

06.20.06

Design Draft of Trails Master Plan Document

ASHLAND, OR — PARKS & TRAILS
master plan document





RICH VANDERWYST, ASHLAND RESIDENT AND AWTA (ASHLAND WOODLANDS AND TRAILS ASSOCIATION) BOARD MEMBER USES A MCLEOD TO PERFORM TRAIL RECONSTRUCTION IN LOWER SISKIYOU MOUNTAIN PARK ON AN AWTA TRAILS WORKDAY WITH THE PARKS DEPARTMENT.

PREFACE

A Cooperative Effort

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A COOPERATIVE EFFORT BY:

City of Ashland

Trails Master Plan Committee

Parks & Recreation Department

Community Development Department

Public Works Department

National Park Service (Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program)

Ashland Woodlands and Trails Association

David R. Lewis, Consultant and Writer

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PREFACE

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PREFACE

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TRAILS MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE

Scott Kurtz, Chair and Ashland Woodlands and Trails Association board member
Diane Amarotico, Ashland Parks and Recreation Commissioner
Jim Lewis, Ashland Parks and Recreation Commissioner
Chris Hearn, past City Council member
Kim Marie Murphy, member of the public
Bob Altaras, member of the public
Jim McGinnis, member of the public
David Chapman, City Council liaison

CITY OF ASHLAND STAFF

Don Robertson, Director, Ashland Parks and Recreation
Susan Dyssegard, Ashland Parks and Recreation
Jeff McFarland, Ashland Parks and Recreation
John McLaughlin, Community Development Director
Paula Brown, Public Works Director
Rich Hall, former employee of the City of Ashland Engineering mapping
Jim Olson, City Surveyor
Geographic Information Systems Department

LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Ashland Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission
Ashland School District
Ashland Woodlands and Trails Association (Rich Vanderwyst, Rob Cain, Pres.)
Southern Oregon Mountain Bike Association (SOMBA)
Bear Creek Greenway Foundation
Bureau of Land Management
Southern Oregon Land Conservancy
Southern Oregon University
Talent Irrigation District
USDA Forest Service

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

National Park Service
Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program
Alexandra Stone, Community Planner

A TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANT WAS RECEIVED FROM THE NPS RTCA PROGRAM BY ASHLAND WOODLANDS AND TRAILS ASSOCIATION AND THE ASHLAND PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT FOR THIS PROJECT.

David R. Lewis, Landscape Architect, Portland, Oregon

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PREFACE

Executive Summary Trails Master Plan

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BACKGROUND

With the acquisition of Lithia Park in 1908, Ashland citizens implemented a vision to protect scenic landscapes and give residents and visitors access to many of the area's natural features. Since then 758 acres of land have been preserved as neighborhood parks, playing fields, open spaces, and natural areas. In 1989 Ashland voters approved a prepared food and beverage tax, the only such tax in Oregon, with 20% of the revenues designated to purchase land for parks in conjunction with the previously adopted Open Space Plan. The tax sunsets in 2010, and most of the income projected from the tax has been committed. In 2002 the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission conducted community forums to invite suggestions to update the Open Space Plan. Many participants voiced their desire for a system of connected trails within the city and beyond.

Aware of development pressures and other challenges threatening trails, a group of citizens formed the Ashland Woodlands and Trails Association (AWTA) in 2001. AWTA envisioned a trail system encircling Ashland and connecting key areas. In 2002 the group received a National Park Service (NPS) Technical Assistance Grant to help prepare a comprehensive Trails Master Plan (TMP). Collaboration with the NPS and the City of Ashland helped create visibility for AWTA's vision and build credibility for the effort. Together, AWTA and the City built or reconstructed ten miles of trails, received grants for new trails totaling \$61,000, and printed the first map of Ashland's trails and urban pathways. AWTA and Parks have made a joint request to NPS for continued assistance to complement commitments from the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission and Department of Community Development to develop a TMP.

BENEFITS OF TRAILS

Nationwide, trails are consistently one of the most requested public projects. An early expression of the benefits of a planned trail system in Ashland came via the 1966 "Regional Park Plan." It was felt that, with a system of safe interconnected trails, residents would more often choose to walk or bike to work, school, and other destinations.

WHY TRAILS AND GREENWAYS ARE GOOD FOR YOUR COMMUNITY

1. Alternative transportation to relieve congestion
2. Improve recreational opportunities
3. Improve health through exercise and lower health care costs
4. Reduce stress
5. Provide stream buffers and protect water quality
6. Preserve wildlife travel corridors
7. Increase property values
8. Increase economic viability and business opportunities
9. Reduce air pollution
10. Provide natural classrooms for children
11. Can be utilized by those of all ages, physical abilities, and economic standing
12. Create safe, livable communities
13. Establish a sense of place and trust in each other and provide a great place to meet your neighbors

OVERVIEW

A Trails Master Plan (TMP) is essential for accomplishing the community trails vision, which is to provide Ashland with “a diverse network of trails that connects downtown, schools, neighborhoods, and surrounding areas.” The TMP will identify key parcels and corridors for purchase or easements, prioritize acquisition and funding, and inform meaningful public involvement. This plan has been developed from a public process conducted throughout Ashland and, therefore, reflects local desires and concerns.

It addresses, principally, Ashland’s off-road trail system, which, together with Ashland’s bicycle and pedestrian program, creates a network of non-motorized routes. Additionally, it contains recommendations for improvements to expand the existing trail system, fill in gaps, and connect neighborhoods, business districts, parks, schools, public facilities, and environmental features. The TMP should be seen as a dynamic document that will evolve over time.

One of the plan’s key goals is to create a grid of trails that unifies the urbanized area and reaches outward to the Cascades and other open spaces. Since trails will be developed to a level appropriate to their surroundings, not all trails will be open for all uses. Trail use may include, but is not limited to, those walking or running, and those on bicycles, non-motorized scooters, roller skates, in-line skates, other wheeled devices such as Segways, or electric-assist bicycles, wheelchairs, and horseback riders.

PREFACE

Executive Summary Trails Master Plan

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CHAPTER 01

Trails Master Plan Process

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ESTABLISHMENT OF A TRAILS MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE

The Trails Master Plan (TMP) Committee was formed in December 2003, at the Ashland Woodlands and Trails Association's (AWTA) suggestion, and was formally recognized by the City Council. The AWTA pointed out, and the Parks and Recreation Commission agreed, that a TMP was the missing component to the city's Open Space Plan, which had been adopted by the City Council in 2002.

At preliminary organizational meetings, it was decided there would be seven voting members representing the Parks and Recreation Commission (2), City Council (1), AWTA Board (2), and the public (2). In addition, the city agreed it would provide staff support from the Parks and Recreation, Planning, and Engineering departments. Advertisements for citizen members were run once a week for four weeks (December 4, 2003 – January 2, 2004).

MISSION

The committee finalized its mission in January of 2004:

- Describe a system of trails for pedestrians and non-motorized vehicles on public lands and privately granted easements;
- Increase trail connectivity between Ashland's neighborhoods and its varied environments, including downtown, commercial, educational, and surrounding rural areas;
- Enhance Ashland's quality of life through improved recreation, health, and transportation opportunities;
- Establish appropriate trail standards based on approved uses, site opportunities, and constraints

In addition, the committee outlined a twelve-month work plan and created four subcommittees that would do the work necessary to fulfill its mission. The four subcommittees were: Vision, Mapping, Document Development, and Public Process.

RICHARD HENDRICKSON AND OTHER VOLUNTEERS FROM AWTA AND THE COMMUNITY JOINED FORCES WITH THE PARKS DEPARTMENT'S FORESTRY-TRAILS DIVISION TO COMPLETE THE NORTH MOUNTAIN BRIDGE SPANNING ACROSS BEACH CREEK. AWTA PARTNERED WITH THE PARKS DEPARTMENT TO RECEIVE A \$16,000 GRANT FROM THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE TO COMPLETE THIS IMPORTANT TRAIL CONNECTION FROM MOUNTAIN AVENUE TO ASHLAND VILLAGE.

Trails Master Plan Process



VISION

The Ashland Trails vision was developed by the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission and reflects the tenor of Ashland citizenry, Ashland Parks and Recreation Commissioners, and city personnel:

Vision — A diverse network of trails that connects downtown, schools, neighborhoods, and surrounding areas.

Building on public input from community workshops and neighborhood forums, the Vision Subcommittee identified supporting goals and objectives.

The resulting goals are:

- Transportation
- Trail Access and Connectivity
- Mitigating Concerns
- Planning for Trails
- Trail Management
- Partners and Collaborators

See Chapter 2 — Vision for the associated objectives of each goal, and Chapter 14 for implementation recommendations.

These goals parallel those of the State of Oregon as delineated in the 2005-2014 Oregon Statewide Non-motorized Trails Plan.

MAPPING

The Mapping Subcommittee began its work by researching and mapping undeveloped street right-of-ways, public access easements, and “existing use” trails within city limits. It identified three major lateral trails that connect Ashland from northwest to southeast:

- 1) Bear Creek Greenway
- 2) Central Bike Path
- 3) Talent Irrigation District Ditch Road or trail

The subcommittee used the city’s adopted Open Space map as the base and overlaid their research for a combined map. By doing so, it made a gap analysis and identified missing trail sections. It was visually apparent that while it was easy to get through town on the major lateral trails, it was challenging to cross between the laterals and travel up- or down-slope. The committee felt that the creek corridors offered unique connections to the three parallel main trails, and mapped 600-foot-wide corridors for possible trail routes that generally follow major creeks. The five corridors are:

- 1) Wrights Creek
- 2) Ashland Creek
- 3) Roca Creek
- 4) Hamilton and Clay Creeks
- 5) Tolman Creek

In addition, the group identified a need for regional connections outside the city limits, including to the Grizzly Peak Trail, Emigrant Lake Trail, and trails within the Bear Creek Watershed. The resulting Trail Connectivity Map was presented at the public workshop and neighborhood forums, and then posted for additional public review and comment, for six weeks in four locations throughout the city (Ashland Public Library, YMCA, the City's Community Development Building, and the Parks and Recreation office in upper Lithia Park).

DOCUMENT DEVELOPMENT

The Document Subcommittee solicited help from community experts to write the plan's contextual chapters covering Ashland trail history, flora and fauna, watershed issues, trail maintenance, standards and specifications, trail use policies, and partnerships. After a series of committee reviews, suggested changes were completed in August 2005.

Following the public workshop and neighborhood forums, the committee and staff hired a writing consultant to organize the collected data into chapters for the completed plan. The draft Ashland Trails Master Plan was presented to the public for comment on December 1, 2005. The final draft will be presented to the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission and the Ashland City Council for adoption and will be referenced in the city's Comprehensive Plan.

PUBLIC PROCESS

The Public Process Subcommittee started by reviewing the results of the trails survey conducted by AWTa between June and September 2003. The survey, consisting of seven questions about trail use, activities, and concerns, was posted on the City of Ashland Web site and publicized through the local press. It garnered 139 citizen responses (representing 1% of the community) and highlighted such issues as the importance of opening the entire TID ditch for trail use and proper disposal of pet waste on the trails. In addition, the committee inserted the survey into Ashland trail maps [sold at local retail outlets] and distributed the survey at the June workshop.

Several public meetings were held where residents were asked to comment on the current status and future desires for a city trail system. The TMP Committee held its first public meeting in June 2004 to unveil the draft concept map and receive feedback from the community. Subsequently, neighborhood forums were held to discuss individual creek corridors in greater detail: September 13th focused on the Wrights Creek corridor; October 11th on the Clay, Hamilton, and Tolman Creek corridors; and December 6th for the corridors along Roca and Ashland Creeks. Comments from the meetings were compiled and sorted by common goals, from which the Vision Subcommittee generated goals and objectives for the final trails plan.

CHAPTER 01

Trails Master Plan Process

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Trails Master Plan Process



SYNTHESIS OF COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Residents who attended the public meetings expressed the following major ideas and concerns regarding trails:

- 1) Pet issues: primarily dogs being unleashed and dog waste being left along trails
- 2) Impingement of trail traffic on nearby homeowners' privacy via heavy use, noise, and trespassing
- 3) Negative impact on wildlife and wildlife habitat within trail corridors
- 4) Trash left by trail users
- 5) Tied with # 1 above, dog refuse stations were requested
- 6) Interest in a citizen-based trails supervisory program to ensure proper trail use

RESPONSES TO COMMUNITY FEEDBACK (listing of 4-6 main themes of responses)

The above concerns were addressed as part of the TMP process in the goals, objectives, and within each chapter.

COORDINATION WITH OTHER PLANS

In developing the TMP, the following plans, guidelines, and handbooks were consulted:

- Ashland Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Element, December 17, 1996.
- Ashland Parks, Trails, and Open Space Program 2002 - 2012, July 24, 2003.
- Bear Creek Greenway Plan: Management and Policies Guidelines, adopted by Jackson County Board of Commissioners, July 1982.
- Oregon Statewide Trails Plan: Bear Creek Valley Regional Problem Solving Phase I Status Report, Rogue Valley Council of Governments, 2001.
- 2005-2014 Oregon Statewide Non-motorized Trails Plan

GEOLOGY

Ashland is located in the eastern foothills of the Siskiyou Mountains on the south side of the Bear Creek Valley. The Cascade Mountains lie to the east on the opposite side of the valley. Thus, the geologic history of Ashland is the story of two mountain ranges, both of which are major players in the geologic history of Oregon. These mountains have been eroding for eons, depositing huge quantities of clay, silt, sand, pebbles, and cobbles into low-lying valleys at their base.

The result of this erosion and deposition is two formations of sedimentary rock. The older was deposited 90 million years ago and consists of sandstone and shale containing many fossils. This formation is visible in the channel of Bear Creek during times of low flow. The younger formation, deposited 40-50 million years ago, is mostly conglomerate and sandstone. It is characterized by smooth, well rounded stones of quartzite. This formation begins east of Bear Creek and includes Pompadour Bluff.

About 23 million years ago Grizzly Peak was an erupting volcano that built up into a mountain. The peak we see today (~4,500 feet) is only a remnant of the original mountain, which may have rivaled Mt. McLoughlin (~10,000 feet) in size and shape.

FAUNA

More than 200 species of birds have been observed in the Rogue Valley and its surrounding mountains in recent years. Many of these species are permanent residents, while others migrate through the valley on a seasonal basis and others sporadically drop in. The valley and nearby hills contain a rich variety of habitats for encountering birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians. Many of these animals can be seen from existing trails and in areas proposed for future trails. Bear Creek Greenway, Talent Irrigation Ditch, Emigrant Lake, Grizzly Peak, and all the creek corridors identified in this plan are significant habitats and great areas for sighting wildlife.

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Trails Master Plan Process

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CHAPTER 02

Trails Master Plan Vision, Goals, and Objectives

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VISION

A diverse network of trails that connects downtown, schools, neighborhoods, and surrounding areas.

OVERVIEW

The Ashland trails vision has associated goals that resulted from a compilation of public input. Each goal has a series of objectives that will support the successful implementation of the TMP. Collectively, the goals and objectives will define Ashland's present and future trail development and maintenance direction.

"Implementation and Phasing" (Chapter 14) adds recommendations to each goal that will be reviewed and approved by the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission and ultimately the Ashland City Council. Upon completion, each recommendation will be changed to "Action Completed."

Each objective will be tied to the city's performance measures (when established) to ensure the successful implementation of the TMP. Further, the Planning Department will flag relevant components of the planning regulations and permit processes to ensure that trail considerations are given full attention during the city's comprehensive planning process (Chapter 15).

KIDS ENJOY EXPLORING AND LEARNING ABOUT THE
ABUNDANT WILDLIFE AT NORTH MOUNTAIN PARK.

Trails Master Plan Vision, Goals, and Objectives



GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A. Transportation.

- Goal A: Trails are an inherent part of Ashland’s transportation system.
- Objective A1: Provide pedestrian and bicycle commuter routes throughout Ashland.
- Objective A2: Provide a diversity of trail types.
- Objective A3: Provide safe routes to schools.
- Objective A4: Provide linkages to municipal transit systems.

B. Trail Access & Connectivity.

- Goal B: A continuous network of trails that is easily identifiable and readily accessible.
- Objective B1: Provide trails that are readily accessible from all neighborhoods.
- Objective B2: Provide parking at major trailheads.
- Objective B3: Provide cross-town connectivity and links to trail systems in the surrounding public lands and communities.
- Objective B4: Provide connections to important community centers and environmental features.
- Objective B5: Provide trail access information at major bus stops.

C. Natural Environment and Citizens’ Rights.

- Goal C: Stewardship of the natural environment, and rights and concerns of citizens are addressed.
- Objective C1: Consider aquatic, plant, and wildlife habitat and needs when designing trail locations.
- Objective C2: Address the concerns of residents and property owners on or near trail corridors in planning, construction, and trail management.
- Objective C3: Create and promote a “trail etiquette” protocol.

D. Planning for Trails.

- Goal D: Trail planning is thoroughly integrated with city planning and vice versa.
- Objective D1: Determine mechanisms for funding land acquisition for trails and trail maintenance.
- Objective D2: Create planning guidelines for new trails in subdivisions and rezoned properties, including the creation of a system for flagging parcels of interest for trails.
- Objective D3: Create privacy guidelines for trails.
- Objective D4: Publish details of legal implications of trail right-of-way across private property, and legal implications of trespass on private land.

E. Trail Management.

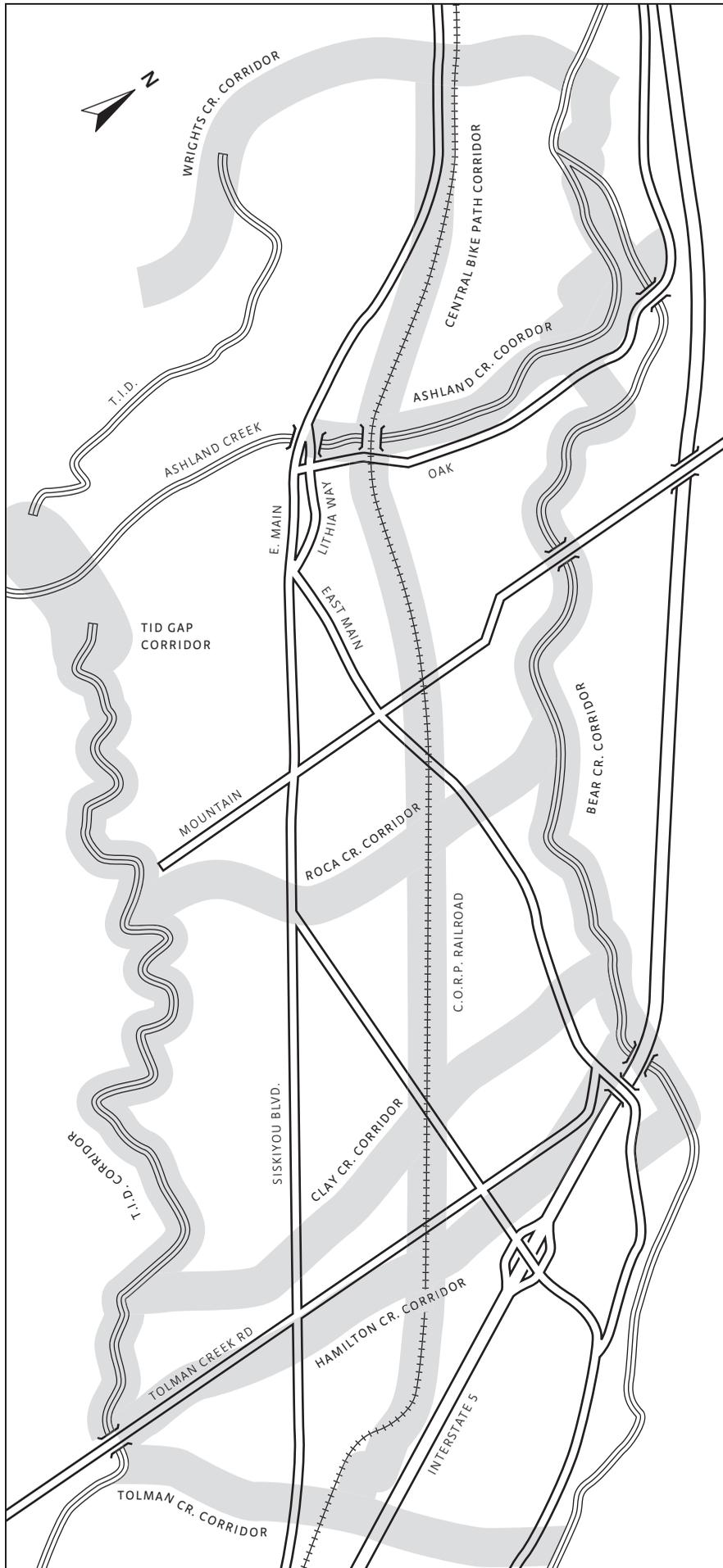
- Goal E: Trail management and maintenance is an integral part of city activities.
- Objective E1: Provide resources for trail maintenance and management.
- Objective E2: Continue development of trail maintenance safety and quality guidelines, including dog stations and receptacles (where appropriate).
- Objective E3: Adopt trail management guidelines.
- Objective E4: Create a “Trails Ambassadors” program of citizen volunteers to ensure implementation of guidelines.
- Objective E5: Ensure that trails are well marked throughout the city.

F. Partners and Collaborators.

- Goal F: The City of Ashland encourages and promotes collaborative partnerships regarding trails planning, implementation, management, and maintenance.
- Objective F1: Develop trail partnerships with Federal, State, and local jurisdictions, businesses, public and private schools, and citizens.

**Trails Master Plan
Vision, Goals, and
Objectives**





CHAPTER 03

Recommended Trail Routes – Maps and System

ASHLAND, OR — PARKS & TRAILS
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DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS BUTTERFLIES LIKE THIS TIGER SWALLOWTAIL PROVIDE BEAUTY AND INTEREST ALONG THE TRAILS. OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND TO SEE A VARIETY OF BUTTERFLIES AT PLACES LIKE THE NORTH MOUNTAIN PARK NATURE CENTER NEAR BEAR CREEK AND THE COMMUNITY GARDEN AREA ALONG THE ASHLAND CREEK CORRIDOR.

Recommended Trail Routes – Maps and System



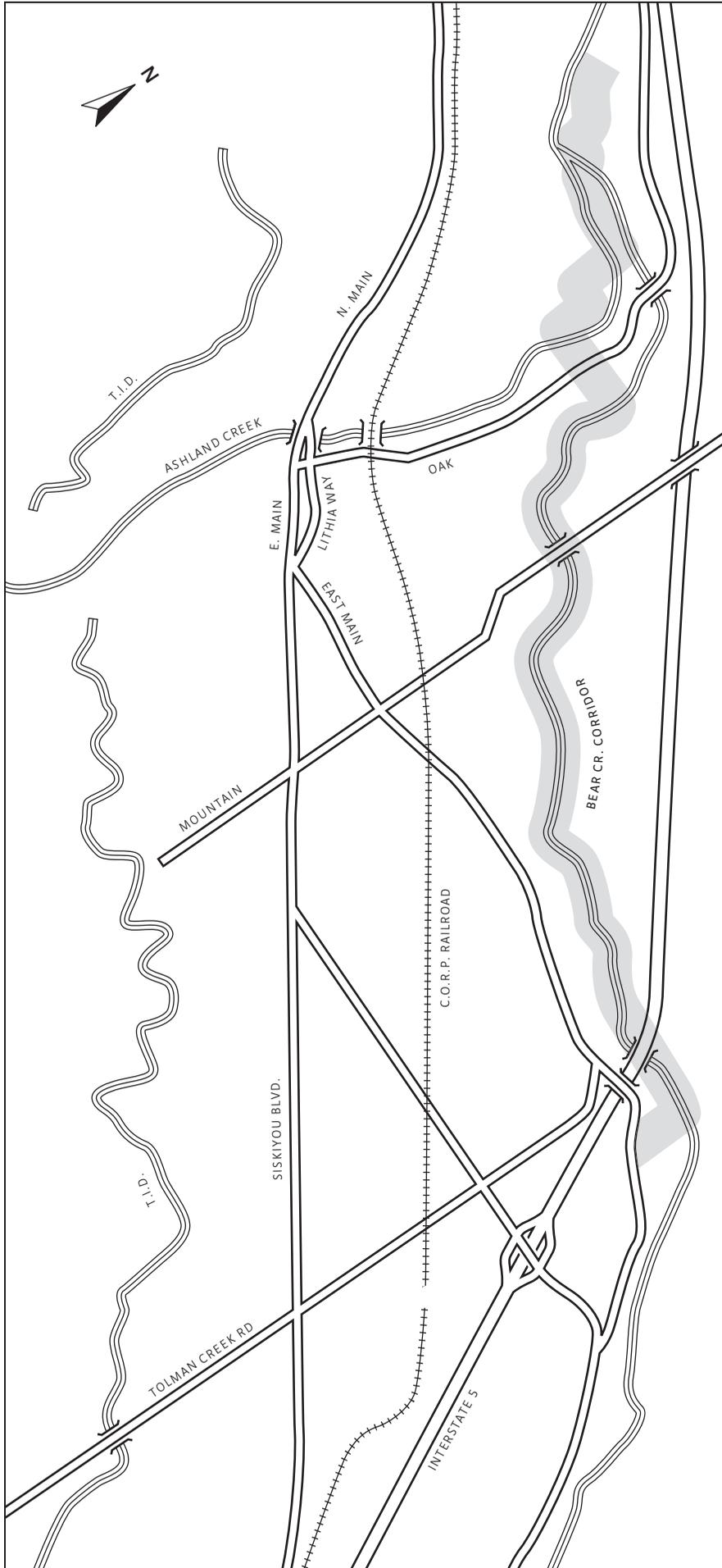
MASTER PLAN MAP

FRAMEWORK – Master Plan Map

Information is provided in Chapters 4-12. The following describes each of the ten proposed trails that will comprise the Ashland Trails System

1. A clear statement of the general alignment route end points, and approximate length in miles, including end points, all known locations, lengths in miles, street crossings, and bridges.
2. Linkages to facilities and junctions with other routes and trails and to adjacent facilities such as trailheads, schools, civic centers, parks, business centers, etc.
3. Character/setting, both natural and manmade elements that have a bearing on the trail.
4. Appropriate uses of each trail will be discussed in the “corridor discussion” section of each chapter.
5. Trail standards (e.g. width, surface type, etc.), including “design typicals” (typical cross-section of a trail), will be identified in Chapter 13.
6. Natural and cultural highlights of each corridor.

The specified width for paved, multi-use trails is six to ten feet. There are no specifications for urban or nature trails in the City Streets Standards Handbook. Urban trails are specified to be three to eight feet wide. Ashland Parks and Recreation uses the “USFS Trail Design Parameters” guidelines for nature trail assessment, survey and design, construction, repair, and maintenance based on the trail class and the trail’s designed use.



CHAPTER 04

Bear Creek
Greenway
Trail Corridor

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THIS SHRUB DWELLING SPIDER WITH SPINY LEGS
WAITS PATIENTLY ON A HONEYSUCKLE LEAF
ALONGSIDE A PATHWAY IN UPPER LITHIA PARK.
SPIDERS ARE BENEFICIAL FOR CONTROLLING POPU-
LATIONS OF PESTS LIKE FLIES AND MOSQUITOES,
AND SHOULD BE CONSERVED.

Bear Creek Greenway Trail Corridor



ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The Bear Creek Greenway is a nineteen-mile trail corridor that connects five cities and many park sites. It is considered by many to be the Rogue Valley's premier trail. The route begins near the Rogue River north of Central Point and extends through Ashland, following Bear Creek, an ancient travel route. Much of the paved trail is already completed northwest of Ashland. The Bear Creek Greenway has its own comprehensive planning document, which has been endorsed by the City of Ashland and is overseen by several agencies, including Jackson County and the Bear Creek Greenway Foundation, a private, non-profit organization. A trail guide has also been published.

Within Ashland, the trail runs predominately east-west and is yet to be built. Approximately two miles of the trail exist, while approximately three miles are proposed to extend the trail through Ashland to the southeastern edge of the Ashland Municipal Airport. Federal security standards have recently changed and may not allow development of the trail on the airport property, so alternative routes should be considered on the south side of Bear Creek or along East Hills Drive to East Main and around the airport. From here, the route could continue southeast, following Bear Creek, to the proposed Tolman Creek Trail and beyond. The route consistently follows the south side of Bear Creek. Near the confluence of Hamilton Creek and Bear Creek, the route will cross under Interstate 5. A future trail section is in the final planning stage to extend the existing trail east from the Ashland Dog Park.

Several of the parks along the route provide support facilities such as restrooms, parking, drinking water, picnicking areas, benches, and wildlife viewing areas. Some of these parks serve as trailheads. Additional trailheads and support facilities are needed within the city's corridor. Interpretive sites presently exist along the route and additional interpretation should be considered for any new trail sections. These sites help create a sense of connection to the land and its past.

LINKAGES

When completed, the Greenway Trail will connect with Wrights Creek Trail, Ashland Creek Trail, Roca Creek Trail, Clay and Hamilton Creek Trails, and Tolman Creek Trail. The trail will also connect to Helman and Oak Streets, which are designated bike routes. The route will cross and connect with North Mountain Avenue, an important route for travel north from Ashland toward Grizzly Peak. Access is currently limited. There are few existing streets and no completed connector trail segments that access the middle and eastern portions of the Greenway. In these areas, connections to the Greenway Trail may rely on the proposed trails mentioned if additional streets are constructed. In the future, the proposed trail alignment will connect from the existing Greenway to the ponds along the Greenway [often referred to as the “Ashland ponds”] to the Dog Park, North Mountain Park, the Willow Wind Learning Center property, and the airport. The alignment is in close proximity to Helman Elementary School, Ashland Middle / Walker Elementary School sites, and Southern Oregon University (SOU) property.

CHARACTER

The corridor’s character is largely natural wooded riparian vegetation, with many open views to the surrounding landscape. This includes large sections of riparian open space and varied scenery.

EXPECTED USERS

Users include bicyclists, pedestrians, runners, skaters, wheelchairs, and maintenance and emergency vehicles. Equestrian use is expected to be mainly outside the city limits to the northwest and southeast toward Emigrant Lake.

TYPICAL SECTION

The Greenway Trail is a multi-use asphalt trail of ten-foot width. Portions of the trail have an adjacent equestrian surface.

See chapter 13 for trail width standards.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

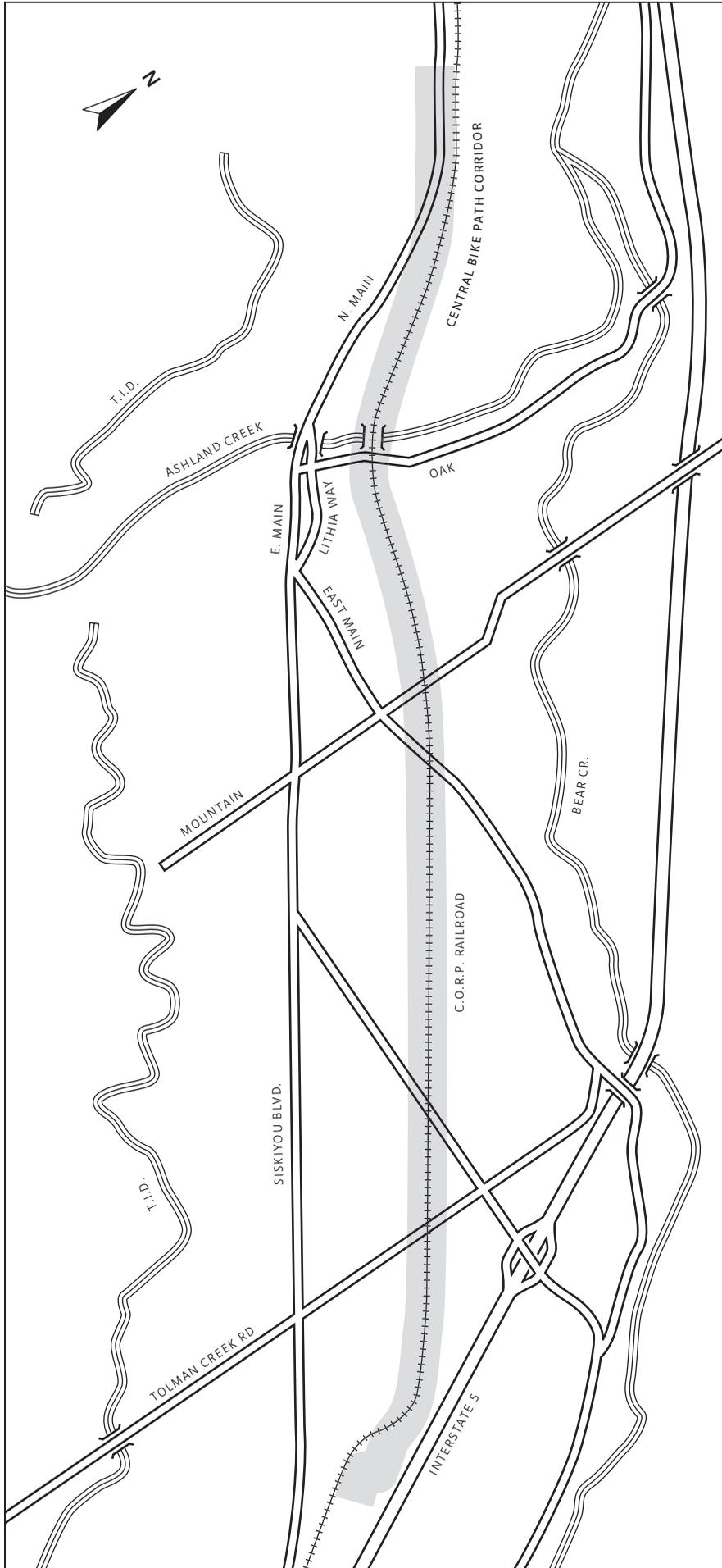
New settlers bestowed the name Bear Creek in the early 1850s due to several near-fatal encounters with grizzly bears along its banks. Ashland’s section of the Greenway includes some beautiful, if small, remnant groves of mature ponderosa pine and California black oak, a vegetation community that once characterized many portions of the Bear Creek valley’s floor.

CHAPTER 04

Bear Creek Greenway Trail Corridor

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CHAPTER 05

Central Bike
Path Corridor

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THE TRADITIONAL ROSE GARDEN IN LOWER LITHIA PARK IS A FAVORITE STOPPING POINT ALONG THE PATHS. IF ONE IS LUCKY, THEY MAY EVEN SEE A DOUBLE BLOSSOM ROSE.

Central Bike Path Corridor



ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The Central Bike Path (CBP) is a predominately east-west route, approximately five miles in length, that parallels the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks through the northern half of Ashland. The tracks are currently leased to a different, regional railroad company. Approximately three miles, the middle portion of the trail has been completed and is well used. The city proposes that approximately two miles are required to complete the route from the Wrights Creek corridor to the Tolman Creek corridor. At the northern end, an addition is planned to extend the trail to Oak Street. The route will eventually continue across Ashland Creek and northwest until it joins North Main Street near Wrights Creek. At the eastern end, the route will cross Tolman Creek Road and continue south-eastward possibly through the Croman Mill site. The trail would terminate at Siskiyou Boulevard and/or meet an existing section of the trail west of Tolman Creek, which connects to the Tolman Creek corridor. A potential long-term goal is to continue the route, possibly following the railroad tracks, as far south as Siskiyou Pass or even the California border.

LINKAGES

When completed, the CBP will connect with Wrights Creek Trail, Ashland Creek Trail, Roca Creek Trail, Clay Creek and Hamilton Creek Trails, and Tolman Creek Trail. The trail will also connect to several streets with bike lanes, such as Hersey, Main, and Ashland Streets. It currently accesses Ashland Middle School and Walker Elementary School, SOU student housing, and Garfield and Railroad Parks, and connects the Ashland Street shopping district near Interstate 5 with the downtown shopping area via the railroad district. The trail is in close proximity to the Municipal Complex, SOU, and Ashland High School stadiums, and ScienceWorks Hands-on Museum.

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 an important commuter and Safe Routes to School course.

EXPECTED USERS

Expected users consist of bicyclists, pedestrians, runners, families with strollers, skaters, equestrians, and maintenance and emergency vehicles.

Note: Equestrian users are expected to clean up after their animals.

TYPICAL TRAIL SECTION

The CBP is a multi-use trail with a ten-foot paved width asphalt surface.

See chapter 13 for trail width standards.

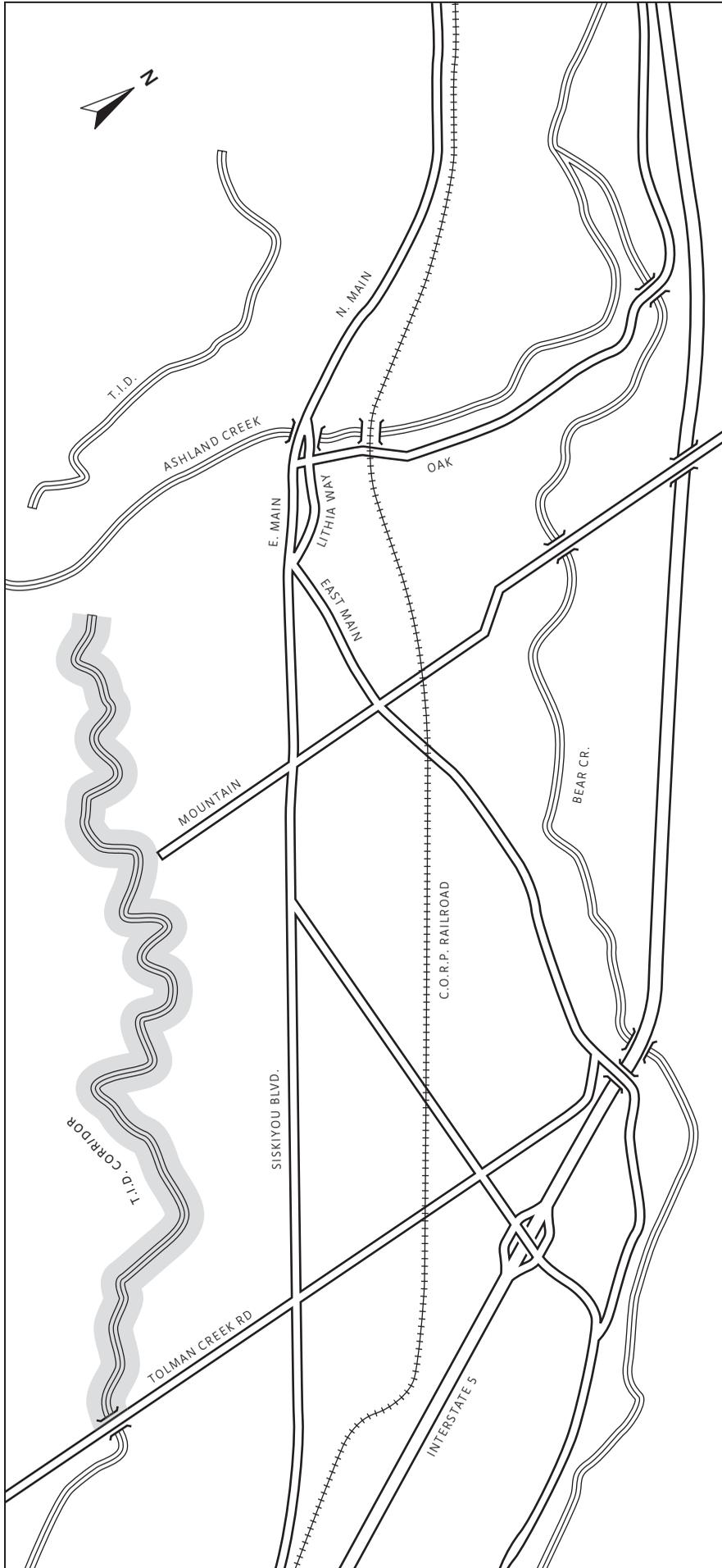
Cultural Highlight: The area is historically significant as it is the site where the golden railway spike was driven on December 17, 1887. This spike was placed where the CPB meets Railroad Park and marked the completion of the rail link between California and Oregon and the last link in the national rail system circling the country. This was a major event, attended by a large group of dignitaries. For many years this was the main north-south line in the far west and Ashland was a true “railroad town.” Things changed in the late 1920s, when most freight traffic switched to a shorter, easier route through Klamath Falls and Eugene.

CHAPTER 05

Central Bike Path Corridor

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master plan document





CHAPTER 06

TID Ditch
Trail Corridor

ASHLAND, OR — PARKS & TRAILS
master plan document



BEEES TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS VOLUNTEER
SUNFLOWER THAT SPRANG UP NEAR HUNTER PARK
ALONG THE CENTRAL ASHLAND BIKEPATH.

TID Ditch Trail Corridor



ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The Ashland Lateral of the Talent Irrigation District (TID), commonly called the TID ditch, begins east of Emigrant Lake Reservoir at a diversion near the Green Springs Power Plant on Emigrant Creek and ends near Oakwood Drive on the north end of Ashland. Taking a meandering path, its total length is about seventeen miles, of which nearly six are in close proximity to Ashland's urban area. In town, the trail predominately follows the southern border of the city limit. Approximately two miles of trail exist on public property or private property with public easements in place, while approximately four miles are proposed to complete a route from the Wrights Creek corridor to Tolman Creek Road. A possible logical extension of the trail would be to continue southeast following the canal's path all the way to Emigrant Lake.

A large part of the TID corridor is on, or closely borders, private property. Significant sections are also in public ownership. Because the ditch access was not originally intended as a public access corridor, property owner easements with the TID were only for canal maintenance. Pedestrian easements have been secured in some areas. At a few points, the trail route may need to leave the ditch alignment on an alternate route or, when an adequate trail corridor does not exist, be routed along city streets. One important gap to note in the trail is at the Ashland Creek crossing in Lithia Park. The ditch itself flows underground from Terrace Street through the park to above Granite Street south of Strawberry Lane and, therefore, the trail through this section does not exist. Alternate routes should be considered, and could include directing trail traffic from Terrace Street to Ashland Loop Road and Glenview Drive where it could connect to the Lithia Park trail system, up the granite quarry trail to the ditch trail again on the west side of Lithia Park. The segments in the immediate vicinity of Ashland generally run at or close to the urban-forest interface on the southern edge of Ashland, and roughly follow the 2,300-foot contour. The trail is generally flat to gently sloping.

The TID is a very important part of Ashland's recommended trail system as it provides a connection between many neighborhoods through otherwise difficult terrain. In fact, local residents have used the maintenance road along the north bank of the TID ditch as a recreational walking area since its construction. Many long-time residents of Ashland remember a time when you could walk the ditch from one end of town to the other. Current trail usage is significant and includes many pedestrians, including parents with strollers, runners, and occasional mountain bikers.

The TID trail corridor crosses several roads and streets. Most of these are residential streets and can be controlled with signage and pavement marking. All of these crossings represent potential points of access. Some or all of these crossings, depending on usage, may need improvements, such as crosswalks, signage, and curb cut ramps. Stream crossings include Tolman, Clay, Hamilton, Roca Canyon, and Ashland Creeks. Bridges may be needed in these areas.

LINKAGES

The trail can provide access to the following open spaces and trails: Oredson-Todd Woods, Siskiyou Mountain Park, Liberty Street connector, connector to Waterline Road, Cottle Property to Ashland Loop Road (2060), Lithia Park trail system, and Hald-Strawberry Park. At the west, Hald-Strawberry Park may be considered for the location of a trailhead.

Important community access points to the trail are—east-to-west—Tolman Creek Road, the Oredson-Todd trailhead on Lupine Drive, Clay Street, Park Street, Walker-Pinecrest Terrace, South Mountain-Elkader Streets, Morton Street, Terrace-Loop Road, Granite Street, Strawberry Lane, and Grandview Street, with connectivity to Hitt Road and Wrights Creek corridor. There are numerous other existing or possible neighborhood access points.

CHARACTER

The route runs predominately across an open wooded hillside, which provides commanding views of Ashland and its valley setting. Open areas offer excellent views of the Bear Creek Valley and the Cascade Range to the north and east. Many prominent local landmarks are also visible. The contrasting views of city below and relatively undeveloped slopes above give a sense of being on the edge of the city and wilderness. Wildlife sightings, footprints, and scat provide evidence that this is indeed the residential-wilderness interface.

While some sections of the TID are bordered by established yards or cleared areas, there are also large sections that are wooded and in a more natural state. Most water drainages are forested and thick with vegetation. The canopy of trees provides welcome shade in hot weather. The more open sections are often lined with blackberries. Many areas of the corridor provide good animal habitat. Deer, fox, and occasional bears are seen.

EXPECTED USERS

Primary use in all sections will likely be foot traffic. The wider sections may be appropriate for other uses, such as mountain bikes, parents with strollers, and possibly horseback riders. These wider sections may also allow driving access for maintenance vehicles. The Talent Irrigation District and the city currently maintain the ditch and access route.

TYPICAL TRAIL SECTION

Due to many existing opportunities and constraints, trail width and surface will likely vary. The objective is to construct a trail that will allow as close to multi-use as appropriate for the location. Fencing, screening, and buffer planting may need to be provided to separate the trail from adjacent development and to maintain privacy. (Bypass section of Pinecrest Terrace described in the Appendix.)

CHAPTER 06

TID Ditch Trail Corridor

ASHLAND, OR — PARKS & TRAILS
master plan document



TID Ditch Trail Corridor



At above-ground segments, the existing access road/trail surface is generally composed of compacted earth and rock, except when crossing paved roads or driveways. The width of the existing access varies from two to more than ten feet. Where wide enough, the route is often used by maintenance equipment and will likely need to remain unpaved because of the nature of ditch maintenance requirements. The earthen surface becomes muddy when wet and provides only seasonal use.

At underground segments where the ditch is piped, the existing surface is crushed rock, grass, or other cover and is generally wider. Some areas have been at least partially incorporated into residential yards. The underground segments may offer opportunities to add crushed rock or paving.

See chapter 13 for trail width standards.

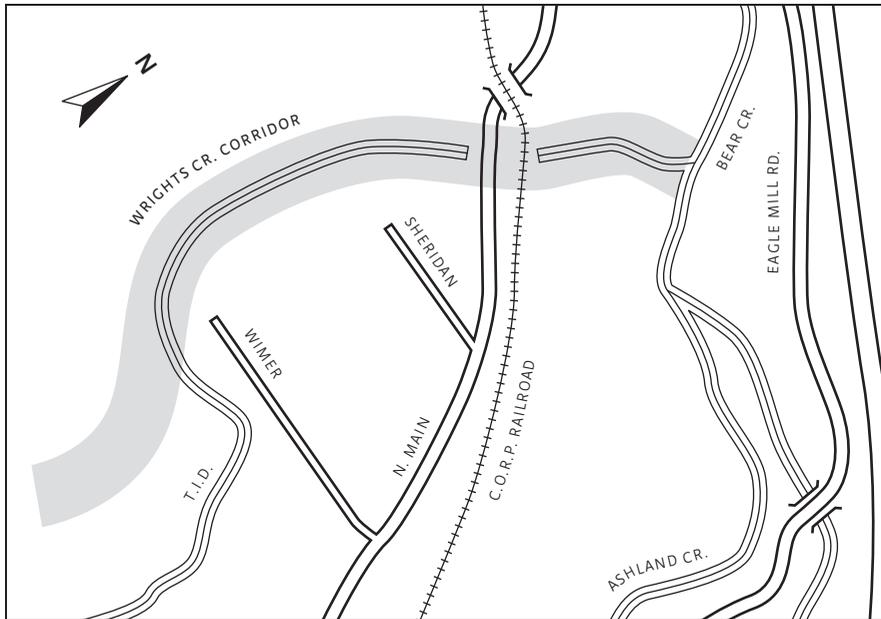
Pinecrest Terrace bypass:

There are TID closures at private properties traveling southeast from Emma Street near Elkader Street for approximately one-half mile, making it necessary for trail users to bypass the closure area by using streets. Trail users can make the connection by following Elkader Street uphill one-tenth mile to Pinecrest Terrace. Follow Pinecrest for 2/10ths mile to the intersection with Woodland Drive. Continue on Pinecrest for another one-tenth mile to a wooden foot-bridge below the road which enables trail users to link up with the TID Ditch Trail again along the open canal.

NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES:

Historically, the TID ditch represents an important part of the development of the area's fruit growing industry in the early twentieth century. The TID was part of the original Rogue Valley Project (1916) design and was initially constructed in the early 1920s to irrigate apple, pear, and peach orchards nearby. At the turn of the century, peaches from Ashland were known throughout the Pacific Coast and were marketed in the eastern states and Canada. Ashland produce took premiums at the Chicago World's Fair. The Ashland lateral in its present form was completed in the late 1950s.

The sound and sight of water running near the trail is a pleasant quality. Also see Character section above.



CHAPTER 07

Wrights Creek Trail Corridor

ASHLAND, OR — PARKS & TRAILS
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ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The Wrights Creek Trail Corridor is an approximately two-mile route along the northwestern edge of Ashland and loosely follows Wrights Creek. Due to steep slopes along the eastern side of the drainage and existing development, the trail may need to be placed predominately on the creek’s western side. It represents a crucial link to complete a ring of trails around the city.

At the northern end, the route will cross North Main Street and the Central Bike Path before it continues north to a junction with the Bear Creek Greenway. Future considerations for linking Wrights Creek trail through the Billings property [portion of the trail corridor located north of North Main Street and west of Cambridge Street] will need to be negotiated. Fox Street should be considered for use as the trail approaches North Main Street. Jackson Road should be considered as part of the trail both as a route north and west. The trail will need a bridge across Bear Creek to connect to the Greenway Trail.

At the southern end, the route could link several city park sites. A trailhead, possibly including parking and a restroom, should be considered for this area. A future ten-acre park site (Westwood) may be utilized for a trailhead. As the trail continues south, it should connect to Hitt and Bird Song Roads, Strags Peak, Ostrich Peak, and to the existing 2050 and 2060 US Forest Service Roads. Recreational users, hikers, and mountain cyclists currently use these roads that connect to trails within the forested part of the watershed and forest beyond. Another desire is to connect northwesterly to Talent, perhaps over Ashland Mine Road, Forest Service trails, and/or along the path of the TID. Aside from existing forest roads and Bird Song Trail, little of the trail currently exists. It is expected that in a few areas the trail may follow city streets or widened sidewalks for a few blocks.



IN THE MONTH OF MAY, BEAUTIFUL GOLDEN-TANGERINE COLORED CALIFORNIA POPPIES PUT ON A SHOW ALONGSIDE MANY OF THE TRAILS AND CAN BE SEEN ON EVERY OTHER BLOCK THROUGH TOWN.

Wrights Creek Trail Corridor



LINKAGES

The trail will connect with trails and roads to the south, several city park properties, the Central Bike Path, and the Bear Creek Greenway.

CHARACTER

The trail corridor is largely outside the city limits in unincorporated Jackson County, through an undeveloped wooded creek area. The corridor contains wildlife habitat and would likely be sensitive to certain types of development. The corridor has a more natural character at the north and south, while the central portion has some existing development.

EXPECTED USERS

The feasibility of constructing a trail and to what width needs further research. It is expected that trail users would initially be pedestrians, runners, and perhaps mountain cyclists. Mountain cycling is more appropriate at the southern end. Downhill cycling may prove to be an appropriate activity on some of the existing forest roads, if riders can be kept to these areas and safely share the trail with other users. The requirements of maintenance vehicles will need to be considered.

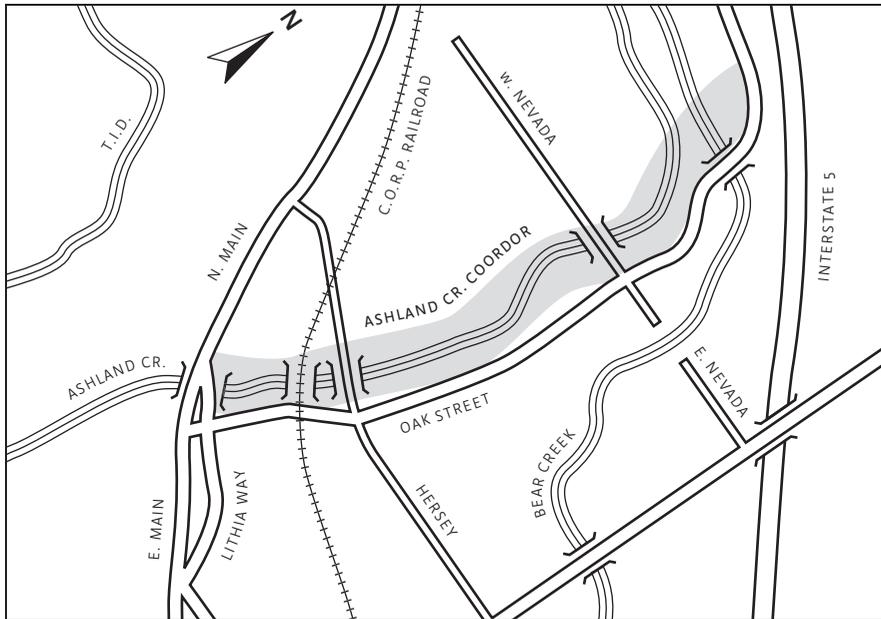
TYPICAL SECTION

The trail initially would be three feet wide with a crushed rock surface. A higher standard trail may be warranted in the future.

See chapter 13 for trail width standards.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

The long-closed Ashland Mine, a producer of gold during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, is situated in the upper reaches of the Wrights Creek drainage. Much of the area was burned in the 1959 Ashland Fire, which was ignited by youngsters playing with matches near Jackson Hot Springs. The fire spread upslope and to the southeast, reaching into the lower portions of the Ashland Creek Watershed.



CHAPTER 08

Ashland Creek Trail Corridor

ASHLAND, OR — PARKS & TRAILS
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ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The Ashland Creek Trail corridor is seen as the natural extension of the existing trails within Lithia Park and it would create a pedestrian route nearly three miles long. The corridor extends from upper Lithia Park on the south to the Bear Creek Greenway on the north. Approximately one-half of the trail currently exists. The corridor was part of the original Regional Greenway Plan of 1966, which was approved by voters in 1974 and reaffirmed in Ashland’s 1974 Comprehensive Plan. There are several existing city parks and other city properties and easements within the corridor that could be utilized for the trail alignment. Since the distance between Hersey and Nevada Streets is more than one-half mile, a connecting trail between Oak and Helman Streets is desired approximately midway. Safe crossings would need to be provided at North Main Street, Lithia Way, Hersey Street, and Nevada Street. Several existing signalized crossings could be utilized if they met city standards and were near the trail alignment. The railroad tracks, north of A Street, would be crossed at either Oak or Helman Street.

LINKAGES

The central area of the corridor includes Ashland’s civic and business center, including City Hall and the Chamber of Commerce. This area is also popular with tourists and is adjacent to the Oregon Shakespeare Festival grounds, Visitor Information Booth, and other tourist attractions and services. An important section of the trail corridor is located along the City of Ashland Water Treatment Plant access road. The existing Bicycle Technical Institute (BTI) Trail and other less developed trails terminate on the access road above the recently upgraded security gate. To remedy this conflict, and to make available a desirable stretch of the creek to the public, the Parks and Recreation Department will open a dialogue with the Public Works Department on the feasibility of moving the security gate back by approximately one-half mile.



GREG ALEXANDER, OF THE KLAMATH BIRD OBSERVATORY, HOLDS A SWAINSON’S THRUSH ON MIGRATORY BIRD DAY AT LOWER NORTH MOUNTAIN PARK. BIRDS ARE CAPTURED ALONG THE TRAIL AND LATER RELEASED AFTER THEY ARE Banded AND IMPORTANT DATA HAS BEEN COLLECTED. MIGRATORY BIRD DAY AT NORTH MOUNTAIN IS HELD ON THE SECOND SATURDAY IN MAY EACH YEAR.

Ashland Creek Trail Corridor



The route passes through or near several city parks, including the Skate/BMX Bike Park (a new seven-acre park site north of Hersey Street), Oak Meadows Park, the Dog Park, and the Ashland Ponds (near the Bear Creek Greenway). The former Briscoe Elementary School and playground are within close proximity to the corridor. Helman School and playground are located on the west edge of the corridor. The trail could provide a safe route for students to walk or bicycle to these schools and playgrounds. The trail would also provide easy access to the Plaza and Calle Guanajuato. North-south bike routes within the corridor are Oak and Helman Streets, and east-west bike routes are Lithia Way, Hersey Street, and Nevada Street. Nevada Street may eventually provide access to the Bear Creek Greenway.

The Creek to Crest Trail is also located within this corridor. Until this corridor is developed, users may reroute to the Creek to Crest Trail. A trailhead at the top of Granite Street could provide a point of entry for equestrians to Forest Service Road 2050. A trail access point should be considered at the park site north of Hersey Street. As an alternative, the Dog Park or Skate/BMX Bike Park may be expanded to serve as a trailhead.

CHARACTER

The route is characterized by groomed parks and public woodlands to the south, urban development in the central area, and open riparian woodlands and residential neighborhoods at the north. The corridor contains many opportunities for varying views of Ashland Creek, one of the main tributaries to upper Bear Creek.

EXPECTED USERS

Expected user groups are pedestrians, runners, families with strollers, and maintenance and emergency vehicles. The desire is to continue the character of Lithia Park along this route. Due to the primarily riparian character of the trail location and related environmental concerns, pedestrian use is the most appropriate. Bicyclists and horses are not allowed on the trail from upper Lithia Park to Nevada Street. Alternate bicycle routes shall be established to allow cyclists to travel the corridor and reach city facilities. The northern and southern trail sections may present an opportunity for equestrian use.

TYPICAL TRAIL SECTION

The typical trail section is eighteen to forty-eight inches in width and surfaced in crushed rock. The width, surfacing, and other trail standards may vary based on site-specific opportunities and constraints, including available land, appropriate use, and wetland and wildlife concerns.

See chapter 13 for trail width standards.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

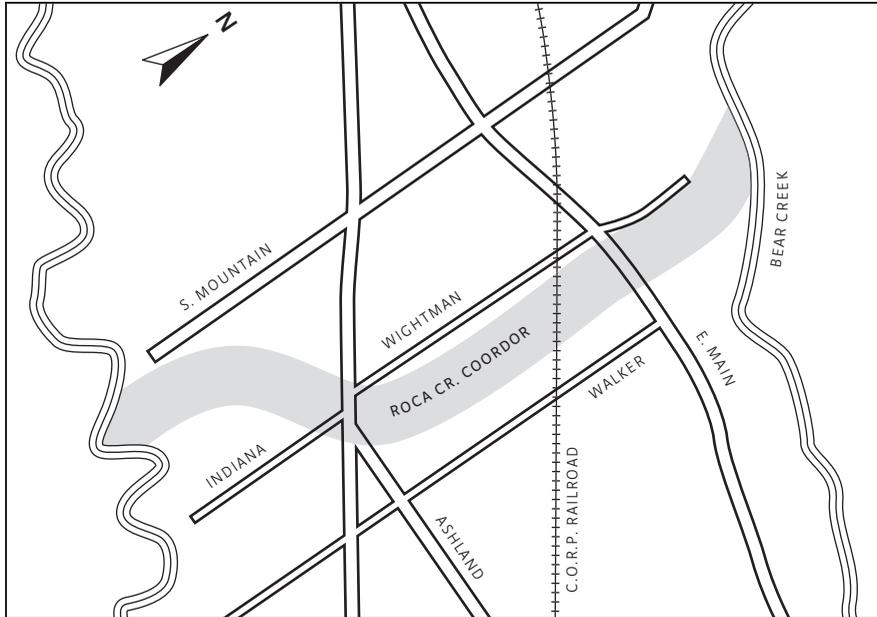
Early settlers referred to Ashland Creek as Rock Creek and then Mill Creek. The creek originates on the summit of Mt. Ashland. The fast-flowing stream, where it first emerges from the mountains, provided power for Ashland's earliest lumber and flour mills and is where the community began. For this reason, Ashland's "Plaza" grew up at this spot. The creek is still the main source of Ashland's drinking water.

CHAPTER 08

Ashland Creek Trail Corridor

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CHAPTER 09

Roca Creek Trail Corridor

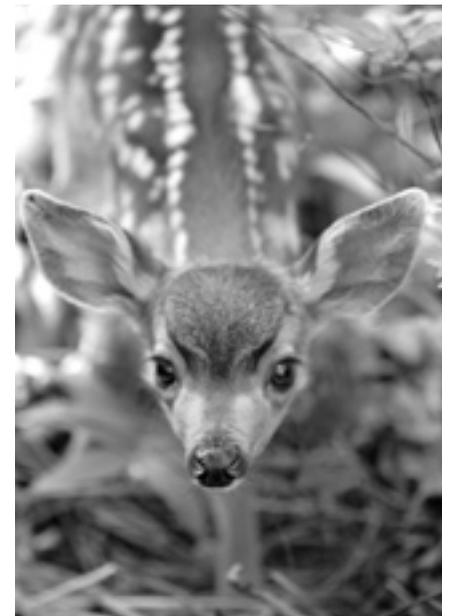
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ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The Roca Creek Trail is approximately two miles in length and runs from the TID route to the Bear Creek Greenway. Currently, none of the trail formally exists. Most of the trail will likely be located within existing public lands. The central portion of the route crosses the SOU campus. To the north of SOU, the route may follow the east side of Paradise Creek, through Ashland School District property at Willow Wind Learning Center, before meeting the Bear Creek Greenway. Both schools have expressed an interest in promoting the trail and are expected to be willing participants. An alternative route at the north may intersect North Mountain Park.

A trailhead may be located at Willow Wind Learning Center. Wetland and wildlife concerns will be addressed regarding the trail alignment along Paradise Creek. The corridor becomes steeper south of SOU as it approaches the TID and Pinecrest Terrace. Due to current development and the steep terrain, alternate routing—including use of existing streets—may be necessary. The trail will cross and connect with several important commuter and recreation routes, including bike lanes on Siskiyou Boulevard, East Main Street, and the Central Bike Path (CBP). The trail may connect to Ashland Street near SOU. The crossings of these arterials will need careful consideration. The trail can use existing crossing signals at Siskiyou Boulevard (Indiana and Wightman) if they meet city standards. Crossing the railroad tracks north of the CBP will likely require the use of an existing crossing such as those at Walker Avenue or Wightman Street.



THIS YOUNG BLACKTAIL FAWN WAS BORN IN A THicket NEAR UPPER LITHIA PARK AND GREW UP THERE FOR A FEW MONTHS BEFORE LEAVING WITH HIS MOTHER TO EXPLORE MORE TERRITORY.

CHAPTER 09

Roca Creek Trail Corridor

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LINKAGES

This is an important commuter and Safe Routes to School trail alignment and would improve access to SOU, SOU student housing, Ashland Middle School, and Walker Elementary School. A single, well-planned trail should be designated and well marked across these campuses to avoid conflicts with other site activities. For SOU, permission may be needed from the State Board of Education.

The trail is close to Raider Stadium at SOU, the Schneider Museum of Art at SOU, and ScienceWorks Hands-on Museum (also property of SOU). The Ashland School District has expressed an interest in a trail connection to North Mountain Park and its Nature Center for school activities. If possible, the route should extend south across the TID and connect to Siskiyou Mountain Park and the White Rabbit Trail system.

CHARACTER

The character of the route is open woodlands at the south with views across the valley, urbanized within the central area, and open riparian woodlands and fields at the north.

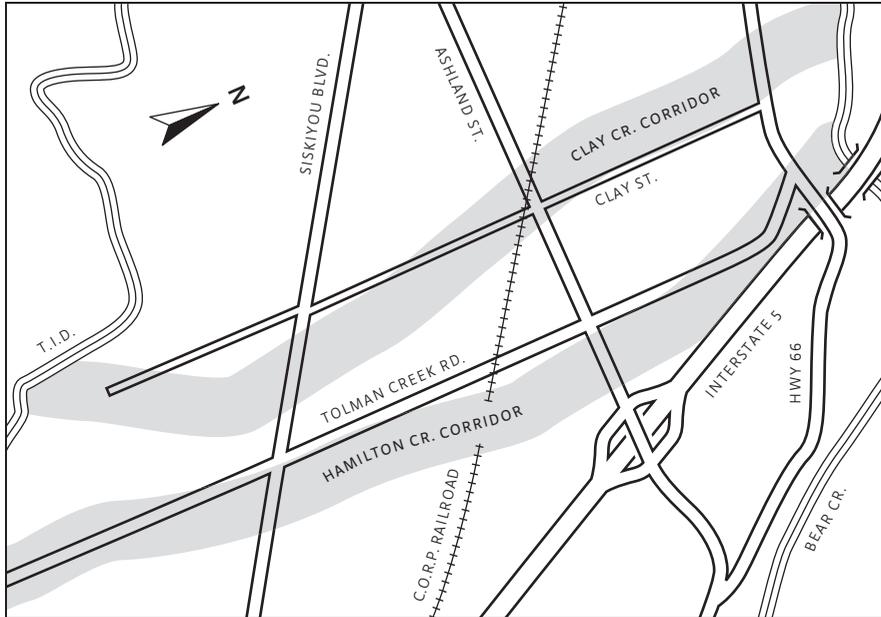
EXPECTED USERS

Expected users are bicyclists, pedestrians, runners, families with strollers, and maintenance vehicles. Pedestrians will be the main users at the southern end.

TYPICAL SECTION

Typical trail sections will vary from eighteen to forty-eight inches for unimproved natural trails, depending on terrain and location.

See chapter 13 for trail width standards.



CHAPTER 10

Clay Creek & Hamilton Creek Trail Corridors

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ROUTE DESCRIPTION

Since the Clay Creek and Hamilton Creek trail corridors are less than one-half mile apart and serve a majority of the same public, the goal is to provide one paved multi-use trail for the area that may switch back and forth between the two drainages. Additional linking neighborhood routes are desired to bring users to the main route. While the goal is to provide a trail experience separated from automobiles, it is possible that many sections of the route may need to use bike lanes and detached widened sidewalks. This is because the majority of the corridor has been consumed by subdivisions without public right-of-way access along the creeks. A meandering alignment to these sidewalks will help to promote the intended natural quality of this trail system. These corridors reach from Bear Creek at the north to the TID Ditch Trail and Oredson-Todd Woods at the south. The distance is approximately two miles, but this may increase as the trail weaves through the community.

There are several potential important locations to connect with or utilize. The area near the north end of Hamilton Creek is one of the few opportunities for a trail to cross under Interstate 5 and continue north or east. An alignment for the Bear Creek Greenway and the Clay and Hamilton Creek Trails in this area is highly important, and a trailhead is desired in this general area as well. Traveling south from the Bear Creek Greenway, the trail route could follow Hamilton Creek, perhaps within an easement from the Federal Highway Administration, and eventually turn west to join Tolman Creek Road. A safe crossing will be needed where the route crosses Ashland Street.



THIS NORTHERN FLICKER HAMMERS ON A HOLLOW SNAG IN LITHIA PARK. THE FLICKERS CREATED AN OPENING IN THE SIDE OF THE SNAG TO GAIN ACCESS TO THE INSIDE AND CONSTRUCT THEIR NEST.

Clay Creek & Hamilton Creek Trail Corridors



While Clay Street is presently an unimproved narrow road, much of Tolman Creek Road has been widened to include bike lanes along its central portion. Bike lanes should be considered for any future upgrades to sections of Tolman Creek Road. Tolman Creek Road, midway between the two creeks, has an existing railroad crossing which will most likely need to be used. Experienced cyclists will use the Tolman bike lanes to continue south to Siskiyou Boulevard; however, a secondary route could follow Takelma Way to either Jacquelyn Street or Clay Street to Siskiyou Boulevard. A widened sidewalk on the north side of Siskiyou would bring users to Tolman.

A crossing of Siskiyou Boulevard exists at Tolman Creek Road, near Bellview Elementary School, and could be used for this route. In addition, a trail segment could start behind Bellview School and follow the Mistletoe Road right-of-way to a future extension of the CBP. This would offer an off-street alternative to school commuters. The main route can continue south, meandering through a neighborhood along Black Oak, Bellview, and Greenmeadows Streets to the existing Oredson-Todd Woods / TID trailhead. This trailhead is greatly in need of expansion. Oredson-Todd Woods is also accessed from Tolman Creek Road. At the south, Clay Creek and Clay Street provide the most direct route to Siskiyou Mountain Park.

LINKAGES

The route will need to cross Siskiyou Boulevard, East Main Street, and Ashland Street and connect to their respective bike lanes. The route will provide the opportunity for connections to Bellview School and the Willow Wind Learning Center.

One of the main neighborhood linking routes will be a trail through the Croman Mill site that should be constructed with future subdivision development. The connection to the main corridor route might be on a separated trail, within an easement, across the northern boundary of the Oregon Department of Transportation property or by following the northern section of Mistletoe Road on a separate widened sidewalk.

A trailhead is needed at the southern end to help provide access for users traveling farther south. Just west of this corridor is the Park Street entry into Siskiyou Mountain Park. This route has been designated as part of the Creek to Crest Trail Route loop trail, which connects Ashland south to the Pacific Crest Trail. A section of Park Street is very steep and, therefore, an alternate route in this area is warranted. Signage is needed at the southern end of the corridor to direct mountain cyclists through the neighborhoods to Siskiyou Mountain Park.

CHARACTER

Portions of the northern and southern areas of the corridor are still undeveloped and remain in a relatively natural state. The central portion of the trail corridor is quickly becoming heavily urbanized and opportunities for a separated trail are already limited, so remaining possible routes should be explored.

EXPECTED USERS

Expected users throughout the corridor include bicyclists, pedestrians, runners, and families with strollers. In the northern portion, users will likely be local residents accessing the Bear Creek Greenway and Central Bike Path. The mid-section of the trail is expected to play a large role in commuting and providing a safe route for children to reach Bellview Elementary School and The Siskiyou School (formerly Waldorf School). In the southern portion, users are likely to be residents, hikers, and mountain bikers accessing the TID route and destinations farther south.

TYPICAL SECTION

A multi-use eight-foot-wide trail with paved surface. The width may narrow as it approaches the TID. See chapter 13 for trail width standards.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Oredson-Todd Woods is owned by the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy and managed by the Ashland Parks and Recreation Department. The area is over ten acres and is designed to provide “recreation, education, research, open space, a public park, a wildlife refuge, or such similar natural use purposes.” The primary feature of the woods is Hamilton Creek and its associated vegetation running the length of the preserve.

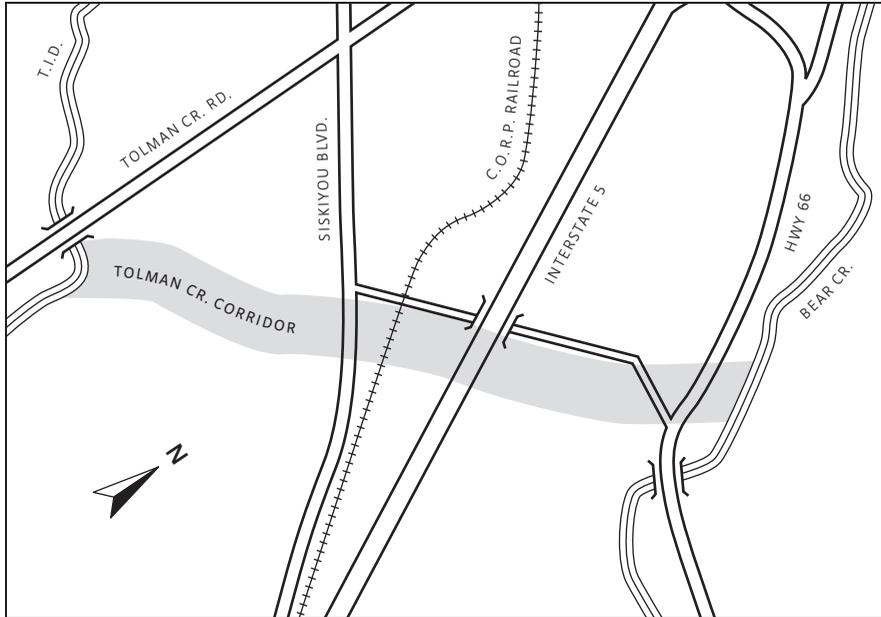
Historical note: Hamilton Creek was probably named for early Ashland-area settler R. J. Hamilton, a Tennessean who farmed along the lower stretches of this stream. The upper portions of Hamilton Creek flow through steep granite terrain. The falls on upper Hamilton Creek are formed by a hard granite ledge. Below the falls, and for some distance above the end of Clay Street, the streambed exposes shale and sandstone of the Hornbrook Formation. The sandstone contains small marine fossil shells from the time when most of southwestern Oregon lay beneath a shallow sea. Some of the Hornbrook deposits have weathered into a reddish (and, when wet, very sticky) clay. In the early twentieth century, a small brick factory located near Hillview Drive mined this clay for making bricks.

CHAPTER 10

Clay Creek & Hamilton Creek Trail Corridors

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CHAPTER 11

Tolman Creek Trail Corridor

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ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The Tolman Creek Corridor extends from the TID crossing with Tolman Creek Road to the Tolman Creek-Neil Creek confluence northeast of Highway 66. The proposed route is approximately two miles and roughly parallels Tolman Creek. This would be the easternmost trail in a loop surrounding the city—including the Bear Creek Greenway, Wrights Creek, and the TID—and a crucial link to complete a ring of trails around the city.

Existing barriers to the trail are the railroad tracks, Interstate 5, and State Highway 66. All opportunities to cross these barriers should be explored. They may need to be crossed utilizing Crowson Road. This portion of the trail may consist of bike lanes and a wide, separated, multi-use sidewalk adjacent to Crowson Road. The desire is that the southwestern portion of the corridor follows the creek more closely and provides a less urbanized experience. The trail will cross and connect to the bike lanes recommended for Siskiyou Boulevard and Highway 66. Because of the trail’s relationship to and dependence on roadways in the corridor, the route should be coordinated with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission.

LINKAGES

This route will connect the Oak Knoll area to the proposed extension of the Central Bike Path and the greater trail and bike route system. A possible link to Emigrant Lake could begin where the TID crosses Tolman Creek Road. This route currently crosses many properties and does not provide public access.

CHARACTER

The area is sparsely developed in small farms and generally opens onto a few wooded areas. Most of the route is outside the urban growth boundary in unincorporated Jackson County; however, a small section is within the urban growth boundary, from just east of Tolman Creek Road running northeast to the intersection of Siskiyou Boulevard at Crowson Road.



BLEEDING HEARTS LOOK LIKE LITTLE “DUTCH GIRL CAPS” AND PUT ON A SPRING SHOW IN FILTERED SUNLIGHT ALONG THE CREEK TO CREST TRAIL ROUTE.

CHAPTER 11

Tolman Creek Trail Corridor

ASHLAND, OR — PARKS & TRAILS
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EXPECTED USERS

Expected users include bicyclists, pedestrians, runners, families with strollers, equestrians, and maintenance vehicles.

TYPICAL SECTION

The trail will likely be multi-use, six-to ten-feet wide, and have an unpaved surface.

See chapter 13 for trail width standards.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Tolman Creek was named for Oregon surveyor general and Jackson County judge, James C. Tolman. This five-mile-long creek flows to Neil Creek, which in turn joins Emigrant Creek to form Bear Creek.



CHAPTER 12

Regional Trails

ASHLAND, OR — PARKS & TRAILS
master plan document



A strong desire, voiced at several public meetings, is to provide connections to regional trails and regional facilities. Regional trails connect Ashland to adjacent communities and to regionally significant features such as Emigrant Lake and Grizzly Peak.

EMIGRANT LAKE TRAIL

Route Description

Creating a trail route to Emigrant Lake is an objective that was expressed at several public meetings. This connection was part of the original Greenway Plan of 1966. The planned extension of the Bear Creek Greenway provides an opportunity to develop this trail. This route would begin at the northeastern end of the proposed Tolman Creek Trail near Crowson Road and Neil Creek or somewhere along Emigrant Creek Road. Four corridors warrant exploration as the eastern trail route:

1. Neil Creek Route – 3 miles
2. TID East Route- 9.5 miles
3. Ashland Lateral Route of the TID - 5.25 miles
4. Emigrant Creek Road Route - 6.5 miles

Planning for this route will need to be coordinated with Jackson County, Bureau of Reclamation, private land owners, and the Bear Creek Greenway Foundation.

Expected Users

Expected users include bicyclists, pedestrians, runners, families with strollers, equestrians, and maintenance vehicles.

Typical Section

The trail will likely be multi-use, from eight to ten feet wide, with a paved or native surface.

See chapter 13 for trail width standards.

A MAP AND COMPASS ARE IMPORTANT TOOLS TO HAVE WHEN NAVIGATING REGIONAL TRAILS IN OUR AREA. THE CREEK TO CREST TRAIL ROUTE RUNNING THROUGH TOWN CONNECTS TO THE BEAR CREEK GREENWAY PATH AND RUNS ALL THE WAY TO THE PACIFIC CREST TRAIL BY MOUNT ASHLAND.

Regional Trails



Natural and Cultural Resources

Emigrant Lake reservoir impounds Emigrant Creek, which derived its name in the early 1850s when exhausted wagon trains of settlers descended westward into the valley from the high country above.

GRIZZLY PEAK TRAIL

Route Description

The objective of creating a trail from Ashland to Grizzly Peak was also expressed by citizens at several public meetings. This would be approximately an eight-mile route, running northeast from Ashland to the top of Grizzly Peak. This route was mentioned as a planning goal in the 2001 Greater Bear Creek Valley Regional Problem Solving Phase One Status Report, authored by the Rogue Valley Council of Governments.

Possible alignments (for leaving Ashland) are along North Mountain Road to cross Interstate 5 or Valley View Road across the city's approximately 800-acre parcel near Butler Creek. The route between Ashland and the top of Grizzly Peak crosses a few large parcels of private property before entering Bureau of Land Management land at the top of the ridge.

Linkages

A spur trail could connect Grizzly Peak to Dead Indian Memorial Road. If this trail connects to the top of Grizzly Peak, it will then connect with the existing Grizzly Peak trailhead off Shale City Road. There are a variety of country roads that meander on the north side of I-5, providing excellent bicycle routes on relatively low trafficked roads with spectacular views of the Rogue Valley, the City of Ashland, and surrounding mountains.

Character

The route is mainly over open fields with views of the valley.

Expected Users

Expected users include bicyclists, pedestrians, runners, families with strollers, equestrians, and maintenance vehicles. On steeper slopes, a separate mountain bike trail should be considered to avoid conflicts with other users.

Typical Section

The trail would likely be multi-use, eight-to ten feet wide, with crushed rock surface.

See chapter 13 for trail width standards.

Natural and Cultural Resources

Standing like Ashland's distant sentinel, Grizzly Peak gradually rises from the valley to an elevation of more than 5,700 feet above sea level. Early white explorers understandably feared the area's ferocious and then-numerous grizzly bears. Grizzly Peak obtained its name in the mid-1850s when a young settler, busy rounding up cattle, barely escaped a fatal encounter near the summit. By the 1890s, the area's last grizzlies had been hunted to extinction.



CHAPTER 13

Trail Standards and Basic Design Elements

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GENERAL

The rights and concerns of all Ashland citizens will be addressed in a fair and equitable way. The city will consider aquatic ecosystems (see city Riparian Ordinance under City of Ashland municipal code “Land Use” Ordinances), vegetation issues, and wildlife habitat when determining locations for trails. It will provide creative long-term solutions for landowners who are concerned with trails on or near their property and will develop a trail etiquette protocol. The city can make available details of legal implications of trail easement and right-of-way across private property, and legal implications of trespass on private land. Existing public process will notify owners near trail developments. All trails crossing private property shall be constructed only after trail easements have been completed.

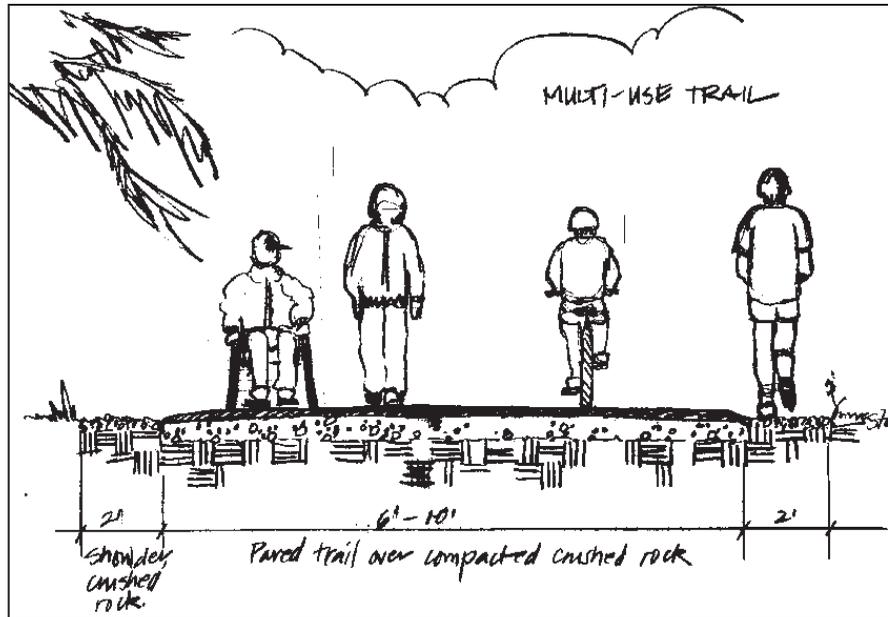
Ashland Parks and Recreation (APR) strives to be a good neighbor. Trail development will occur on private property only with owner consent. APR will continue to do everything within reason to shield neighboring properties from undesirable impacts of trails. In areas of the trail corridor that come close to existing residences, measures will be taken to maintain privacy and control trail use with fencing, screening, and buffering. The trail system will use existing trails and easements where they are available and can meet city standards.

Construction of trails is recommended to be an integral part of future projects (e.g. building, roadway, and sanitary sewer improvements) adjacent to these trails. Trails will generally not be lit for night use. Typically, trails are open for use from dawn to dusk; however, certain trails will be designated as travel corridors in which non-motorized traffic will be allowed to travel (with appropriate lighting) at all hours.

SYCAMORE TREES SERVE AS A NICE BACKDROP TO
THE TRAILS THAT FLOW THROUGH THE MIDDLE
SECTION OF LITHIA PARK.

Trail Standards and Basic Design Elements

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RIPARIAN ISSUES

Trail development shall conform to riparian ordinances and regulations such as erosion control and setbacks. Paths and trails will be developed only after APR staff authorizes an environmental assessment. When appropriate, a geologist or geo-technical engineer will be consulted in areas of steep terrain, unstable soil conditions, or severe erosion areas.

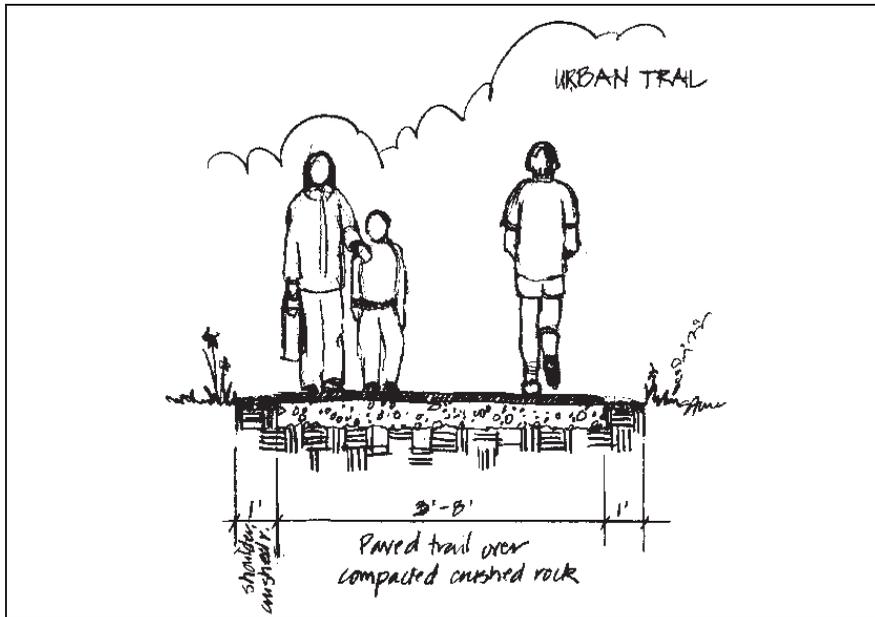
Other considerations shall be impacts on water quality, wildlife, and native plant species. Some concerns could be compaction, erosion, and siltation, which could impact native plants and aquatic species, thereby raising water temperature and decreasing water quality. Consequently, a well-designed trail will provide controlled access to streams. When appropriate, a riparian stream specialist should be consulted when designing trails in these areas. Trail improvement or development can provide opportunities for environmental enhancement projects and improved maintenance.

ACCESSIBILITY

Trails will be designed and installed to applicable accessibility standards, best practices, and current guidelines at the time of implementation. Every attempt will be made to comply with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) grade requirements; however, this will not always be practical or reasonable. Trails may be exempt from certain ADA requirements if “reasonable accommodation” cannot be met. This is most typical in areas of steep terrain. APR will strive to make all trails and paths applicable to ADA standards where reasonable.

TRAIL USER GROUPS

Nature trail users will usually include walkers, runners, bicyclists, and limited numbers of equestrians (on designated sections only). Multi-use trail users may include, but are not limited to, bicyclists, non-motorized scooters, skaters, wheelchair users, and equestrians. Since trails will be developed to a level appropriate to their surroundings, all trail users will not be accommodated on all trails.



CHAPTER 13

Trail Standards
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Urban trails will often accommodate users of slower, quieter, electric power assisted wheeled devices, such as wheelchairs, Segways, scooters and bicycles, along with foot traffic. Motorized vehicles—including gas-powered scooters, carts, motorcycles, and others—shall not be allowed on trails unless specially designated for such use. Motorized vehicle use restrictions shall not apply to emergency, security, and maintenance vehicles.

EQUESTRIAN USE

Where designated, widened shoulders or separated parallel trails for equestrian use will be included. It is anticipated that equestrians will not use many of the trails due to safety and other issues because of the many arterials and streets that the trails cross.

TYPES OF TRAILS

Current and future trails fall into three general categories: multi-use, urban, and nature trails. Any of these may be used as interpretive trails. Width, surfacing, and other trail standards may vary from proposed standards based on such things as available land, adjacent development, site-specific concerns, appropriate uses, or wetland and wildlife concerns within riparian areas.

MULTI-USE TRAILS

Trails that have regional or community-wide significance will usually be of this type. These improvements are necessary to assure that the trail will accommodate two-way wheelchair, stroller, bicycle, skater, pedestrian, and possibly others, as well as maintenance, security, and emergency vehicles. Multi-use trails will be designed to provide safety for each user group. Design considerations shall include, but not be limited to, site lines, grade, erosion, and regulation development. Multi-use trail surfacing shall be asphaltic concrete or concrete over a compacted crushed rock base (impervious surfaces are preferred). The paved trail tread width should be a minimum of six to ten feet, with two- to four-foot-wide crushed rock shoulders or planted strips.

Trail Standards and Basic Design Elements



Soft shoulders of crushed rock or woodchips may be provided for runners and equestrians should space and approved use allow.

URBAN TRAILS

When appropriate and possible, urban trails will be ADA compliant. Trails that have local significance, or are in developed open spaces, will usually be of this type. Urban trail surfacing shall be asphaltic concrete or concrete over a compacted crushed rock base. Depending on the approved categories of trail users, crushed rock or woodchip surfacing may be approved. Crushed rock surfacing shall be fine decomposed granite from the local area. The tread width should be a minimum of three feet to a maximum of eight feet wide (preferred width) with three-foot-wide crushed rock shoulders. Urban trails with anticipated bicycle use shall be at least eight feet wide.

NATURE TRAILS

In the placement of nature trails, first consideration shall be given to environmental impacts. Nature trails shall have two designations: unimproved and improved.

Unimproved nature trail tread width shall be a minimum of eighteen inches to a maximum of four feet wide (preferred width) with one-half-foot-wide native soil shoulders. Unimproved trail surfacing shall be compacted native soils. Occasional crushed granite and/or wood chip surfacing to limit erosion will be allowed in areas associated with environmental need, safety, or other circumstances identified by Parks and Recreation staff. Trails in undeveloped open spaces that provide a natural outdoor experience will often be of this type.

Improved nature trail tread width shall be a minimum of thirty-two inches to a maximum of eight feet wide (preferred width) with one-half-foot-wide native soil shoulders. Improved nature trail surfacing shall be compacted crushed rock or wood chip surfacing to limit erosion over a compacted crushed rock base. Crushed rock surfacing shall be fine decomposed granite from the local area. Trails in developed and undeveloped open spaces that provide a natural outdoor experience will often be of this type.

Nature trails will be developed in accordance with US Forest Service standards. Ashland Parks uses “USFS Trail Design Parameters” (6/18/2002) (USFS National Trail Design Parameters) as guidelines for the assessment, survey and design, construction, repair, and maintenance of trails, based on the trail class and designed use of the trail. Exceptions and variances to these parameters can occur, however, when site-specific circumstances demand such exceptions.

Trails and trail street crossings must be designed to meet applicable standards such as ADA, Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) standards, and other State and Federal guidelines.

Trail Standards and Basic Design Elements



STREET CROSSINGS

In compliance with city standards, engineering studies will be done to establish the suitable level of traffic control and design. This plan suggests appropriate crossing options, which must be verified and refined through engineering. It is preferable to route users to existing intersections where sufficient protection must be provided. If use of an existing intersection is not practical, mid-block street crossings may be considered. Trail user improvements for major intersections and mid-block street crossings may include median refuges, a curved path approaching the crossing, slowing techniques and stop signs, high visibility “ladder” type crosswalks and other striping specific to crossings, signage, overhead lighting improvements, user-activated or pedestrian/bicycle detection systems, curb ramps with widths matching the trail width, specialized paving, bollards, curb extensions, and other appropriate and required safety measures recommended for crossings of major streets for trail user safety. Signals will be installed as traffic warrants are met.

TRAILHEADS

Trailheads provide access for local and regional citizens arriving by car. A trailhead site usually includes off-street parking, information kiosks and signage, garbage receptacles, and possibly drinking water, benches, lighting, bike parking, restroom or “porta-potty” facilities, and other services. Dog litterbags will be placed at all trailheads where dogs are allowed.

Trailheads may be stand-alone facilities (at or integrated within existing or proposed park properties or other community centers) or as cooperative agreements with schools to increase use and reduce duplication of support facilities. In natural areas or areas with slope or environmental restraints, trailheads will be placed in such a way to allow for modest off-street parking where possible.

SIGNAGE

Signage will play a crucial role in ensuring successful trail use. Residents and visitors alike will require orientation, guidance, and information about permissible trail uses. The following types of signage will be considered:

- Directional and regulatory signage
- Continuous route signage for route identification, way-finding, and direction to recommended safe crossings of busy streets
- Periodic information regarding distance to areas of interest
- Interpretive information regarding ecological, historical, and cultural features found along and in proximity to trails
- Per the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission policy regarding non-native species on park lands, possible placement of signs educating the public about non-native species (to encourage participation in the removal of the plants).

CHAPTER 13

Trail Standards and Basic Design Elements

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While enhancing a trail’s aesthetic appeal, many art installations provide functional places to rest and play. Trail corridors hold great potential for interpretive rest areas and signage. Such sites will add interest and appreciation of the corridors and Ashland in general. The city should develop comprehensive trail signage and directional guidelines for coordinating these efforts, with attention given to the goal of minimizing visual impact due to unnecessary or inappropriate signage. A consistent theme of orientation, regulatory, and interpretive signs should be implemented along the trail routes. As part of the consideration of signage, signs will delineate private and public lands. Trail use designations shall clearly be posted at the entrance or intersection of each trail segment.

Signs will feature brown letters on a tan background, screen print. Signs shall contain the Ashland Parks and Recreation logo and a phone number for information. Special full-color signs will be allowed to designate “special” trails such as the Creek to Crest Trail and Bear Creek Greenway. Signage at trailheads may include laminated maps of the trail area, posted rules and uses of the trail or path system (see Trail Safety and Etiquette protocol in Appendix A), appropriate flora and fauna information including warnings of such things as poison oak or other hazard conditions within the area, and identification of invasive species that trail users could assist in eradicating. This information shall be contained on a trailhead kiosk or billboard.



CHAPTER 14

Implementation and Phasing

ASHLAND, OR — PARKS & TRAILS
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As the urbanized area continues to fill in and expand, it is critical that trail corridors, preliminary alignments, and easements become established and set aside. Trail alignments will use existing and future easements through subdivision developments. The city should develop and adopt code to ensure that trail segments are built to standards as part of the land use permitting process. City planners and inspectors should be educated about Ashland trail standards and alignment guidelines to ensure that trails are included in land developments and constructed properly.

It is expected that trail alignments will, where appropriate, be placed within or just outside the boundary of creek natural resource conservation zones, to impact buildable properties as little as possible. In more urbanized areas where the route may be street right-of-ways, it will be critical to coordinate with the Ashland Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Safe Routes to School programs are sustained efforts by schools, parents, local governments, and other community organizations and members to improve the health and safety of children by enabling and encouraging them to walk, skate, and bicycle to school. Supporters organize school teams to examine the existing conditions, identify projects, implement solutions and activities to address student transportation barriers and problems through a combination of engineering, education, encouragement, and enforcement activities.

In the future, Federal and State funds may be available for projects that improve direct access to schools. Communities nationwide are increasing programs to improve the safety and ability of children to walk, bike, or skate to school. This plan recommends a trail connection to every school in Ashland.

A YOUNG BIKER PRACTICES RIDING ALONG THE
PATH AT THE DOG PARK NODE NEXT TO THE BEAR
CREEK GREENWAY TRAIL.

Implementation and Phasing



PRIORITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- Completion of existing trails (Greenway, TID, Central Bike Path, Dog Park, North Mountain, Willow Wind Learning Center, etc.)
- Link existing trails together
- Link existing park and open space to existing trail networks
- Where opportunities occur, priorities may be adjusted

Recommendations from the Trail Master Plan Committee to the City of Ashland

This section contains recommendations to the City of Ashland and will be directly tied to the Trails Master Plan vision, goals, and objectives described at the beginning of this document.

NOTE: This is a long-term plan and timeframes should be addressed appropriately. As recommendations are added, changed, and completed, they will be tracked in this section of the document. Upon approval by the Parks and Recreation Commission and City Council, these recommendations will show under this section as “Action Items” with responsible parties and timeframes, as appropriate. When completed, they will show as “Action Completed” with references to documentation.

Goal A. Transportation. Trails are an inherent part of Ashland’s transportation system.

Objective A1: Provide pedestrian and bicycle commuter routes throughout Ashland.

Recommendation A1a: Work with the Bike and Pedestrian Commission and the Public Works Department to create a bike lane on Croman Road and to explore the possibility of bike lanes through the Clay and Hamilton Creek corridors.

Recommendation A1b: Work with SOU to create a trail route through campus, and encourage SOU to plan a trail through the new arboretum within the Roca Creek corridor.

Recommendation A1c: Solicit the Public Works Department to improve signage at the junction of East Main and the main bike path. (This crossing is particularly dangerous due to the angle of the path in relationship to East Main.)

Objective A2: Provide a diversity of trail types.

Recommendation A2a: Review the Trail Master Plan every five (5) years to update trail connections that have been made, and prioritize and propose funding mechanisms for future trail types.

Objective A3: Provide safe routes to schools.

Recommendation A3a: Begin negotiating with Ashland School District and SOU to confirm public access to and through campuses.

Recommendation A3b: Solicit the Public Works Department to improve signage at the junction of East Main and the main bike path. (This crossing is particularly dangerous due to the angle of the path in relationship to East Main.)

Recommendation A3c: Solicit Public Works to smooth the interface between the main bike path and various streets that it crosses (example: where Normal Street and the main bike path intersect).

Recommendation A3d: Solicit Public Works to provide flashing yellow light setups (such as the one at the high school/Lincoln School crossing on Siskiyou Blvd.) at key high traffic “safe routes” crossings.

Goal B. Trail Access & Connectivity. A continuous network of trails is easily identifiable and readily accessible.

Objective B1: Provide trails that are readily accessible from all neighborhoods.

Recommendation B1a: Make important properties for trail connectivity a major criterion in consideration for future purchase of open space or park land.

Objective B2: Provide parking at major trailheads.

Recommendation B2a: Identify major trailheads and prioritize those most needing parking. Define a series of alternatives for making parking possible.

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Implementation and Phasing

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Implementation and Phasing



Objective B3: Provide cross-town connectivity and links to trail systems in the surrounding public lands and communities.

Recommendation B3a: Strengthen relationships with Jackson County, TID, BLM, Forest Service, and the City of Talent so that Ashland’s Trails Master Plan could be reflected in their actions.

Recommendation B3b: Actively pursue easements on the TID Ditch Trail in partnership with the Ashland Woodlands and Trails Association, and place approval of easements on the City Council’s agenda in a timely manner.

Recommendation B3c: Identify key linkages and propose joint partnerships for completion of those linkages.

Objective B4: Provide connections to important community centers and environmental features.

Recommendation B4a: Place a trail easement on the city-owned Butler Creek spray property which would start the trail to Grizzly Peak.

Goal C. Natural Environment and Citizens’ Rights: Stewardship of the natural environment, and rights and concerns of citizens are addressed.

Objective C1: Consider aquatic, plant, and wildlife concerns when designing locations for trails.

Recommendation C1a: The Planning Department will identify significant aquatic, plant, and wildlife concerns whenever a trail is planned or improvements are identified.

Objective C2: Address the concerns of residents and property owners on or near trail corridors in planning, construction, and trail management.

Recommendation C2a: City police should add bike patrols to include major trails.

Objective C3: Create and promote a “trail etiquette” protocol.

Recommendation C3a: Create a “Trails Ambassadors” program that will allow community members to help patrol and educate trail users in their neighborhood.

Goal D. Planning for Trails. Trail planning is thoroughly integrated with city planning and vice versa.

Objective D1: Determine mechanisms for funding of maintenance and acquisition of trails.

Recommendation D1a: Work with the Ashland Woodlands and Trails Association to write grants and find funding sources to be used for the purchase of trail easements.

Recommendation D1b: The Parks and Recreation Department should prepare and maintain a list of important trail connectivity properties and work with the Planning Department to flag these parcels should they become available for purchase.

Objective D2: Create planning guidelines for new trails in subdivisions and rezoned properties, including the creation of a system for flagging parcels of interest for trails.

Recommendation D2a: Strengthen land use ordinances that require trail easements as part of planning actions.

Recommendation D2b: The city should set up a mechanism to include public trail development as part of future public works projects within the city or carried out by the city where appropriate.

Recommendation D2c: Make trail access and corridors part of the city's affordable housing plan to mitigate increased density.

Recommendation D2d: Flag key sections of planning documents used by the city Planning Department (e.g. city planning ordinances, regulations, and guidelines) to consider trail actions during the planning process.

Objective D3: Create privacy guidelines for trails.

Recommendation D3a: Post signs where necessary.

Objective D4: Publish details of legal implications of trail right-of-way across private property, and legal implications of trespass on private land.

Recommendation D4a: Parks Department, in cooperation with the city Legal Department, will compile a list of legal implications and publish on the city Web page for public viewing.

Goal E. Trail Management. Trail management and maintenance is an integral part of city activities.

CHAPTER 14

Implementation and Phasing

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Implementation and Phasing



Objective E1: Provide resources for trail maintenance and management.

Recommendation E1a: The Parks Department will work with the city budgeting process to propose and develop long-term mechanisms of providing needed funding sources for maintenance and management of the trail system.

Objective E2: Continue development of trail maintenance safety and quality guidelines, including dog stations and receptacles (where appropriate).

Recommendation E2a: Maintain those parts of the TID Ditch Trail that are currently public, and manage trailhead parking areas.

Objective E3: Adopt trail management guidelines.

Recommendation E3a: The Parks and Recreation Department will develop and propose a set of trail management guidelines to be approved by the Parks and Recreation Commission and the City Council.

Objective E4: Ensure that trails are well marked throughout the city.

Recommendation E4a: The Parks Department will work with the Public Works Department to identify trail-making standards and prioritize areas to be marked.

Goal F. Partners and Collaborators. The City of Ashland promotes collaborative partnerships in trails planning, implementation, management, and maintenance.

Objective F1: Develop trail partnerships with Federal, State, and local jurisdictions, businesses, public and private schools, and citizens.

See Recommendation B3a



The Trails Master Plan will function as a component of the Open Space Plan adopted in 2002. Upon approval of City Council it will become a full component of the Ashland Comprehensive Plan. As the Comprehensive Plan review proceeds through 2006, the trail plan should be reviewed as a part of the process. Any ordinances associated with the implementation of the Trails Master Plan shall be written or rewritten to further strengthen the link between the Comprehensive Plan, Open Space Plan, and Trails Master Plan.

CHAPTER 15

Coordination with the City Comprehensive Plan

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KIDS OF ALL AGES HAVE ENJOYED HUNTING DOWN
AND DISCOVERING HIDDEN GEOCACHES LOCATED
AMONG ASHLAND'S EXTENSIVE TRAIL NETWORK.

Bear Creek Watershed Map

Talent Irrigation District website: www.talentid.org

O’Harra, Marjorie. Ashland: The First 130 Years. Ashland, OR: Northwest Passages Publishing Company, 1986

Regional Park Plan, prepared by University of Oregon Bureau of Municipal Research, 1966, copy in Ashland Library

Greater Bear Creek Valley Regional Problem Solving Phase One Status Report, Rogue Valley Council of Governments, 2001.

Ashland Comprehensive Plan, 1974

Trails Master Plan Source Documents

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APPENDIX A

Trail Safety and Etiquette

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A FAMILY ENJOYS A BIKE RIDE PAST THE ASHLAND
GREENHOUSES AREA ALONG THE BEAR CREEK
GREENWAY TRAIL.

1. **Stay on the trail.**
2. **Respect wildlife.**
3. **Don't cut switchbacks.**
4. **Pick up litter.**

CYCLISTS

1. Yield to slower traffic.
2. Stop your bike for equestrians.
3. Slow down on hidden corners.
4. Stop for pedestrians when descending steep grades
5. Warn others when passing.
6. Don't ride muddy trails.

DOG OWNERS

1. Keep your dog under control and on a leash.
2. Clean up after your dog.

HOW YOU CAN HELP!

1. Respect private property.
2. Pack out your trash or any other trash you find.
3. Don't spread noxious weeds.
4. Report weed infestations to parks office.
5. Report trail maintenance needs.
6. Report safety issues and problems.



APPENDIX B

Fauna

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BIRD NOTES FOR THE ASHLAND TRAILS MASTER PLAN

More than 200 species of birds have been observed in the Rogue Valley and its surrounding mountains in recent years, and there are several ways to categorize them. One is by occurrence and is determined by whether a species is a permanent resident, migrant, or visitor. A visitor may be a sporadic drop-in or one that comes for a season, usually winter or summer. The other principal division is by habitat. The valley contains diverse habitat types, and most species are associated with one or a few.

Habitats that are encountered on the trails are riparian, open-water, grassland, oak woodland, and mixed conifer-hardwood forest. Both methods are useful for getting to know which species can be seen where, and when. The following information is taken from the recently published “Guide to Birds of the Rogue Valley,” by Barbara Massey and Dennis Vroman.

Occurrence

- 1) Residents: Birds present year-round and known to breed locally.
- 2) Visitors: Birds of seasonal occurrence, e.g., those that winter in the valley, come in summer to breed, or visit occasionally.
- 3) Migrants: Birds en route to breeding or wintering grounds in spring or fall.

Resident birds: Some species have adapted to many habitats and can be found throughout the valley, such as Red-tailed Hawk, Northern Flicker, Common Raven, Western Bluebird, American Robin, and Lesser Goldfinch. Others are more habitat-specific and should be looked for in the kinds of habitat they prefer (see below).

Visitors: In summer, many species come to breed, including Western Wood-Pee-wee, Western Kingbird, Tree Swallow, House Wren, Yellow-breasted Chat, Lazuli Bunting, Black-headed Grosbeak, and Bullock’s Oriole. In winter there is another group that stays in the valley until late spring, then goes farther north or to high elevations to breed. Species include Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Golden-crowned Sparrow, and White-crowned Sparrow.

LOCATED ABOVE THE CLAY CREEK CORRIDOR,
THE OREDSON-TODD WOODLANDS CONTAINS
A GREAT MIX OF TRAILS WITH WONDERFUL
NATURAL FEATURES.

Fauna



Migrants: The valley is in the migratory path of birds heading north or south, and migrants can be encountered in many habitats as well as overhead. Examples of birds usually seen in flight are Turkey Vulture, Snow Goose, and Vaux's Swift. Migrants that often stop over are Townsend's Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, Swainson's Thrush, and Yellow Warbler.

HABITAT

While some bird species are generalists and have adapted to multiple habitat types, most show preferences for one or two, and a few are restricted to a single one. Riparian habitat, with its mixture of trees, shrubs, and annuals along a stream, contains the greatest species diversity, and is the major habitat type on many of Ashland's trails. If the trail also goes through other habitats, the species diversity increases. Here is a thumbnail sketch of the habitat types found on the trails.

- Emigrant Lake—open water, riparian, grassland, oak savannah, oak woodland.
- White Rabbit Trail and Lamb Mine Trail—oak woodland, mixed conifer- hardwood forest.
- Bear Creek Greenway—riparian, oak woodland, oak savannah.
- Talent Irrigation Ditch—riparian, oak woodland, mixed hardwood forest.
- Creeks (Ashland, Wrights, Roca, Hamilton, Clay, and Tolman)—riparian.
- Central Bike Path—grassland.
- Grizzly Peak—mixed conifer-hardwood forest.

In riparian habitat, such as creek corridors, you are likely to encounter such residents as Great Blue Heron, Wood Duck, Mallard, Belted Kingfisher, Downy Woodpecker, Wrentit, Song Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, and American Dipper (fast-flowing streams only). In the breeding season, Western Wood-pewee, Yellow Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, Black-headed Grosbeak, and Bullock's Oriole are usually in evidence.

Oak woodlands and surrounding grasslands are year-round habitat for Acorn Woodpecker, Huttons' Vireo, Oak Titmouse, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, and Brown Creeper. In summer they attract Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Western Kingbird, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Cassin's Vireo, and Lazuli Bunting.

Mixed forests are home to Pileated Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Winter Wren and Dark-eyed Junco, plus many species also common to oak woodlands. They provide breeding habitat for many species including warblers (Hermit, Nashville, MacGillivray's, Orange-crowned), Western Tanager, and Chipping Sparrow.

MAMMALS

1. Opossum
2. Pacific Shrew
3. Water Shrew
4. Trowbridge's Shrew
5. Vagrant Shrew
6. Shrew-mole
7. Broad-footed Mole
8. Coast Mole
9. Townsend's Mole
10. California Myotis
11. Long-eared Myotis
12. Little Brown Myotis
13. Fringed Myotis
14. Long-legged Myotis
15. Yuma Myotis
16. Silver-haired Bat
17. Big Brown Bat
18. Townsend's Big-eared Bat
19. Pallid Bat
20. Brazilian Free-tailed Bat
21. Black-tailed Jackrabbit
22. California Ground Squirrel
23. Western Gray Squirrel
24. Northern Flying Squirrel
25. Botta's Pocket Gopher
26. Western Pocket Gopher
27. Beaver
28. Muskrat
29. Western Harvest Mouse
30. Deer Mouse
31. House Mouse
32. Western Jumping Mouse
33. Dusky-footed Woodrat
34. Bushy-tailed Woodrat
35. Norway Rat
36. California Vole
37. Long-Tailed Vole
38. Creeping Vole
39. Porcupine
40. Coyote
41. Gray Fox
42. Black Bear
43. Raccoon
44. Cougar
45. Long-tailed Weasel
46. Mink
47. River Otter
48. Spotted Skunk
49. Striped Skunk
50. Black-tailed Deer

REFERENCE LITERATURE

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2. Atlas of Oregon Wildlife
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APPENDIX B

Fauna

ASHLAND, OR — PARKS & TRAILS
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Fauna



REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS THAT MIGHT BE SIGHTED ALONG ASHLAND TRAILS

AMPHIBIANS

1. Long-toed Salamander
2. Pacific Giant Salamander
3. Rough-skinned Newt
4. Western Toad
5. Pacific Tree Frog

REPTILES

1. Western Pond Turtle
2. Southern Alligator Lizard
3. Western Fence Lizard
4. Western Skink
5. Rubber Boa
6. Racer
7. Sharptail Snake
8. Ringneck Snake
9. Common King Snake
10. California Mountain King Snake
11. Gopher Snake
12. Western Terrestrial Garter Snake
13. Northwestern Garter Snake
14. Common Garter Snake
15. Western Rattlesnake (Grizzly Peak side)



Geology



GEOLOGY OF ASHLAND AREA

Ashland lies at the foot of the Siskiyou Mountains in southwestern Oregon. The Cascade Mountain Range extends to the north and south. Thus, the geologic history of Ashland is the story of two mountain ranges, both of which are major players in the geologic history of Oregon in general.

Prior to 200 million years ago, Oregon lay under the sea. Thus, there was no Oregon (on land, at least). At that time, the shore of North America was located roughly where Oregon and Idaho meet today.

This situation began to change about 200 million years ago. At that time, the North American continental plate began to drift westward, resulting in the first of a succession of subduction zones. Each new subduction zone marked a place where the Pacific Ocean plate was able to sink beneath the North American plate. Two consequences of this subduction process helped to create the Oregon we know today.

First, several times between about 200 and 50 million years ago, fragments of eastward drifting oceanic crust—including volcanic islands and thick deposits of sediment—collided with North America. Sometimes these crustal slabs subducted beneath the continents. But at other times, rather than subducting, these fragments stopped subducting and became welded onto North America, such that Oregon grew westward, ultimately reaching its present size. The name for such exotic, welded-on fragments of crust is accreted terranes. The oldest of these fragments now exposed at the surface in the Bear Creek Valley was named the Applegate Group of rock formations by early geologists. Recent study has shown us, however, that the Applegate Group is actually one of five related terranes, each with its own history. The Applegate Group is characterized by gneiss and metamorphosed sedimentary rocks. (You are unlikely, however, to find many of these rock types in the stream gravels of North Mountain Park, though they can be found both north and south of the city.)

ASHLAND FIRE DEPARTMENT ENGINEER KELLY BURNS AND HIS DAUGHTER JULIENNE ENJOY A HIKE ALONG CLAY CREEK IN THE OREDSON-TODD WOODLANDS.

Geology



Second, subduction processes often cause melting of the earth's upper mantle (the region, composed of peridotite rock, that underlies the crust). Such melted rock—called magma—is hot and buoyant, and it rises, melting and pushing its way upward through the overlying crust. If the magma bursts out at the surface, we say it has erupted: creating volcanoes and lava flows and volcanic ash. On the other hand, if the magma never rises all the way to the surface and instead cools and solidifies within the crust, the result can be masses of rock (called plutons) miles wide and miles thick. Granite and diorite are typical rock types within plutons. Granitic plutons formed beneath southwestern Oregon several times around 150 million years ago, and one of them makes up the area of Mt. Ashland and Wagner Butte. (Rock debris from the Mount Ashland Pluton is common in the stream gravels of North Mountain Park.)

Thus, subduction processes have had a major role in creating the Siskiyou Mountains. These are very complex mountains, and they are actually just the northern portion of the Klamath Mountains Province, a region that extends southward to Redding, California. (The Blue Mountains of Oregon and the Sierra Nevada Mountains of California are similar in age and mode of creation to the Klamaths.)

These mountains have been here a long time. They have also been eroding for a long time, depositing huge quantities of clay, silt, sand, pebbles, and cobbles into low-lying areas at their base. The result of this erosion and deposition is two geologic formations composed of sedimentary rock: conglomerate, sandstone, and shale.

The older of the sedimentary formations was deposited on the bottom of a Cretaceous sea that covered much of Oregon roughly 90 million years ago. These beds, called the Hornbrook Formation, consist mostly of sandstone (solidified sand) and shale (solidified clay or mud). They contain fossils of ammonites, clams, snails, and sharks' teeth. Many trails in Ashland are built on Hornbrook rocks, which erode easily, often crumbling into piles of grayish or greenish rock debris.

The younger of the two sedimentary formations begins just east of Bear Creek and includes Pompadour Bluff. This is the Payne Cliffs Formation. It is mostly conglomerate and sandstone. Smooth, very well rounded pebbles and cobbles of quartzite rock erode free from this formation and can occasionally be found in the stream gravels of Ashland streams. By the time the Payne Cliffs Formation was deposited—roughly 40-50 million years ago—the old Cretaceous sea had filled up and drained away, so these younger rocks came to rest on top of the older Hornbrook formation. The Payne Cliffs rocks were terrestrial, deposited from rivers flowing sluggishly across the land. Thus, no seashells are found in them, although petrified wood occurs here and there.

Between about 37 million years ago and 17 million years ago, the subducting plate of oceanic crust generated a lot of magma. This molten rock worked its way to the surface and began erupting, building up a new mountain range, the Cascades. Repeated eruption of these old volcanoes created a range we call the Western Cascades. Although these volcanoes have since been heavily eroded, we can still see rocks erupted from them, including Pilot Rock, Green Springs Mountain, Grizzly Peak, and Roxy Ann Butte. About 23 million years ago, the Grizzly Peak volcano built itself, though today the peak we see is only a remnant of the original mountain, which may have rivaled Mt. McLoughlin in size and shape.

Between 17 million years ago and about 7 million years ago, the Cascade Range took a vacation. (Volcanism shifted eastward during this time to the vast floods of basalt that buried eastern Oregon and eastern Washington: the Columbia River Basalt flows.)

Beginning about 7 million years ago, the Cascade Range returned from vacation with renewed activity and newly formed volcanoes deposited layers of lava in the Rogue River Valley.

APPENDIX C

Geology

ASHLAND, OR — PARKS & TRAILS
master plan document





Flora

Family	Common Name	Scientific Name
TREES, SHRUBS, AND VINES		
Pinacea	Douglas Fir	(<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>)
	White Fir	(<i>Abies concolor</i>)
	Ponderosa Pine	(<i>Pinus ponderosa</i>)
	Sugar Pine	(<i>Pinus lambertiana</i>)
Cupressaceae	Incense-Cedar	(<i>Calocedrus decurrens</i>)
Salicaceae	Black Cottonwood	(<i>Populus trichocarpa</i>)
	Arroy Willow	(<i>Salix lasiolepis</i>)
	Scouler's Willow	(<i>Salix scouleriana</i>)
Fagaceae	California Black Oak	(<i>Quercus kelloggii</i>)
	Oregon White Oak	(<i>Quercus garryana</i>)
Betulaceae	White Alder	(<i>Alnus rhombifolia</i>)
Aceraceae	Bigleaf Maple	(<i>Acer macrophyllum</i>)
Ericaceae	Pacific Madrone	(<i>Arbutus menziesii</i>)
	Whiteleaf Manzanita	(<i>Arcotostaphylos viscida</i>)
Rosaceae	Hawthorn	(<i>Crataegus</i> sp.)
	Himalayan Blackberry	(<i>Rubus discolor</i>)
	Pacific Blackberry	(<i>Rubus ursinus</i>)
	Birchleaf Moountain Mahogany	(<i>Cerocarpus betuloides</i>)
	Baldhip Rose	(<i>Rosa gymnocarpa</i>)
	Thimbleberry	(<i>Rumus parviflorus</i>)
	Indian Plum	(<i>Oemleria cerasiformis</i>)
	Indian Plum	(<i>Oemleria cerasiformis</i>)
	Pacific Serviceberry	(<i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i>)
Liliaceae	Greenbriar	(<i>Smilax californica</i>)
	Ookow	(<i>Dichelostema congestum</i>)
Solanaceae	Climbing Nightshade	(<i>Solanum dulcamara</i>)
Berberidaceae	Barberry	(<i>Berberis</i> sp.)
	Dwarf Oregon-Grape	(<i>Berberis nervosa</i>)
	Piper's Oregon-Grape	(<i>Berberis aquifolium</i>)



Family	Common Name	Scientific Name
Hydrangeaceae	Mockorange	(Philadelphus lewisii)
Grossulariaceae	Red-flowering Currant	(Ribes sanguineum)
Fabaceae	Scotch Broom	(Cytisus scoparius)
Leguminosae		
Rhamnaceae	Deerbrush	(Ceanothus intergerrimus)
Anacardiaceae	Poison Oak	(Toxicodendron diversilobum)
Carifoliaceae	Hairy Honeysuckle	(Lonicera hispidula)
	Orange Honeysuckle	(Lonicera ciliosa)
	Snowberry	(Symphoricarpos albus)
Loranthaceae	Mistletoe	(Phoradendron flavescens)
Asteraceae	Mugwort	(Artemisia douglasiana)
WILDFLOWERS, RUSHES, AND FERNS		
Liliaceae	Hooker's Fairybell	(Disporum hookeri)
	Henderson's Fawnlily	(Erythronium hendersonii)
	Washington Lily	(Lilium washingtonianum)
	Missionbells	(Fritillaria lanceolata)
	Redbells	(Fritillaria recurva)
	Small False Solomon's Seal	(Smilacina stellata)
	Tall False Solomon's Seal	(Smilacina racemosa)
	Western Trillium	(Trillium ovatum)
	Death-camas	(Zygadenus venenosus)
Polemoniaceae	Navarretia	(Navarretia sp.)
Iridaceae	Grass-widows	(Sisyrinchium douglasii)
Orchidaceae	Calypso Orchid	(Calypso bulbosa)
Polygonaceae	Dock	(Rumex sp.)
Portulacaceae	Miner's Lettuce	(Montia perfoliata)
Caryophyllaceae	Common Chickweed	(stellaria media)
	Bigleaf Sandwort	(Arenaria macrophylla)



Flora

Family	Common Name	Scientific Name
Brassicaceae	Pestle Lomatium	(Lomatium nudicaule)
Cruciferae	Spring Whitlow Grass	(Draba verna)
	Common Toothwort	(Dentaria californica)
	American Wintercress	(Barbarea orthoceras)
Saxifragaceae	Woodland Star	(Lithophragma affine)
	Crevice Heuchera	(Heuchera micrantha)
Ranunculaceae	Western Buttercup	(Ranunculus occidentalis)
	Crimson Columbine	(Aquilegia formosa)
	Menzies' Larkspur	(Delphinium menzeisii)
Onagraceae	Farewell-to-Spring	(Clarkia amoena)
	Enchanter's Nightshade	(Circaea alpine)
Rosaceae	Sticky Cinquefoil	(Potentilla glandulosa)
	Wood Strawberry	(Fragaria vesca)
Fabaceae	Clover	(Trifolium sp.)
Leguminosae	Wild Pea	(Lathyrus sp.)
	Winter Vetch	(Vicia villosa)
Rubiaceae	Bedstraw	(Galium aparine)
Aristolochiaceae	Wild Ginger	(Asarum caudatum)
Apocynaceae	Spreading dogbane	(Apocynum androsaemifolium)
Lamiaceae	Clasping Henbit	(Lamium amplexicaule)
	Yerba Buena	(Satureja douglasii)
	Self-heal	(Prunella vulgaris)
Boraginaceae	Giant Houndstongue	(Cynoglossum grande)
Scrophulariaceae	Giant Mullein	(Verbascum thapsus)
	Snowqueen	(Synthyris reniformis)
	Indian Paintbrush	(Castilleja sp.)
	Water Speedwell	(Veronica anagallis-aquatica)
Hydrophyllaceae	Vari-leaf Nemophila	(Nemophila heterophylla)

Family	Common Name	Scientific Name
Plantaginaceae	English Plantain	(Plantago lanceolata)
Apiaceae	Queen Anne's Lace	(Daucus carota)
Umbelliferae	Pacific Snakeroot	(Sanicula crassicaulis)
	Purple Sweet-ciciley	(Osomorhiza purpurea)
	Hedge-parsley	(Yeabea sp. or Torilis sp.)
Hypericaceae	St. John's Wort	(Hypericum perforatum)
Asteraceae	Deltoid Balsamroot	(Balsamorhiza deltoidea)
Compositae	Tower Butterweed	(Senecio integerrimus)
	Chicory	(Chichorium intybus)
	Ox Eye Daisy	(Leucanthemum vulgare)
	Dandelion	(Tarxacum officinale)
	White Hawkweed	(Hieracium albiflorum)
	White Salsify	(Tragopogon dubius)
	Yellow Star Thistle	(Centaurea solstitialis)
	Bull Thistle	(Cirsium vulgare)
	Yarrow	(Achillea millefolium)
	Bachelor Buttons	(Centaurea cyanus)
	False Dandelion	(Hypochoeris radicata)
	Wild Lettuce	(Lactuca sp.)
	Trail Plant	(Adenocaulon bicolor)
	Common sow-thistle	(Sonchus oleraceus)
	Woodland Madia	(Madia madioides)
Orbanchaceae	Ground Cone	(Boschniakia hookeri)
Polypodiaceae	Licorice Fern	(Polypodium glycyrrhiza)
Dryopteridaceae	Swordfern	(Polysticum munitum)
	Fragile Fern	(Cystopteris fragilis)
Equisetaceae	Giant Horsetail	(Equisetum telmateia)
	Common Scouring-rush	(Equisetum hyemale)
Juncaceae	Common Rush	(Juncus effusus)



History



EMIGRANT LAKE

The Talent Irrigation District’s Emigrant Lake dam impounds Emigrant Creek, which derived its name in the early 1850s when exhausted settlers with their wagon trains descended westward into the valley from the high country. These people were traveling the final stretch of the 1846 Southern Emigrant Road (or “Applegate Trail”), an alternative route to the main Oregon Trail. Leaving their Midwestern home towns and farms behind to find an unknown land, they considered themselves to be “emigrants,” not “immigrants”—hence the name.

LAMB MINE TRAIL

Around 1910, Ashland businessman A.L. Lamb began developing a “hard-rock” gold mine located high on the ridge between town and upper Ashland Creek. Lamb extended a crude wagon road along the ridge crest up to his mine (a few remnants of the road are still visible to the watchful eye).

Worked sporadically only into the 1920s or so, the Lamb Mine (also known as the Bula Mine) produced very little gold. However, some of its evidence—including sections of the old ditch next to the trail—can be found in this vicinity. (Gold-prospecting continued elsewhere along the ridge even into the 1950s-60s, leaving pits, trenches, and collapsed vertical shafts scattered along the present trail system.)

ASHLAND CREEK

Ashland Creek was first called Rock Creek and then Mill Creek by the earliest settlers; lower Ashland Creek is where their community began. This section of fast-flowing stream, where it issues from the steep mountains and into the gentle valley, provided power for Ashland’s earliest lumber and flour mills. For this reason, Ashland’s “Plaza” grew up at this spot.

History



Ashland Creek originates on the summit of Mt. Ashland, 7,533 feet above sea level, the highest point in western Oregon. Ashland Creek is still the main source of Ashland's drinking water.

GRIZZLY PEAK

Standing like Ashland's distant sentinel, Grizzly Peak gradually rises from the valley to an elevation of over 5,700 feet above sea level. The early white explorers of southwestern Oregon understandably feared the area's ferocious and then-numerous grizzly bears. Grizzly Peak obtained its name in the mid-1850s when a young settler, busy rounding up cattle, barely escaped a fatal encounter near the summit. By the 1890s, the area's last grizzlies had been hunted to extinction.

WRIGHTS CREEK

The long-closed Ashland Mine (producer of gold during the late 19th and early 20th centuries) is situated in the upper reaches of the Wrights Creek drainage. Much of the area was burned in the 1959 Ashland Fire (which began from youngsters playing with matches near Jackson Hot Springs). The fire spread upslope and to the southeast, reaching into lower portions of the Ashland Creek watershed.

HAMILTON CREEK

Hamilton Creek was probably named for early-day Ashland-area settler R.J. Hamilton, a Tennessean who farmed along the lower stretches of this stream. The uppermost portions of Hamilton Creek flow through very steep granitic terrain. The falls on upper Hamilton Creek are formed by a hard granite ledge. Below the falls and for some distance above the end of Clay Street, Hamilton Creek's streambed exposes shale and sandstone of the Hornbrook Formation. The sandstone contains fossils of small marine shells from when most of southwestern Oregon lay beneath a shallow sea.

Some of the Hornbrook deposits have weathered into a reddish (and, when wet, very sticky) clay. In the early twentieth century, a small brick factory located near present-day Hillview Drive mined this Clay for making bricks.

WHITE RABBIT TRAIL

Much of the White Rabbit Trail system passes through the area of the 1973 Hillview fire. The burned area, mostly private timberland, was logged to salvage large trees. Soon after the fire, thousands of shoots of "barkless" Pacific madrone resprouted from the surviving root systems. Today, former tractor-logging skid-roads form some of the area's current hiking and biking trails, and young Ponderosa pine and Douglas fir are reclaiming the hillside.

Clusters of huge, round granite boulders sit along this trail system. These "monoliths" took shape through geological weathering via "spheroidal exfoliation." Sharp, angular chunks of rock slowly became rounded by the spalling-off of sharp edges (for example, through freeze/thaw action and intense heat from forest fires).

In the 1980s, apparently inspired by people hiking or biking beneath the graceful over-arching groves of red-barked manzanita, some Ashland residents dubbed one favorite route the “Alice in Wonderland Trail.” These people definitely “started something”—the Wonderland theme later spread to many trail names in the vicinity.

ASHLAND WATERSHED

The Ashland Creek watershed (i.e., its entire drainage area) includes over 20 square miles, most of it located within the Rogue River – Siskiyou National Forest. The watershed provides Ashland’s water supply. Its importance was recognized by the federal government in 1893, when President Cleveland proclaimed the Ashland Forest Reserve largely to protect the water supply from sheep grazing.

Geologically, the area is situated within the Ashland “batholith” (a now-exposed and deeply weathered body of granite and granite-like rocks that originated during the Jurassic Age). The watershed’s sandy, decomposed granitic soil is prone to severe erosion. Over the years, major “warm rain-deep snow” flood events (such as in 1947, 1955, 1964, 1974, and 1997) have carried huge quantities of sand and rock into Ashland’s Reeder Reservoir—and on a few of those occasions filled much of its water-storage area with debris.

Because of its high potential for accelerated rates of erosion—usually caused by fire, logging, or road building—some areas of the watershed are closed entirely, and some formerly open roads are now blocked to motor-vehicle traffic.

TOLMAN CREEK

This five-mile-long tributary of Neil Creek (which, in turn, joins Emigrant Creek to form Bear Creek) was named for one-time Oregon surveyor general and Jackson County judge, James C. Tolman. Judge Tolman settled a large farm near the mouth of the creek in the early 1850s. Tolman’s grave in the Ashland Cemetery is marked by a prominent obelisk; it was carved from the same Hornbrook Formation sandstone that underlies much of lower Tolman Creek. The creek’s upper drainage lies entirely within steep, highly erodible granitic terrain.

BEAR CREEK GREENWAY

Many years in the making and nearing completion, the Bear Creek Greenway is meant to provide a pedestrian and bike route along Bear Creek from near its mouth on the Rogue River south to Ashland and beyond.

New settlers bestowed the name Bear Creek in the early 1850s due to several near-fatal encounters with grizzly bears along its banks. Ashland’s section of the Greenway includes some beautiful, if small, remnant groves of mature Ponderosa pine and California black oak, a vegetation community that once characterized many portions of the Bear Creek Valley floor.

History



History



TALENT IRRIGATION DISTRICT

The Talent Irrigation District (TID) formed in the years around World War I to provide a dependable supply of irrigation water to upper Bear Creek Valley's orchardists, farmers, and ranchers. West Ashland Canal, a major "lateral canal," was dug during the early 1920s as part of TID's Hyatt Lake reservoir development. Known to many residents who regularly walk along it as simply "the TID Ditch," most of the West Ashland Canal's water comes from many miles away, in the mountains east of Emigrant Lake.

CENTRAL BIKE PATH (RAILROAD DISTRICT)

For much of its length, Ashland's main bike path closely parallels the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks. Although it is currently leased to a different, regional railroad operation, for many years Southern Pacific was the main north-south railroad line in the far West. Its construction through southwestern Oregon began in the early 1880s as the Oregon-and-California Railroad. The final rail link with California came in December 1887, when a large group of dignitaries gathered in a cold winter rain to participate in the "golden spike" ceremony.

The building of this line was significant nationally; it marked the completion of the country's circum-continental rail system. It was also of vital importance locally. With a roundhouse, shops, and a major passenger depot and hotel, Ashland became a true "railroad town." Its Railroad District was home to many railroad employees. Things changed in the late 1920s when most freight traffic switched to a shorter, easier route through Klamath Falls and Eugene. The "Shasta Daylight" passenger train finally ended its run through Ashland in the 1950s.