

# ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

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COMMISSIONERS:

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## STAFF MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Ashland Parks and Recreation Commissioners

**FROM:** Leslie Eldridge, Interim Director

**DATE:** December 6, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Official Parks and Open Space Map Approval (Action)  
(Improve watershed trail network Goal #6)

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### Situation

Parks Commissioners must approve the Official Parks and Open Space Map before it is presented to the Planning Commission and the City Council for approval. This legislative process is required to replace the 2002 map with the updated map in the Ashland Comprehensive Plan.

### Background

The Parks and Open Space Map is a guide for APRC land acquisition and designates properties for different usage including neighborhood parks, potential sports fields, open spaces, trail connectivity, and riparian areas.

The last official update of the Map was done in 2002 with a “Light Update” done by APRC in 2012 without formal adoption.

On October 11, 2023, APRC approved the updated Parks and Open Space Map. On Nov 28, 2023 the Planning commission reviewed the Comparison and Official maps at their Study Session. Some minor corrections have been made to the comparison and the official maps since APRC approval.

A public hearing to consider the proposed map amendment is tentatively scheduled before the Planning Commission at the next regular meeting on December 12, 2023. A public hearing and first reading of the proposed ordinance before the City Council is tentatively scheduled for January 16, 2024, with second reading scheduled for February 20, 2024.

### Recommendation

Staff recommend approval of the Official Parks and Open Space Map.

**Possible Motion**

*I move to approve the Official Parks and Open Space Map as presented by staff.*

**Attachments**

Official Parks and Open Space Map

Comparison Parks and Open Space Map

October 11, 2023 APRC Business Meeting Minutes:

[https://www.ashland.or.us/SIB/files/FinalMinutes\\_10\\_11\\_23\\_RegularMeeting.pdf](https://www.ashland.or.us/SIB/files/FinalMinutes_10_11_23_RegularMeeting.pdf)

Nov 28, 2023 Planning Commission Study Session packet:

[https://www.ashland.or.us/files/2023-11-28\\_PC\\_Packet\\_Print.pdf](https://www.ashland.or.us/files/2023-11-28_PC_Packet_Print.pdf)

# PARKS AND OPEN SPACE MAP



**CITY OF ASHLAND**  
Better Together

- Park Property to Acquire
- Portion of Area to Acquire for Riparian/Connectivity
- \*Trails Master Plan Corridors

- Urban Growth Boundary
- Ashland City Limits

**Public Land Ownership**

- City-Owned Forest Lands
- City-Owned Non Forest Lands
- U.S. Forest Service
- Ashland Parks Land

\*This map is intended to be used in conjunction with the APRC Trails Master Plan, which identifies critical connectivity corridors for acquisition or easements.

NOT TO SCALE



- (#1) Billings Property. North part of property for possible sports fields and riparian zone protection
- (#2) Wright's Creek Parcel. Trail corridor and protection for riparian zone.
- (#3) Grizzly Peak. Conservation easements on the south slopes of Grizzly visible from Ashland would not only protect iconic view visible from most of Ashland but would also reduce development pressure on rare and sensitive flora and on large mammals.
- (#4 & #5) Ashland Creek Corridor – Year-round stream, significant wildlife habitat and potential pedestrian/bicycle connection
- (#6) Nevada St to North Mountain Ave. (Bear Creek Corridor) Riparian area.
- (#7) Property across from Riverwalk. Riparian area.
- (#8) Willows area potential trail connection and riparian zone
- (#9) Bear Creek riparian/floodplain corridor from east of North Mountain Park. Significant wildlife habitat, natural area that is potentially a part of the Greenway extension.
- (#10) Walker Ave. East Main Street. Possible sports fields
- (#11) Talent Irrigation Ditch Segment
- (#12 & #13) West side watershed (Hitt Road) Trail connectivity.
- (#14) 440 Granite Street. Surrounded on three sides by Lithia Park. Only private property on east side of Granite above Nutley not part Lithia Park. Lithia Park Master Plan recommends purchase of property.
- (#15) Lincoln School. Critical to goal of neighborhood park within ¼ mile of all residents. Many low-income residents in the area.
- (#16 & #17) Upper Liberty St/Ivy Ln Forest/Urban Interface. Connects southern residential neighborhoods with trail network.
- (#18) Tolman Creek/Mistletoe Road Area potential neighborhood park site

This is to Certify that this is the approved final version of the official Parks and Open Space Map.

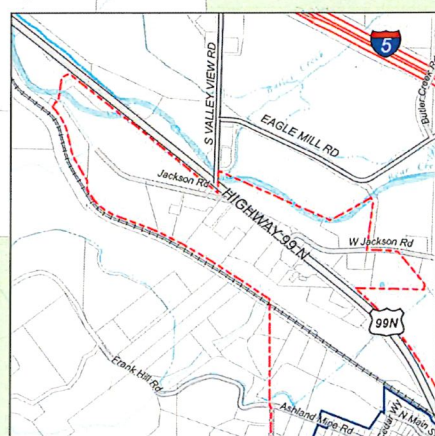
Signed:

Mayor \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

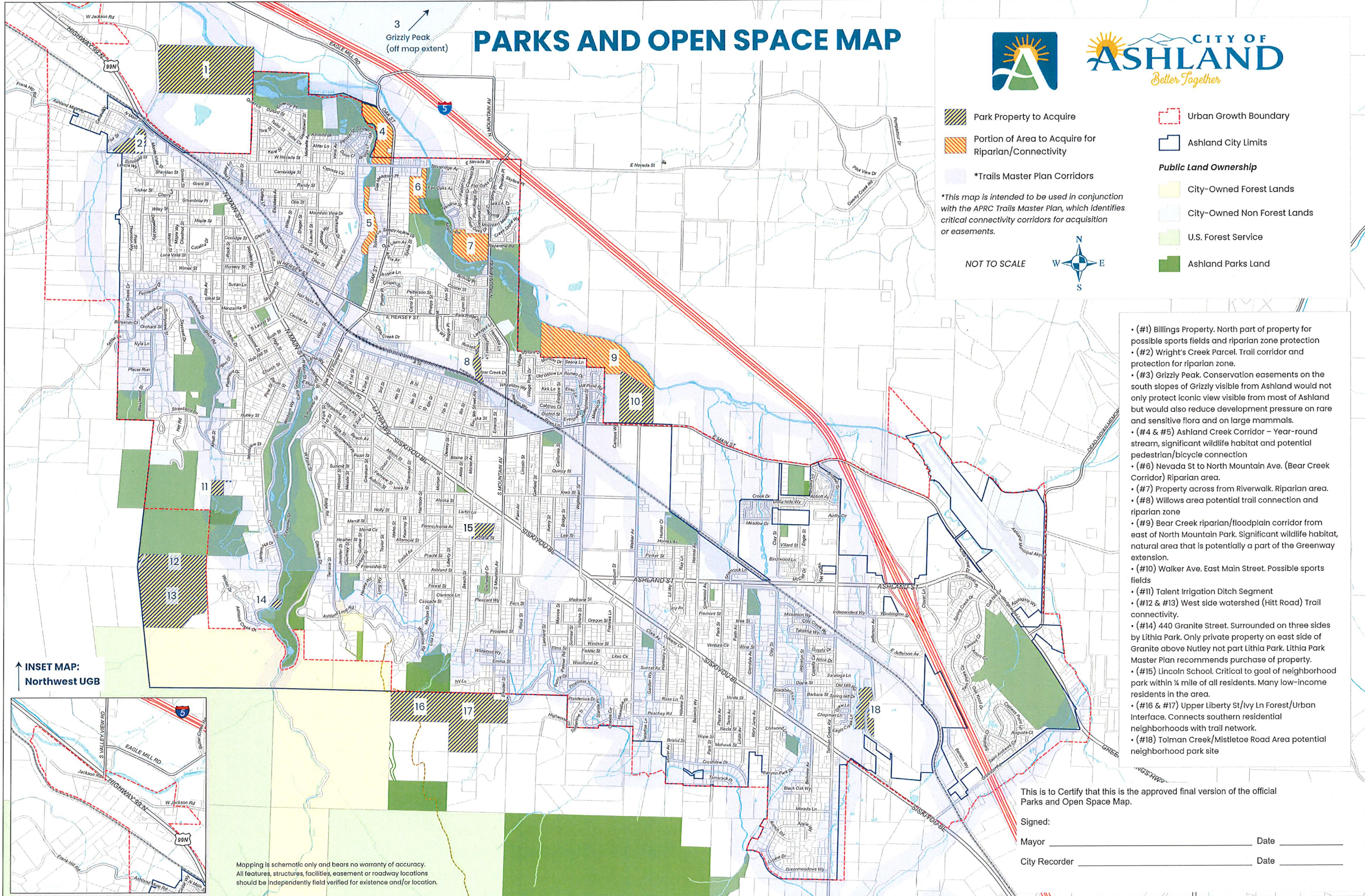
City Recorder \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

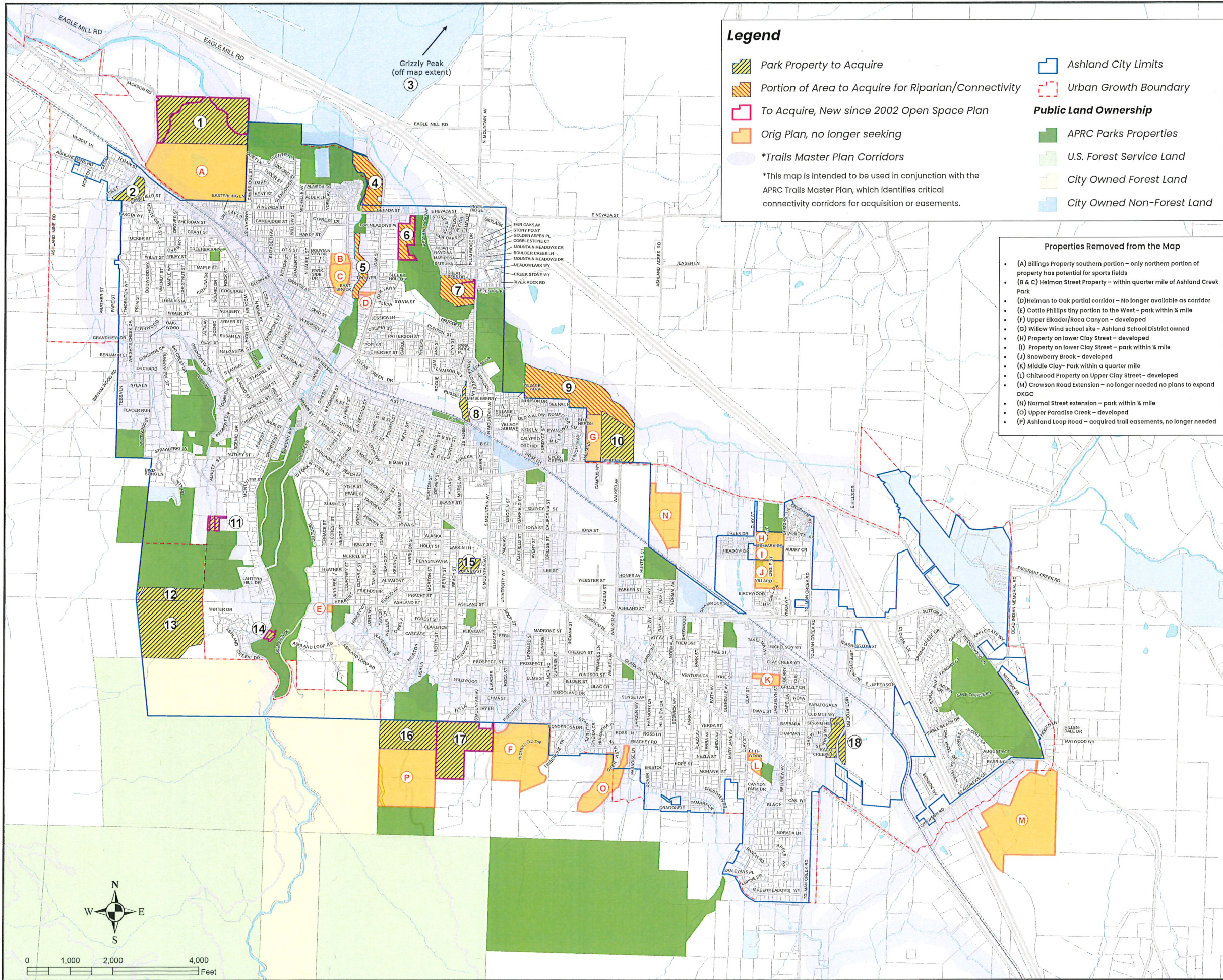
Mapping is schematic only and bears no warranty of accuracy. All features, structures, facilities, easement or roadway locations should be independently field verified for existence and/or location.

**INSET MAP: Northwest UGB**



3  
Grizzly Peak  
(off map extent)





### Legend

- Park Property to Acquire
- Portion of Area to Acquire for Riparian/Connectivity
- To Acquire, New since 2002 Open Space Plan
- Orig Plan, no longer seeking
- \*Trails Master Plan Corridors
- Ashland City Limits
- Urban Growth Boundary

### Public Land Ownership

- APRC Parks Properties
- U.S. Forest Service Land
- City Owned Forest Land
- City Owned Non-Forest Land

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- ### Properties Removed from the Map
- (A) Billings Property southern portion - only northern portion of property has potential for sports fields
  - (B & C) Helman Street Property - within quarter mile of Ashland Creek Park
  - (D) Helman to Oak partial corridor - No longer available as corridor
  - (E) Cottle Phillips tiny portion to the West - park within 1/4 mile
  - (F) Upper Elkader/Roca Canyon - developed
  - (G) Willow Wind school site - Ashland School District owned
  - (H) Property on lower Clay Street - developed
  - (I) Property on lower Clay Street - park within 1/4 mile
  - (J) Snowberry Brook - developed
  - (K) Middle Clay - Park within a quarter mile
  - (L) Chitwood property on Upper Clay Street - developed
  - (M) Crowson Road Extension - no longer needed no plans to expand OKGC
  - (N) Normal Street extension - park within 1/4 mile
  - (O) Upper Paradise Creek - developed
  - (P) Ashland Loop Road - acquired trail easements, no longer needed



A goal of the Ashland Parks & Recreation Commission (APRC), Board of Commissioners' (the "Commissioners") is to update the Parks, Trails & Open Space Plan (the "Plan") every ten years. Although a "Light Update" was done by APRC in 2012, it was not reviewed and approved by City Council. The last official update of the Plan was done in 2002.

In preparation for the 2002 update, APRC held a series of community meetings to gather input from citizens on updating the 1991 plan. Following the meetings, Commissioners developed an updated Plan map that included changing the name of the program to the "Parks, Trails and Open Space Plan". For the 2023 update, a Parks, Trails and Open Space Subcommittee (the "Subcommittee") was formed by the Commissioners to review the Plan and make recommendations. The Subcommittee has prepared the 2023 update and that body has recommended the 2023 Plan for approval by the Commissioners and City Council. There have been seven APRC meetings where public input was solicited. This Plan was approved by Commissioners on October 11, 2023 and by City Council XXXX.

The current situation with Ashland's Park land is very different than in 1991 when the Comprehensive Plan was first developed and approved by City Council. In 1991, Ashland had less park land per capita than Roseburg, Medford and Klamath Falls. Now, after 30-plus years of effort, Ashland's per capita park land ranks it among the State's leaders. It has been determined that procurement of land for developed parks is no longer a high priority. Additionally, because City legislation accompanying the Plan specifically mandated that no land would be obtained by condemnation, originally more property than needed was on the Plan to ensure sufficient land could be acquired from willing sellers. For the reasons stated and after careful review by the Subcommittee and approval by APRC Commissioners, roughly 200 acres of property projected for purchase from the 2005 Plan map has been removed from this updated 2023 Plan.

One of the goals of the City's Comprehensive Plan is to have a neighborhood park located within a 1/4 mile of every resident living inside the current city limits. With the exceptions of the Mistletoe (Croman) neighborhood, fully developed sections of the City where no open lands exist, and areas in the urban-forest interface characterized by large lots where Commissioners have deemed that the benefits are not great enough to justify the costs, sufficient property has been obtained to meet this goal. If the City's boundaries are expanded, additional property may need to be identified, for example, a part of the Billings Ranch and acquired to meet the neighborhood goal.

The majority of properties left on the Plan for future purchase provide protection of significant natural areas like streams and riparian areas and/or are land and easements that provide trail connectivity. The connectivity goal is to secure land, through outright purchase, donation, grants, or easements, on which to develop a trail system that would provide connecting links to neighborhoods and additional trails throughout the City and surrounding area for non-motorized, recreational use. Efforts to accomplish this goal will be advanced through collaboration with other organizations, such as the Ashland Woodland and Trails Association, Rogue Valley Mountain Bike Association and Southern Oregon Land Conservancy.

- ### Properties Designated Purchase or Easements and Projected Use
- (#1) Billings Property, North part of property for possible sports fields and riparian zone protection
  - (#2) Wright's Creek Parcel, Trail corridor and protection for riparian zone.
  - (#3) Grizzly Peak, Conservation easements on the south slopes of Grizzly visible from Ashland would not only protect iconic view visible from most of Ashland but would also reduce development pressure on rare and sensitive flora and on large mammals.
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