor chapters.

The TMP shall serve as a civic guiding document where the information, data, maps and findings contained within the plan may constitute part of the basis on which new policies may be formulated or existing policy amended. All trail planning considerations should be consistent with the broader City plans to include the TSP, Storm Water Master Plan and the Climate Energy Action Plan.

1

TRAILS MASTER PLAN UPDATE PROCESS: A BRIEF HISTORY AND LOOK FORWARD

TRAILS MASTER PLAN



TRAILS CONNECT PEOPLE TO PEOPLE, PEOPLE TO NATURE,
PEOPLE TO OUR COMMUNITY AND TO OUR REGION

1 TRAILS MASTER PLAN UPDATE PROCESS: A BRIEF HISTORY AND LOOK FORWARD

TRAILS MASTER PLAN

6

The initial Trails Master Plan Committee was formed in December 2003 at the suggestion of the Ashland Woodlands & Trails Association (AWTA) and was formally recognized by the Ashland City Council. The AWTA and the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission (APRC) had agreed that a Trails Master Plan (TMP) was a missing component to the City's Open Space Plan, which had been adopted by the City Council in 2002. The initial TMP draft was presented to the public for comment in December 2005. The final draft was approved by the APRC and the City Council in the spring of 2006 and became part of the City of Ashland Comprehensive Plan.

Vision

The overall vision for the City of Ashland trail system was developed in 2006 by the APRC. In 2018, the vision continues to reflect the values of Ashland citizenry, the elected Ashland Parks and Recreation Commissioners and professional City staff.

Vision — Trails connect people to people, people to nature, people to our community and to our region. These vital connections and values are key to the continuing success of our trail system.

Building on public input from community workshops and neighborhood forums, the 2006 TMP Committee had identified



ASHLAND'S TRAILS OFFER ENJOYMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE OF ALL AGES.

the following general themes of interest which were used to generate the initial goal framework.

With some minor revision, these themes hold true:

- **Trails as Transportation**
- **Trail Access and Connectivity**
- **Natural Environment and Citizen Rights**
- **Trail Planning**
- **Trail Management and Maintenance**
- **Partners and Collaborators**

Mission

The TMP Committee confirmed the TMP mission in March of 2017, closely modeling the 2006 statement:

- Develop and maintain a system of trails for pedestrians and non-motorized vehicles on public lands and privately granted easements;
- Increase trail connectivity between neighborhoods and civic features, downtown, commercial zones, educational entities and surrounding natural areas;
- Enhance the quality of life for all Ashland residents and visitors through improved trail opportunities in support of our health, wellness and environmental enjoyment;
- Continue use of appropriate trail standards based on approved uses, site opportunities and historical and safety constraints.

MAPPING: A LOOK BACK INFORMS CURRENT DIRECTION

The 2006 TMP Committee began its work by researching and mapping undeveloped street rights-of-way, public access easements and “existing use” trails within the city limits. It identified three major lateral trails

that connect Ashland from northwest to southeast:

1. Bear Creek Greenway
2. Central Bike Path
3. Ashland Canal Trail

The committee used Ashland’s adopted Open Space map as the base map and overlaid their research in a combined map resulting in a gap analysis identifying missing trail sections. It became apparent that, while it is easier to get through town on the continuous major lateral trails, it is challenging to cross between the laterals and travel up or down slope, due to segmentation of trails. The five urban creek corridors offered the most promising connections to the three parallel main trails and these corridors were mapped for possible trail routes.

1. Wrights Creek
2. Ashland Creek
3. Roca Creek
4. Hamilton and Clay Creeks
5. Tolman Creek

In 2006, the need for regional connections outside the city limits, including an Ashland Grizzly Peak Trail, Emigrant Lake Trail and trails within the Bear Creek Watershed was identified.

In 2018, the TMP Update Committee confirmed the enduring need for effective mapping of trails and surrounding infrastructure to inform issues of safety, navigation, acquisition, planning and to more comprehensively recognize additional connections and easement opportunities. The staff of the the City of Ashland Engineering GIS will continue with essential support of this mission.

PUBLIC PROCESS: ESSENTIAL THEN AND NOW

In 2006, the TMP Committee reviewed the results of a trails survey conducted by the AWTa that consisted of questions about trail use, activities and concerns. The survey was widely disseminated and received significant citizen response. Comments from community meetings were compiled from which the goals and objectives for the 2006 TMP was generated. These concerns guided the TMP Update Committee and were revisited during the community comment period in 2018.

1. Pet issues: primarily dogs being off-leash and dog waste being left along trails. Waste stations were requested;
2. Impingement of trail traffic on nearby homeowners' privacy via heavy use, noise and trespassing;
3. Negative impact on wildlife and wildlife habitat within trail corridors;
4. Trash left by trail users;
5. Interest in a citizen trails volunteer program.

2006 TMP DOCUMENT DEVELOPMENT AND COORDINATION WITH OTHER EXISTING QUALIFIED PLANS

In developing the 2006 TMP, the following plans, guidelines, and handbooks were consulted and these planning documents continue to offer guiding concepts for trail planning and management:

- Ashland Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Element, December 17, 1996.
- Ashland Parks, Trails, and Open Space Program 2002 - 2012, July 24, 2003.
- Bear Creek Greenway Plan: Management and Policies Guidelines, adopted by Jackson County Board of Commissioners, July 1982.
- Oregon Statewide Trails Plan: Bear Creek Valley Regional Problem-Solving Phase I Status Report, Rogue Valley Council of Governments, 2001.
- 2005-2014 Oregon Statewide Non-motorized Trails Plan.
- Ashland Transportation System Plan, 2012.
- Ashland Storm Water and Drainage Master Plan, 2018 Update.
- Ashland Climate and Energy Action Plan

TMP PROCESS

In the fall of 2016 the APRC, recognizing the need for a ten-year update, formed

a committee with seven voting members representing stakeholders as follows: APRC (2), AWTA Board (2), Ashland Forest Lands Commission (2) and the general public (1). The City provided support staff from APRC, Ashland Fire and Rescue and City of Ashland Engineering GIS, as well as other City staff for specific issues. The target date for completion and approval of the TMP was set for late summer of 2018.

The process for adoption of the TMP unfolded in 2017 and early 2018 with the TMP Committee holding regularly scheduled and noticed meetings for deliberation and assembly of new data and information with a collaborative editing and re-write process. A public comment link was inserted into the City website. The editing process was made fully available for public viewing via a Google Docs link on the City website. An open house public meeting was held in early May of 2018.

The final TMP draft was submitted to the format editor for maps, pictures and text layout. The draft TMP was submitted to the Transportation Commission and the APRC for approval and, at the same time, the APRC initiated the necessary Planning Department approval process in order to amend the City of Ashland Comprehensive Plan with the TMP serving as an important technical supporting document.

Following the APRC and Planning Department approval with possible revisions, the draft TMP will be submitted to the Ashland City Council for adoption in the form of an expedient all-in-one package: a Comprehensive Plan Amendment/Ordinance.

COORDINATION WITH THE CITY OF ASHLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The TMP will be adopted by reference as a technical report supporting the Parks, Open Space and Aesthetics Chapter (Chapter VIII) of the City of Ashland Comprehensive Plan. The TMP shall serve the purpose of a guiding document where the information, data and findings contained within the document and maps may constitute part of the basis on which new policies may be formulated or existing policy amended.

Chronology of Trails Master Plan Update

Fall 2016	APRC forms TMP Update Committee
Feb 2017	First TMP Update Committee Meeting
April 2018	Final TMP Update draft finished
May 2018	Open house public comment Listening Post
Aug 2018	Final TMP draft submitted to format editor
Oct 2018	Final TMP draft submitted to Transportation Commission and APRC
Nov-Dec 2018	Final TMP draft submitted to Public Works and Transportation Commission and APRC
May 2019	APRC initiates Planning Dept approval process to amend the City of Ashland Comprehensive Plan
Jan 2020	TMP final draft submitted to the Ashland City Council for adoption as Comprehensive Plan amendment/ordinance package

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TRAIL STANDARDS AND BASIC DESIGN ELEMENTS

TRAILS MASTER PLAN



CITY TRAIL SYSTEMS SHOULD BE AN INTEGRAL
COMPONENT IN THE PLANNING OF FUTURE BUILDING,
ROADWAY AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

Overview

The City of Ashland and the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission (APRC) strives to be a responsible and collaborative neighbor when determining locations for new trails and maintenance of existing trails. Most of the trails in this Master Plan are within Ashland's city limits or the City's Urban Growth Boundary and therefore within the City's planning jurisdiction. A number of trail sections are within Jackson County, whose comprehensive plan strongly supports cooperation with cities and encourages the development of recreational facilities and opportunities to meet the need of urban population centers. The City will work with the County on whatever planning requirements deemed necessary by the County to make the Master Plan trails and trail connections a reality. The APRC will work with property owners to create long-term solutions for landowners who are concerned with trails on or near their property. Trail development will occur on private property only with owner consent and all trails crossing private property should be constructed only after trail easements have been legally acquired and recorded. The APRC will continue to work with adjacent property owners to reduce possible undesirable impacts of trails. Trail corridors that come close to existing residences could be mitigated through fencing, screening, signage and other buffering measures.



TRAIL SIGNAGE DESIGNATES TRAIL USAGE AT INTERSECTIONS FOR SAFETY OF TRAIL USERS.

City trail systems should be an integral component in the planning of future building, roadway and infrastructure projects. The trail enhancement opportunities identified in the TMP should be given full and intentional consideration by City planning staff from initial planning to project completion.

All trail construction and maintenance will consider aquatic ecosystems, vegetation suitability and wildlife habitat. Trail development should conform to City floodplain, riparian and hillside ordinances and regulations such as erosion control and setbacks.¹ When appropriate, a geologist or geotechnical engineer will be consulted in areas of steep terrain, unstable soil conditions or severe erosion areas.

Other considerations should include possible impacts on water quality, archaeology and native plant species. When appropriate, a riparian specialist will be consulted when designing trails in these areas. Trail improvement or development can provide coordinated opportunities for broader environmental enhancement projects in addition to improved maintenance. All trail construction and major trail improvements on City forestlands that come under the purview of the City-adopted *2016 Ashland Forest Plan* will be reviewed and approved by the Ashland Forest Lands Commission prior to implementation.

Accessibility

Trails will be designed and constructed to applicable accessibility standards, best practices and current professional guidelines at the time of implementation. Reasonable attempts will be made to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) trail grade requirements and other important safety features. However, this may not always be practical. Trails may be exempt from certain ADA requirements if “reasonable accommodation” cannot be met.² This is most typical in areas of steep terrain.

Types of Trails

Current and future trails in the city of Ashland fall into three general categories: multi-use, on-street and natural area trails.

Any of these may be used as interpretive trails for purposes of natural, historical and cultural offerings. Trail width, surfacing and other trail standards may vary from accepted standards based upon issues around available land, adjacent development, site-specific concerns, appropriate uses and wetland/riparian preservation.

Trails and trail street crossings should be designed to meet applicable standards such as ADA, Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) standards and other State and Federal guidelines.

The Ashland Transportation System Plan (TSP) discusses both existing and planned on-street and off-street trails and the TSP and this Trails Master Plan should strive for coordination in future planning.

Multi-Use Trails

Paved multi-use trails are generally trails that are separated from parallel streets. Trails that have regional or community-wide significance will usually be of this type. They are designed to provide safety for each user group and be ADA compliant. Multi-use trails are designed to assure that the trail will accommodate two-way wheelchair navigation, strollers, bicycles, skaters,

pedestrians and possibly others, as well as maintenance, security and emergency vehicles. Motorized vehicles including gas-powered scooters, carts, motorcycles, and others shall not be allowed on multi-use trails unless specifically designated.

Design considerations should include, but not be limited to, site lines, grade, erosion and local regulations. The surfacing of multi-use trails should be asphaltic concrete or concrete over a compacted crushed rock base (impervious surfaces are preferred). The paved trail tread width should be a minimum of six feet to a maximum of ten feet, with two to-four foot-wide crushed rock shoulders or planted strips.

Soft shoulders of crushed rock or wood chips may be provided for runners and equestrians should space and approved use allow.

On-Street Trails

On-street trails are generally trails attached to a parallel street with no separation.

An on-street trail would typically appear as a designated bike lane, wide shoulder, sidewalk or protected bike lane. On-street trail surfacing should be asphaltic concrete or concrete over a compacted crushed rock base. The tread width should be a minimum of three feet to a maximum of eight feet wide (preferred width) with three-foot crushed rock shoulders (preferred width).

Natural Area Trails

In the placement of natural area trails, first consideration should be given to environmental impacts. Natural area trails have two categories: *native and native improved*.

Native trail width should be a minimum of 18 inches to a maximum of four feet wide. Native trail surfacing should be compacted native soils. Occasional decomposed granite and/or wood chip surfacing to limit erosion could be allowed in areas associated with environmental need, user safety or other circumstances as identified by APRC staff. Trails in undeveloped open spaces that provide a natural outdoor experience will often be of this type.

Native improved trail width should be a minimum of 32 inches to a maximum of eight feet wide (preferred width) with six-inch native soil shoulders. Native improved trail surfacing should be a compacted crushed rock base with screened granite and/or wood chip surfacing to limit erosion. Surfacing material should be fine decomposed/screened granite from the local area. Trails in developed and undeveloped open spaces that provide a natural outdoor experience will often be of this type.

Natural area trails will be developed using US Forest Service standards as a model. The APRC currently uses “USFS National Design Parameters” as a model for the development, construction and maintenance of City trails.³

Safe Routes to School

Safe Routes to School programs are sustained efforts by schools, parents, concerned citizens, local governments and other community organizations to improve the health and safety of children by enabling and encouraging them to walk, skate and bicycle to school. Supporters often organize ad hoc school committees to examine the existing conditions, identify projects and implement solutions to address active-transportation barriers for students. Through a combination of traffic engineering, focused education, broad encouragement and traffic enforcement activities, cities have successfully promoted these programs.

Communities nationwide are increasing programs to improve the safety and ability of children to walk, bike or skate to school. Ashland has recently been the recipient of federal and state funding for several *Safe Routes to School* projects. In the future, more funds may be available for such projects. Opportunities to enhance the urban trail system should include *Safe Routes to School* cooperative planning and design. This plan recommends a trail connection to every school in Ashland.

The Ashland TSP has identified a prioritized list of Safe Routes to School and other sidewalk projects. The TSP and this TMP will strive for consistency and coordination in this area and for sidewalks on all school routes, on both sides of the street.



A YOUNG CYCLIST PRACTICES RIDING ON A SECTION OF THE BEAR CREEK GREENWAY TRAIL NEAR ASHLAND'S DOG PARK.

Street Crossings

In compliance with City standards, engineering studies will continue to establish the suitable level of traffic control and design. The TMP may suggest appropriate crossing options which must be verified and refined through traffic engineering and City transportation planning processes. All crossings must meet Americans with Disabilities Act compliance standards which are defined by the Oregon Department of Transportation and can be found in the City of Ashland Public Works Engineering Division. Urban trail user improvements for

major intersections and mid-block street crossings could include:

- median refuges
- a curved path approach to the crossing
- slow-down techniques
- user stop signs
- high visibility “ladder” type crosswalks
- other striping specific to crossings
- signage
- overhead lighting improvements
- user-activated or pedestrian/cyclist detection systems
- curb ramps with widths matching the trail width
- specialized paving
- traffic cones
- curb extensions

Trailheads

Trailheads provide access for citizens arriving by auto or other means. Depending on the level of development, a trailhead site may include off-street parking, information kiosks, signage, trash receptacles, drinking water, benches, lighting, bike parking, a restroom or “porta-potty” facilities and dog litter bags.

Trailheads, as with other off-street trails, should be designed with appropriate storm water and drainage considerations per the Storm Water and Drainage Master Plan.

Stand-alone, full-service urban trailheads are not features that are currently part of development plans within the City of Ashland trail system.

Trailheads may be integrated within existing or proposed park properties, parking lots, or other community centers. Some trailheads could exist as cooperative agreements with schools to increase trail use and to reduce duplication of support facilities (restrooms, parking, ADA access). In natural areas or areas with slope or environmental constraints, trailheads should be placed in such a way to allow for maximum off-street parking where possible.

Parking

An urban trail system is analogous to a mass transit system in that there are multiple access points along a system of linked corridors as opposed to the traditional trailheads in the more remote trail systems. These urban access points are intended to be within a reasonable walk from home or key destination points. If access to the urban system via private vehicle is desirable, it will be necessary for the individual user to find nearby legal street parking. In some cases, existing or future parks can also serve as urban trailheads with parking, restrooms, litter collection, dog waste stations and appropriate signage already in place.

Signage

Effective signage will play a crucial role in ensuring successful trail use. Local residents and visitors alike may value guidance about permissible trail uses. The following types of signage will be considered:

- Directional and regulatory signage
- Continuous route signage for route identification, way-finding and direction to recommended safe crossings of busy streets
- Periodic information regarding distance to areas of interest
- Interpretive information regarding ecological, historical and cultural features found along and in proximity to trails

APRC will continue to develop comprehensive trail signage with particular attention given to curtailing visual impact due to unnecessary or inappropriate signage. A consistent sign motif should be implemented along the trail routes. Signs will delineate private and public lands. Trail use designations shall clearly be posted at the entrance or intersection of each trail segment.

Signs will feature brown letters on a tan background, screen print. Signs shall contain the APRC logo and a phone number for information. Special full-color signs will be allowed to designate “special” trails such as the Creek to Crest Trail and Bear Creek Greenway. Signage at trailheads may include appropriate flora and fauna information

including warnings for poison oak and/or other hazard conditions within the area.

Trail Art

Approved art installations along trails provide aesthetic appeal. Certain trail corridors can offer unique potential for community art installations and interpretive signage and should be encouraged.

Trails Master Plan Corridor Descriptive Framework

Individual corridor information is provided in the individual corridor chapters to follow. The general template of information below will be applied to each of the ten existing trail corridors, as well as the two newly-designated trail areas.

- A clear statement of the general alignment route, end points, approximate length in miles, street crossings and bridges
- Linkages to junctions with other routes and trails and to adjacent facilities such as trailheads, schools, civic centers, parks, business centers and civic amenities
- Character in terms of setting, both natural and manmade, viewscape, and intensity of use

-
- Expected and permitted users
 - Typical Section (e.g. width, surface type)
 - Natural and cultural highlights of each corridor

Citations

1. Ashland Municipal Code, Water Resources Protection Zones
ashland.municipal.codes/LandUse/18.3.1
2. ADA Draft Final Accessibility Guidelines For Outdoor Developed Areas
atfiles.org/files/pdf/draft-final-accessibility-guidelines-2009.pdf
3. Trail Design Parameters, US Forest Service
[National Design Parameters PDF \(September 2016\)](#)

3

TRAIL SAFETY AND PROTOCOLS

TRAILS MASTER PLAN



STAY ON THE TRAILS AS OVERLAND TRAVEL CAN
BE DANGEROUS AND HARMFUL TO ECOSYSTEMS

Unsanctioned Trails, Trespassing, Camping

APRC does not sanction any trails within the Ashland trails system that trespass on private property. Camping is not a sanctioned activity in any City park or City forestlands, or on USFS lands within the Ashland watershed. However, transients do use these trails to establish and access illegal camping sites on City, private and FS lands. City officials regularly express apprehension about the threat of wildfires from campfires started by this illegal activity. Human waste, litter and damage to natural resources also result from illegal camping in the watershed.

General Safety and Trail Use Protocols

1. Stay on the trail. Overland travel can be dangerous and harmful to ecosystems.
2. On multi-use trails: cyclists yield to pedestrians and everyone yields to equestrians.
3. Obey trail designations (e.g., pedestrian-equestrian trails, mountain bike only trails, etc).
4. Respect wildlife.
5. Respect private property.
6. Do not use off-trail switchbacks even if they exist.
7. Pack out your trash
8. When meeting a horse:
 - Move off the trail on the downhill side.
 - Quietly greet the rider in a steady and calm voice asking if you are ok where you are.
 - Stand quietly while the horses pass.



TRAIL YIELD SIGNS DISPLAY TRAIL PROTOCOL ON MULTI-USE TRAILS.

Cyclists

1. Stop your bicycle for equestrians.
2. Slow down on hidden corners.
3. Stop for pedestrians when descending steep grades.
4. Warn others when passing or when sight distance is limited.
5. Do not ride muddy trails.

Dog Owners

1. Keep your dog on a leash and under control at all times.
2. Clean up after your dog.
3. Carry out your dog waste. Never leave bagged dog feces along the trail even while you complete your hike.

Equestrians

1. Clean up after your horse and carry out the waste.
2. Do not ride horses at a pace greater than a walk on muddy trails.
3. Cross creeks and wetlands only in designated areas to guard against adverse landscape impact.

How You Can Help

1. Pack out other trash you may find.
2. Join volunteer trail work parties through APRC or AWTA.
3. Report trail maintenance needs to APRC.
4. Report safety issues or illegal activity and problems to APRC, APD or Ashland Fire and Rescue.
5. Park only in parking areas or along public streets that are approved and designated for public parking.



PREPARING TO RIDE BANDERSNATCH TRAIL.

4

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES: THE FIRST TRAIL USERS

TRAILS MASTER PLAN



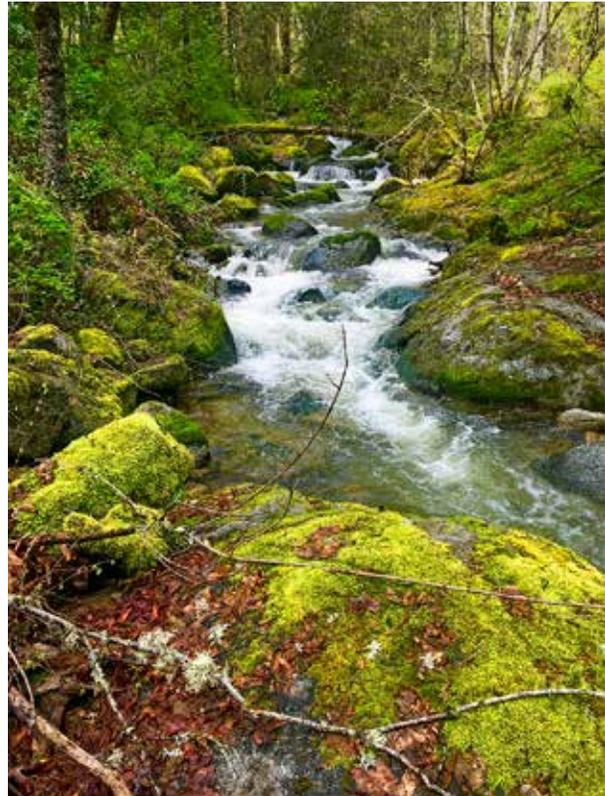
OFTEN, THEIR TRAILS HAVE BECOME OUR TRAILS

A Trails Master Plan for Ashland and the surrounding areas would be incomplete without acknowledging the first trail users: the indigenous inhabitants who have lived in the immediate area for over 10,000 years.

...To the Native American tribes that lived here, the Rogue Valley was not just their home, it was what defined them as a culture and a people. The stories they told, the food they ate, the clothing they wore and the objects they crafted were all connected to the surrounding environment...

(from “An introduction to the Native Americans of the Rogue Valley with a Focus on the Ashland Area”)

The above quote is from an illustrated booklet prepared by Kari Gies, former manager of the North Mountain Park Nature Center who, under the auspices of the APRC, collaborated with the Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde to write a very thorough, readable cultural history of local Native American inhabitants. Because it can be difficult to characterize a culture from the outside, it is reassuring that all the statements in this booklet have the seal of authenticity from several tribal contacts. The entire booklet is available online:



UPPER REACHES OF ASHLAND CREEK.

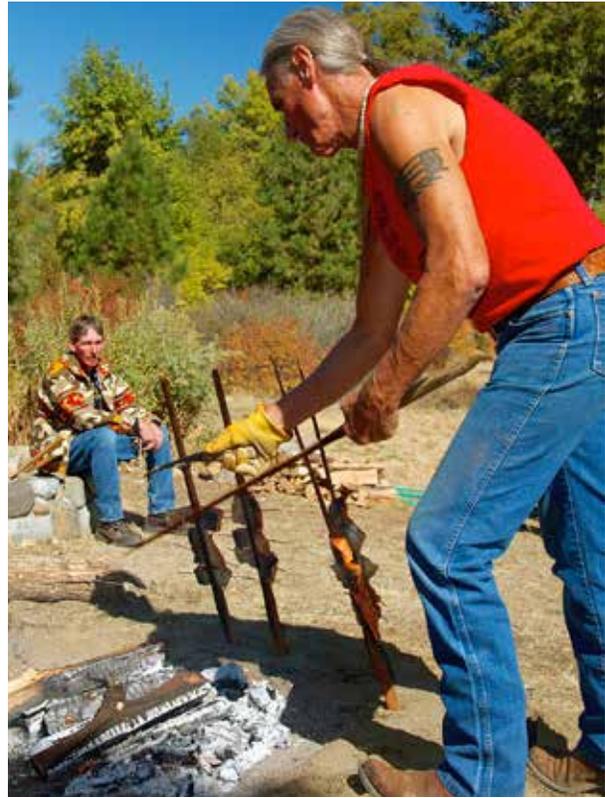
[An introduction to The Native Americans of the Rogue Valley](#)

Several more excerpts are offered below to honor and learn about the original trail users, in whose footsteps we walk today. The below excerpts were selected because they offer direct reference to extensive tribal seasonal movement suggesting the substantial use of trails. Often, their trails have become our trails.

...For at least as long as 10,000 years, Native Americans were part of the landscape of the Rogue Valley, traveling from the valley floor to the high mountains in a seasonal round pattern that allowed them access to available resources. They moved throughout the valley hunting deer, gathering willow, burning oak stands, celebrating the return of the salmon, raising families, and mourning the loss of loved ones...

...One of the most significant differences between the Native Americans of the Rogue Valley and the Euro-Americans who came to “settle” the region had to do with the acquisition of food. The settlers were an agricultural people in contrast to the indigenous tribes whose hunter-gatherer lifestyles were based on moving throughout the region as wild food resources became available and abundant (1)...

...Summer was a time for moving to the higher elevations of the valley in search of big game, bulbs and a variety of berries. By early fall, families returned to mid-elevations where they would be busy catching and drying salmon, burning tarweed fields for easy collection of the seeds and for gathering the enormously



SALMON COOKED OVER AN OPEN FIRE IN THE TRADITIONAL WAY.

important acorn crop. Late fall was a time for communal deer and elk drives and the processing of the resultant venison. By early winter it was time for families to return to their permanent village locations in the lowlands where they would complete the processing of acorns and other foods that were needed to last throughout the cold, wet winter months...

...The timing as to when the needed plant materials were available helped dictate the movement of the tribes throughout the valley... During the fall, tribal members came to read the signs that signaled it was time to travel back to the lower elevations to gather the falling acorns and to burn fields of yellow tarweed to collect the roasted seeds...

...Because the tribes of the Rogue Valley were very mobile, moving from the valley floor into the high mountains and back each year, their inventory of household items was fairly small...

5

GEOLOGY OF ASHLAND AREA: THE FOUNDATIONS OF OUR TRAILS

TRAILS MASTER PLAN



THESE GEOLOGICALLY COMPLEX MOUNTAINS HAVE EXISTED HERE
A LONG TIME AND HAVE ALSO BEEN ERODING FOR A LONG TIME,
DEPOSITING SIGNIFICANT QUANTITIES OF CLAY, SILT, SAND, PEBBLES
AND COBBLES INTO LOW-LYING AREAS AT THEIR BASE

The city of Ashland and surrounding area sits on a geologic scramble sometimes defying interpretation yet remaining uniquely interesting and always challenging for trail building and maintenance. The town sits on the northern edge of the Siskiyou Mountains which extend west to east from the Pacific Ocean and eventually abut into the north-south running Cascade Range. Thus, the geologic history of Ashland is the story of two mountain ranges, both of which are major players in the geologic history of Oregon.

Prior to 200 million years ago, Oregon lay under a shallow sea and the western shore of North America was located roughly where Oregon and Idaho meet today.

This situation began to change when the North American continental plate began to drift westward, resulting in the first of a succession of subduction zones where each new zone marked a place in which the Pacific plate slid beneath the North American plate. Two consequences of this subduction process helped to create the terrestrial Oregon we know today.

The first consequence: Several times between 200 and 50 million years ago, fragments of the eastward drifting Pacific plate, including volcanic islands and

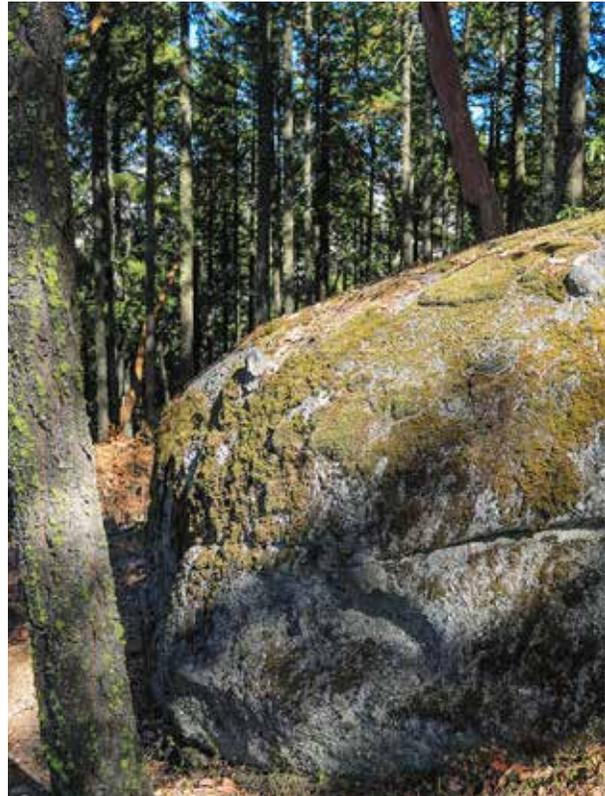
thick deposits of sediment, collided and subducted under the North American plate. At times, however, rather than subducting, these fragments stopped subducting and became welded onto the North America plate, such that Oregon grew westward, ultimately reaching its present size. Some of these welded-on, accreted terranes are among the oldest in the region and are now exposed at the surface in the Bear Creek Valley, characterized by gneiss and metamorphosed sedimentary rocks.

The second consequence: Subduction processes often cause melting of the earth's upper mantle. This developing magma was hot and buoyant, and it rose, melting and pushing its way upward through the overlying crust, erupting and creating volcanoes, lava flows and volcanic ash. In some instances, the magma never rose all the way to the surface and instead cooled and solidified within the crust, resulting in a collection of slow-cooling granite and diorite intrusions (plutons) that were often many miles wide. These plutons formed beneath southwestern Oregon and several of them make up much of the base rock of Mount Ashland and Wagner Butte. Rock debris from the Mount Ashland pluton is common in the stream gravels of North Mountain Park and along the Bear Creek Greenway.

Other very ancient subduction processes have had a major role in creating the Siskiyou Mountains. These geologically complex mountains have existed for a long time and have also been eroding for a long time, depositing significant quantities of clay, silt, sand, pebbles and cobbles into low-lying areas at their base. The result of this erosion and layered deposition is the formations that comprise most of the surface rocks of our area.

The older of these formations were marine deposits on the bottom of the Cretaceous sea that covered much of Oregon roughly 90 million years ago. These sedimentary beds, called the Hornbrook Formation, consist mostly of sandstone and shale. They contain fossils of ammonites, clams, snails and sharks' teeth. Many trails in Ashland are built on Hornbrook rocks, which erode easily, often crumbling into piles of grayish or orange tone rock debris.

The younger of the two formations, the Payne Cliffs Formation, is mostly terrestrial conglomerate and sandstone that emerges just east of Bear Creek and includes Pompadour Bluff. Smooth, very well-rounded pebbles and cobbles of quartzite rock have eroded free from this formation and can occasionally be found in the stream gravels of the Bear Creek Valley and on the shoreline of Emigrant Lake.



GRANITE BOULDERS WITH DIORITE INCLUSIONS.

6

FLORA AND FAUNA IN THE ASHLAND TRAILS AREA

TRAILS MASTER PLAN



THE OVERALL SUPPORT FOR INFORMED AND ACTIVE CARE OF
THE FLORA AND FAUNA IS AN OVERARCHING RESPONSIBILITY
FOR TRAIL DESIGNERS, BUILDERS AND USERS

The design, construction and long-term use of both urban and natural area trails should include an understanding of the plants and animals that are impacted by trail activity. For purposes of the TMP, the below listings and reports are offered as a framework of information. Specific flora and fauna interdictions or encouragements are not in the scope of this plan; however, the overall support for informed and active care of the flora and fauna in the trail zones is an overarching responsibility for trail designers, builders and users. There are specific areas in the Ashland trail system that require intentional and informed care of certain sensitive flora and fauna. Below is a listing and linkage to a broad range of management strategies for care of our local flora and fauna. Of special note is the *2016 Ashland Forest Plan* which offers detailed vegetation and wildlife descriptions and prescriptions for the watershed area.

NATIVE PLANTS IN ASHLAND AND ASHLAND WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE: (USDA NRCS 2016)

For a list of Native Plants in Ashland and the Ashland Wildland Urban Interface area go to:

[2016 Ashland Forest Plan Table 8-1](#)



WILD COLUMBINE BLOOMING ALONG BANDERSNATCH TRAIL.

PROBLEMATIC OR INVASIVE PLANTS: (USDA NRCS 2016)

Invasive plants come in many varieties and sizes, from trees to vines to shrubs, and the damage they can cause is just as varied. If left unchecked, many invasive plants can cause the eventual demise of desired plant species, alter wildlife habitat or directly threaten animals, choke waterways or increase the intensity of a wildfire.

For a list of problematic or invasive plants in the Ashland area go to:

[2016 Ashland Forest Plan Table 8-2](#)

ASHLAND FOREST PLAN LANDSCAPE UNITS:

For a list of Landscape Unit Vegetation types in the Ashland Watershed forestlands go to:

[2016 Ashland Forest Plan Table 8-5](#)

IMPERATRICE PROPERTY PLANTS — CASCADE FOOTHILLS AREA:

The geology of the Cascade Foothills, coupled with their southwestern aspect, provide unique habitat for flora and fauna that is distinctly different from the granitic north aspect of the Ashland watershed. Several rare plants and birds have been identified in the area. This area has sparse human population concentrated at the base of the foothills.

For a 2017 Biological Assessment conducted on the Imperatrice Property for the City of Ashland within the Cascade Foothills Area go here:

[Imperatrice Biological Assessment Report - Pacific Crest](#)

For a Vascular Plant list for the Imperatrice Property prepared by Southern Oregon Land Conservancy go here:

[Vascular Plant List Imperatrice](#)



BULLOCK'S ORIOLE ON FIRE POKER.

WILDLIFE IN THE ASHLAND CREEK WATERSHED

The below paragraph is excerpted from the *2016 Ashland Forest Plan*.

City of Ashland forestlands contain a variety of wildlife habitats ranging from the Riparian Management Areas through the drier lowlands, to the forests above Lithia Park and on into the Reeder Reservoir area and the Winburn parcel in the upper reaches of the Ashland Creek watershed. These diverse wildlife habitat areas lie on the

northern slopes of the Siskiyou Mountains, a range known for its significant biodiversity. Even with significant urbanization and the resulting mix of non-native trees, this area continues to provide nesting and foraging habitat for migratory songbirds, woodpeckers, owls and other raptors as well as browse for deer and smaller herbivores, and habitat for carnivores such as raccoons, bobcats and other animals.

For a more in-depth look at wildlife in our trails area, Chapter 4, Wildlife in the Ashland Creek Watershed of the *2016 Ashland Forest Plan* offers a range of useful information with further citations

[2016 Ashland Forest Plan](#)

BIRDS IN THE TRAILS AREA

More than 200 species of birds have been observed in the Rogue Valley and its surrounding mountains in recent years and there are several ways to categorize them. One is by occurrence and is determined by whether a species is a permanent resident, migrant or visitor. A visitor may be a sporadic drop-in or one that comes for a season, usually winter or summer. The other

principal division is by habitat. The valley contains diverse habitat types, and most species are associated with one or a few.

Habitats encountered on the trails are riparian, open-water, grassland, oak woodland and mixed conifer-hardwood forest.

For a comprehensive look at the wide variety of birds in our trails area, the following work by Rogue Valley Audubon Society member Barbara Massey is a useful study developed under the auspices of the APRC North Mountain Park Nature Center staff.

Birds at North Mountain Park: Occurrence, Seasonality and Numbers over a 10-Year Period

[Birds in North Mountain Park](#)

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS THAT MIGHT BE SIGHTED ALONG ASHLAND TRAILS

Amphibians

- Long-toed Salamander
- Pacific Giant Salamander
- Rough-skinned Newt
- Western Toad
- Pacific Tree Frog

Reptiles

- Western Pond Turtle
- Southern Alligator Lizard
- Western Fence Lizard
- Western Skink
- Rubber Boa
- Racer
- Sharptail Snake
- Ringneck Snake
- Common King Snake
- California Mountain Kingsnake
- Gopher Snake
- Western Terrestrial Garter Snake
- Northwestern Garter Snake
- Common Garter Snake
- Western Rattlesnake (Grizzly Peak side)



WESTERN POND TURTLE.



THE BEAR CREEK GREENWAY

TRAILS MASTER PLAN

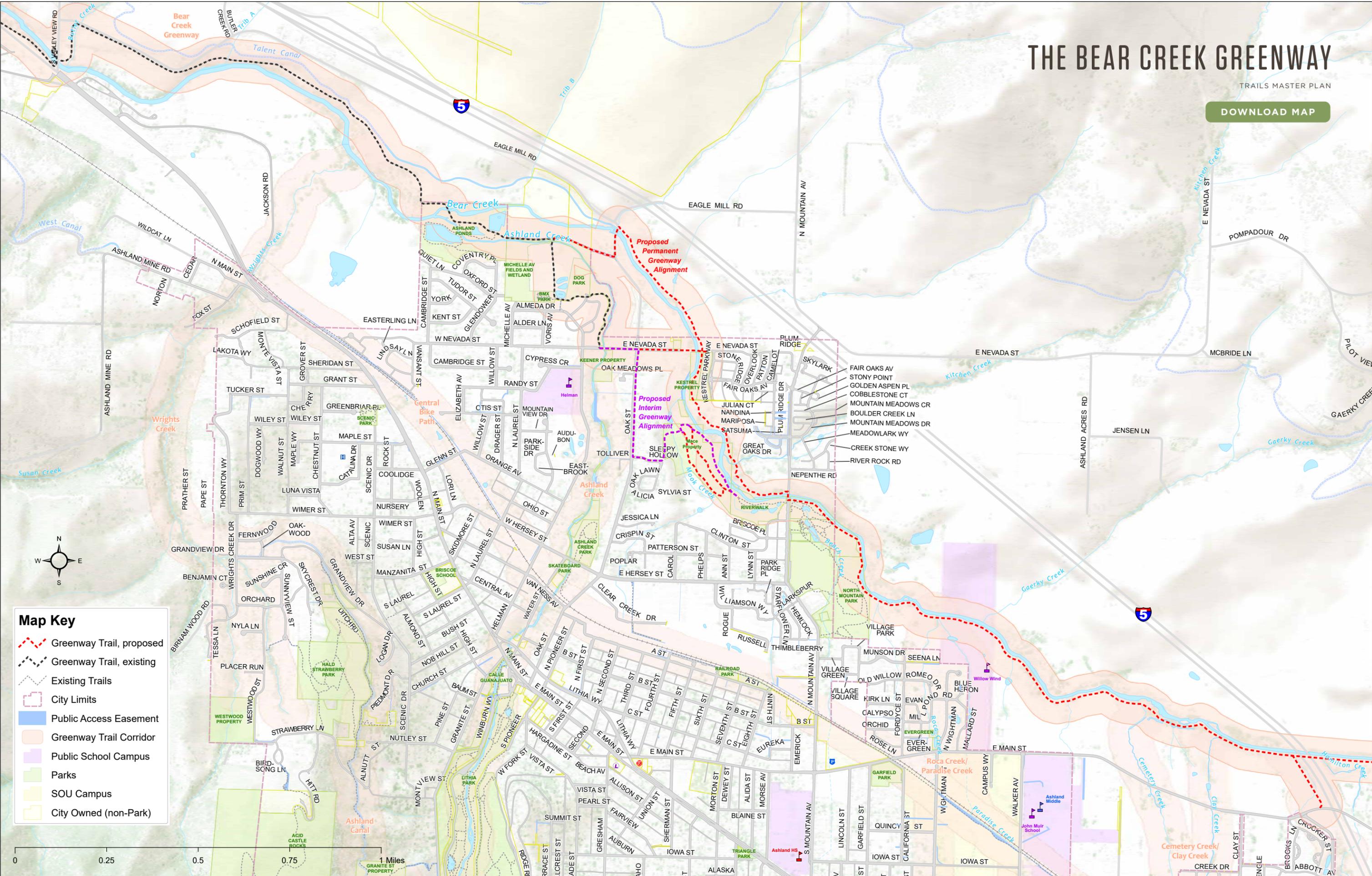


IT IS THE PREMIER CYCLIST AND PEDESTRIAN ROUTE THAT
TRAVERSES A SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF THE ROGUE VALLEY

THE BEAR CREEK GREENWAY

TRAILS MASTER PLAN

[DOWNLOAD MAP](#)



Map Key

- Greenway Trail, proposed
- Greenway Trail, existing
- Existing Trails
- City Limits
- Public Access Easement
- Greenway Trail Corridor
- Public School Campus
- Parks
- SOU Campus
- City Owned (non-Park)



Route Description

The Bear Creek Greenway is a twenty-mile trail that connects five cities and a number of municipal and county park sites all within Jackson County. In conjunction with the Rogue River Greenway, it is the premier cyclist and pedestrian transportation route that traverses a significant portion of the Rogue Valley. The Bear Creek Greenway route begins near Blackwell Road north of Central Point and extends generally south along Bear Creek, through Medford, Phoenix and Talent, currently terminating at Nevada Street just past the Ashland Dog Park. Several of the parks along the route provide support facilities including restrooms, parking, drinking water, picnicking areas, benches and wildlife viewing areas. These parks serve as important trailheads offering the aforementioned services to users who can enjoy different segments of the Greenway.

The Greenway enters the maintenance jurisdiction of the City of Ashland, northwest of the Ashland urban growth boundary. This portion of the trail travels predominately west to east and extends from the Valley View Road bridge over Bear Creek and then follows Bear Creek to the current termination point at West Nevada Street near the Ashland Dog Park and the Verde Village housing development. Another three



ASHLAND PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION SEASONAL PARK-WORKER MARIAN TELERSKI AND PARK TECH-1 TRAILS MAINTENANCE WORKER JILL MULLEN-FEELEY INSTALL NEW SIGNAGE ALONG THE ASHLAND SECTION OF THE BEAR CREEK GREENWAY TRAIL.

miles of trail is proposed to extend beyond Ashland to the southeastern edge of the Ashland Municipal Airport. FAA security standards may prevent the building of a trail near the airport so alternative routes should be considered on the south side of Bear Creek or along East Hills Drive to East Main and around the airport. From here, the route could continue southeast, following Bear Creek, to the proposed Tolman Creek Trail

and beyond. The planned route consistently follows the south side of Bear Creek. Near the confluence of Hamilton Creek and Bear Creek, the route would ideally cross under Interstate 5. Such a route would require significant inter-agency discussions and agreements.

A trail extension from West Nevada Street to North Mountain Park has become the immediate scope of work for a new trail building project. Currently an Alternate Routes Proposal study is being funded by a joint agreement between the Ashland Public Works Department, APRC and the Bear Creek Greenway Foundation Board, made possible through the acquisition of new properties and easements.

Governance

The Bear Creek Greenway has its own comprehensive planning document which has been endorsed by the city of Ashland and is administered by several agencies, including Jackson County Parks and the private, non-profit organization, Bear Creek Greenway Foundation. The maintenance of the Greenway is administered by Jackson County Parks through a Joint Powers Agreement between the five municipalities and Jackson County. A trail guide is available through Jackson County Parks.

Linkages

When completed, the Bear Creek Greenway will potentially connect with the Wrights Creek Trail, Ashland Creek Trail, Roca Creek Trail, Clay and Hamilton Creek Trails and Tolman Creek Trail. The Greenway will also connect to Helman, North Laurel and Oak streets, which are designated cycling routes. While the permanent Bear Creek Greenway route is pursued, several properties and bridges must be acquired and built prior to the permanent route being dedicated for use. A temporary route is planned to connect from Oak Street through the newly acquired APRC property below Clinton Street, then connect with North Mountain Avenue and North Mountain Park. Even though access to this section is currently limited, significant linkages are in place through North Mountain Park that connects the Greenway to the Roca corridor and the existing links to schools and civic features described in other chapters. In the future, the proposed trail alignment could connect the Greenway to the Ashland Pond open space area, giving good linkages to Helman Elementary School, the Central Bike Path and downtown Ashland.

Character

The corridor's character is largely wooded, riparian vegetation with many open views to the surrounding landscape that include large sections of natural open space, an often vigorous flowing Bear Creek, farmland and Cascade foothills viewsapes.

Expected Users

Users include bicyclists, pedestrians, runners, skaters, wheelchairs and maintenance and emergency vehicles. Equestrian use is expected to be mainly outside the city limits to the northwest and southeast toward Emigrant Lake.

Typical Section

The Greenway Trail is a ten-foot-wide, multi-use asphalt trail. Portions of the trail have an adjacent equestrian surface.

Natural and Cultural Resources

New settlers bestowed the name Bear Creek in the early 1850s due to several near-fatal encounters with grizzly bears along its banks. Ashland's section of the Greenway includes several significant remnant groves of mature ponderosa pine and California black oak, a vegetation community that once



CYCLISTS ENJOYING A RIDE ON THE BEAR CREEK GREENWAY TRAIL.

characterized many portions of the valley floor when the indigenous peoples were the only inhabitants of the area.

8

THE CENTRAL BIKE PATH CORRIDOR

TRAILS MASTER PLAN

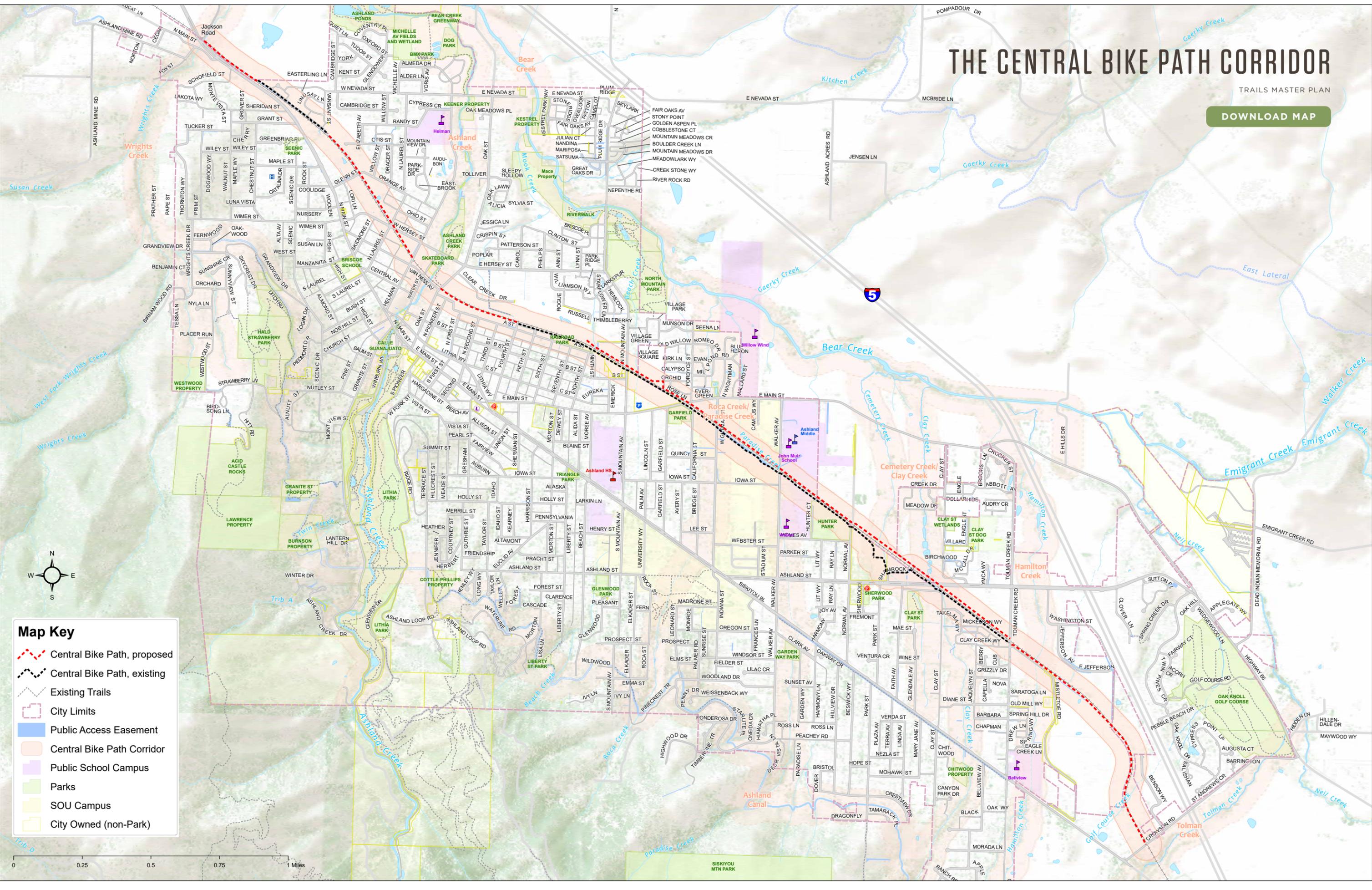


THE CENTRAL BIKE PATH WILL EVENTUALLY INTERSECT
WITH EVERY EXISTING AND PROPOSED UPSLOPE
CORRIDOR OFFERING SIGNIFICANT LINKAGES

THE CENTRAL BIKE PATH CORRIDOR

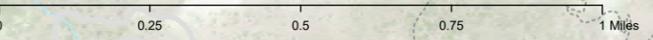
TRAILS MASTER PLAN

[DOWNLOAD MAP](#)



Map Key

- Central Bike Path, proposed
- Central Bike Path, existing
- Existing Trails
- City Limits
- Public Access Easement
- Central Bike Path Corridor
- Public School Campus
- Parks
- SOU Campus
- City Owned (non-Park)



Route Description

The Central Bike Path corridor is a northwest to southeast route through the center of Ashland that runs approximately five miles in length. It gained the name Central Bike Path from its inception and, even though the completed section is a fully developed, multi-use trail, it retains the name. For almost its entire length, the corridor runs parallel to the Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad tracks. The existing multi-use trail serves as a key bike-to-school passageway and is one of the most heavily used trails in Ashland.

The proposed two mile northwestern section of the Central Bike Path will begin at Jackson Road and connect to the existing segment that was constructed as part of the Billings Ranch Subdivision. There is a considerable gap in the trail from that point to where the extensive completed section begins where Fourth Street dead-ends into the railroad tracks. However, there are significant possibilities toward Glenn Street for an extension of the Billings Ranch Subdivision segment paralleling the railroad and bordering private land that may soon see development.

The completed section of the Central Bike Path effectively follows the railroad all the way to Tolman Creek Road. The proposed one-mile southeastern section of the Central



FAMILY USING THE CENTRAL BIKEPATH NEAR HUNTER PARK.

Bike Path will extend from Tolman Creek Road, again parallel to the railroad, to Crowson Road.

Linkages

The Central Bike Path will eventually intersect with every existing and proposed upslope corridor offering significant linkages to streets with bike lanes including Glenn, Orange, Laurel, Helman, Hersey, Oak, East Main and Ashland Streets.

The Central Bike Path currently provides direct access to Ashland Middle School and Walker Elementary School, SOU student housing and Garfield and Railroad parks. It connects the Ashland Street business complex near Interstate 5 with the downtown business area via the railroad district. The trail is in close proximity to the City of Ashland Civic Center campus on East Main Street, the SOU and Ashland High School sports stadiums and the ScienceWorks Hands-on Museum.

Important future linkages include expanded appropriate bike-to-school routes from as far away as Crowson Road, Jackson Road and the Normal Street Neighborhood. A safe pedestrian crossing is needed at the intersection of Oak Street, railroad tracks and Van Ness St, which continues to be a problematic intersection for motorized, bike and pedestrian traffic.

There are several key railroad crossing locations that are currently “informal” and unsanctioned passages that offer the continuous access which is essential for this backbone corridor to function, e.g., 4th Street to Clear Creek Drive. An important element of this corridor will be the improvement and formalizing of railroad track crossings for Central Bike Path users.

Character

The route is basically flat with views of the city and upward to the surrounding mountains. The corridor is predominately urbanized and there is easy access to businesses, services, schools, parks and neighborhoods. This will continue to operate as an essential commuter and *Safe Route to Schools* pathway forming the backbone of Ashland’s trail system.

Expected Users

Expected users consist of bikers, pedestrians, equestrians and maintenance and emergency vehicles.

Typical Trail Section

The Central Bike Path is a multi-use trail with a ten-foot paved width asphalt surface. Details are defined in the City’s TSP.

Natural and Cultural Resources

The Central Bike Path corridor is historically significant. It is the site where the golden railway spike was driven on December 17, 1887. This spike was placed where the Central Bike Path crosses Railroad Park and marked

the completion of the rail link between California and Oregon and the last link in the national rail system circling the United States. This was a major event, attended by a large group of dignitaries. For many years it served as the main north-south line in the far west and Ashland became a true “railroad town.” With a roundhouse, shops and a major passenger depot and hotel, Ashland and its

railroad district was home to many railroad employees and ancillary services. The railroad dynamic changed in the late 1920s when most freight traffic switched to the shorter, easier route from Weed, California, through Klamath Falls connecting to the main line in Eugene. The “Shasta Daylight” passenger train finally ended its run through Ashland in the 1950s.



ASHLAND CANAL

TRAILS MASTER PLAN



THE CONTRASTING VIEWS OF URBAN SPACES BELOW AND
RELATIVELY UNDERDEVELOPED SLOPES ABOVE GIVE A
SENSE OF THE URBAN-WILDLAND INTERFACE

ASHLAND CANAL

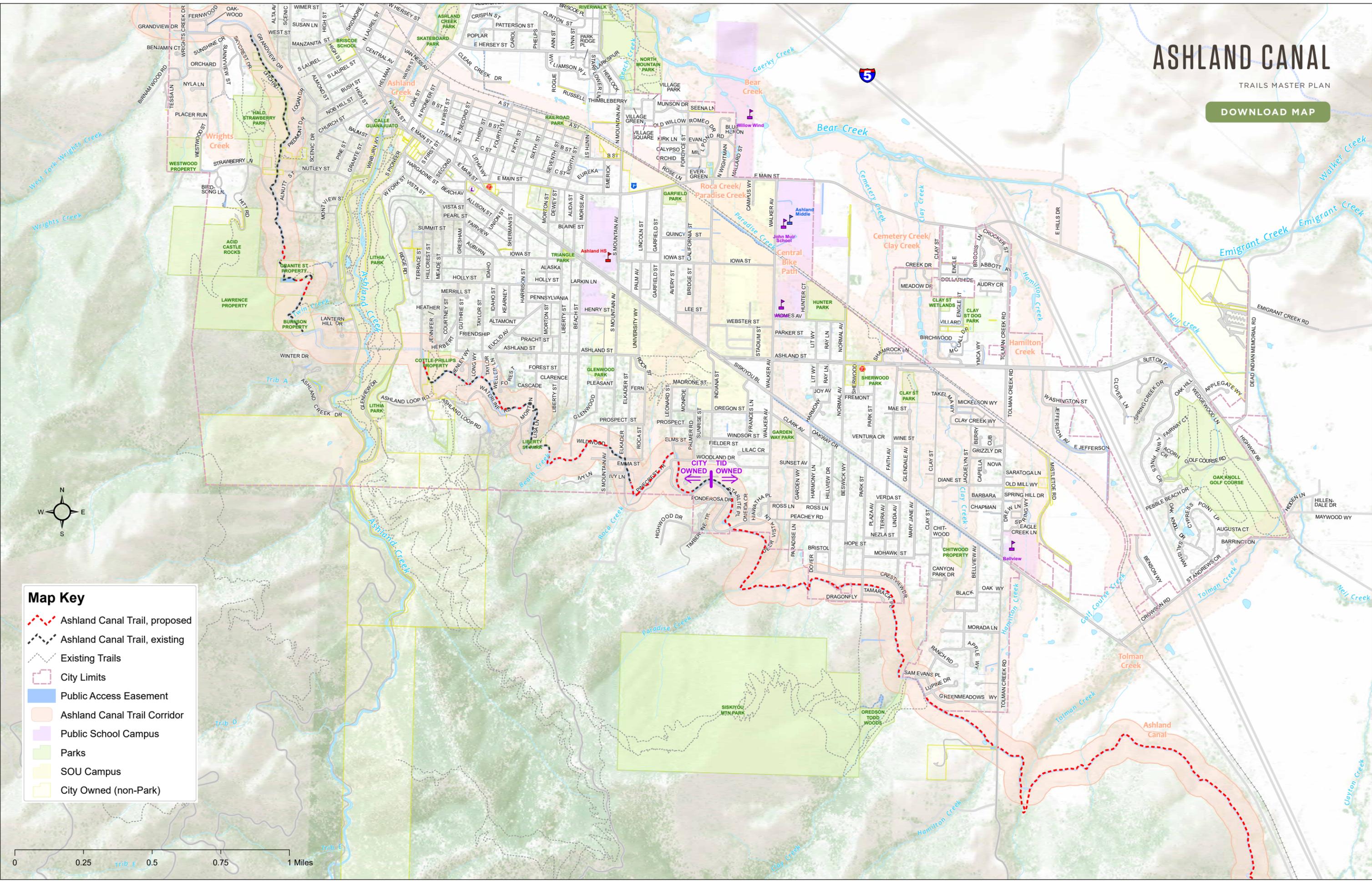
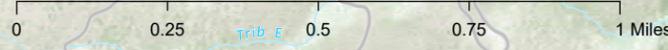
TRAILS MASTER PLAN

[DOWNLOAD MAP](#)



Map Key

- Ashland Canal Trail, proposed
- Ashland Canal Trail, existing
- Existing Trails
- City Limits
- Public Access Easement
- Ashland Canal Trail Corridor
- Public School Campus
- Parks
- SOU Campus
- City Owned (non-Park)



Route Description

The Ashland Canal, commonly called “the TID ditch,” is a significant part of the recommended trail system that visualizes completing a trail ring around the city of Ashland. The Talent Irrigation District (TID) was formed in 1917, in the middle of World War I, to provide a dependable supply of irrigation water to the upper Bear Creek Valley orchardists, farmers and ranchers. Most of the water in the Ashland Canal comes from the southern Cascades that lie east of Emigrant Lake.

The Ashland Canal provides a unique connection between many neighborhoods as it passes through otherwise difficult urban terrain. Local residents have used the maintenance easement along the north bank of the Ashland Canal as a recreational walking and running area since its construction in the 1920s. Many long-time residents remember a time when you could walk and run the ditch from one end of town to the other. Current trail usage is significant and includes pedestrians, runners, users with strollers, dog walkers and occasional mountain cyclists.

The Ashland Canal begins southeast of Emigrant Lake at a diversion near the Green Springs Power Plant on Emigrant Creek. Traveling toward Ashland, the Ashland Canal



THE ASHLAND CANAL TRAIL RUNS THROUGH MANY NEIGHBORHOODS IN ASHLAND AND SERVES AS A POPULAR HIKE AND ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION ROUTE FOR MANY RESIDENTS.

enters the urban growth boundary and crosses Tolman Creek Road until it reaches the intersection of Pinecrest Terrace and Starlite Place where the city of Ashland takes ownership of the water and assumes responsibility for maintenance of the canal until its terminus at Wrights Creek.

A large part of the Ashland Canal corridor from Tolman Creek to Wrights Creek is

on or closely borders private property. Because the canal access/maintenance road was not originally intended as a public access corridor, the original property owner easements were designated for canal maintenance only. It is important to reiterate that the maintenance easement does not include a public access element. Public access easements have been secured in some areas and it is desirable to continue the process of acquiring other easements to complete the public access component.

The trail segment in Ashland generally travels at or close to the wildland-urban interface along the southern edge of Ashland and roughly follows the 2,300-foot contour. The Ashland Canal is generally flat to gently sloping and has nearly six miles of linear distance, most of which is in close proximity to the southern border of the city limits.

Approximately 2.2 miles of the Ashland Canal trail intermittently exist on public property or on private property with public access easements in place. Significant segments of easement acquisition are needed to complete a unified route from Tolman Creek Road to the Wrights Creek corridor (see Ashland Canal map insert). A possible extension of the Ashland Canal trail would continue southeast following the canal's path all the way to Emigrant Lake;

however, numerous jurisdictional obstacles would need to be resolved before such an extension could occur.

At a few points, the trail route may need to leave the canal alignment and be routed along city streets when an adequate trail corridor does not exist or public access easements are simply not obtainable. One significant gap in the trail occurs where the piped canal crosses Ashland Creek in Lithia Park. The canal itself goes underground at Terrace Street down into Lithia Park, then daylights to the west of Granite Street halfway between Ashland Creek Drive and Lantern Hill Road. Thus, the trail through this section does not exist and, in the future, most likely will not. An alternate route should be considered and could include directing trail traffic from Terrace Street to Ashland Loop Road and along Glenview Drive to meet with the Ashland Canal trail on the west side of Lithia Park.

The Ashland Canal trail corridor crosses several roads and streets. Most of these are residential streets and can be controlled with signage and pavement marking. All of these crossings represent potential points of access. Some or all of these crossings, depending on usage, may need improvements, such as crosswalks, signage and curb cut ramps.

Linkages

The Ashland Canal trail provides access to the following parks and open spaces: Oredson-Todd Woods, Siskiyou Mountain Park, Liberty Street trail and open space, trail to Waterline Road, Cottle-Phillips open space to Ashland Loop Road (2060), Lithia Park trail system, Burnson and Granite Street properties. Providing a central location for parking to serve the Ashland Canal Trail and adjacent open spaces, a portion of Hald-Strawberry open space may serve as a trailhead.

Linkages from the Ashland Canal trail to existing trails are too numerous to list here. Important street access points to the trail are Tolman Creek Road, the Oredson-Todd trailhead on Lupine Drive, Park Street, Walker-Pinecrest Terrace, South Mountain-Elkader Streets, Liberty Street trail, Morton Street, Weller-Taylor-Long Streets, Terrace-Ashland Loop Road, Granite Street, Strawberry Lane and Grandview Street, with potential connectivity to Hitt Road and the Wrights Creek corridor. The Hearts and Granite Street trails currently provide access to the westside Ashland Canal segment from Lithia Park.

Character

The route runs predominately across an open, wooded hillside that provides both forest views and commanding views of the city as well as cross-valley panoramas.

Several prominent local landmarks are also visible. The contrasting views of urban spaces below and relatively undeveloped slopes above give an imminent sense of the urban-wildland interface. Wildlife sightings, footprints, and scat provide further evidence of the proximity of wild places.

While some sections of the Ashland Canal are bordered by established yards and cleared areas, there are also extensive wooded sections with imposing canopies. Most downslope water drainages are forested and thick with vegetation. This canopy of riparian trees provides welcome shade in hot weather. The more open sections are often lined with blackberries. Many areas of the corridor provide good animal habitat with deer, fox, bobcats, mountain lions and bears reported.

Expected Users

Primary use in all sections will likely be pedestrians. The wider sections may be appropriate for other users, such as mountain bikers, wheeled strollers and possibly equestrians. These wider sections also provide essential access for canal maintenance vehicles.

Typical Trail Section

Due to many existing constraints, the trail width and surface varies. The long-term objective should allow for a trail that offers as many multi-use features as reasonably possible. Fencing, screening and buffer plantings may be needed to separate the trail from adjacent properties and future development.

Along daylighted canal segments, the existing access/maintenance road surface is generally composed of compacted earth and rock, except when crossing paved roads or driveways. The width of the existing trail varies from two to more than ten feet. Where wide enough, the route is often used by maintenance equipment and will likely need to remain unpaved because of the nature of maintenance excavation requirements.

In some segments, the earthen surface becomes too muddy when wet and often provides only seasonal use.

At underground segments, the existing surface is crushed rock, grass or other cover and is generally wider. Some areas have been at least partially incorporated into residential yards. The underground segments may offer opportunities to add crushed rock.

Natural & Cultural Resources:

The Ashland Canal, a major “lateral canal,” was excavated during the early 1920s as part of TID’s Hyatt Lake reservoir development. Historically, the Ashland Canal represents an important part of the development of the area’s fruit growing industry in the early twentieth century. The Ashland Canal was part of the original Rogue Valley Project irrigation system design and was initially constructed to irrigate nearby apple, pear and peach orchards. At the turn of the century, peaches and apples from Ashland were known throughout the Pacific Coast and were marketed in the eastern states and Canada.

10

WRIGHTS CREEK TRAIL CORRIDOR

TRAILS MASTER PLAN

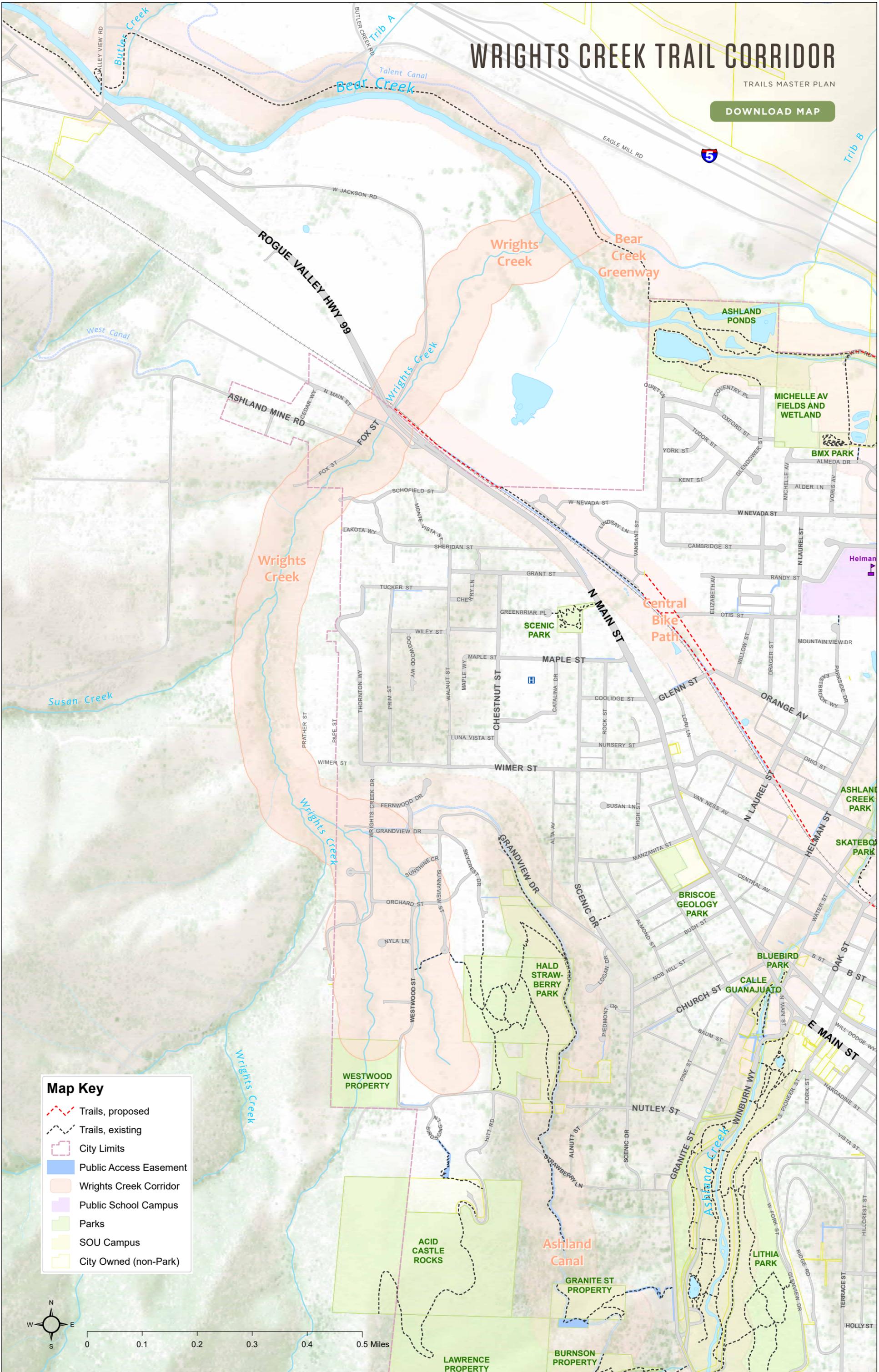


THIS CORRIDOR REPRESENTS A CRUCIAL LINK TO COMPLETE
A RING OF TRAILS AROUND THE CITY OF ASHLAND

WRIGHTS CREEK TRAIL CORRIDOR

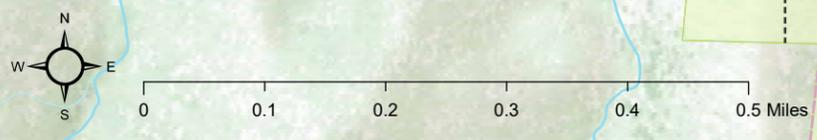
TRAILS MASTER PLAN

[DOWNLOAD MAP](#)



Map Key

- Trails, proposed
- Trails, existing
- City Limits
- Public Access Easement
- Wrights Creek Corridor
- Public School Campus
- Parks
- SOU Campus
- City Owned (non-Park)



Route Description

The Wrights Creek Trail Corridor is an approximately two-mile route along the northwestern edge of the city of Ashland that loosely follows Wrights Creek. Due to steep slopes along the eastern side of the drainage and existing development, any proposed trail may need to be placed primarily on the creek's west side. Aside from existing Forest Service roads, Bird Song Lane and a few areas where the trail may follow paved city streets or widened sidewalks for a few blocks, little of the Wrights Creek Trail currently exists.

This corridor represents a crucial link to complete a ring of trails around the city of Ashland and is, therefore, an integral part of the TMP. At the northern end, the proposed route would begin at the confluence of Wrights Creek and Bear Creek following the creek through the historic Billings property. It would cross under the railroad tracks at Jackson Road, cross North Main Street and the proposed Central Bike Path extension where it would connect with Fox Street as the jumping off point to the southern end of the corridor. The route would then follow Wrights Creek south, eventually connecting to Westwood and Hald-Strawberry parks.



SWALLOWTAIL ON BUDDLEIA.

Linkages

Jackson Road should be considered as part of the Wrights Creek Trail system as it offers an existing, albeit oblique, linkage to the northbound Bear Creek Greenway using a short section of Highway 99 for transit. The proposed section of trail that follows Wrights Creek through the Billings property to its confluence with Bear Creek and a connection to the southbound Bear Creek

Greenway will need a bridge across Bear Creek. Development of the Ashland Pond open space area with proposed fish habitat restoration and riparian zone improvements along the Ashland Creek confluence with Bear Creek could include a bridge across Bear Creek. Completion of either of these bridges would complete the linkage around the entire city of Ashland. On the south side of North Main Street, the proposed route would link to several city open space sites: Westwood and Hald-Strawberry. A trailhead that includes parking and a restroom should be considered for this vital hub area. The future Westwood open space site is an ideal location for such a full-service trailhead. As the trail continues south, it would connect to Hitt Road and Bird Song Lane and to the Westside Forestlands trails and beyond, where hikers and mountain bikers currently use these roads to connect to the uplands. It has been observed that corridor neighbors use existing paths to currently access components of the Wrights Creek trail system. When eventual planning and land-use actions take place as part of the development of this system, neighborhood meetings should be held to uncover additional useful connections and easements.

Another long-term goal would be to connect westerly to Talent over Ashland Mine Road, Forest Service trails and/or along the path of the Talent Irrigation District (TID) canals: West Canal and Talent Canal.

Character

The trail corridor is largely outside the Ashland city limits on unincorporated Jackson County land that traverses through a mostly undeveloped wooded creek area. The corridor contains wildlife habitat and would likely be sensitive to certain types of trail development. The corridor has a more natural character at the northern and southern ends, while the central portion has some existing development, a major arterial, railroad tracks and a small web of residential streets.

Expected Users

It is expected that eventual trail users would initially be pedestrians, runners and perhaps mountain bikers. Mountain biking is more appropriate at the southern end, especially downhill mountain biking on some of the existing Forest Service roads if riders can be kept to these areas and safely share the trail with other users. The requirements of maintenance vehicles will need to be considered.

Typical Section

The trail initially would be three feet in width with a crushed rock surface. A higher standard trail may be warranted in the future.

Natural and Cultural Resources

The long-closed Ashland Mine, a producer of gold during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, is situated in the upper reaches of the Wrights Creek drainage. Much of the area was burned in the 1959 Ashland Fire, which was ignited by youngsters playing with matches near Jackson Hot Springs. This epic wildfire spread upslope and to the southeast, reaching into the lower portions of the Ashland Creek Watershed.



ASHLAND CREEK TRAIL CORRIDOR

TRAILS MASTER PLAN

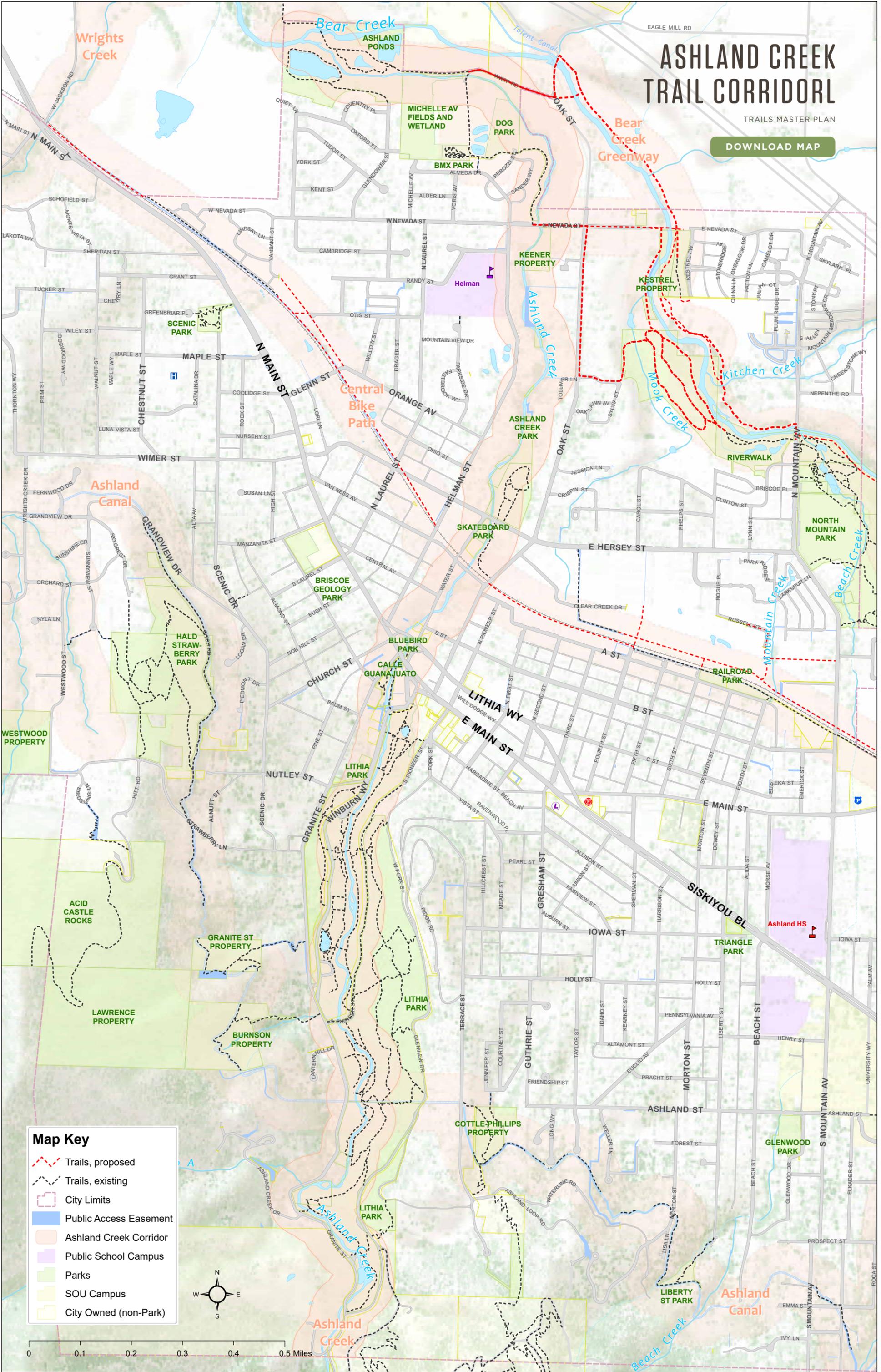


IT IS AROUND THIS KEY GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURE THAT THE
COMMUNITY OF ASHLAND FIRST FORMED WITH THE PLAZA AS THE
NEXUS OF CIVIC DISCOURSE, GOVERNANCE AND COMMERCE

ASHLAND CREEK TRAIL CORRIDOR

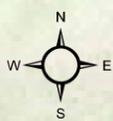
TRAILS MASTER PLAN

[DOWNLOAD MAP](#)



Map Key

-  Trails, proposed
-  Trails, existing
-  City Limits
-  Public Access Easement
-  Ashland Creek Corridor
-  Public School Campus
-  Parks
-  SOU Campus
-  City Owned (non-Park)



0 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 0.5 Miles

Route Description

The Ashland Creek trail corridor is visualized as the natural extension of the existing trails within Lithia Park as they follow Ashland Creek to its confluence with Bear Creek, a pedestrian route nearly three miles long. Broadly, the corridor extends south from the Bear Creek Greenway at the confluence of Ashland Creek and Bear Creek, to downtown, then farther south to the upper reaches of Lithia Park. Approximately one-half of the trail currently exists. The corridor was part of the original Regional Greenway Plan of 1966, which was approved by voters in 1974 and reaffirmed in Ashland's 1974 Comprehensive Plan. There are several existing city parks and other city properties as well as easements within the corridor that could be folded into a corridor trail alignment. The new section of multi-use trail that connects the Bear Creek Greenway to Nevada Street through Verde Village is a vital addition. The only current viable route from Nevada Street south to Ashland Creek Park is the on-street trail of Oak Street. An alternative route would travel up Helman Street to avoid the bumps and traffic of Oak Street. From Ashland Creek Park the best multi-use route is up the less vehicle-impacted Water Street to the pedestrian crossing at North Main Street, through the Plaza and into Lithia Park. In this section, existing alternate



FALL LEAVES ON MOSSY BOULDERS IN ASHLAND CREEK CREATE A BEAUTIFUL SETTING.

pedestrian paths parallel the creek: 1) the improved natural area trail next to Ashland Christian Fellowship Church that delivers users to the problematic intersection of Oak-Railroad District-A St.-Van Ness; 2) the pedestrian walkway off Water Street adjacent to the Plaza Hotel and ending at Bluebird Park. From the entrance to Lithia Park to the corridor's southern terminus in the Ashland Watershed there are numerous trails: on-street for cyclists, multi-use and

natural area trails, both improved and native. Safe crossings would need to be provided at Nevada Street and Hersey Street. The railroad tracks could be crossed at the Water Street underpass.

Linkages

Connectivity could be greatly improved in the Ashland Creek corridor by completing the trail connection between Ashland Creek Park and APRC-owned land at Nevada Street. Several trail easements have been secured along this corridor over the last ten years, with only a few more critical pieces needed to complete the connection between the Bear Creek Greenway and the central area corridor that includes Ashland's civic and business center, City Hall and the Chamber of Commerce. This central business area is also popular with tourists and is adjacent to the Oregon Shakespeare Festival grounds and other tourist attractions and services. The central section of the Ashland Creek corridor also offers new linkage possibilities to the Central Bike Path and the newly acquired APRC property alongside Bear Creek below Clinton Street. The Ashland Creek corridor connects to the Ashland Watershed open space and several APRC open spaces contiguous to or connected via trail access to the southern end of Lithia Park.



100 YEAR OLD RHODODENDRONS BLOOM ALONG ASHLAND CREEK IN LITHIA PARK.

The Ashland Creek corridor passes through or near several city parks, including Ashland Pond (near the Bear Creek Greenway), the Dog Park, Ashland Creek Park, the Skate Park, Bluebird Park and Lithia Park. Briscoe School and playground are within close proximity to the corridor. Helman School and playground are located on the west edge of the corridor. The trail could provide a safe route for students to walk or cycle to these schools and playgrounds. The trail would also

provide easy access to the Plaza and Calle Guanajuato. North-south bike routes within the corridor follow Oak and Helman Streets, and east-west bike routes are Nevada Street, Glenn/Orange Street, Hersey Street and Lithia Way.

The Creek to Crest Trail is also located within this corridor. Until this corridor is fully developed, users may reroute to the Creek to Crest Trail. A trail access point should be considered at Ashland Creek Park with parking nearby, on public property or through a public/private partnership.

Character

The route is characterized by open riparian woodlands and residential neighborhoods at the north, urban development in the central area and groomed parkland and natural areas as well as public woodlands to the south. The corridor contains many opportunities for appreciation of Ashland Creek, which is the backbone of Lithia Park and one of the main tributaries to upper Bear Creek.

Expected Users

Expected user groups are pedestrians, runners, families with strollers and maintenance and emergency vehicles. Due to the primarily riparian character of the trail

location and related environmental concerns, pedestrian use is the most appropriate. Alternate cycling routes are established to allow cyclists to travel the corridor and reach city facilities.

Typical Trail Section

The typical trail section is eighteen to forty-eight inches in width and surfaced in crushed rock. The width, surfacing and other trail standards may vary based on site-specific



ASHLANDER PETE BAUGHMAN RUNNING THE TRAILS.

opportunities and constraints, including available land, appropriate use and wetland and wildlife concerns.

Natural and Cultural Resources

Early settlers referred to Ashland Creek as Rock Creek and then Mill Creek. The creek originates on the summit of Mt. Ashland and is still the main source of municipal drinking water.

The fast-flowing stream provided power for Ashland's earliest lumber and flour mills and it is around this key geographical feature that the community of Ashland first formed with the Plaza as the nexus of civic discourse, governance and commerce.

12

ROCA/PARADISE CREEK CORRIDOR TRAIL

TRAILS MASTER PLAN

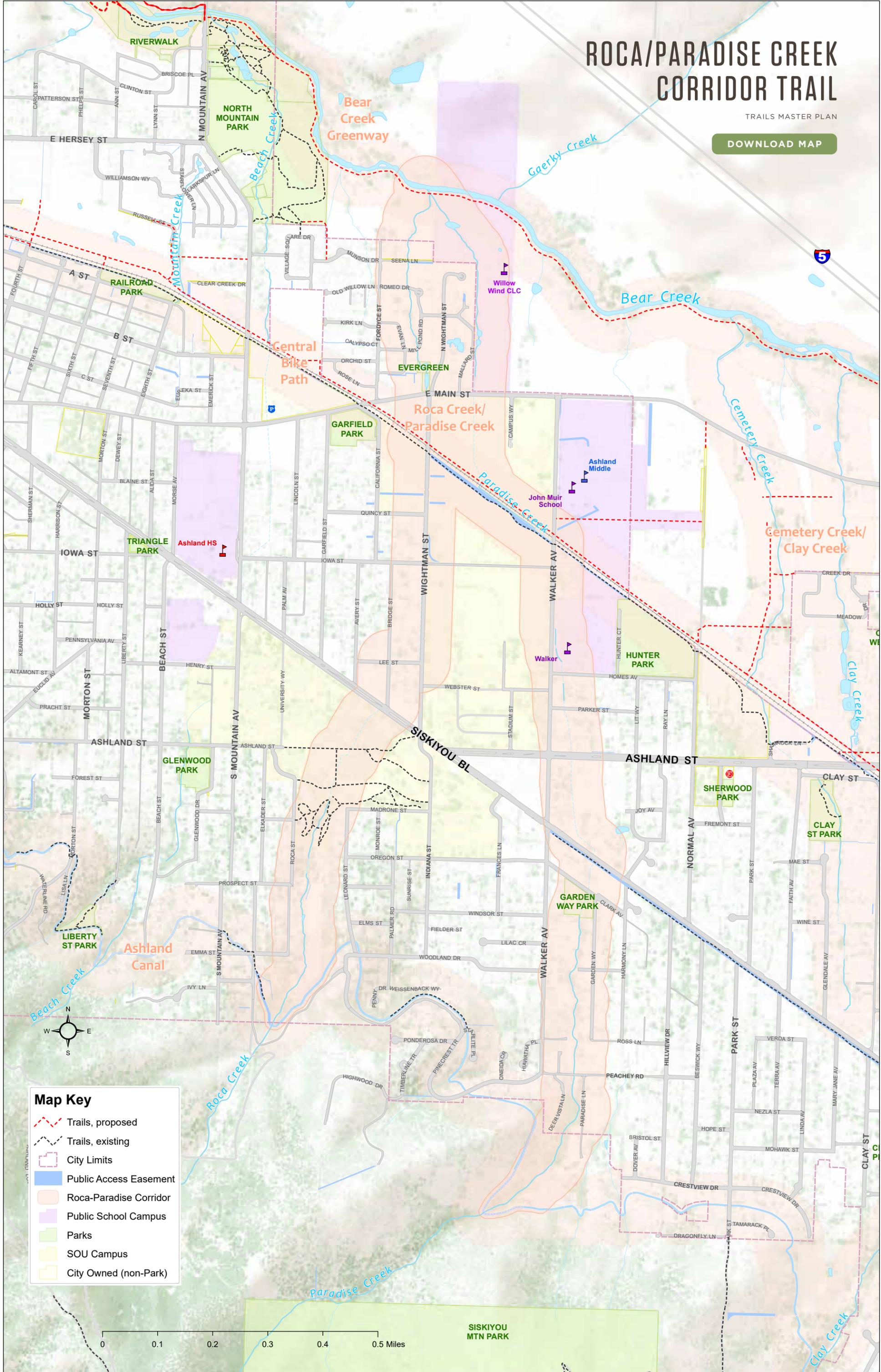


THE ROCA CREEK TRAIL CORRIDOR IS AN
IMPORTANT COMMUTER TRAIL OPPORTUNITY

ROCA/PARADISE CREEK CORRIDOR TRAIL

TRAILS MASTER PLAN

[DOWNLOAD MAP](#)



Map Key

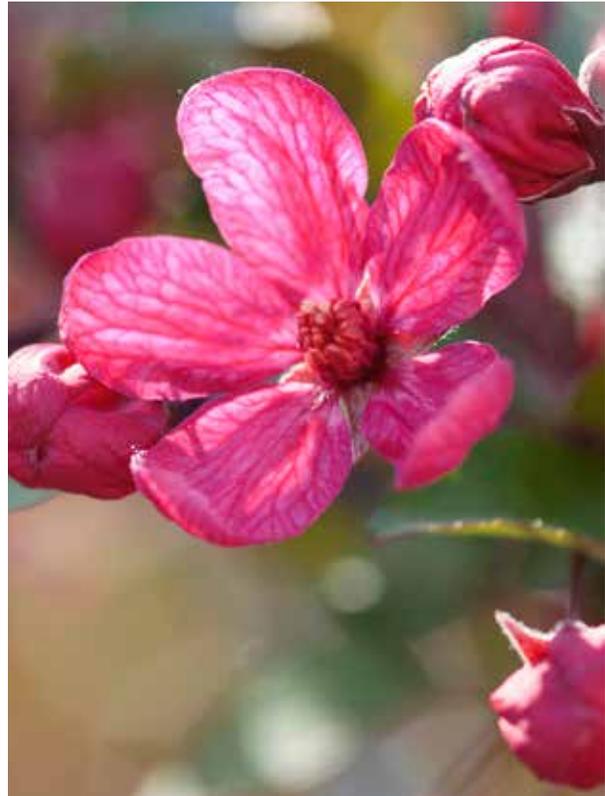
- Trails, proposed
- Trails, existing
- City Limits
- Public Access Easement
- Roca-Paradise Corridor
- Public School Campus
- Parks
- SOU Campus
- City Owned (non-Park)



Route Description

Roca Creek Trail is a corridor approximately two miles in length that runs from the Bear Creek Greenway to the Ashland Canal. Currently, none of the trail formally exists and most of any future trail will likely be located within existing public lands.

The corridor would begin at the proposed Bear Creek Greenway route on the south side of Bear Creek and travel south through the existing trail network of North Mountain Park and emerge from the upper playground into the residential neighborhood of the Mill Pond subdivision. Crossing East Main Street at the pedestrian-signaled crosswalk adjacent to ScienceWorks Hands-on Museum, the central portion of the route would follow the on-street trail of Campus Way, traverse The Farm at SOU and cross the railroad tracks at the cross-arms on Walker Avenue, emerging onto the main SOU campus off Iowa Street. The route through the SOU campus would roughly follow Roca Creek, which flows in underground storm drains through most of the SOU campus before daylighting in the Roca Creek canyon area and then connecting to the Ashland Canal near the top of Elkader and Roca streets. Due to development, lack of easements and steep terrain, some alternate routing via existing streets and sidewalks could be necessary.



PRAIRIE FIRE CRABAPPLE.

SOU has expressed an interest in promoting the trail and is expected to partner in future development. Route signage could be installed across the campus, demonstrating the underground nature of the creek. Opportunities to daylight the creek along these campus routes would offer intermittent waterways, greenways and natural areas. Wetland and wildlife ecology should be considered when designing the trail alignment along the open sections of Roca Creek.

Linkages

The trail will cross and connect with several important commuter and recreation routes, including bike lanes on East Main Street, Ashland Street and Siskiyou Boulevard. After crossing the railroad, the Roca Creek Trail would deliver users to the vital intersection with the Central Bike Path, offering a key link to all of west Ashland as well as points east, including the future Normal Neighborhood.

The Roca Creek Trail corridor is an important commuter and bike-to-school opportunity that would improve general access to Willow Wind School, Ashland Middle School, John Muir School, Walker Elementary School, SOU, the SOU student housing complexes and the business cluster adjacent to the SOU campus. A single well-planned trail should be designed and appropriately marked as it navigates these important campuses to avoid conflicts with other site activities.

The Ashland School District has expressed an interest in a trail connection to North Mountain Park from the various schools mentioned above. North Mountain Park offers sports fields and the Nature Center provides a broad venue for school activities. In addition, possible connections through Willow Wind should continue to be part of any future trail development efforts.

At the south end of the corridor,

opportunities to connect this route via the Ashland Canal Trail or other easements to the Eastside Forestland trails should be an important priority.

Character

The character of the route is open, riparian woodlands and fields at the north end. The central section is developed, yet with intermittent landscaped and manicured park-like spaces as it traverses several campuses. Approaching the south end, the trail traverses hilly woodlands with a north-aspect and the corridor becomes steeper south of SOU as it approaches the Ashland Canal. This area is part of the the wildland-urban interface and offers views across the valley.

Expected Users

Expected users are cyclists, pedestrians, runners, families with strollers and maintenance vehicles. Pedestrians would likely be the main users at the southern end.

Typical Section

Typical trail sections will vary from eighteen to forty-eight inches for native natural trails, depending on terrain and location. Ideally, campus sections, would be designed as a paved multi-use system or a native improved trail.

13

CEMETERY-CLAY-HAMILTON CREEK CORRIDORS

TRAILS MASTER PLAN

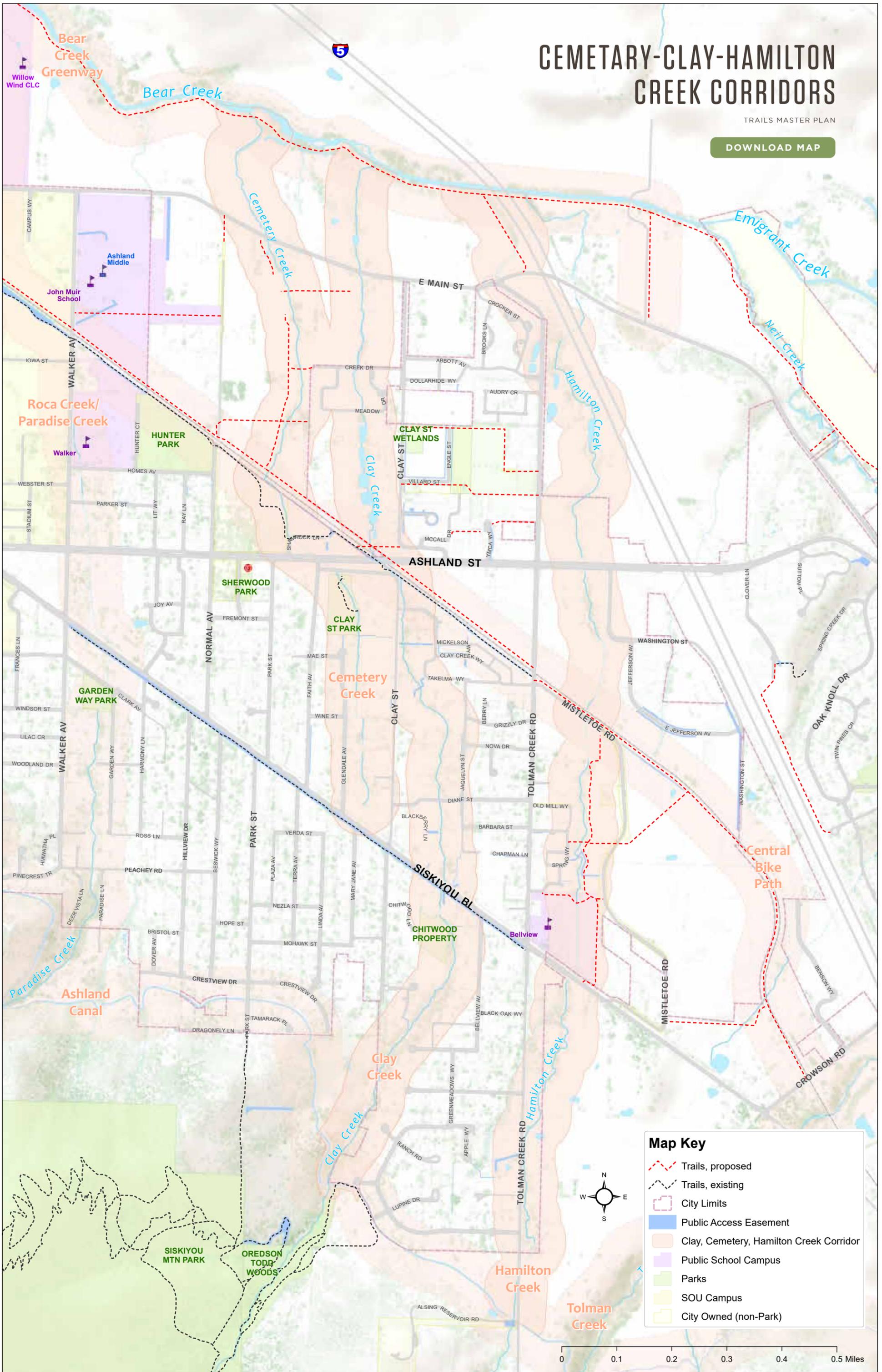


THIS CORRIDOR OFFERS SIGNIFICANT
OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRAILS TO BE SECURED AS
A CONDITION OF FUTURE DEVELOPMENT.

CEMETARY-CLAY-HAMILTON CREEK CORRIDORS

TRAILS MASTER PLAN

[DOWNLOAD MAP](#)

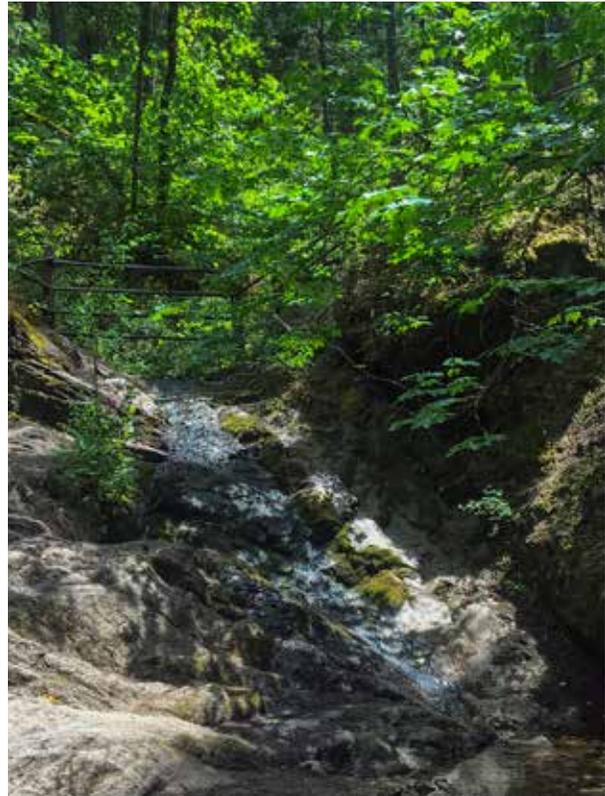


Map Key	
	Trails, proposed
	Trails, existing
	City Limits
	Public Access Easement
	Clay, Cemetery, Hamilton Creek Corridor
	Public School Campus
	Parks
	SOU Campus
	City Owned (non-Park)

Route Description

Cemetery Creek, Clay Creek and Hamilton Creek are parallel streams less than one-half-mile apart. A single trail system would provide one multi-use trail to serve as a main corridor that could switch back and forth between the three subsidiary corridors. Additional linking to neighborhood routes would be needed to bring users to the main route. While a continuing goal is to provide a trail experience separated from automobiles, many sections of the main route may need to use bike lanes and intermittent widened sidewalks due to corridors development without public rights-of-way along creeks. This main corridor would extend from the Bear Creek Greenway at the north end to the Ashland Canal, Oredson-Todd Woods and Siskiyou Mountain Park at the south end. The distance is approximately two miles but this could increase as the trail weaves through the constraints of the existing urban routing.

Traveling south from the proposed Bear Creek Greenway, the trail route could follow Cemetery Creek, assuming an easement could be obtained, across the large property in the lower flood plain. The entire area along Cemetery Creek to East Main Street is located in unincorporated Jackson County. Crossing East Main Street, the trail would insert directly into the planned Normal Neighborhood. Of note, all of the property



WATERFALL AT UPSTREAM END OF OREDSON-TODD WOODS TRAILS.

from East Main Street to the railroad tracks is within Ashland's urban growth boundary but not yet within city limits. This corridor offers significant opportunities for trail easements and rights-of-way to be secured as a condition of future development. An additional benefit to routing through the Normal Neighborhood is the existing railroad crossing on Normal Street. Traveling south, this route would follow the Central Bike Path adjacent to the Ashland Cemetery, cross under the Ashland Street overpass

and proceed to Tolman Creek Road and the railroad crossing. Much of Tolman Creek Road has been widened to include bike lanes along its central portion from the railroad crossing to Siskiyou Boulevard. Trail users would traverse Tolman Creek Road as an on-street trail to continue south to Siskiyou Boulevard. Alternatively, after crossing the railroad tracks, a secondary route could follow Takelma Way to Jaquelyn Street and up Clay Street to Siskiyou Boulevard.

There is a signaled crossing at the intersection of Siskiyou Boulevard and Tolman Creek Road near Bellview Elementary School. The trail would then continue south, following existing on-street routes along Black Oak Way, Bellview Avenue and Greenmeadows Way to Lupine Drive, then to the existing Oredson-Todd Woods / Ashland Canal trailhead that serves as an integral hub connecting the Eastside Forestland trails.

A trailhead exists at Lupine Drive that includes a dog waste station, trash receptacles, informational signage and parking. West of this corridor is the Park Street entry into Siskiyou Mountain Park. This route has been designated as part of the Creek to Crest Trail, which, heading south, connects Ashland to the Pacific Crest Trail. Since upper Park Street is very steep with limited parking, an alternate access point to gain entry to the Creek to Crest Trail would

be the trailhead at Lupine Drive. This access point should be considered in the future to relieve the congestion, parking and safety issues that currently make the Park Street trailhead problematic. Appropriately placed signage could effectively direct users to the higher capacity trailhead at Lupine Drive.

Linkages

Along the Cemetery-Clay-Hamilton corridor, there are several important existing and potential connections. The trail system crosses three main arterials: East Main Street, Ashland Street and Siskiyou Boulevard, offering a vital connection to their respective bike lanes. These linkages would provide the opportunity for cycling connections to many important city features.

One of the significant future neighborhood-linking routes is the planned trail through the Croman Mill site that is already part of the subdivision design and development. In addition, the confluence of any of the Croman Mill site trails with the existing and future extension of the Central Bike Path is an obvious essential linkage. A planned additional trail segment starts behind Bellview School and follows the Mistletoe Road right-of-way to the future extension of the Central Bike Path. This would offer an off-street alternative to school commuters.

Character

Portions of the northern end of the corridor are still undeveloped and remain in a relatively natural state. The central portion of the corridor has become urbanized and opportunities for a stand alone trail are already limited.

Expected Users

Expected users throughout the corridor include cyclists, pedestrians, runners, mountain bikers and families with strollers. In the northern portion, users will likely be local residents accessing the Bear Creek Greenway and the Central Bike Path. The middle section would offer general commuting and a safe route for children to Bellview Elementary School, Walker School, Ashland Middle School and the private Siskiyou School on Clay Street. In the southern portion, users are likely to be residents, hikers and mountain bikers accessing the Ashland Canal and the Eastside Forestland Trails.

Typical Section

The Cemetery-Clay-Hamilton corridor uses existing paved streets and sidewalks. It is an on-street trail system with future extensions to be determined. New extensions or “spoke” connections would ideally be built to multi-



HIKER ENJOYING THE OREDSON-TODD WOODS WITH DOGS.

use trail standards.

Natural and Cultural Resources

Oredson-Todd Woods is owned by the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy and managed by APRC. This parkland occupies over ten acres and is designed to provide “recreation, education, research, open space, a public park, a wildlife refuge or such similar

natural use purposes.” The primary feature of the Oredson-Todd Woods is Clay Creek with its associated riparian landscapes running the length of the preserve.

Hamilton Creek was named for early Ashland-area settler R. J. Hamilton, a Tennessean who farmed along the lower stretches of this stream. The upper portions of Hamilton Creek flow through steep granite terrain. The falls on upper Clay Creek are formed by a hard granite ledge and below the falls, for some distance above the end of

Clay Street, the stream-bed exposes shale and sandstone of the Hornbrook Formation. The sandstone contains small marine fossil shells from the time when most of southwestern Oregon lay beneath a shallow sea. Some of the Hornbrook deposits have weathered into a reddish (and sometimes sticky) clay. In the early 20th century, a small brick factory located near Hillview Drive mined this clay for brick making.

14

TOLMAN CREEK CORRIDOR

TRAILS MASTER PLAN

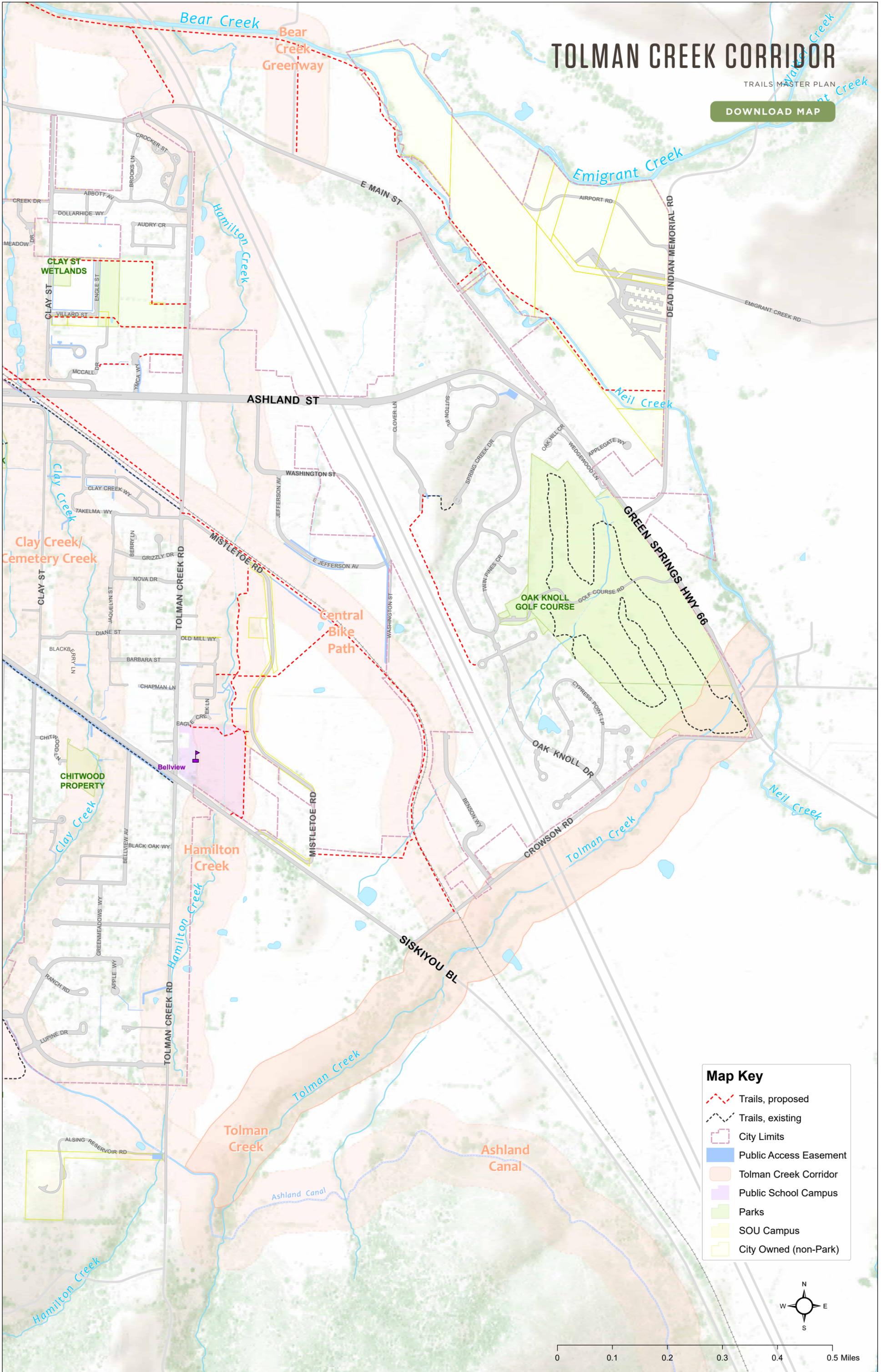


TRAILS IN THIS AREA OFFER VIEWS OF MOUNT
ASHLAND, GRIZZLY PEAK, MOUNT MCLOUGHLIN, THE
CITY OF ASHLAND AND THE CENTRAL ROGUE VALLEY

TOLMAN CREEK CORRIDOR

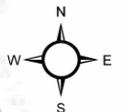
TRAILS MASTER PLAN

[DOWNLOAD MAP](#)



Map Key

- Trails, proposed
- Trails, existing
- City Limits
- Public Access Easement
- Tolman Creek Corridor
- Public School Campus
- Parks
- SOU Campus
- City Owned (non-Park)



0 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 0.5 Miles

Route Description

The notion of a Tolman Creek Corridor can be confusing because only in the uplands at the south end of the corridor does Tolman Creek follow Tolman Creek Road before the creek veers sharply to the northeast where it crosses under Siskiyou Boulevard to the east of Crowson Road. From there it crosses under both the railroad tracks and Interstate 5 and follows Crowson Road through extensive private properties and the re-crossing under Crowson Road adjacent to the Oak Knoll Golf Course. Emerging from a corner of the golf course, Tolman Creek crosses under Highway 66 and then crosses private property to its confluence with Neil Creek. The Tolman Creek corridor would be the easternmost trail in a future loop surrounding the city.

Little of an actual trail exists in this corridor and the proposed route currently consists of making the best use of existing streets, crossings, underpasses and sidewalks. This proposed route is approximately two miles long and roughly parallels Tolman Creek. The corridor, as previously outlined, begins at the confluence of Tolman Creek with Neil Creek, would follow Crowson Road to Siskiyou Boulevard, then follow the creek all the way up to its end at the junction with the Ashland Canal.

Existing barriers to any future standalone trail are Highway 66, Interstate 5, the railroad tracks and Siskiyou Boulevard. The long-term plan for the southwestern portion of the corridor above Siskiyou Boulevard is to follow the creek more closely and provide a less urbanized experience. This would require an extensive and forward-looking acquisition of trail easements through a considerable expanse of private property. Most of the route is outside the urban growth boundary in unincorporated Jackson County. Because of the trail's relationship to and dependence upon roadways in the corridor, the route should be coordinated with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission with suggested improvements such as widened shoulders, bike lanes and crosswalks.

Linkages

This route offers connections to the Oak Knoll Neighborhood and the Oak Knoll Golf Course. It also connects to the proposed extension of the Central Bike Path as it passes through the Croman Mill site. This corridor currently crosses many private properties that do not provide public access.

Character

Other than paved roads with marked bike lanes, the area is sparsely developed with small farms and pastureland and a few wooded areas. Narrow shoulders and higher speed traffic can make this route problematic for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Expected Users

Expected users include cyclists, pedestrians, runners and equestrians.

Typical Section

Existing trail sections are mainly on-street trails with future sections consisting of a mix of multi-use and nature trails.

Natural and Cultural Resources

Tolman Creek flows directly off the northern flank of Mount Ashland and, along with Neil Creek and Emigrant Creek, eventually forms Bear Creek. This creek was named for Oregon Surveyor General and Jackson County judge, James C. Tolman, who settled a large farm near the mouth of the creek in the early 1850s. Tolman's grave in the Ashland Cemetery is marked by a prominent obelisk carved from the same Hornbrook Formation sandstone that underlies much of lower Tolman Creek.

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WESTSIDE FORESTLAND TRAILS

TRAILS MASTER PLAN



TRAILS IN THIS AREA OFFER VIEWS OF MOUNTAIN
ASHLAND, GRIZZLY PEAK, MOUNT MCLOUGHLIN, THE
CITY OF ASHLAND AND THE CENTRAL ROGUE VALLEY

WESTSIDE FORESTLAND TRAILS

TRAILS MASTER PLAN

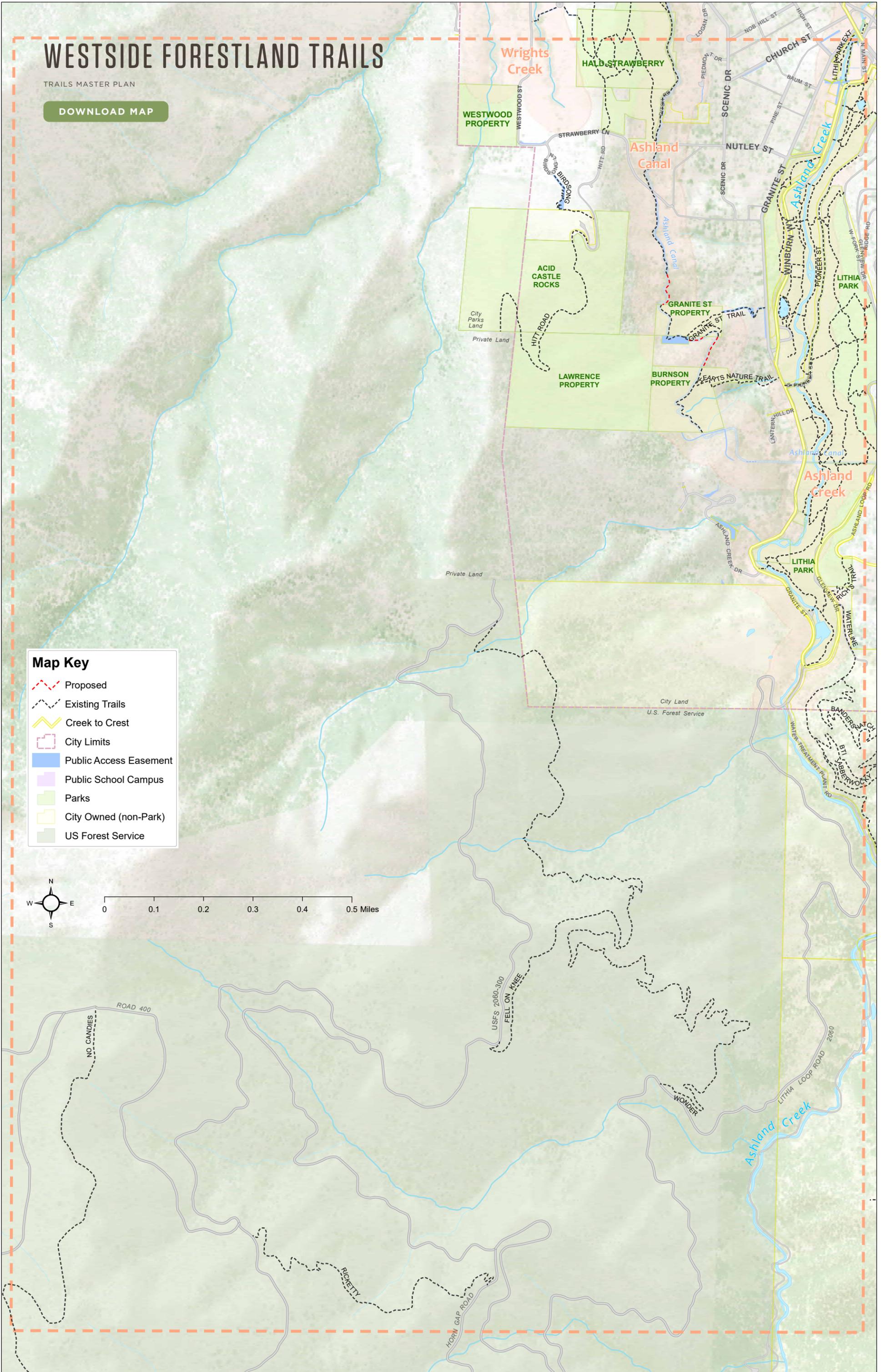
[DOWNLOAD MAP](#)

Map Key

-  Proposed
-  Existing Trails
-  Creek to Crest
-  City Limits
-  Public Access Easement
-  Public School Campus
-  Parks
-  City Owned (non-Park)
-  US Forest Service



0 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 0.5 Miles



Route Description

This is an area to the south and west of the Ashland Canal Trail on the west side of Ashland Creek that extends up to an imaginary line roughly connecting Ostrich Peak, Panther Peak and Wagner Butte. The existing official trails in this area include:

- Ashland Canal Trail
- Parts of Hitt Road
- Bird Song Trail
- Fell on Knee Trail
- Hearts Nature Trail
- Granite Street Trail

The Ashland Woodlands & Trails Association (AWTA) has plans for [an additional trail in the area called Wonder](#), which may start near the defunct granite quarry at the top of Granite Street and continue on City forestland roughly parallel to Forest Service Road 2060 into Forest Service lands, ultimately connecting to the Fell on Knee Trail.

Linkages

Hitt Road connects to the Hald-Strawberry area. Hitt Road continues through private land and becomes Forest Service Road 300, which connects to the multi-use Fell on Knee Trail as well as Forest Service Road 2060 with connections to other Westside Forest



VIEW OF MT. ASHLAND FROM FELL ON KNEE TRAIL.

Service trails. These include: No Candies, Ricketty, Horn Gap Road and Horn Gap Trail, Potlicker and Wagner Glade Trail, which connects to Wagner Lookout Trail and the Split Rock Trail.

When the Wonder Trail is completed, a loop encompassing Hitt Road, Fell on Knee and Wonder will encourage more biking, hiking, running and equestrian use on the Westside Forestland which will help distribute user impact and enhance user experience. Various

loop permutations exist that connect other Forest Service trails with Ricketty, Horn Gap Road and Horn Gap Trail, No Candies and Forest Service Road 400. These options will make the West Side Forestland trails more accessible and appealing. Such trail variations have gained increasing importance as they serve the AWTA and Forest Service goal to distribute trail users throughout the trail system.

Hearts Nature Trail and Granite Street Trail connect Granite Street to the Ashland Canal Trail. These trails provide easy linkages from Lithia Park to the Ashland Canal Trail; and both are designated as pedestrian use only.

Parking areas serving the Westside Forestland trails are located in and above Lithia Park, thus allowing hikers, cyclists, equestrians and runners to begin their outings from several locations. Many hikers, cyclists and runners start their routes in the downtown Plaza or in Lithia Park. They either use Winburn Way or upland park trails to access Westside Forestland trails via Forest Service Road 2060. Some start by hiking or biking up Strawberry Lane to Hitt Road. Additionally, a small amount of private parking exists at the top of the residential area on Hitt Road.

Character

Hitt Road was once a logging and mining road but is no longer a navigable four-wheel vehicle route. It retains the character of a steep mountain road in places, with an average grade of 12%. It holds appeal for hikers, runners and mountain bikers as a single-track trail. **Hitt Road could provide a critical link to other important Westside Forestland trails** and, together with Forest Service Road 2060, is one of the two main arteries into the Westside Forestland trails network.

Vegetation at the base of these trails is a mix of chaparral, poison oak, manzanita, white and black oak, Pacific madrone and occasional open-grown pine trees. Large granite boulders are perched in the Acid Castle Rocks area, on Fell on Knee Trail, as well and on the Westside Forest Service trails.

Trails in this area offer views of Mount Ashland, Grizzly Peak, Mount McLoughlin, the city of Ashland and the central Rogue Valley.

Expected Users

Hikers, mountain bikers and runners use the present trail system. Currently, electric bicycles and other motorized traffic are not permitted.

Typical Section

Hitt Road varies in width from five feet to over twelve feet and is comprised of decomposed granite interspersed with smaller rocks and cobbles. The short section of Fell on Knee Trail on city forestlands is on decomposed granitic soil, approximately 24 inches wide when freshly maintained with 5% or greater outslope, with less than 5% grade on average.

In the drier months, traction can be an issue on these granitic trails. In the winter months, granite absorbs water and becomes less slippery.

Natural and Cultural Resources

Hitt Road is named after E.P. Hitt. In 1935, E.P. Hitt and his wife deeded a significant amount of property to the city. The road was originally used for logging and mining. Mining activities at the Skyline Mine near Ostrich Peak led to the creation of roads and trails in that area, including the Skyline Mine Trail which is now used by hikers and mountain bikers and has been renamed No Candies Trail.

By 1995, after years of fire suppression, limited logging and minimal management, the Ashland Watershed morphed into an overgrown fire hazard. In that same year,



GOLDFINCH ON NATIVE ROSE.

the city of Ashland launched [the](#) active forest management of the city ownership in the watershed. They later successfully spearheaded a major ongoing collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service in the larger watershed with the following goals:

- Protect and promote the city's water supply
- Maintain and promote forest health
- Reduce the fire-prone nature of the forestland through active management of vegetation and fuels

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EASTSIDE FORESTLAND TRAILS

TRAILS MASTER PLAN



THE EASTSIDE FORESTLAND TRAILS ARE AMONG
THE MOST VISITED IN THE WATERSHED

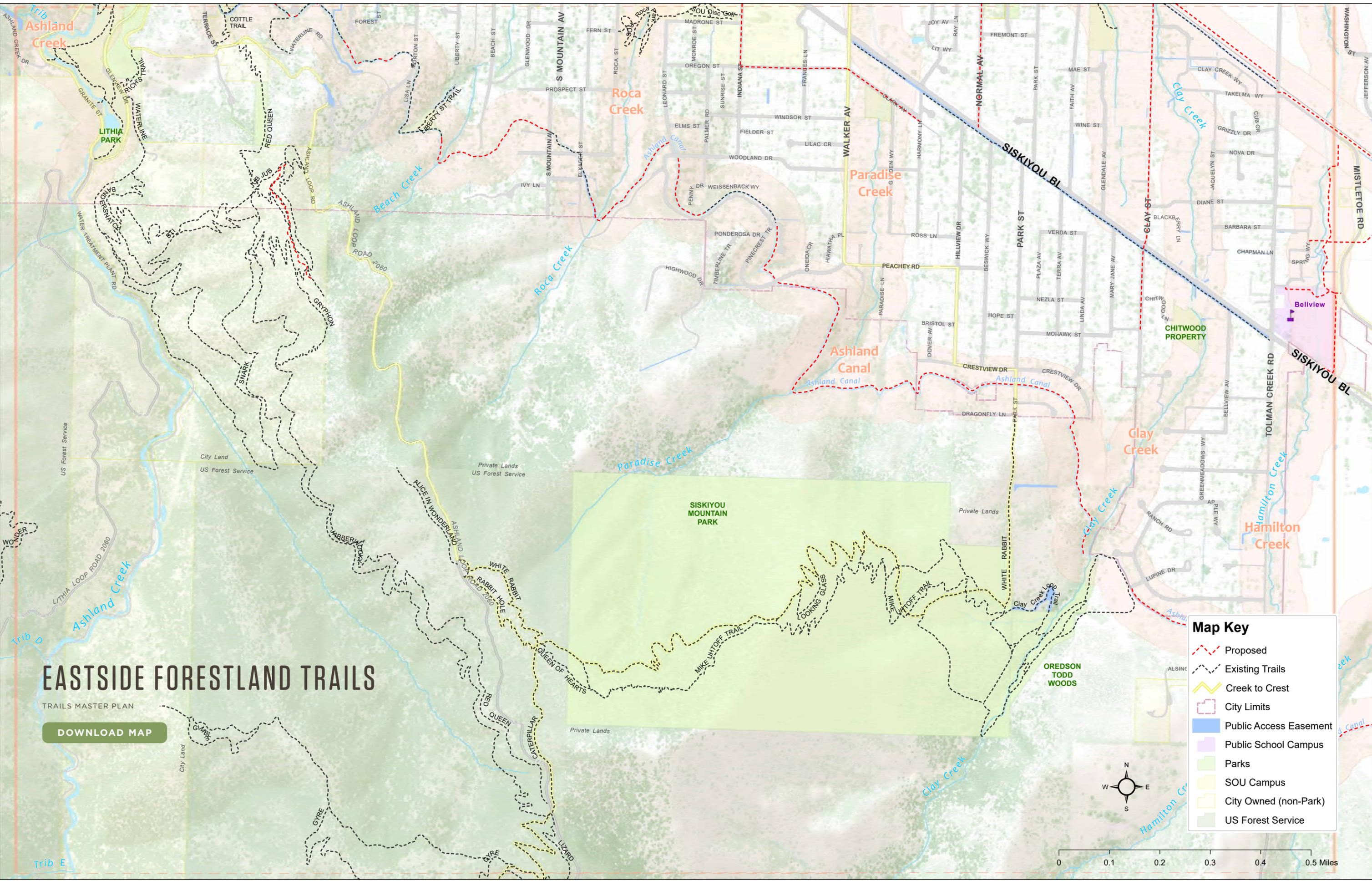
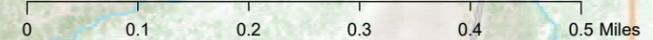
EASTSIDE FORESTLAND TRAILS

TRAILS MASTER PLAN

[DOWNLOAD MAP](#)

Map Key

- Proposed
- Existing Trails
- Creek to Crest
- City Limits
- Public Access Easement
- Public School Campus
- Parks
- SOU Campus
- City Owned (non-Park)
- US Forest Service



Route Description

The Eastside Forestland area extends southeast from Lithia Park, bordered on the west by Ashland Creek, to the south by Forest Service lands, and to the east by Oredson-Todd Woods. The Eastside Forestland Trails are among the most visited in the watershed and include a variety of trail types and users such as mountain bikers, equestrians, pedestrians and runners. Official city trails are listed below:

- Alice in Wonderland
- Bandersnatch
- BTI
- Gryphon
- Jabberwocky
- Jub Jub
- Looking Glass
- Mike Uthoff
- Queen of Hearts
- Red Queen
- Snark
- Waterline
- White Rabbit

Much of the trail system starting near Lithia Park loosely follows a ridge southeast and roughly parallel to the nearby portion of the Ashland Loop Road, *aka* Forest Service Road 2060, connecting to other Forest Service roads and trails. Several of these trails start on City park and forestlands and continue



ASHLAND PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION PARK
TECH-1 TRAILS MAINTENANCE WORKER JILL MULLEN-FEELEY
HEADS UP A TRAILS WORK PARTY

onto Forest Service land, e.g., Red Queen and Alice in Wonderland.

The trails near Oredson-Todd Woods and adjoining Siskiyou Mountain Park were created through a partnership with the city of Ashland and the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy. This area is above the city on the southeast side, with access at the end of Park Street, Lupine Drive or Ashland Loop Road. It encompasses nearly 300 acres of

park-like forestland with a system of looping trails and a connection to White Rabbit and Eastside uplands.

Linkages

With their proximity to downtown Ashland and Lithia Park, the Eastside Forestland Trails are the most accessible connections from the city of Ashland to the Forest Service lands in the upper watershed. Trails that start in the city center connect to this trail system, up to Mount Ashland and the Pacific Crest Trail.

With significant parking areas located in and above Lithia Park, hikers, bicyclists, equestrians and runners may begin their routes from several locations. Equestrians typically park their trailers just above Lithia Park on Glenview Drive. Many of the trails starting near Lithia Park connect to a network of trails that wind through city-owned forestlands and eventually onto Forest Service trails in the upper watershed.

Some trails, notably White Rabbit and the Mike Uhtoff Trail, connect the far Eastside Forestlands laterally to the Alice in Wonderland/Red Queen trail complex. This includes a connector from the Oredson-Todd Woods/Siskiyou Mountain Park area with connections to both the Forest Service uplands and, by extension, down into Lithia Park and downtown Ashland.

Character

The Eastside Forestland is a diverse hardwood and mixed conifer woodland area with Douglas-fir, ponderosa pine, Pacific madrone and white oak. This area experiences the highest trail density in the local trail systems. Several of the Eastside Forestland trails start immediately adjacent to residential areas and most of the trails quickly ascend upslope into the forestlands.

There is high scenic value to many trails in this area as they offer frequent views of Mount Ashland, Grizzly Peak, Wagner Butte and the city of Ashland.

Expected Users

Hikers, mountain bikers, runners and equestrians use the the trails in this area. Currently, electric bicycles and other motorized traffic are not permitted.

Typical Section

Most trails in this area are on granitic soils, approximately 24 inches wide, with a 5% or greater outslope and less than 10% grade on average. There are exceptions in terms of width, steepness, outslope and soil type. Trail sections range from groomed parklike areas with wide chipped-bark paths, turnpikes and kiosks with maps, e.g., Oredson-Todd Woods,

to narrow, single track trails, e.g., Gimble, Red Queen, with few simple trail signs. Some mountain bike trails are wider, particularly in turns.

In drier months, traction can be problematic on trails composed of granitic soil. In wetter months, granitic soils tend to absorb water and become less slippery.

Natural And Cultural Resources

Between 1950 and 1969, 53 miles of roads were built in the Ashland Watershed. A road moratorium in 1969 halted further construction. Mountain bikers, runners, equestrians and hikers use these defunct logging roads to connect to trails. Some of the roads have been abandoned for so long that they have narrowed and are essentially trails. The Forest Service actually lists Forest Service Road 2060 as a trail named the Lithia Loop Mountain Bike Route; however, few mountain bikers actually ride the loop, eschewing the roads for actual trails.

Lamb Mine Trail

In 1908, an Ashland storekeeper named Lamb built a ridge-top wagon road to his gold mining operation on the divide between Bear Creek and Ashland Creek. Traces of the old Lamb Wagon Road and Lamb Mine can

still be found parallel to the lower section of Forest Service Road 2060 along the Lamb Mine Trail. The trail follows portions of an old mining ditch built sometime in the early 1900s to transport water from Ashland Creek to power a stamp mill located on upper Tolman Creek Road. The ditch trail passes one of the old “adits” (tunnels with one entrance) of the Lamb Mine, which was excavated into the granite slope in search of gold.

Alice In Wonderland

This trail was modified and named by early mountain bikers in the 1980s. Its salient feature is a long, narrow section that features a canopy of thick manzanita. The trail provides a riding experience similar to descending through a tunnel. Riders must duck and get low on their bikes to avoid the overhead branches. Think “down the rabbit hole” and one begins to understand the origin of the name “Alice in Wonderland.”

White Rabbit

White Rabbit was named by former Forest Service recreational specialist, Phil Akerman, who was instrumental in the design and building of the White Rabbit Trail system. Trails in that system include Queen of Hearts, Mad Hatter, March Hare and Cheshire Cat.

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REGIONAL TRAIL CONNECTIONS

TRAILS MASTER PLAN



REGIONAL TRAIL LINKAGES WILL ENABLE THE CITY OF ASHLAND
TO CONTINUE FUNCTIONING AS THE HUB TO A NETWORK OF
TRAILS CONNECTING TO ADJACENT COMMUNITIES AND TO
REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT FEATURES

Regional Trail Connections

There is a strong and growing public desire to gain connections from the Ashland trail systems to the regional trails, landmarks and recreational amenities that extend throughout southern Oregon and northern California. Existing and proposed regional trail linkages will enable the city of Ashland to continue functioning as the hub to a network of trails connecting to adjacent communities and to regionally significant features including the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT), the Siskiyou Crest and Grizzly Peak. The State of Oregon's 2013-2018 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan emphasizes the following goals: ¹

- linking urban trails to outlying Federal trail systems
- linking neighborhood, community and regional trails
- connecting community parks and other recreational and public facilities
- connecting parks to supporting services and facilities
- connecting neighboring communities
- improving use of the state's existing non-motorized trail infrastructure

At the local level, the Ashland Woodland Trails Association (AWTA) assists with the



THE CREEK TO CREST TRAIL ROUTE CONNECTS THE BEAR CREEK GREENWAY TRAIL IN THE CITY OF ASHLAND TO THE PACIFIC CREST TRAIL UP NEAR MOUNT ASHLAND.

planning, construction and maintenance of trails on both city lands and surrounding ownerships. This work is intended to create sustainable trails, enhance user experiences and provide for travel between ownerships with seamless trail connectivity. The primary federal land management agencies in this area, the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), encourage and support local efforts to promote and enhance non-motorized trail connectivity.

Creek To Crest Trail

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The existing Creek to Crest Trail connects the Bear Creek Greenway in the city of Ashland to the PCT near Mount Ashland. This trail was designated as a Visionary Trail Route for the state by the Oregon Recreation and Parks Association in the Statewide Trail Plan. APRC and the Forest Service obtained a grant in 2002 to create the route using sections of existing trails and building new sections where needed. This project also provided for trail signage along the route with over 180 new “Creek to Crest” signs installed in 2003. From the Bear Creek Greenway, the trail splits into two parallel routes with one route traveling through Lithia Park and the other ascending through Siskiyou Mountain Park. These two routes rejoin above White Rabbit Trailhead at the Caterpillar-White Rabbit Trail junction where they continue on to the PCT and Mount Ashland.

LINKAGES

This route passes many other trail and park connections and some desirable viewpoints as it traverses from the valley floor to Mount Ashland and the PCT.



A SUNBURST BREAKS THROUGH THE MORNING MIST ALONG THE CREEK TO CREST TRAIL.

CHARACTER

The route has a varied character, from busy urban trails and city streets to natural settings of parklands and outlying forests with few other users.

EXPECTED USERS

Hikers, equestrians and mountain bikers may use portions or the entirety of this route.

Many trail users utilize portions of this trail as a means for making other trail connections or loops.

TYPICAL SECTION

This major connector route is comprised of asphalt paths, sidewalks or city streets close to town. As the trail ascends to Mount Ashland it exhibits an increasingly wild character and may be comprised of single-track trail or dirt road.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Traveling from town to the top of Mount Ashland, this trail attracts locals and visitors alike. It provides opportunities to view riparian creekside flora and fauna on the valley floor, dry mixed hardwood and conifer forests in the uplands, and alpine tree species such as whitebark pine, hemlock and Engelmann spruce as one approaches the Mount Ashland summit.

The Cascade Foothills Area

AREA DESCRIPTION

The hills to the northeast of Ashland rise to Grizzly Peak. This Cascade Foothills area has a southern exposure with grasslands, chaparral and scattered oak groves that contrast greatly with the coniferous forests of the Ashland watershed. This area offers

views of the city of Ashland, Mount Ashland, Wagner Butte, Anderson Butte, Pilot Rock and Mount Shasta.

The Imperatrice Ranch property lies within these foothills and consists of 846 acres owned by the city of Ashland. A conceptual trail plan was prepared for the Imperatrice Ranch property by the city of Ashland and APRC. This property was purchased by the City in 1996 using food and beverage tax proceeds. It is located north of Interstate 5, outside the Ashland urban growth boundary. There are no year-round streams on the property but several intermittent streams flow during the wet season and at least one spring, Hamby Spring, is located on the property. Most of the property has a relatively steep southern exposure.

Since 2009 there has been interest by the city in determining the best use of the property. Several organizations, including the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy (SOLC), have expressed a desire to conserve portions of the property. In addition to an abundance of birds and rare plants, this property is listed as an Area of Special Concern for the survival of black-tailed deer and Roosevelt elk herds.²

The Imperatrice Ranch affords opportunities for recreational uses including trails, open space and passive parks. An initial plan has

been developed for a trail system with a viable opportunity for connection to Grizzly Peak. A map of the wider Cascade Foothills has been included to help visualize possible regional connections through this property.

LINKAGES

The Cascade Foothills area provides a link from the city of Ashland to regional trails and to popular recreation sites in the Cascade Mountains and the Howard Prairie plateau. Lake Creek and Antelope Creek flow north of Grizzly Peak and are also accessible from this area.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

A preliminary proposal for the Ashland to Grizzly Peak Trail is listed as a planning goal in the 2001 Greater Bear Creek Valley Regional Problem Solving Phase One Status Report, authored by the Rogue Valley Council of Governments.³ This trail, approximately eight miles in length, would offer an opportunity for hikers, equestrians and mountain bikers to utilize the Cascade Foothills as a varied loop system or to gain access to the higher elevation BLM lands and recreation sites on the face and back side of Grizzly Peak. Several easements through private land, including the newly-formed Sampson and Grizzly Peak Preserves managed by the Selberg Institute, will be needed to make this trail system



HIKING THE IMPERATRICE PROPERTY IN THE CASCADE FOOTHILLS AREA.

viable. Additional SOLC acquisitions and agreements with private landowners may create new opportunities for connectivity over time.

CHARACTER

The proposed trail would traverse open fields with views of the valley to the south. The grasslands above the vineyards and pasturelands offer views of Ashland and the

flanks of Mount Ashland and the surrounding watershed. The high-clay content soils of this area contribute slippage and challenges for trail construction and sustainability.

EXPECTED USERS

The expected users for this trail include hikers, runners, equestrians, mountain bikers and maintenance vehicles. On steeper slopes, a separate mountain bike trail would be considered to avoid conflicts with other users.

TYPICAL SECTION

The trail design standards are to be determined at a later time of trail development after trail usage and user-types are analyzed.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Grizzly Peak is the most prominent feature in the Ashland area of the Cascade Foothills. Grizzly Peak rises from the valley to an elevation of more than 5,900 feet above sea level. Grizzly Peak obtained its name in the mid-1850s when a young settler, busy rounding up cattle, barely escaped a fatal encounter with a grizzly bear near the summit. By the 1890s, the area's last grizzlies had been hunted to extinction. It is managed as a recreation site by the BLM and is within the Cascade-Siskiyou

National Monument. Currently, Grizzly Peak is accessed via Shale City Road, 12 miles east of Ashland. The area features a loop trail through dense coniferous forests, grassy openings and rocky bluffs. Grizzly Peak suffered a wildfire and was burned over in 2002 and now provides an easily accessible example of ecosystem adaptation as it recovers following disturbance from wildfire. The geology of the Cascade Foothills, coupled with their southern aspect, provide habitat for flora and fauna that is distinctly different from the granitic north-aspect of the Ashland Watershed. Several rare plants and birds have been identified in the area. This area currently has a very sparse human population that is mostly concentrated at the base of the foothills. Black tail deer, elk, black bear and cougar may be observed in this area and it has long been an area popular with hunters.

To see a Biological Assessment for the Imperatrice Property [go here](#).

To see a vascular plant list for the Imperatrice Property [go here](#).

Emigrant Lake Area

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The Emigrant Lake Recreation Area is a 1,476-acre lakefront park with campsites,

boat ramps and a swimming cove located six miles southeast of Ashland. This recreation area is the planned terminus of the Bear Creek Greenway and was part of the original Greenway Plan of 1966.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Emigrant Lake is formed by a dam built in 1924 which impounds Emigrant Creek flowing out of the transitional landscape between the Siskiyou Mountains and Cascade Range. Its name derives from the early 1850s when settlers traveled the final stretch of the Applegate Trail descending into the Bear Creek Valley. The lake has an average water volume of 40,530 acre feet and is administered by the TID in conjunction with the United States Bureau of Reclamation. The reservoir helps provide additional storage for irrigation. The surrounding geologically complex Siskiyou Mountains have been eroding for over 50 million years, depositing significant quantities of clay, silt, sand, pebbles and cobbles into low-lying areas at their base. The very well-rounded pebbles and cobbles of quartzite rock eroding from the upland formations can often be found in the stream gravels of Bear Creek Valley and on the shoreline of Emigrant Lake.⁴

Pacific Crest Trail (PCT)

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

This popular National Scenic Trail was created in 1968 as part of federal legislation to foster the creation of a nationwide system of trails. The PCT connects Mexico to Canada and is 2,659 miles in length. The city of Ashland is a major re-supply stop for hikers on this trail, who are a common sight in town during the busy summer season. Heading north from California, the PCT runs congruent with the Coast to Crest trail on the Siskiyou Crest, west of Mount Ashland, and follows it east of Interstate 5 and north to enter the Cascade Mountain Range.

LINKAGES

The existing Creek to Crest Trail connects the Bear Creek Greenway and numerous other trails in the city of Ashland to the PCT near Mount Ashland.

CHARACTER

This trail explores a broad range of habitats along its entire length. Locally, it is a ridgetop trail west of Interstate 5. East of the interstate it connects to the community of Greensprings, Oregon, and becomes a plateau trail before heading north through the Cascade Mountains. This trail experiences

severe overcrowding during the summer season. Resource damage and negative user experiences are a recurring problem due to the trail's popularity.

EXPECTED USERS

The expected user groups for this trail are hikers and equestrians. This trail passes through multiple federal wilderness areas where mountain bikers and motorized equipment are not permitted. Local community members use nearby portions of this trail year-round for single and multi-day hiking and horseback rides or snow sports.

TYPICAL SECTION

This is a high-volume, well-maintained, typically single-track ridgetop trail.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Clinton Churchill Clarke first proposed this trail in 1932 but it was not officially designated until 36 years later. This mountainous trail offers users an opportunity to see a vast array of botanical and geologic diversity as well as significant historical and cultural landmarks and features. The lowest point is near sea level, while the highest point is 13,153 feet in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The PCT traverses 25 National Forests and seven National Parks.



SECTIONS OF THE CREEK TO CREST TRAIL ROUTE OFFER CHALLENGING RIDES FOR MOUNTAIN BIKERS.

Jack-Ash Trail

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The Jacksonville to Ashland trail, referred to as the Jack-Ash Trail, has been partially constructed. When completed it will run primarily along the ridges and crests of the Siskiyou Mountains between the two cities. The first phase of construction was completed in 2017 with subsequent

proposed phases expected to be completed in the near future.

LINKAGES

The trail will provide connectivity between the Rogue and Applegate valleys. There are opportunities for both short and long-distance active recreation with linkages to the PCT and other regional trails. On the eastside, the proposed Jack-Ash Trail would connect to the city of Ashland. Routes are yet to be determined; there are multiple options.

CHARACTER

Trail users would expect high vehicle traffic on the sections congruent with existing roadways during the weekends as well as opportunities for solitude on some of the single-track sections depending on the season.

EXPECTED USERS

The Jack-Ash Trail is designed for non-motorized users except where the route runs concurrent with existing multiple-use roads. Typical users could be hikers, mountain bikers and equestrians.

TYPICAL SECTION

This trail consists of a series of single-track, non-motorized trail sections that link several segments of gravel and natural surface

roads that are open to vehicle traffic. Trail segments are primarily on BLM land with some proposed portions on private land for which easements would be needed.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

This trail spans a wide variety of environments, from urban areas to Siskiyou Mountain ridge tops, winding through meadows, chaparral and mixed forestlands. The Jack-Ash Trail provides views of the Rogue and Applegate Valleys, the Siskiyou Crest and the Cascade Mountains.⁵

Citations

1. 2017 SCORP
[SCORP/2013-2017 Oregon](#)
2. Beneficial Use of Imperatrice Property, City of Ashland, July 2009
[Beneficial Use of Imperatrice Property](#)
3. Greater Bear Creek Valley Regional Problem Solving Phase One Status Report
[Regional Problem Solving Phase](#)
4. United States Bureau of Reclamation-Emigrant Lake
[United States Bureau of Reclamation-Emigrant Lake](#)
5. BLM Jack-Ash Trail EA
[BLM Jack-Ash Trail EA](#)



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

TRAILS MASTER PLAN



CITY OF
ASHLAND





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Ashland Woodlands & Trails Association

Bear Creek Greenway Foundation

Rogue Valley Mountain Bike Association

Southern Oregon Land Conservancy

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