

# CITY NEWS

*Better Together*

## Let's Stay Connected

Joseph L. Lessard, City Manager

Have you ever wondered about the ways you can connect with the City? You probably know that Council meets biweekly and their regular business meetings include a public forum time to receive community input. City Commissions and Committees also meet regularly on specific topics that everyone is invited to attend.

The City offers a number of other ways for us to connect. For example, last year the City Council held a Business Roundtable and invited members of the business community to provide input on the business environment in Ashland – We're now looking to hold a 2023 Business Roundtable in the next month. Last fall we offered a citywide survey so that we could hear from you on suggestions for the 2023-2025 Biennial budget. In January of this year, Council hosted a well-attended Townhall meeting asking for input on potential City priorities for the Biennial budget. A couple of months later in March, Council held an Economic Roundtable Discussion with other regional elected leaders and with Ashland's major employer institutions that identified next steps in converting economic challenges into economic opportunities for Ashland – This group will also be asked to meet again soon. Most recently Council and I hosted a Coffee & Conversation event and found the interest for such an occasion to be high. We look forward to future gatherings! Finally, many community special events, like the Ashland World Music Festival or the free City Band concerts in the summer, provide an opportunity for community connectivity though as informal social occasions.

All of these meet and connect efforts take place throughout the year and are in addition to our regular media efforts, including news releases, social media posts and our monthly newsletter. In September 2022, as part of City media efforts, we rolled added the "Let Curiosity be Your Guide," corner on our website, to give you the opportunity to ask us what you are curious about. To date, we've had nearly 100 questions sent in. The answers are posted on the City website for all to see – Submit your question at [ashland.or.us/Curiosity](https://ashland.or.us/Curiosity).

While all of our efforts are important ways for the Ashland community to connect, the most significant connection is the interaction that takes place between you, the citizens of Ashland, and our City staff. The encounters between staff in the field or at one of our customer service counters is very important. I would like to extend a thank you for connecting with us on a regular basis.

***"We are better together!"***



Joseph L. Lessard

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*Better Together*



Tonya Graham  
Mayor



Paula Hyatt  
Councilor  
Position No. 1



Dylan Bloom  
Councilor  
Position No. 2



Jeff Dahle  
Councilor  
Position No. 3



Bob Kaplan  
Councilor  
Position No. 4



Gina DuQuenne  
Councilor  
Position No. 5



Eric Hansen  
Councilor  
Position No. 6

## COUNCIL OUTCOMES July 2023

At the July 18 meeting, Council approved acquisition of approximately 4.16 acres of the **Tuttle Property** at a purchase price of \$125K. The property is located at the upper westside of Lithia Park and abuts Acid Castle Open Space. It contains highly used pedestrian trails and trail connections and includes sections of the Ashland Canal Trail (TID - Talent Irrigation Ditch). Councilor Hansen stated that, "...this is a piece of property that APRC has identified as a key connector for our existing trails system." He thanked APRC and the Tuttle family and went on to say, "This is a social equity win for the City of Ashland." He encouraged the citizens of Ashland to visit the property. Councilor Dahle added that this purchase fits into more than one of the Council's comprehensive plans or ideals, including forestlands and wildfire resiliency, as well as recreation.

For more information, including meetings, agendas, minutes and how to contact Council, visit [ashland.or.us/Council](http://ashland.or.us/Council). Info on City of Ashland Commissions and Committees at [ashland.or.us](http://ashland.or.us).

The City currently has vacancies on the Social Equity and Racial Justice Committee. **Apply Today!**

## CITY GETS NEW FIRE ENGINE



In 2022, the Ashland City Council ordered a new fire engine in an effort to head off maintenance and supply chain concerns. Fire engines are typically replaced every 20 years. This means for the Ashland Fire and Rescue Department to stay on task and keep their fleet of engines current, a fire engine needs to be ordered every five (5) years. Doing so also meets the national performance standards for fire engines.

**The engine was delivered in late June will go into service in September 2023!**



### ASHLAND CHAMBER of COMMERCE Local Business Spotlight

#### Your Oregon Welcome Center---

At Travel Oregon's State Welcome Center, visitors and residents are warmly greeted at the Siskiyou Rest Area, 13 miles north of the Oregon/California border off I-5 N. Enjoy stunning views of the Cascade and Siskiyou mountains along with travel resources, locally roasted coffee and other amenities. Whether you're coming home or seeking inspiration for your next adventure, a stop at the welcome center is an enjoyable experience. Hours: Mon-Wed, 9-5, Thu-Sun 9-6, 541.625.0575, [Ashlandwc@traveloregon.com](http://Ashlandwc@traveloregon.com).



### BASECAMP ASHLAND Live Like a Local

Southern Oregon abounds with outdoor recreation and Ashland makes a great basecamp to do and see it all!

**Diamond Lake Resort**— In about two hours you can be transposed to the shores of Diamond Lake. This resort has evolved from a once small fishing lodge to a modern family resort with year-round service. More at [diamondlake.net](http://diamondlake.net).

Learn more at [TravelAshland.com](http://TravelAshland.com), @TravelAshlandOregon on social media and use the hashtags #Basecamp #BasecampAshland #LiveLikeaLocal.

## COFFEE with the CITY COUNCIL & MANAGER



Members of the City Council with the City Manager will be available for informal “Coffee & Conversation,” at a local business. Please plan to drop by and have a cup of coffee on us at one of the locations listed below for a get acquainted, meet-and-greet between 8:30 and 10 a.m. on the following dates:

- Tuesday, September 26, **Rogue Valley Roasting Company**, 917 E Main St
- Tuesday, November 14, **location TBD**

The conversations will be casual and there will not be an agenda. The City looks forward to connecting with you, because in Ashland, **We are better together!**

## LET CURIOSITY BE YOUR GUIDE

**Are you curious about something in Ashland?** Get your questions answered and see what others in the community are asking about. Questions like:

- Will wildfire mitigation be fully funded in the upcoming budget?
- Is it illegal to feed wildlife in Ashland?
- Where can i get a bear-proof trash can?
- What sort of items should NOT be flushed down the toilet?

All of this and more at [ashland.or.us/Curiosity](http://ashland.or.us/Curiosity).



*I'm curious about...*

## CITY BUDGET 2023–2025 Biennium

The City’s current Biennium (BN) Budget began with the new fiscal year on July 1, 2023, and will carry through to June 30, 2025. City Council’s top priorities for the 23–25 BN are:



- *Wildfire risk reduction and CEAP (Climate Energy Action Plan) execution*
- *Economic Development including development of eco-tourism like trails, ensuring City processes such as planning are supportive of attracting new business and supporting those already here*
- *Affordability including attainable housing, and review of our rate structures for progressiveness in their livability*

*All with the underlying supporting principles of equity of access, and strong supportive City services with a customer service focus.*

Learn more and view the 23–25 BN Budget at [ashland.or.us/23-25](http://ashland.or.us/23-25).

## POLICE PRESENCE DOWNTOWN

Did you know the Ashland Police Department (APD) has a presence downtown? Recently, APD moved out of the contact station that was located across Main Street from the plaza.

The police presence has since been transitioned to City Hall. APD has reserved two parking spaces near City Hall, which will give officers the flexibility to respond in a vehicle if needed.





# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

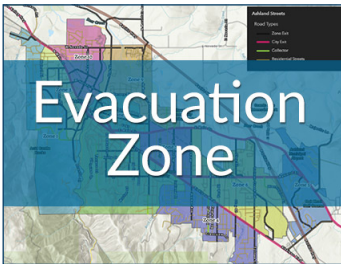
Get Ready Rogue—Emergency Preparedness and Response

LET US HELP YOU BE BETTER PREPARED FOR AN EMERGENCY

Visit [ashland.or.us/BetterPrepared](http://ashland.or.us/BetterPrepared) to learn:

- EVACUATION ZONES
- SIGN UP FOR CITIZEN ALERTS
- EVACUATION LEVELS
- GET READY

On June 1, 2023, Ashland officially joined with the Jackson County under the Citizen Alert/Everbridge emergency messaging system, transitioning away from Nixle. This move not only saves our tax-payer’s money (the cost for the system is now covered by the state of Oregon, OR-Alert program), but it joins us with our partners at Jackson County, **We are better together!** Sign up today at [ashland.or.us/BetterPrepared](http://ashland.or.us/BetterPrepared).



**BE READY.  
BE SET.  
GO NOW!**

Know evacuation levels and follow advice of emergency officials.  
Make the best decision for your safety. Don't wait to evacuate if you feel unsafe!

**LEVEL 1**

**BE READY**

**PREPARE TO EVACUATE**  
*BE AWARE OF DANGER IN THE AREA*

- ✓ Stay informed.
- ✓ Have your plan & go-kit ready.
- ✓ Act early if you or your loved ones can't move quickly.

**LEVEL 2**

**BE SET**

**BE SET TO EVACUATE**  
*AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE*  
*SIGNIFICANT DANGER IN THE AREA*

- ⚠ Follow your evacuation plan & grab your go-kit.
- ⚠ Check news & radio for updates.
- ⚠ Conditions change rapidly. Leave if you feel unsafe.

**LEVEL 3**

**GO NOW!**

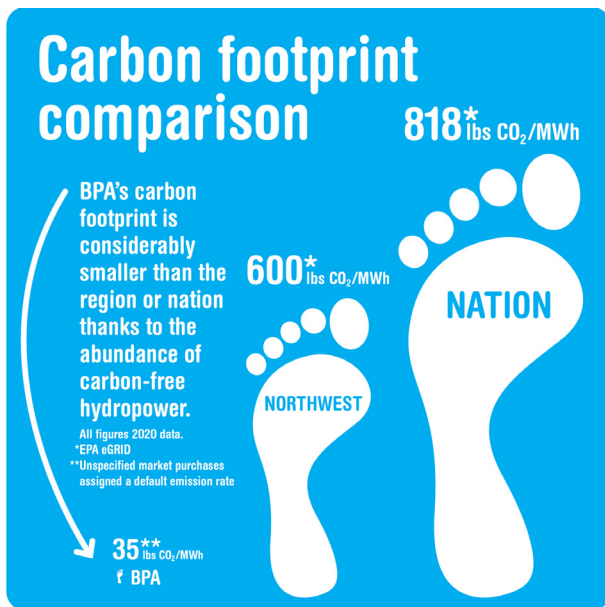
**LEAVE IMMEDIATELY!**  
*EXTREME DANGER IN THE AREA*

- 🏃 Leave without delay. It is unsafe to stay.
- 🏃 Do not stop to gather belongings or protect your home.
- 🏃 Do not return until officials announce the area is safe.

# FEDERAL, STATE & LOCAL INCENTIVES, OH MY!

## Climate & Energy News

Never has there been a better time to plan on upgrading or replacing your home appliances, including your heating and cooling systems! Devices have never been more efficient and there are unprecedented federal incentives being rolled out. Currently, there are federal tax credits in two categories that allow up to \$3200 tax credit (see [energy.gov/save](https://www.energy.gov/save)). What will be even more impactful, is the High-Efficiency Electric Home Rebate program (HEEHRA), also referred to as Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates. This program allocates funds to states who will implement a rebate program in either late 2023 or early 2024. These rebates will allow households up to \$14,000 in up-front rebates to lower the cost of electrification projects (more info will be available at [oregon.gov/energy](https://www.oregon.gov/energy)). Finally, the City of Ashland has long offered various energy efficiency incentives (see [ashlandor.org/climate-energy/find-resources](https://www.ashlandor.org/climate-energy/find-resources)). The federal tax credits, state administered rebates and City of Ashland incentives can all be used together to dramatically reduce the costs of making home improvements!



As you pursue these incentives you may notice that while they are all energy efficiency offerings, the majority are related to electric appliances. Electrification of households has been targeted by these initiatives because meeting our daily needs with electric appliances rather than fossil fuel-based appliances helps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The movement to electrify homes is taking place across the country as cities, states and the federal government look for mechanisms to combat climate change. Meeting our daily needs with electric appliances is one of the best ways we can reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. In Ashland we are doubly fortunate to have both affordable electricity and lower carbon electricity than most places (our energy is purchased from the Bonneville Power Administration, aka BPA). This combination allows electrifying your home in Ashland to cost less and have a greater reduction in emissions!

## CITY UTILITY BILLS *Need help, or would you like to help others?*

The City offers a variety of assistance programs for citizens who may have difficulty paying their utility bills. In addition, there are options available to help others! Programs such as Rounding-Up your utility payment to the nearest dollar, or contributing to the HEAT Assistance Program. Complete information at [ashland.or.us/UtilityAssistance](https://www.ashland.or.us/UtilityAssistance).



## UTILITY BILLING SELF-SERVICE is AVAILABLE



It is all a couple clicks away – Pay your bill online or sign up to CONNECT or DISCONNECT service at [ashland.or.us/Utilities](https://www.ashland.or.us/Utilities). If you have any questions or issues with your account, email is the best way to reach out at [utilitybilling@ashland.or.us](mailto:utilitybilling@ashland.or.us). We are currently going through a staffing shortage and responses may be delayed. Thank you in advance for your patience and understanding.

# BUTLER-PEROZZI FOUNTAIN TO BE RESTORED

## Fountain Fundraising Inches Closer to Goal

The Ashland Parks Foundation (APF) is moving full steam ahead with the fundraising campaign to restore, repair and upgrade all the elements of the historic Butler-Perozzi Fountain and site. Over \$440,000 (55%) has been raised thanks to more than 60 local donors. APF hopes to secure the remaining \$360,000 by the end of 2023, through grants and donations from those who love Lithia Park and the fountain.

APF recently announced that Barbara Allen and Jim Batzer, two longtime Ashland community leaders, are serving as honorary co-chairs of the campaign. "We walk by the fountain nearly every day and want to do all we can to support its restoration," they said.

Once completed, the project will protect an iconic piece of Ashland's history that has been the centerpiece of Lithia Park for over 100 years.



Butler-Perozzi Fountain in Lithia Park

To learn more, or to make a tax-deductible donation, please visit [AshlandParksFoundation.org](http://AshlandParksFoundation.org).



# New Ashland Route!

Providing important connections!



### Route 17 - Ashland Crosstown

Monday-Friday

1 Hour Service - 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Stops	First Bus	Hour Times	Last Bus
<b>To Ashland Hospital &gt;&gt;&gt;</b>			
Albertsons	9:00 am	:00	4:00 pm
SOU's The Hawk	9:09 am	:09	4:09 pm
N. Mountain Park	9:15 am	:15	4:15 pm
N. Main and Glenn	9:20 am	:20	4:20 pm
Ashland Hospital	9:25 am	:25	4:25 pm
<b>To Albertsons &gt;&gt;&gt;</b>			
N. Main and Maple	9:26 am	:26	4:26 pm
N. Mountain Park	9:31 am	:31	4:31 pm
SOU's The Hawk	9:37 am	:37	4:37 pm
Shop'n Kart	9:41 am	:41	4:41 pm
Albertsons	9:43 am	:43	4:43 pm

T Indicates Transfer Sites to ROUTE 10.



## WHAT'S COMING UP? September Events

The Ashland Senior Center will present **"Social Security Planning" on Wednesday, September 13, 5:30 to 7 p.m.** and **"Medicare 101" on Monday, September 18, 1 to 3 p.m.** These events are FREE and registration is required. Please register at 541.488.5342. More at [ashland.or.us/SeniorEvents](https://ashland.or.us/SeniorEvents).

The **Lithia Park Guided Walks** will continue through September! The walks are led by passionate and knowledgeable volunteers and are FREE for all. Walks last between an hour and hour and half and cover the history, flora and fauna of Ashland's crown jewel. The walks are on Thursday and Saturday mornings at 10 a.m. Meet at the entrance to Lithia Park, at the downtown plaza. More at [ashland.or.us/LithiaGuidedWalks](https://ashland.or.us/LithiaGuidedWalks).

Stroll through North Mountain Park with birding experts from the Rogue Valley! **The Summer Saturday Morning Bird Walk on September 16, 8 to 9 a.m.,** will be an opportunity to see and hear a variety of migratory and resident birds that spend the summer, and early fall, at North Mountain Park. Register at [ashland.or.us/Register](https://ashland.or.us/Register).



## Sneak Peak at October Events



The **Ashland Mystery Festival** is a NEW event coming this fall to Ashland the weekend of October 20 through 22, 2023. Author Ellie Alexander, has sold over half a million books and wrote one of her cozy mystery

Bakeshop Series, set here in Ashland! Ellie will be joined by nine of her cozy mystery author friends for a fun, fictional weekend with hosted author panels, pop ups and a mystery for guests to solve. With mystery dinners and packages, it will be an immersive weekend that readers and visitors will enjoy. The event is being produced by Travel Ashland and Ashland Chamber. Thank you to our sponsors Paddington Station, Friends of the Public Library, Bloomsbury Books, Barbara Allen and RVML (Rogue Valley Metaphysical Library). For event information and tickets visit [ashlandmysteryfest.com](https://ashlandmysteryfest.com).

Watch for details on the **15th Annual Monster Dash 2023!** This annual run takes place in Lithia Park, offers different runs to accommodate all and proceeds support grants for Ashland Public Schools. More at [ashlandmonsterdash.com](https://ashlandmonsterdash.com).

**Southern Oregon Pride 2023** will take place the weekend of October 6 and 7. The theme this year is, "Live Out Loud!" More at .



Photo Stephen Bruno

## IS IT OKAY TO FEED WILDLIFE?

Are you wondering if it is okay to feed wildlife in Ashland? The answer is no, it is not okay to feed deer, raccoon, wild turkeys, bear and cougars.

Please do not scatter food or garbage or any other attractant that might lure a wild animal. For more information visit [ashland.municipal.codes](https://ashland.municipal.codes), or reach out to **Lisa Evans**, Code Compliance Specialist for the City, [codecompliance@ashland.or.us](mailto:codecompliance@ashland.or.us), 541.552.2424.

# ARE YOU INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING?



## LITHIA PARK GUIDES NEEDED

If you love Lithia Park and are interested in sharing this love with others, consider becoming a Lithia Park Walk Guide. Free guided walks have been taking place in Lithia Park for over 30 years and Ashland Parks & Recreation is looking for new volunteers to join this program. Walks take place Saturday mornings at 10 a.m., May–September, scheduling is flexible and training is provided. Become part of this beloved institution and help share Ashland’s jewel with generations to come.

## BIKE REPAIR VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Come volunteer to fix up bikes at the Grove, 1195 E Main St, every Thursday morning, 9:30 a.m. to Noon. All experience levels welcome, and some training provided. Bikes are being distributed to local aid organizations, and low-income residents of the area, as well as being sold at the annual Rogue Valley Bike Swap to help raise funds for bike education in the Valley.

## RIPARIAN RESTORATION WORK PARTY, NORTH MOUNTAIN PARK, THURSDAYS 9–11 A.M.

Join us to remove invasive species, plant native plants, and care for North Mountain Park. This group meets weekly, and cares for different areas of the park each week. Tools, refreshments, and training provided. Join the email list to be notified of schedule changes and work sites ahead of time.

For more info on either opportunity, or to apply, please reach out to Parks & Recreation Volunteer Coordinator Sulaiman Shelton at, [sulaiman.shelton@ashland.or.us](mailto:sulaiman.shelton@ashland.or.us) or 541.552.2264.

## COMMUNICATIONS

View the monthly *City News* at [ashland.or.us/Communications](http://ashland.or.us/Communications).

Stay informed by visiting and subscribing at [ashland.or.us](http://ashland.or.us), and follow us on Facebook @CityofAshlandOregon and Twitter at @CityofAshland, use the hashtags #CityofAshland, #BetterTogether.

### How to contact us:

[ashland.or.us](http://ashland.or.us)  
[administration@ashland.or.us](mailto:administration@ashland.or.us)  
541.488.6002



## COUNCIL ADOPTED VISION & VALUE STATEMENTS FOR THE CITY IN 2022

### Vision

Ashland is a resilient, sustainable community that maintains the distinctive quality of place for which it is known.

We will continue to be a unique and caring city that stresses environmental conservation, fosters artistic expression and is open to new ideas and innovation.

We will plan and direct our efforts to fulfill this Vision for the long term with a constant view toward being an open, welcoming community for all with a positive economic future.

### Values

#### Community

**COMMUNITY AFFORDABILITY**, including available housing and childcare

**BELONGING** through mutual respect and openness, inclusion and equity

**QUALITY OF LIFE** that underpins the City’s economic vibrancy

**ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE**, including addressing climate change and ecosystem conservation

**REGIONAL COOPERATION**, including in support for public safety and homelessness

#### Organization

**RESPECT** for the citizens we serve, for each other and for the work we do

**EXCELLENCE** in governance and City services

**SUSTAINABILITY** through creativity, affordability and rightsized service delivery

**PUBLIC SAFETY**, including emergency preparedness for climate change risk

**QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES** through timely maintenance and community investment