



City Administrator's Report

Adam Hanks, Interim City Administrator

AUGUST 4, 2020

The City Administrator's Report showcases current events facing the City externally and internally since the last Council meeting, while highlighting City accomplishments.

ZERO EMISSION VEHICLE INNOVATION (ZEVI) GRANT

City of Ashland will receive \$50,000 in funding from Bonneville Environmental Foundation (BEF) to implement the 'Empower 2020' project; \$15,000 to pilot the e-bike incentive and \$35,000 to use as booster funds for a new electric vehicle (EV) incentive funded by clean fuel revenue.

Ashland Electric's 'Empower2020' project creates utility incentives to increase equitable access to zero emission vehicles in Ashland, Oregon. This project is important and innovative because it focuses on affordable electric vehicles and e-bikes, which are more attainable for utility customers.

Ashland has successfully implemented several previous electric vehicle incentive programs. However, there are still segments of our community that have not been able to realize the benefits of zero-emission transportation. Ashland Electric seeks to promote additional ZEV adoption among these customers.

BPA CONTRACT PROCESS

Bonneville Power Administration, the City Electric Utility's wholesale power provider, recently released an initial process timeline/flowchart for the development of the new wholesale power purchase contracts that will replace the existing contracts it has with the over 140 public utilities in the Northwest. The flowchart can be found at the end of this report.

The City's Electric Utilities Director, Tom Mc Bartlett, has already been involved in the very early stages of this process and will continue to represent the City as the process moves forward. This is a significant issue for the City and staff will provide regular updates at key stakeholder input and deliberation points along the way. Final contract documents are scheduled to be available for review and decision making will occur in mid to late 2025.

PLAZA CLOSURES UPDATES

While the recent Plaza closure for expanded outdoor dining and shopping opportunities has had some successes, City staff has been working with the Chamber of Commerce to communicate with individual businesses both on the Plaza and in the downtown area in general that have felt negatively impacted by the weekend closures.

Simultaneously, the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission and its staff have been working with the users of Calle Guanajuato to expand the availability of restaurant use. The Commission approved the relocation of the Lithia Artisans Market to the area in the front of Lithia Park to help accommodate the expanded restaurant use. The Commission also waived the fees for the use of the Calle for this season, which has also been a tremendous benefit to all Calle users.

This has culminated in changes proposed to the Plaza closure to address the following issues:

- Vehicle access through the Plaza;
- Restoration of 15 to 20 parking spaces;
- Re-distribution of space allocation taking into account the newly available Calle space;
- Improved equity between the Plaza and the rest of downtown;
- Improved consistency of operations both on the Plaza and the Calle; and
- Ability for this configuration to extend into the fall.

ASHLAND CITY BAND ENCORE SERIES

After a suggestion from a member of the public, RVTV will broadcast eight performances from the Ashland City Band's 2018 and 2019 seasons on Thursdays from 7 to 8 p.m. starting August 6, 2020. Traditionally, the City Band performs a free concert every summer on Thursday evenings at the Butler Bandshell. However, this year's concerts were cancelled over concern of spreading COVID-19.

Tune in to watch the concerts on Thursdays at 7 p.m. on local channel 9 or channels 180 or 181 for Charter Communications customers. Those without television can live stream the concerts at rvtv.sou.edu by selecting channel RVTV Prime.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Housing Program – Fair Housing

Community Development staff has completed an Analysis of Impediments (AI); a process that grant recipients from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) undertake as part of their obligation to affirmatively further fair housing (AFFH) under the Fair Housing Act.

The updated AI allows City staff to determine what types of impediments to fair housing choice, since the last AI in 2008, continue to exist, or if any new impediments have developed within the City of Ashland. Impediments may include actions, omissions, or decisions taken with the intent of, or effect of, restricting availability of housing choices for members of any of the federally protected classes (race, color, religion, gender, disability, familial status, and national origin), or the statewide protected classes (marital status, source of income and sexual orientation, including gender identity and survivors of domestic violence), and lastly, the jurisdictionally protected classes (age, and domestic partnership).

[The completed AI is located here.](#)

Land Use Approvals – Noteworthy

The residential subdivision situated between Otis, Randy and VanSant streets received final planning approval in July. Referred to as the West Village Subdivision, the site is approximately six acres in size, representing one of the few remaining, larger vacant residential properties on the west side of Ashland and is commonly referred to as the Cowan property after the previous property owners.

The subdivision includes 22 single-family homes and two larger parcels identified for future cottage housing development. The subdivision will connect Randy and Otis streets through the property to VanSant in the adjacent Billings Ranch Subdivision. Construction on the streets and utilities is slated to begin soon.



SMALL BUSINESS GRANTS

This week the City has sent out checks for the State of Oregon COVID-19 Emergency Business Grant program. The program awarded a total of \$97,500 to 36 Ashland small businesses and non-profits. Of these awardees 56 percent were sole proprietors and 100 percent had either zero (nonprofits with volunteers) to five employees.

While our program has ended there are still options for Ashland and Jackson County businesses. SOREDI is facilitating the Jackson County Emergency Small Business Grant program with details at soredi.org/home/coronavirus-resources/jacksoncomatching/. This program has \$145,000 available and will be distributed on a first come first serve basis until grant funds are exhausted.

TOT AND FOOD AND BEVERAGE COLLECTIONS

The extended due date for both the 3rd (Jan-March) and 4th (April-June) quarterly Lodging and Meals taxes was August 1st. Finance staff is processing the payments as they are submitted.

A revenue comparison between projected shortfall and actual will be a part of the staff presentation to Council on September 15 as part of an overall financial update.

LOOKING AHEAD

This is a draft of the next Council meetings agenda and is subject to change.

August 18—Business Meeting

- Land Use Appeal of 210 Alicia Avenue
- One Year Review Ordinance 3176
- BEF ZEV Grant Acceptance
- Award of Tourism Grants
- Update on Pioneer Hall and the Community Center

For the full look ahead and more details on the above items, go to ashland.or.us/lookahead.



Timeline for Post-2028 Power Policy, Rates, and Contracts

