

# CITY NEWS

*Better Together*



Photo Bob Palermini

City of Ashland  
ashland.or.us

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## THE PROPOSED CITY BUDGET HAS BEEN PUBLISHED Joseph L. Lessard, City Manager

The proposed 2023–2025 Biennial Budget has been published and is available at [ashland.or.us/23-25Budget](https://ashland.or.us/23-25Budget).

The City strives to deliver services that are essential and enhance the quality of life of Ashland's citizens. In March 2023, the Mayor and City Council formally adopted Priorities to take the City into the 23-25 Biennium and beyond. The priorities are:

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

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

The Council Priorities were preceded by the adoption of Vision and Value Statements for the City in the summer of 2022. View the Vision and Value statements at [ashland.or.us/VisionandValues](https://ashland.or.us/VisionandValues).

The 2023–2025 Biennium Budget will cover a two-year period, beginning July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2025.

Learn more about the City, the budget process and more at [ashland.or.us](https://ashland.or.us). **"We are better together!"**



Joseph L. Lessard



Tonya Graham  
Mayor



Paula Hyatt  
Councilor  
Position No. 1



Dylan Bloom  
Councilor  
Position No. 2



Jeff Dahle  
Councilor  
Position No. 3



Bob Kaplan  
Councilor  
Position No. 4



Gina DuQuenne  
Councilor  
Position No. 5



Eric Hansen  
Councilor  
Position No. 6

## COUNCIL OUTCOMES May 2023

In the summer of 2022, we began talking about an **IGA** (intergovernmental agreement) between the **City, SOU (Southern Oregon University)** and **ASD (Ashland School District)** to form a **joint-Emergency Operations Center (EOC)**. This effort has been led by our Emergency Management Coordinator, **Kelly Burns**. The new EOC will provide collaborative and coordinated support for response and recovery to large-scale emergencies in Ashland and our surrounding communities--- It's really a Southern Valley approach! At the May 2, 2023, City Council meeting, Councilors unanimously approved the IGA for the EOC.

**Brandon Goldman** and **Linda Reid** presented at the May 2, 2023, City Council meeting on the **Housing Production Strategy (HPS)**. We have completed the process of developing an HPS to identify and prioritize a variety of strategies and actions for accommodating needed housing within our community. This effort has been supported by a grant from the State Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) with consultant services provided by ECONorthwest. The Final HPS report identifies a set of specific actions we will undertake over an eight-year period to address the housing needs in Ashland. Council unanimously adopted this resolution and praised staff for the good work! Councilor Hyatt highlighted the collaborative work that took place over a two-year period between various bodies such as the Planning Department, the Housing and Human Services Committee, Planning Commission, the Advisory Committee and various community members.

At the May 16, 2023, City Council meeting, Council approved the proposed **Emergency Traffic Routes and Non-Congregate City Facilities Security Camera Policy**, as presented by **Scott Fleury** and **Mike Morrison**. Traffic management cameras, placed in critical traffic routes and emergency management related locations, will provide real time, publicly available monitoring of community evacuation route conditions, and not for traffic enforcement purposes. This action will allow for people to better plan their evacuation route or decide to shelter in place when necessary. The cameras will function much like the ODOT (Oregon Department of Transportation) Tripcheck cameras.

We currently have vacancies on the following committees/commissions:

- **Housing and Human Services Committee**
- **Planning Commission**
- **Public Arts Committee**
- **Transportation Committee**

If you know of anyone in the Ashland community who would like to serve on one of these bodies, please have them fill out an online application.

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



### ASHLAND CHAMBER of COMMERCE Local Business Spotlight

**Tail of the Sun Network Chiropractic** is owned and operated by Dr Luke Schmelzle. Dr. Luke specializes in liberating stress energy that is stored in the nervous system, muscles and tendons. Learn more at [tailofthesunsa.com](http://tailofthesunsa.com).

Dr Luke is also involved in the annual **Ashland Chamber 4th of July Community Celebration!** The 2023 Celebration will be his second official year as Parade Chair; however, he has been involved with the committee for many years. Thank you for your service to the community Dr Luke!

For information on the **2023 4th of July Festivities**, see the July Events section on p 4.



### BASECAMP ASHLAND Live Like a Local



We are fortunate to live in such a beautiful city with incredible outdoor opportunities in and around Ashland--- Southern Oregon abounds with outdoor recreation and Ashland makes a great basecamp to do and see it all!

**Big Red Mountain---** This moderate 3.4 mile out-and-back trail near town, is a beautiful hike through forest and alpine meadows on metamorphic rock. The elevation gain is 826' and is on part of the Pacific Crest Trail in the Cascade Siskiyou Mountain Range. The trail is approximately 10 miles southwest of Ashland.

Check out all there is to do in Southern Oregon by visiting [TravelAshland.com](http://TravelAshland.com), @TravelAshlandOregon on social media and use the hashtags #Basecamp #BasecampAshland #LiveLikeLocal.

## COMMUNICATIONS *Better Together*

View our monthly NEWSLETTERS and "INSIDE THE CITY REPORTS" at [ashland.or.us/Communications](http://ashland.or.us/Communications). Are you CURIOUS about something in Ashland? Just ask us at [ashland.or.us/Curiosity](http://ashland.or.us/Curiosity).

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

## CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

You can take steps to help reduce water usage and promote water efficiency. More at [AshlandSavesWater.org](http://AshlandSavesWater.org), including information on an indoor/outdoor water evaluation audits, lawn replacement, smart sprinkler controller program and more! You can also take part in rebate programs that are not only good for the environment, but good for your wallet.

## ARE YOU PREPARED? Let us help you be Better Prepared for an Emergency

- **Know your Evacuation Zone**—View our interactive map. Enter your address and find your zone. Download the map and keep one in your Go Kit, and one on the fridge or near your front door
  - **Know the Evacuation Levels**—  
Level 1: **Be Ready** | Level 2: **Be Set** | Level 3: **Go!**
  - **Sign up for Alerts**—Stay informed by signing yourself up! Do you have tweens, teenagers or young adults with mobile devices? Each member in your household should register for alerts, so everyone is receiving the same alert to know what is happening
  - **Get Ready**—Pack your Go Kit! Check out the Ashland Chamber of Commerce Emergency Preparedness Toolkit to help you get ready
  - Review valuable information at [FireAdaptedAshland.org](http://FireAdaptedAshland.org) to learn steps you can take to make your home and property better prepared for a wildfire, including signing up for a FREE 1-hour Wildfire Risk Assessment for your home
  - Visit our [SmokewiseAshland.org](http://SmokewiseAshland.org) site for preparedness and health information when there is smoke
- All of this and more can be found at [ashland.or.us/BetterPrepared](http://ashland.or.us/BetterPrepared), because we are **Better Together!**

## BUDGET BITES What do I get for my money?

Do you wonder where the money to finance the City comes from and how that money is spent? Ashland revenue is primarily collected from the fees paid for services; however, there are other sources of revenue. Below is one revenue source that is often asked about: The **Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT)**.

The **TOT is also referred to as the hotel/motel tax**. This tax generates approximately \$3M per year and is used for three purposes:

- 1) Economic and Cultural Development
- 2) Tourism Promotion.
- 3) The remainder goes into the General Fund to help support services that are important to tourism, like police and fire protection, transportation, community planning and more.

The hotels/motels keep five percent (%5) of the money collected as payment for processing.

Visit our Finance page at [ashland.or.us/Finance](http://ashland.or.us/Finance) to learn more.

The CITIZENS' BUDGET COMMITTEE will make recommendations to the City Council this month. The Council will adopt a final budget by June 30, 2023. The 2023-2025 Biennium Budget will cover July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2025.

### BUDGET PRIORITY CONCENTRATIONS FOR 2023-2025

<b>Management for Excellence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equity of Access</li> <li>• Customer Focus</li> <li>• Communication/Transparency</li> <li>• Partnering for Success</li> </ul>	<b>Economic Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Downtown &amp; University Districts</li> <li>• Eco-Tourism/Outdoor Recreation</li> <li>• Business Retention &amp; Attraction</li> </ul>
<b>Livable Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Character</li> <li>• Parks &amp; Recreation</li> <li>• Mobility</li> <li>• Utility Services</li> </ul>	<b>Affordability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attainable Housing</li> <li>• Progressive Rate Structures</li> <li>• Childcare/Early Childhood Dev.</li> <li>• Ashland Fiber Network</li> </ul>
<b>Risk Reduction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wildfire Risk Reduction</li> <li>• Climate and Energy Action Plan</li> <li>• Public Safety/Emergency Services</li> </ul>	<b>Invest in the Future</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technology</li> <li>• Facilities</li> <li>• Public Infrastructure</li> </ul>

## SAVE ENERGY & SAVE \$\$\$

Request your FREE Energy Savings Kit Today!

The City of Ashland supports your efforts to save energy. Since every little bit helps, we hope this offer of a FREE Energy Savings Kit will help lower your energy bill and brighten your day.

Your FREE Energy Kit will contain 20 LED general purpose lightbulbs and one advanced power strip. Did you know LED lightbulbs use 85% less energy than incandescent bulbs? To maximize your savings, use LEDs to replace incandescent bulbs in high use areas. Load-sensing power strips save energy by turning off connected devices such as speakers and monitors when you turn off your TV or computer. Energy Saving Kits available while supplies last!

Visit [ashland.gpfulfillment.com](http://ashland.gpfulfillment.com) or call 503.907.2903 to request your FREE kit.





## NEW TRAILS IN ASHLAND

Community partnerships make amazing things happen!

In April 2023, Parks and Recreation acquired the Palen Property for the City's Open Space Park Program. The acquisition of this property is the final piece in securing a perpetual trail connection through the Alice in Wonderland Trail Corridor in the Ashland Watershed, which connects to USFS land. This important connection to the existing sanctioned trail network and easements will provide a safer, more user-specific experience for hikers, trail runners, mountain bikers and equestrians.



Alice in Wonderland Trail, photo by Madison Hornig

In May, we welcomed another new addition to the trail network--- A spicy flow trail named Wasabi! This new trail is near the Lower Wonder trailhead, just up from the Swim Reservoir in Lithia Park. Wasabi is a mountain bike trail that is designed for to intermediate riders but is spicy enough for all riders to enjoy. There are three optional technical features for advanced riders.



Map of the new Wasabi Trail

The 50+ miles of trails in the Ashland Watershed is made possible through collaboration with local groups like AWTA (Ashland Trails and Woodlands Association) and the RVMB (Rogue Valley Mountain Bike Association) who volunteer their time and expertise in helping to create and maintain a world-class trail system!

"We are better together!"



## UTILITIES

Is your utility account past due?

Take action now to bring your account current. The Utility Billing Department will be resuming past due processing this month. For payment options, please visit [ashland.or.us/utilities](http://ashland.or.us/utilities).

## JULY EVENTS...

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

The **Ashland City Band** will offer a **FREE concert** in Lithia Park at the Butler Memorial Bandshell on Thursdays this summer at 7 p.m., with a pre-concert ensemble at 6:15 p.m. A special 4th of July performance will take place at noon at the Bandshell.

Join the **Ashland Senior Services Division** for **Drumtastic Beats** on Wednesday, July 5, 1 to 2 p.m. Learn fun and easy drumming techniques. Bring your grandkids or other youth in your life--- This class is for all ages! Drums will be provided or bring your own. This FREE program is co-sponsored by Britt. Pre-register by calling 541.488.5342.

Also at the **Ashland Senior Center**, on Wednesday, July 26, 1 to 3 p.m., **Author Talk: Sue DeMarinis, Hidden in Haarlem**. Local author, DeMarinis, will read from and discuss her novel. This event is FREE and sponsored by the **Rogue Valley Manor**. Pre-register by calling 541.488.5342. The **Ashland Senior Center** is located at 1699 Homes Ave. More information on all Senior Services programs at [ashland seniorservices.org/events](http://ashland seniorservices.org/events).

Don't miss the annual **4th of July Festivities**. The theme for this year is, **"Together We Thrive!"** The fun will kick off with the Ashland Parks & Recreation Run at 7:45 a.m., with the Parade at 10 a.m., followed by family-friendly activities in Lithia Park and more! For information on the **2023 4th of July Festivities**, visit the Ashland Chamber of Commerce website at [ashlandchamber.com](http://ashlandchamber.com). To register for the Parks & Recreation Run visit [ashland.or.us/JulyRun](http://ashland.or.us/JulyRun). Registration for both the 2-mile fun run and the 10K is open! (Cover photo, by Bob Palermi, is of the annual 4th of July Parade.)

## AIRPORT MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

City Receives Critical Oregon Airport Relief Grant

Public Works has established the Airport Management Advisory Committee (MAC), formerly Airport Committee, to review the rate structure and make recommendations for changes. This is part of the miscellaneous fee process approved by Council annually.

In addition, MAC will discuss the Airport Taxiway Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Project, scheduled to begin July 10, 2023. MAC will assist in outreach efforts regarding the construction phase, which will impact airport use for an estimated three months.

Project Summary for the Airport Taxiway Rehab: The parallel taxiway at the Ashland Airport is shown in the 2016 ODA (Oregon Department of Aviation) Pavement Maintenance report as satisfactory to poor. Work elements for the project are general mill and overlay of the taxiway, new subsurface drainage, new taxiway edge lights and new mandatory lighted HOLD position signs. The Federal Aviation Administration has funded this project at 90%. The City has received a Critical Oregon Airport Relief (COAR) grant that will fund \$150,000 of the total 10% match required. The Airport Fund will cover any remaining project costs.

