

IMPORTANT: Any citizen may orally address the Parks Commission on non-agenda items during the Public Forum. Any citizen may submit written comments to the Commission on any item on the Agenda, unless it is the subject of a public hearing and the record is closed. Time permitting, the Presiding Officer may allow oral testimony. If you wish to speak, please out the Speaker Request Form located near the entrance to the meeting room. The chair will recognize you and inform you as to the amount of time allotted to you, if any. The time granted will be dependent to some extent on the nature of the item under discussion, the number of people who wish to speak, and the length of the agenda.



MEETING AGENDA

ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION Trail Master Plan Update Committee June 15, 2018 The Grove, Otte-Peterson Room—1195 E. Main

9:00 a.m.

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES—June 1, 2018
- III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION & GUEST SPEAKERS
 - a. Open Forum
 - b. Review Additional Public Input Since Last Meeting
- IV. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA
- V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
- VI. NEW BUSINESS
 - a. Review Executive Summary (Jensen-Chapman)
 - b. Review Chapter 6: Ashland Canal (McGinnis)
 - c. Roundtable Discussion (All)
- VII. UPCOMING MEETING DATE
 - a. June 29, 2018
 - Community Development Building, Siskiyou Room—10:00 a.m.
- VIII. ADJOURNMENT—10:30 a.m.

City of Ashland
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
TRAIL MASTER PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
June 1, 2018

PRESENT: **Parks Commissioner:** Jim Lewis
 Additional Committee Members: David Chapman, Torsten Heycke, Stephen Jensen, Jim McGinnis
 City and APRC Staff: Interim Parks Superintendent Jeffrey McFarland, Forestry Supervisor Jason Minica, GIS Analyst Lea Richards
 APRC Minute-taker: Betsy Manuel

ABSENT: APRC Director Michael Black, Committee member and Parks Commissioner Mike Gardiner, Committee members Luke Brandy and Chris Chambers

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Chapman called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. at 51 Winburn Way, Ashland OR.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- *Minutes of May 18, 2018*

Motion: Lewis moved to approve the Minutes of May 18, 2018, as presented. McGinnis seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION & GUEST SPEAKERS

a. Open Forum

There was none.

b. Review Additional Public Input Since Last Meeting

There were none.

IV. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

McGinnis asked for time to update the Committee regarding the Ashland Canal project.

McFarland asked that the Chapter on the Ashland Canal be first under **Agenda Item VI: New Business**.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Web-app for Location-Based Comments Regarding TMP Project

Richards stated that she and co-worker Rickey Fite designed and coded a web-app for public input regarding the TMP. She noted that the website contained basic information about the project including an interactive map. She displayed the web-app information, noting that clicking on an area of the map resulted in information about the location where the pin was located as well as the applicable corridor. Richards noted that the comment section allowed sufficient room for input of approximately 100 characters. She stated that she would retrieve the commentaries via computer and the retrieved information would be in a table format.

There followed a brief discussion about capturing the name of the persons making comments. Jensen recommended that the names be required so that any issues could be resolved and/or specifically discussed directly with the concerned party. Chapman agreed, indicating that face-to-face or email discussion could accelerate problem solving.

Jensen inquired about corridor widths. Richards noted that widths had been determined in the original Master Plan document but there were some areas such as the Bear Creek area that had been updated. In response to a question by Jensen, Richards noted that the corridors were established as a way to organize specific areas.

Heycke asked whether the map would remain open to the public indefinitely. There followed discussion about receiving commentary that could affect the Master Plan – particularly when the Update Committee was at a point where the document was almost complete.

Lewis stated that the interactive map was a very useful tool – not only for Master Plan input but also for ongoing public input with regard to trails.

McGinnis talked about the importance of an end date for comments regarding the Master Plan. He stated that without it, people could assume their input would be incorporated into the plan, when it would not. It was agreed that an end-date should be established with regard to the updated Trail Master Plan.

McFarland detailed the process for adoption. Jensen read from the Master Plan document the actual wording regarding the 2018 TMP update process. Lewis noted that the Master Plan would remain a draft until formally approved by APRC and the Ashland City Council. Until then, technically, changes to the Plan could occur. Responses to public concerns were typically addressed by APRC staff. It was stated that the TMP Master Plan Subcommittee Chair Chapman also worked with the public often in partnership with APRC.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

a. Review Chapter 6: Ashland Canal

McGinnis noted that the Chapter was originally referred to as the TID Ditch. He commented that in the past, people assumed they had access to trails along the canal. McGinnis stated that the easement in place was a maintenance easement and therefore not open to the public.

Heycke talked about the first paragraph that framed the Ashland Canal as a significant part of the a “emerald ring” around the City of Ashland. He stated that the concept of an emerald ring or necklace was difficult to visualize and problematic to achieve. Lewis explained the historic precedent set originally in Seattle. He stated that APRC’s take on an emerald ring was that a series of trails would be assembled as a loop around Ashland. He stated that the descriptor *emerald ring* might not be pertinent for Ashland.

Heycke proposed that the sentence *“Aligning with the hydrologically necessary contour, the Ashland Canal is generally flat to gently sloping and has nearly six miles of linear footage most of which are in close proximity to the southern border of the city limits”* be changed to - *The Ashland Canal is generally flat to gently sloping and has nearly six miles of linear footage most of which are in close proximity to the southern border of the city limits.* He suggested that the word *“robust”* be removed from the last sentence of the fifth paragraph on page one.

Heycke suggested changes to **LINKAGE** as follows:

First paragraph: Last sentence – *“The Hald-Strawberry Park, when developed, may serve as a trailhead”* be changed to *The Westwood open space may serve as a trailhead.* Lewis noted that a neighborhood park was needed in the area as well.

Heycke restated the linkages to Granite Street properties as the *“Lithia Trail System, and the APRC-owned properties from Granite Street to Acid Castle”*. He recommended deletion of the paragraph referred to with the heading *“Pinecrest Terrace bypass.”* McGinnis agreed, stating that the potential for trail development should remain viable if circumstances changed.

CHARACTER

It was agreed that the description "*imposing canopies*" would be deleted.

EXPECTED USERS

Heycke questioned the term "*foot traffic*" and it was agreed that the terminology would be changed to *pedestrians*. The term *baby strollers* was deleted.

Other changes included deleting the word *paving* from the sentence beginning with "*The underground segments 'may offer opportunities to add crushed rock or paving.'*"

There followed a brief discussion about whether to mention the two-mile portion of the Ashland Canal that the City plans to divert underground and cover. It was agreed that plans to do so were tentative and the impact on the trail system unknown – therefore no mention would be incorporated into the updated Trail Master Plan.

McGinnis talked about issues concerning to property owners along the Ashland Canal, noting that there was potential for a group of residents to come together and work toward potential solutions to conflicts in that area.

Motion: Jensen moved to approve Chapter 6: *Ashland Canal* with the edits discussed. McGinnis seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

b. Review Chapter 4: Bear Creek Greenway Trail Corridor

Heycke proposed that the second sentence under the Bear Creek Greenway Route Description read as follows: "*It is the premier bicycle and pedestrian transportation route that crosses a significant portion of the Rogue Valley.*"

Chapman stated that it was important to associate the Bear Creek Greenway with the Rogue River Greenway because of its additional connectivity. Richards responded that the Bear Creek Greenway crossed a significant portion of the Bear Creek Valley – rather than the Rogue River Valley. After some discussion, it was agreed that the sentence would be revised as follows: "*The Bear Creek Greenway in conjunction with the Rogue Valley Greenway is a premier bicycle and pedestrian transportation route that crosses a significant portion of the Rogue River Valley.*"

Lewis agreed, noting that the two valleys are important to mention in context together because of the linkages from Grants Pass to Ashland.

Jensen question the characterization of the bicycle and pedestrian transportation route as "*the premier*" route. It was further agreed that the sentence would be changed to read "*a premier*" route.

McGinnis suggested that the sentence stating that the route begins near Dean Creek north of Central Point would be more accurately portrayed as near Blackwell Road.

GOVERNANCE

Heycke suggested that the sentences "A trail guide has also been published." and "This guide has been updated and made available through Jackson County Park" be restated as "The trail guide is available through Jackson County Parks."

Additional changes were outlined as follows:

"The funding for the maintenance of the Greenway is administered by Jackson County Parks through a Joint Powers Agreement between five municipalities and Jackson County" will be changed to "The maintenance of the Greenway is administered by Jackson County Parks through a Joint Powers Agreement administered by Jackson County Parks."

"The Greenway enters the jurisdiction of Ashland on the north end of the Ashland urban growth boundary where approximately two miles of the Greenway lies within the urban growth boundary and the City limits." The sentence will be changed to "The Greenway enters the maintenance jurisdiction of Ashland on the north-west end of the Ashland urban growth boundary."

"This portion of the trail runs predominately west to east and extends from Valley View Road and then follows Bear Creek to the current termination point at West Nevada..." The sentence will be changed to "This portion of the trail runs predominately west to east and extends from Valley View Road over Bear Creek and follows Bear Creek to a termination point at West Nevada."

"Another three miles of trail is proposed to extend through Ashland to the southeastern edge of the Ashland Municipal Airport" will be changed to "Another three miles of trail is proposed to extend beyond Ashland to the southeastern edge of the Ashland Municipal Airport."

McGinnis suggested that the paragraph be broken into two paragraphs beginning with *"Another three miles..."*

Jensen asked about the addition of a paragraph that explained that the Greenway is a work-in-progress. The paragraph reads: *"A future trail extension from West Nevada Street to North Mountain Park has become the scope of work for a new trail building project. Currently an Alternate Routes Proposal is being funded by a joint agreement between the Ashland Public Works Department, APRC and The Bear Creek Greenway Foundation Board."*

McFarland noted that the study had been completed and a series of recommendations proposed. Recommendations included an interim proposed route and a long-term proposal for a permanent route. The Mace property was referred to as the extended Riverwalk property and a section of the parcel was the interim route.

Discussion included various properties and bridges. Jensen asked whether the proposals should be included in the Master Plan. Chapman suggested that the paragraph should convey that work is currently underway for an extension of the Greenway to North Mountain Park without further comment. He noted that the map depicts two possible routes.

McGinnis suggested that the Willow Wind property that extends from East Main to the I-5 Highway could be considered a corridor – and could be mapped accordingly. Richards stated that there were a number of factors involved that would require some research. She indicated that she would take the matter under advisement and see what she could do.

It was agreed that the paragraph that begins *"A future trail extension"* would be re-written and condensed.

LINKAGES

Heycke pointed out a typo under linkages.

Richards reported that the sentence that talk about the Greenway connecting to Helman and Oak streets should also include North Laurel – as the street was also a designated bike route.

Motion: Jensen moved to approve Chapter 4: *The Bear Creek Greenway*, as edited. Heycke seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

c. Table of Contents

Jensen highlighted a proposal to re-order the Table of Contents. He noted that the title page would be developed more simply by APRC, and he committed to completing the Executive Summary prior to the meeting on June 15.

Jensen suggested that several chapters be incorporated into the body of those that already existed, where appropriate. He explained that he would prefer to eliminate the Appendices if possible, given the size of the document. He stated that citations would be documented and reference links would be attached but a Bibliography was not necessarily needed. In response to a question by Chapman, Jensen replied that the goals and objectives would be incorporated into the first Chapter. In addition, Chapter 14 on implementation and phasing would be eliminated.

McFarland reported that in spite of the various iterations of the Master Plan, the document would be similar in length to the original Plan. He summarized other changes, such as the combining of Chapters 1 and 2 and the incorporation of the Cascade Foothills into the chapter on Regional Trails. Flora and Fauna were also combined, and the historical references inserted into the appropriate chapter or chapters. The title page would be simplified and the Executive Summary would be shortened. Jensen added that the acknowledgements and partnerships would also be shortened.

Chapman recapped the agenda Items for the next regularly scheduled meeting, indicating that they would include a final review of the Executive Summary and the Central Bike Path.

There followed a brief discussion about maps, with Richards commenting that the maps would be similar to those displayed at the Open House with the possible addition of the Willow Wind property if appropriate.

McFarland added that photos were still needed. He reminded those present that each photo should contain the name of the member submitting the photo as well as the date the photo was taken. He recommended sending no more than three per chapter.

Chapman stated that in his opinion, the Master Plan should be completed by the end of June – or shortly thereafter.

Jensen proposed a meeting with the format editor who would be compiling the project, ensuring that narratives were in order and that all parties were in agreement.

V. UPCOMING MEETING DATE

June 15, 2018 @ The Grove, Otte-Peterson Room—1195 E. Main -10:00 a.m. [later changed to 9:00 a.m.]

VI. ADJOURNMENT – 11:30 a.m.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Manuel, Minute-Taker

These Minutes are not a verbatim record. The narrative has been condensed and paraphrased at times to reflect the discussions and decisions made. Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission Subcommittee meetings are digitally recorded; those recordings are available upon request.

Lithia Park Master Plan

Unfortunately, I will be out of town June 12-15. However, I have a strong vision of what a portion of Lithia Park should morph into over the next 25 years: bigger and better by inclusion of west side bike and hiking trails. The south end of the park can become a parking and information center for mountain biking and near city walking/hiking.

The following are my thoughts to improve Lithia Park by inclusion of city property and bike and hiking trails on the west side of Ashland Creek. The first is unrelated but is a quick and long over due fix.

First, fix the fountain. Don't spend millions of dollars to fix it, use local contractors to re-plaster and re tile (pool contractors). Doesn't have to be imported Italian tile, just fix it.

Second, plan big for the long term. The eastern side of the park has wonderful southern exposure of manzanita, ponderosa and oak woodland trails. The western side has the potential to have an incredible northern exposure of large Douglas fir and Ponderosa pine trails. We must connect either Ditch Road / TID trail or Hitt Rd trail to the upper quarry at the southern tip of Lithia Park. The preference would be the Ditch Road / TID trail because it would be significant less

elevation gain and would be assessable to more people. Several undeveloped Trails/old single-track roads exist through this area. The Ditch Road / TID trail crosses private lands and a city easement will have to be established to tie the trail. It is unfortunate the city missed the opportunity in the late 90's to guarantee trail access above Ashland Creek Dr. However, the city is now in possession of several key properties below "Fell on Knee Trail" and the continuation of the southern end of the TID trail above or across Winter Dr (above Ashland Creek Drive). A connecting loop from Upper Lithia Park to the existing Ditch Road / TID trail and back to the Park via Strawberry Dr or the city property along Piedmont Dr. will provide a "Best in Nation", small city hiking loop. It would be an incredible addition to Lithia Park and could be marketed to young and old visitors to our city. In fact, the quarry area could serve as a parking and information center of the trail systems. An overgrown trail runs northward above the Quarry and could be tied to the Ditch Road / TID trail.

I realize, that this is an old and contentious issue. However, Lithia Park with this connected trail system in 2030 or 2040 would be unique to this city. The term "eminent domain" is brought to mind. In the second half of the 1900's coastal cities in Hawaii, California and Oregon used the process to ensure coastal beach access through existing property lines. We in Oregon can see such access along some of our northern and central coast. Why not forest access.

Third. And maybe this is not so much a Lithia park issue as a city issue. I am getting tired of being run off my west side hiking trail by nearly out of control down hill mountain bikers. The east side has some clearly marked bike vs hiker trails. It is a free for all on the west side (ok not that bad, but it is deteriorating and by 2020 or 2025 it will be bad). Bikers are coming down off Black Diamond "Time Warp" (top Mt. Ashland) and ending up on Upper Hitt /Lower Hitt road, then "shortcutting" to Lithia Park parking via Hitt Rd/un named trail/Ditch Rd/Nature or Granite trail. (Nature is supposed to be closed to bikers but that is not working). This same group of bikers will access NW Ashland via Ditch Road (service road) but ride not on the dirt ditch road but ride on the small walking trail because "it's more technical". On the west side, it appears the more secluded "wilderness" type trails that are below 3600' (Fell on Knee, and others) are being discovered and added to the downhill express from Mt. Ashland for a last gasp of "Black Diamond" type runs. The city needs to develop a plan to accommodate world class mountain biking terrain and local and visitor "wilderness" seekers who hike these trails below 4000' and within easy reach of Lithia Park. Further the city needs to act now to ensure the Bike traffic today does not destroy the "wilderness" feel of these trails to future hikers. (See attached PDF).

Forth, what's happening now. With the completion of the Wonder trail this spring, I have noticed an increase in mountain bikes on the downhill direction (NW) of Fell on Knee trail. Fell on Knee trail is like the middle portion of Time Warp. It's tight, and steep in places and it has very steep side. There are no bail outs for hikers. This trail is easily accessible to up and down to hiking. It is spectacular and at less than 3600' is within reasonably walking (uphill climbing) distance to Lithia Park. Two similar trail to Fell on Knee are the unnamed downhill extension of Mystical Trail (Lower Mystical) tying into Hitt Road just above the quarry above the water tank at Strawberry and the un named trail from the hairpin turned on the paved section of Hitt road just below the water tank that crosses Acid Castle Rock trail and continues on down to the TID trail. Both of these un named trails are well established and "wilderness" quality. All three trails should be hiking only.

The uphill only direction of the Wonder trail should be continued uphill at its junction to Fell on Knee trail to where it meets Lower Hitt Road. No bikes should be allowed on the NW, downhill portion of Fell on Knee to Lower Hitt road trail. It is just not needed there are several different routes down. (Upper Hitt Road, Mystical, and Moai).

I can go on about hiking only trails below 3600', but it is up to the city to study the issue of dual use trails. As a frequent hiker on the west side I can only point out that downhill, high speed mountain bikes and dry decomposed granite are

very dangerous to hikers when steep sides limit quick bail out options. (Not to mention poison oak in the bail out areas). Biker's downhill stopping distances put the hiker at risk.

Include are a few photos as examples are what has happened to the walking trail to Acid Castle Rocks and the un named turn off to "Ditch Road" trail over the last 18 months. These trails are going to deteriorate over the next 10 years. They need to have there "wilderness" feel preserved for the future.

Respectively, homeowner and Ashland Resident, hiker/walker,

As a final post script, I have nothing against mountain bikes sharing most trails with me at this time. However, as part of a Lithia Park master plan looking out 20 or 30 years, it will become a city and park issue. The recently constructed Wonder trail will introduce more bikes to the lower west side/Hitt road area. I truly understand that most of the trail users are biker. And much of the maintained of the trails is undertaken by bikers. However, I what to ensure that hikers and the trail "wilderness" feel are considered when an uphill bike trail intersects a near to city trail. I do not know what to say regarding the dirt Ditch road and existing TID trail. There are more fast bikes riding the lower "more technical" trail (between Strawberry and Grandview). More than half of that distance is owned by the city. The other portion is private property that the TID has a 15' easement across. The city (dominate land owner) should end bike access to the lower trail. The road above and the southern extension of the TID to the south should continue to be dual bikes and hiking.

**Acid Castle Rock Trail
From Hitt Rd parking**



Two or three of these cuts have just been developed this year on the short trail to Acid Castle Rocks from the Hitt road parking area. All appear to be down hill formed by the bikers not making the right hand turn shown on the photo to the right



Main traffic flow of high speed bikes coming down upper/lower Hitt Road

Un named trail connects to TID
trail shown on right photo on
previous slide



This is the steep rock section that attracts bikes to this trail. Of all the bikes I have seen on the trail I have only seen 2 or 3 bikes "take" this section. Most people walk it....
After about two years of bikes using this trail there is a clear start of a single breaking grove above the rocks it is only going to get worst



There are two shoulder cuts on the trail, this is the lower cut and has been here for about two years. The second is up hill of the rocks shown on the left slide and was formed last fall.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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 and Trails Association (AWTA) in 2001. The AWTA envisioned a trail system built around a trio of west to east main trails with lateral connections to key civic areas and upland forestlands. In 2006, the AWTA and the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission (APRC) authored a Trails Master Plan (TMP) as an essential component to the city's Open Space Plan. 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 2018 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 2018 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 and noticed meetings. 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 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 Department 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 component in the planning of all applicable future building, roadway, and infrastructure projects. The trail enhancement opportunities identified in the 2018 TMP should be given full and intentional consideration by City planning staff from initial planning to project 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 *Safe Routes to School* cooperative planning and design. The 2018 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 2018 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. In addition, the 2018 TMP will provide a source of information that may be used to assist the community in the evaluation of local land use decisions.

Chapter 8

THE CENTRAL BIKE PATH CORRIDOR

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The Central Bike Path corridor is a northwest to southeast route through the center of Ashland that runs approximately 5 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, Central Bike Path. For almost its entire length, the Central Bike Path corridor runs parallel to the Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad tracks. The existing multi-use trail serves as a key *Safe Route to Schools* 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 Bike Path will extend from Tolman Creek Road, again parallel to the railroad, to Crowson Road. A potential long-term regional goal is to continue the route, possibly following the railroad tracks, as far south as Siskiyou Pass or even the California border. (This is not mentioned anywhere else...a realistic part of this TMP?)

LINKAGES

When completed, the Central Bike Path will 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 Municipal campus on East Main Street, the SOU and Ashland High School sports stadiums, and the ScienceWorks Hands-on Museum.

Important future linkages include expanded *Safe Route to Schools* from as far away as Crowson Road, Jackson Road and the Normal Street Neighborhood. A safe pedestrian crossing is needed at Oak Street which continues to be a problematic intersection for both motorized, bike and pedestrian traffic.

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 is and 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.

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.