

Hannah Archambault, Daughter of Cynthia Downes Lord
Statement regarding the donation of the Lord Family Property adjacent to North Mountain Park
APRC Special Business Meeting
September 23, 2020

“Thanks for giving me an opportunity to speak this evening. In order to explain why my family has decided to donate this land to Ashland’s Parks department, I need to tell you a little bit about my grandmother, Cynthia Downes Lord, who moved to Ashland in 1960 with her husband Irving Lord, a professor of English at Southern Oregon College, and their three young children, Alfred, Tracy, and Alcyon. From Cynthia’s very first years here, she was actively involved in cultivating the things that made Ashland special. She helped to plan the Mt. Ashland ski resort, supported the Shakespeare festival, and in the 1970s, recognizing its value as an open space, the family donated the land that is now Glenwood Park to the city of Ashland.

Longtime observers of Ashland politics will remember both her local and regional activism. She participated in the land-use planning movement that led to the passage of SB100, an important law that reshaped Oregon’s planning infrastructure by foregrounding the principle of citizen participation in land use decisions. Locally, she was an early supporter of the Bear Creek Greenway. She also donated funds that allowed the Nature Conservancy to secure public access to the Lower Table Rock. And she proved herself a determined foe of ill-conceived local development projects. She was also an avid birdwatcher, hiker, and lifelong member of groups such as the Sierra Club, Nature Conservancy, Native Plant Society of Oregon, the Audubon Society, and KS Wild.

Our family purchased our property along Bear Creek starting in the 1960s; my grandmother loved this land, and she, her children, and now grandchildren have cared for it for more than fifty years. Like Cynthia, we are all firm believers in public access and the preservation of open and natural spaces. We are enthusiastic about Ashland’s vision for developing accessible and open parkway along Bear Creek. We are so pleased to be able to donate six acres of our property, which supports a healthy population of native white oaks and is dotted with handsome rock formations, to Ashland for use as a park. Although my grandmother passed away in 2015, we know that nothing would have made her more happy than to have seen it preserved and accessible to the public for exploring and enjoying the 360 degree views across the valley. We hope the Ashland community will love it as we do.”