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*The comments of this pre-app are preliminary in nature and subject to change based upon the submittal of additional or different information. The Planning Commission or City Council are the final decision making authority of the City, and are not bound by the comments made by the Staff as part of this pre-application.*

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**ASHLAND PLANNING DIVISION**  
**PRE-APPLICATION CONFERENCE**  
**COMMENT SHEET** February 22, 2023

**SITE:** 1500 E. Main St.  
(ScienceWorks)  
**APPLICANT:** Sharpe  
**REQUEST:** Site Design Review for  
installation of mechanical equipment/solar

## **PLANNING DIVISION COMMENTS**

*This pre-application conference is intended to highlight significant issues before the applicant prepares and submits a formal application.*

**Summary:** The Ashland Municipal Code (AMC) requires Site Design Review for mechanical equipment that is not fully enclosed in a structure or if the mechanical equipment is visible from a public street or adjacent residentially zoned property. In addition, mechanical equipment is required to be fully screened by a fence, wall or landscaping. The proposal requires a Site Design Review approval for the installation of mechanical equipment.

Key issues for staff are demonstrating that: **1)** Placement does not adversely impact circulation, including fire apparatus access; **2)** placement does not adversely impact existing parking or required parking lot landscaping; **3)** placement does not adversely impact existing trees or other significant natural features; and **4)** that the installations can and will be completed in compliance will all applicable fire/life/safety regulations of the building code.

**Site Design Review Criteria:** The application must address the following criteria and standards from Ashland Municipal Code (AMC) 18.5.2.050 for a Site Design Review approval for commercial development.

- A. Underlying Zone.** *The proposal complies with all of the applicable provisions of the underlying zone (part 18.2), including but not limited to: building and yard setbacks, lot area and dimensions, density and floor area, lot coverage, building height, building orientation, architecture, and other applicable standards.*
- B. Overlay Zones.** *The proposal complies with applicable overlay zone requirements (part 18.3).*
- C. Site Development and Design Standards.** *The proposal complies with the applicable Site Development and Design Standards of part 18.4, except as provided by subsection E, below.*
- D. City Facilities.** *The proposal complies with the applicable standards in section 18.4.6 Public Facilities, and that adequate capacity of City facilities for water, sewer, electricity, urban storm drainage, paved access to and throughout the property, and adequate transportation can and will be provided to the subject property.*
- E. Exception to the Site Development and Design Standards.** *The approval authority may approve exceptions to the Site Development and Design Standards of part 18.4 if the*

*circumstances in either subsection 1 or 2, below, are found to exist.*

- 1. There is a demonstrable difficulty meeting the specific requirements of the Site Development and Design Standards due to a unique or unusual aspect of an existing structure or the proposed use of a site; and approval of the exception will not substantially negatively impact adjacent properties; and approval of the exception is consistent with the stated purpose of the Site Development and Design; and the exception requested is the minimum which would alleviate the difficulty.; or*
- 2. There is no demonstrable difficulty in meeting the specific requirements, but granting the exception will result in a design that equally or better achieves the stated purpose of the Site Development and Design Standards.*

**Site Circulations/Fire Apparatus Access:** A driveway serving more than seven parking spaces must be maintained to a minimum 20-foot clear width to a height of 13½ feet. The final application submittal would need to demonstrate that the placements proposed would not adversely affect vehicle circulation, including school buses or fire apparatus access.

**Driveway Vertical Clearances (AMC 18.4.3.080.D.6):** Driveways, aisles, turn-around areas and ramps shall have a minimum vertical clearance of 13.5 feet for their entire length and width. The application could not place the requested equipment where it would project into the vertical clearance area required for driveways, aisles or turn-around areas if a minimum 13½-foot clearance were not maintained.

**Fire Apparatus Access:** Final application submittals will need to demonstrate that the 13½-foot clearance required for fire apparatus access is maintained in all stages of operation, and the installation would not be able to extend into fire apparatus accessways. It would be advisable to consult both the Building Official and Fire Marshall and address fire apparatus access and emergency vehicle circulation in the application materials.

**Screening of Mechanical Equipment:** The application would need to request an Exception to the screening requirements for mechanical equipment in **AMC 18.4.4.030.G.4** which require that mechanical equipment installed at ground level be screened to limit view from public rights-of-way and adjacent residentially-zoned property with a fence, masonry wall or hedge screen and least equal in height to the equipment. The application will need to explain the difficulty in meeting this requirement due to a unique or unusual aspect of an existing structure or the proposed use, that approval will not substantially negatively impact adjacent properties, and approval is the minimum necessary to alleviate the difficulty and consistent with the purpose and intent of the standards.

**Significant Natural Features:** There is a wetland and a regulated creek near the installation proposed at ScienceWorks. The final applications would need to demonstrate that these areas are not proposed to be disturbed by the installation or any associated trenching.

**Tree Preservation, Protection and Removal:** An inventory of all trees six-inches in diameter at breast height and greater on the property and within 15 feet of the property boundaries including any street trees

is required with the application under AMC 18.4.5. The inventory must include detailed information prepared by a certified arborist including but not limited to species, diameter at breast height, condition, and drip line/protection area of each tree. The plan must clearly identify trees to be preserved and how they will be protected and show those trees to be removed, and address the tree removal permit requirements in AMC 18.5.7 for significant trees to be removed. Tree removal permit requests would be considered in light of the Tree Removal Permit criteria. *[The final application submittals could specify the limits of site disturbance proposed including any required trenching; the tree inventory and protection requirements would extend 15 feet beyond the limits of any disturbance.]*

**Impacts to Existing Approved Parking:** If bollards or other installations are necessary to protect the installation or cars within the parking lot, the space required for the installation and the bollards would need to be taken into account both in terms of parking space and driveway dimensions. For instance, if a three-foot buffer is required, this would amount to a six-foot radius around the installation which would detract from the adjacent two to four parking spaces and could alter the parking available to address parking and/or circulation within the parking lots. *(There may be cooperative parking agreements in place between SOU, the Armory, Growers Market, Middle School and Science Works for use of the Science Works parking lot during events and activities.)*

**Impacts to Required Parking Lot Landscaping/Parking Lot Treatment Standards:** Parking lots are typically required to include seven percent of the parking area in landscaping and to include one parking lot tree per seven parking spaces. The application would need to demonstrate that placement would not affect compliance with these standards.

**Scalable Site Plans:** The applications will need to include plans addressing the application submission requirements in AMC 18.5.2.040 including a site and landscaping plans drawn to a standard scale.

**Written Findings/Burden of Proof:** Applicants should be aware that written findings addressing the ordinance and all applicable criteria are required, and are heavily depended on in the decision making process for a planning action. In addition, the required plans are explained in writing below. The burden of proof is on the applicant(s) to ensure that all applicable criteria are addressed in writing and that all required plans, written findings, and other materials are submitted even if those items were not discussed in specific, itemized detail during this initial pre-application conference.

**Building Codes, Fire Codes and Electrical Codes:** The applicants would be well-advised to contact the Building Official, Fire Marshal and Electric Department to verify installation, permitting and metering requirements which might affect placement or permitting prior to preparing final application submittals.

**Neighborhood Outreach:** Staff always recommends applicants approach the affected neighbors to discuss proposals and try to address any concerns as early in the process as possible. Notices will be sent to owners of neighboring properties within a 200-foot radius, signs posted on the site and advertised in the local newspaper once an application is deemed complete. In many cases, it is better if neighbors first hear of the proposal from the applicants rather than by a more formal notice from the city.

## ZONING DISTRICT REQUIREMENTS

**Zoning:** SO (Southern Oregon University). Development requirements on campus are regulated through AMC 18.3.6 and through the Southern Oregon University Master Plan 2010-2020.

**Parking, Access and Internal Circulation:** As per AMC 18.4.3.

**Signage:** As per AMC 18.4.7. Campus signage is subject to a Campus Signage Master Plan approved through the Conditional Use Permit process; any additional signage or changes to existing signs may require Conditional Use Permit approval.

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## OTHER DEPARTMENT/AGENCY COMMENTS

**BUILDING:** *No specific comments at this time.* Electrical permits and inspections will be required. It would be advisable to consult with Building Official Steven Matiaco regarding any building code issues prior to submittal of permit drawings. Please contact the Building Division for any building codes-related questions at 541-488-5305.

**CONSERVATION:** For more information on available water conservation programs, including any available appliance rebates or assistance with landscaping and irrigation system requirements, or any financial or technical assistance available for the construction of Earth Advantage/Energy Star buildings, please contact Conservation Analyst/Inspector Dan Cunningham at 541-552-2063 or via e-mail to [dan.cunningham@ashland.or.us](mailto:dan.cunningham@ashland.or.us)

**ENGINEERING:** No comments at this time. Please contact Karl Johnson of the Engineering Division for any additional Public Works/Engineering-related information at 541-552-2415 or via e-mail to [karl.johnson@ashland.or.us](mailto:karl.johnson@ashland.or.us) .

**FIRE:** *See attached comments from Fire.* It would be advisable to contact Ralph Sartain from the Fire Department to clarify any Fire Department-related information at 541-552-2229 or via e-mail to [ralph.sartain@ashland.or.us](mailto:ralph.sartain@ashland.or.us) .

**WATER AND SEWER SERVICE:** No comments at this time. Please Contact Steve Walker at [541-552-2326](tel:541-552-2326) or via e-mail to [walkers@ashland.or.us](mailto:walkers@ashland.or.us) with any questions regarding water utilities.”

**ELECTRIC SERVICE:** Previous comments for installations at Science Works: “*Only concerns for Electric Department would be to advise applicant to follow COA Solar installation requirements for disconnecting devices and metering. Location behind Science works building would be outside primary metering and connected within COA metering.*” Electrical permits and inspections will be required.

Please contact Rick Barton in the Electric Department for service requirements and fee information. Rick can be reached at 541-552-2082 or via e-mail to [rick.barton@ashland.or.us](mailto:rick.barton@ashland.or.us).

**OREGON DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (ODOT):** “*We have no comments on the proposal.*” For any additional information from ODOT, please contact:

**Micah Horowitz, AICP** | Senior Transportation Planner  
ODOT Region 3 | Southwest Oregon (Coos, Curry, Douglas, Jackson & Josephine Counties)  
p: 541.774.6331 | c: 541.603.8431 | e: [micah.horowitz@odot.oregon.gov](mailto:micah.horowitz@odot.oregon.gov)

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## PROCEDURE

**Application Requirements:** Site Design Review for mechanical equipment is subject to a “Type I” procedure which includes an administrative decision made following public notice and a public comment period. Type I decisions provide an opportunity for appeal to the Planning Commission. For procedural & timeline details see:

[https://www.ashland.or.us/SIB/files/Comm%20Dev/Forms%2C%20Brochures%2C%20Handouts/Flowchart\\_Type\\_I\\_FY21-22\(1\).pdf](https://www.ashland.or.us/SIB/files/Comm%20Dev/Forms%2C%20Brochures%2C%20Handouts/Flowchart_Type_I_FY21-22(1).pdf)

## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

### Application Requirements.

1. Application Form and Fee. Applications for Type I review shall be made on forms provided by the Staff Advisor (see [https://www.ashland.or.us/SIB/files/Comm%20Dev/Forms%2C%20Brochures%2C%20Handouts/Zoning\\_Permit\\_Application\\_FY21-22.pdf](https://www.ashland.or.us/SIB/files/Comm%20Dev/Forms%2C%20Brochures%2C%20Handouts/Zoning_Permit_Application_FY21-22.pdf)). One or more property owners of the property for which the planning action is requested, and their authorized agent, as applicable, must sign the application. The application shall not be considered complete unless the appropriate application fee accompanies it.
2. Submittal Information. The application shall include all of the following information.
  - a. The information requested on the application form.
  - b. Plans and exhibits required for the specific approvals sought.
  - c. A written statement or letter explaining how the application satisfies each and all of the relevant criteria and standards in sufficient detail.
  - d. Information demonstrating compliance with all prior decision(s) and conditions of approval for the subject site, as applicable.
  - e. The required fee (see the end of this document, and further detail at: [https://www.ashland.or.us/SIB/files/Comm%20Dev/Forms%2C%20Brochures%2C%20Handouts/2021-07-01\\_PlanningFees.pdf](https://www.ashland.or.us/SIB/files/Comm%20Dev/Forms%2C%20Brochures%2C%20Handouts/2021-07-01_PlanningFees.pdf)).

The Ashland Land Use Ordinance in its entirety may be accessed on-line at:  
<https://ashland.municipal.codes/LandUse> .

**PLAN & EXHIBIT REQUIREMENTS:** *Two (2) copies of the plans below on paper no larger than 11"x 17". Note: These copies may be used for the Planning Commission packets and for the notices mailed to neighbors - please submit clear, readable, reproducible copies.*

- Two (2) Copies of the materials required for a Site Design Review approval as detailed in <https://ashland.municipal.codes/LandUse/18.5.2.040>.
- Two (2) Copies of a Tree Protection Plan as required in <https://ashland.municipal.codes/LandUse/18.4.5.030>.
- Two (2) Copies of the plans required for a Tree Removal Permit as required in <https://ashland.municipal.codes/LandUse/18.5.7.030> (if tree removal is proposed).

**RELEVANT CRITERIA AND STANDARDS:** Applicants are advised that in addition to required plans, written findings addressing how the ordinance criteria are satisfied in narrative format are required. The applicable criteria are included below.

- Two (2) Copies of written findings addressing the following criteria for Site Design Review approval detailed in <https://ashland.municipal.codes/LandUse/18.5.2.050>.
- Two (2) copies of written findings addressing the following criteria for Tree Removal Permit from <https://ashland.municipal.codes/LandUse/18.5.7.040.B.2>. (if applicable to the final proposal).

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<b>SUBMITTAL DEADLINES (For Hearings Only):</b>	First Friday of Each Month
<b>HEARING DATES (Planning Commission):</b>	Second Tuesday of Each Month
<b>FEES:</b>	
Site Design Review (Type I):	\$ 1,120.25
Total Application Fee	\$ 1,120.25

**NOTE:** Applications are accepted on a first come-first served basis. All applications received are reviewed and must be found to be complete before being processed. Applications will not be accepted without a complete application form signed by the applicant(s) and property owner(s), all required materials and full payment. **Applications are reviewed for completeness in accordance with ORS 227.178.**

**For further information, please contact:**

Derek Severson, *Senior Planner*  
City of Ashland, Department of Community Development  
Phone: 541-552-2040 or e-mail: [derek.severson@ashland.or.us](mailto:derek.severson@ashland.or.us)