



Council Business Meeting

July 18, 2023

Agenda Item	Early Childhood Affordability Grant Program	
From	Joseph Lessard	City Manager
Contact	joe.lessard@ashland.or.us ; 541-552-2103	
Item Type	Requested by Council <input type="checkbox"/> Update <input type="checkbox"/> Request for Direction <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input type="checkbox"/>	

SUMMARY

This agenda item is for Council consideration of the conceptual plan to issue grants to Ashland licensed preschool or daycare providers that will in turn provide affordability scholarships to customers that qualify as low-moderate income households in need of childcare financial assistance. The timing of this proposal is to expedite the

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED

The Economic Roundtable conducted by the City Council on March 6, 2023, identified the need for a partnership to develop early childhood development or care options for the Ashland community (see attached Economic Roundtable – “Better Together” Next Steps).

On March 21, 2023, Council adopted a motion adopting its 2023–2025 BN Budget priorities that included the following:

- Wildfire Risk Reduction & CEAP Execution
- Economic Development
- Affordability

On May 16, 2023, the Council voted to establish an Ad Hoc Committee on Early Learning at the request of Councilor Hyatt to create a tangible network of early learning care options within the Ashland community (see attached Request for Early Learning Ad Hoc Committee). At the Regular Meeting of June 20, 2023, Council confirmed the Mayor’s appointment of six members to the Ad Hoc Committee which also included Councilors Hyatt and Bloom, an Ashland School District member and a potential City Manager’s Office assigned participant (see attached Council Communication for Ad Hoc Committee for Affordable Childcare and Early Learning Appointments).

The 2023–2025 BN Budget includes funding appropriations of \$120,000 each fiscal year for an affordable childcare initiative (BN Budget total of \$240,000).

On June 6, 2023, Council authorized an Early Learning Small Grant to ScienceWorks Museum in the amount of \$5,000 to serve as matching funds to the purchase of two temporary classrooms and a bathroom modular building for use in developing an early childhood learning program (see attached Council Communication for the Early Learning Small Grant Opportunity – ScienceWorks Museum).

BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION





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For affordability scholarships to be available to qualified low and moderate Ashland households seeking early childcare options at/near the start of the next Ashland School District scholastic year, it is timely for Council to authorize the corresponding grant issuance plan for implementation. The plan is as follows:

- The goal of the Early Childhood Affordability Grant Program is:
 - To remove household financial barriers to economic stability
 - To maximize community wellness
 - To help expand community choice for early childhood care services
 - Support post COVID economic development
 - Support local key economic institutions and businesses

- Establish a pilot program that issues grants to licensed preschool or daycare providers in Ashland. The pilot program will only award grants for the FY 2023-2024 budget year. Grant awards will be made on a competitive basis from applications submitted by early childhood service providers. In addition to the requested application information, provider applicants should be interviewed and receive site visits as part of the award process. The draft timeline for applications is the following.
 - July 20, 2023 – Announcement/notification of upcoming Affordable Childcare Grant Program
 - July 25, 2023 – Issue formal grant solicitation announcement including City website posting of application materials
 - August 4, 2023 – Program orientation/input meeting for prospective grant applicants with Ad Hoc Committee and City staff
 - August 7, 2023 – Potential deadline for grant applicant’s notice of interest (may be required for subsequent grant consideration)
 - August 14, 2023 – 12:00 p.m. grant application deadline
 - August 15-18, 2023 – Staff review process of received grant applications for completeness and preliminary evaluation/ranking
 - August 21-25, 2023 – Ad Hoc Committee grant application review and recommendation process (potential applicant interviews and site visits)
 - September 5, 2023 – City Council award of grants
 - September 8-15, 2023 – First grant allocation payouts to grant recipients

- Grant applications will only be accepted from non-profit, certified/licensed childcare providers offering service within the City of Ashland. A grant application is being developed by City staff similar to those use for City for social services grants. The Grant application is anticipated to require the following types of information:

Applicant Entity Information

- Applicant narrative on organizational priorities/mission and values, history, board membership, etc.
- Documentation of financial viability (such as 990 tax form, most recent income tax filings, etc.)
- Staff profiles including formal and continuing education accomplishments/requirements
- Documentation of non-profit status
- Documentation of state certification/licensure of applicant/childcare facilities



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- Description of type of childcare services offered (preschool/childcare, special needs services, ages served, days/time of service, family-child needs screening/planning, and auxiliary services offered such as meals, health screening, transportation, etc.)

Grant Funding Request

- Grant funding request amount and anticipated number of scholarship awards
- Description of applicant's proposed affordability scholarship public information/marketing efforts
- Scholarships Award Information (grant recipients may be requested to adjust their scholarship award plans to meet grant award conditions for consistency between multiple recipients)
- Description of applicant's proposed scholarship program, including household income affordability thresholds (minimum and maximum percentage of Oregon/regional median family income level eligible for affordability scholarships)
- Draft scholarship award sliding scale based on verified need and award priority
- Outline of information required from households to evaluate potential scholarship eligibility

Program Monitoring

- Anticipated/recommended outcome measures to be reported, including related to scholarships award amounts and demographic information
 - Quarterly reporting and reviews will evaluate the availability of underutilized grant/scholarship funding; underutilized funding may be subject to recapture by the City and re-award
- Affordability scholarships awarded by a grant recipient will be on the following basis:
 - Ashland residents
 - Ashland business or local government employees
 - Grant recipients will be required to reserve a minimum of child placement seats/slots for City of Ashland employee households up a preschool year application deadline mutually agreed to by the grant recipient and City. After the preschool year deadline, any unused reserved City employee household seats will be released for other applicants. City of Ashland employee households will not receive preferential affordability scholarship consideration and will need to separately qualify for a scholarship under the grant recipients award verification and sliding scale award criteria.
 - FY 2023-2024 provider applications will be solicited for up to a total \$100,000 of available City grant funding. Initial grant awards are anticipated to be paid on a quarterly basis with the first installment immediately available (to balance the need for adequate pilot program funding control with the need to make scholarships availability to support provider operations in a business timely manner). End of quarter reporting will be required from each grant recipient provider in advance of subsequent grant allocations/payouts.

FY 2024-2025 pilot program provider applications will be solicited for a new competitive process that will may include potential renewal and new provider applicants. A prior year grant award does not guarantee an award in the FY 2024-2025 program year. This solicitation will be based on learnings from the FY 2023-2024 pilot program.

Subsequent biennial budgets continuation of grant program funding is solely at the discretion of the City Council and may not be continued base in its 2025-2027 BN Budget deliberations and decisions.



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- City grant funding should be considered by provider applicants as last-in funding. That is, available affordability funding from other sources (such as Preschool Promise, Head Start, SNAP, foundations/donors, local employers, etc.) should be considered the first applied affordability support for each potential low or moderate household seeking early childcare support. Applicants will be requested to indicate their potential other funding source or solicitation efforts as part of their City grant application.
- The \$15,000 balance of FY 2023–2024 available funding for early childhood programming will be held by the City as a pilot program contingency for unanticipated needs or opportunities, or for grant award later in the fiscal year.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The Early Childhood Affordability Grant Program is a new and unprecedented initiative by the City. As such, its application process and implementation are proposed as a pilot program to allow continual evaluation and updating throughout the FY 2023–2024 year. Ongoing and constructive feedback from its participants and other stakeholders will be necessary as the program proceeds to assure it meets its performance goals and community expectations. The proposed plan should be considered a starting point for its implementation and feedback.

FISCAL IMPACTS

Funding is available within the FY 2023–2024 budget for the Early Childhood Affordability Grant Program. City FY 2023–2024 balance of available funding is \$115,000.

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS

City staff recommends adoption of the Early Childhood Affordability Grant Program conceptual plan:

I move to adopt the Early Childhood Affordability Grant Program plan and authorize City staff begin its implementation with the goal of making its grant awards and funding available on the plan's draft timeline.

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

Attached documents:

1. Economic Roundtable – “Better Together” Next Steps
2. Request for Early Learning Ad Hoc Committee
3. Council Communication for Ad Hoc Committee for Affordable Childcare and Early Learning Appointments
4. Council Communication for the Early Learning Small Grant Opportunity – ScienceWorks Museum



CITY OF ASHLAND
Economic Roundtable – “Better Together” Next Steps
April 7, 2023

Introduction

The City of Ashland’s March 6, 2023, Economic Roundtable attendees identified three “Better Together” next step topics that can be confronted jointly with the aim of converting economic challenges into economic opportunities for Ashland. (Please see Economic Roundtable Attendees list, pages 4 and 5). Each of the next steps is a partnered effort by key community leaders and local core economic institutions to address the identified topic:

1. Partnership to Build the Ashland Brand Community
2. Partnership to Envision the University District Activity Center
3. Partnership for Affordable Childcare & Early Child Development

Next Steps

The purpose of this document is to request the following:

- o Participation of those individuals and/or core economic institutions in the above-listed partnerships – Progress on the three topics will require the development of community-based plans and implementation recommendations that can be considered by each of the partnering individuals and/or institutions for implementation. Pages 2 and 3 include draft project descriptions, suggested convening/managing partners and initially identified planning/project team co-leads.

Please take a few moments to consider the suggestions and identify by return email if you are interested in participating as a team member in one or more of the identified partnerships. Responses should be returned to the Ashland City Manager, Joseph Lessard, at joe.lessard@ashland.or.us.

- o Identification of immediately actionable coordination and/or budget efforts – Given that collaboration on each topic’s planning effort is likely to advance into the next fiscal year, it is timely that potentially participating partner local entities also anticipate their resource needs for future efforts over the next budget years (planning and implementation) and attempt to plan/budget accordingly.

Guiding Principles

These partnerships are each intended to advance a community effort toward meeting the City’s adopted Vision and Values (please see City of Ashland Vision & Values, page 6).

The Economic Roundtable attendees also concurred that community partnering efforts should improve opportunities for all residents and visitors to Ashland to experience an authentic welcome and thereby build a more sustainable and vibrant local economy that stresses the following:

- ❖ Partnering / Collaboration / Mutual Support
- ❖ Belonging / Accessibility / Inclusion / Equity / Diversity



1. Partnership to Build the Ashland Brand Community

This is a collaborative marketing and outreach effort by key economic participants in Ashland to create opportunities for residents, tourists and businesses to access information and offerings that connects them with live, work and play opportunities in Ashland, Oregon. This effort is focused on building a strong experience focused relationship with those interested in living, visiting and working in the Ashland community.

Suggested Convening/Managing Partners:

City of Ashland (CoA)

Travel Ashland

Planning/Project Team Co-Leads:

1. Dorinda Cottle, Communication Officer, CoA
1. Katharine Cato, Director, Ashland Travel

2. Partnership to Envision the University District Activity Center

This partnership initiative is to jointly plan and support potential future development of a University District at Southern Oregon University (SOU) that would diversify the City's economic base and support SOU by enhancing Ashland's student life experience.

Suggested Convening/Managing Partners:

City of Ashland (CoA)

Southern Oregon University (SOU)

Planning/Project Team Co-Leads:

2. Brandon Goldman, Community Development, CoA
3. Greg Perkinson, Vice President for Finance & Administration, SOU



3. Partnership/Ad Hoc Committee for Affordable Childcare & Early Childhood Development

This partnering effort is to plan potential advancement of early childhood development (childcare) options for the Ashland community. The Ashland City Council has voted to establish an Ad Hoc Advisory Committee to advance this effort under the attached Request for Early Learning Ad Hoc Committee (pages 7 and 8).

Suggested Convening/Managing Partners:

City of Ashland (CoA)

Ashland School District (ASD)

Planning/Project Team Co-Leads:

1. Paula Hyatt _____, CoA Councilor, Ad Hoc Committee Sponsor
2. Samuel Bogdanove _____, ASD Superintendent,
3. City Manager's Office designee TBD _____, CoA



Economic Roundtable Attendees

March 6, 2023

The partnering consensus on next steps was supported by the attendees at the Roundtable which included the following:

1. Tonya Graham, Mayor of the City of Ashland, tonya@council.ashland.or.us
2. Paula Hyatt, Councilor and Chair of Council for the City of Ashland, paula.hyatt@council.ashland.or.us
3. Gina DuQuenne, Councilor for the City of Ashland, gina.duquenne@council.ashland.or.us
4. Bob Kaplan, Councilor for the City of Ashland, bob@council.ashland.or.us
5. Eric Hansen, Councilor for the City of Ashland, eric@council.ashland.or.us
6. Rick Landt, Ashland Parks and Recreation Commissioner (APRC), commissioner_Landt@external.ashland.or.us
7. Pam Marsh, State Representative for Southern Jackson County, Rep.PamMarsh@oregonlegislature.gov
8. Dave Dotterer, Jackson County Commissioner, DotterDG@jacksoncounty.org
9. Victor Chang, Chair of the Ashland School District (ASD), victor.chang@ashland.k12.or.us
10. Samuel Bogdanove, ASD Superintendent, Samuel.Bogdanove@ashland.k12.or.us
11. Sheila Clough, Vice-Chair of the Southern Oregon University Board of Trustees, trusteeclough@sou.edu
12. Dr. Rick Bailey, President of Southern Oregon University (SOU), baileyr1@sou.edu
13. Diane Yu, Board of Trustee Chair of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF), Diane.yu@nyu.edu
14. Sachta Card, Board of Trustee Member of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF), Sachta2121@gmail.com
15. Anyania Muse, Interim Chief Operating Officer of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF), anyaniam@osfashland.org
16. Tara Houston Cultural and Community Liaison of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF), tarah@osfashland.org
17. Dr. Steven Hersch, Vice President of Medical Affairs and Administrator for Ashland Asante Community Hospital, Steven.Hersch@asante.org
18. Colleen Padilla, Executive Director of Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development Inc. (SORED), colleen@soredi.org
19. Gary Blake, President of the Ashland Chamber of Commerce Board, GBlake@recology.com
20. Sandra Slattery, Executive Director of the Ashland Chamber of Commerce, sandra@ashlandchamber.com
21. Katharine Cato, Director of Travel Ashland, katharine@ashlandchamber.com
22. Joseph Lessard, City Manager for the City of Ashland, joe.lessard@ashland.or.us
23. Sabrina Cotta, Deputy City Manager for the City of Ashland, Sabrina.cotta@ashland.or.us



Additional Contact Information

1. Nataki Garrett, Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF), natakig@osfashland.org
2. Dylan Bloom, Councilor for the City of Ashland, dylan.bloom@council.ashland.or.us
3. Jeff Dahle, Councilor for the City of Ashland, jeff.dahle@council.ashland.or.us
4. Greg Perkinson, Vice President for Finance & Administration for SOU, perkinsog@sou.edu
5. Brandon Goldman, Interim Director for CoA Community Development,
brandon.goldman@ashland.or.us
6. Dorinda Cottle, Communications Officer for CoA, dorinda.cottle@ashland.or.us



CITY OF ASHLAND VISION & VALUES

Vision for Success

- *Ashland is a resilient, sustainable community that maintains the distinctive quality of place for which it is known.*
- *We will continue to be a unique and caring city that stresses environmental conservation, fosters artistic expression, and is open to new ideas and innovation.*
- *We will plan and direct our efforts to fulfill this Vision for the long-term with a constant view toward being an open, welcoming community for all with a positive economic future.*

Values that support the Vision: COMMUNITY

- *Community affordability, including in available housing and childcare*
- *Belonging through mutual respect and openness, inclusion, and equity*
- *Quality of life that underpins the city's economic vibrancy*
- *Environment resilience, including addressing climate change and ecosystem conservation*
- *Regional cooperation, including in support for public safety and homelessness*

Values that support the Vision: ORGANIZATION

- *Respect for the citizens we serve and the work we do*
- *Excellence in governance and city services*
- *Sustainability through creativity, affordability and rightsized service delivery*
- *Public safety, including emergency preparedness for climate change risk*
- *Quality infrastructure and facilities through timely maintenance and community investment*

Request for Early Learning Ad Hoc Committee

Challenge Statement

The current inventory of pre-school seats is not adequate to meet the demand of Ashland families as evidenced by waitlists in excess of 6 to 12 months. Limited early learning opportunities in Ashland are directly related to the following:

1. Program closures,
2. Reduced seats due to relocation, and
3. Increasing staffing challenges, consistent with national job market trends, resulting in fewer pre-school options for families.

These challenges result in subsequent concern for future enrolment in Ashland School District, kindergarten readiness, socialization opportunities for our children, a continuation of the worker shortage due to lack of childcare and impacts to the economic vitality of Ashland as a whole.

The Economic Round Table discussion held on March 6, 2023 further highlighted the need for early learning options in our community. Many stakeholders communicate strong support for affordable early learning and childcare programs. Specifically, such support focused on the need for early learning to attract and sustain working families in Ashland, and as a key service required to sustain and grow our economy.

Request:

- Convene an Ad Hoc Committee comprised of the City of Ashland, ASD, and local partners to respond to our mutually recognized need for early learning access in Ashland, and the Rogue Valley.
- Develop a charge that explores tangible actions we can take, as economic partners, in support working families, our economic development, and most importantly, our children.
- Respond to the conversation on March 6th with action.

Past Policy Analysis

The advent of the Covid-19 pandemic highlighted the critical nature of quality, reliable, affordable early learning, and childcare options for working families in Ashland, across the state of Oregon and nationally.

State Level Policy

Insufficient slots for childcare and early learning opportunities were a serious challenge in Oregon Prior to the Covid-19 outbreak in March of 2020¹. The prevalence of inadequate childcare supply across Oregon was exceptionally high with a blended rate of 72% of communities lacking necessary care options². This translates to only enough early learning and childcare options to support one third of the total need. When studying more detailed data, 85% of communities lacked a satisfactory number of slots for infant and toddlers while 61% of communities required additional preschool options². According to conversations with Oregon Community Foundation, Ashland and the Southern Rogue Valley are considered childcare deserts.



Addressing the challenges of childcare and preschool options in a community must not be considered a micro issue specific to an individual household. When such challenges endure, they transform into economic development and operational problems for businesses and local economies. Staffing paradigms suffer and directly impact the viability of businesses as well as the local economies these businesses comprise. The Census Household Pulse Survey for October 2021 found, in Oregon, over 88,000 eligible workers reported difficulty with childcare as the main reason for opting to stay home and not participate in the workforce³.

Local Policy

Local to Ashland, preschool is not the direct responsibility of city government or the local school district. Traditionally preschool and childcare needs are met through a patchwork of private and non-profit providers of varying size, philosophy, and licensure status. Programs with ten or fewer students in a home environment are not required to be licensed and comprise a significant segment of the preschool slots available to Ashland residents. This patchwork model is not unique to Ashland, nor the state of Oregon. Preschool and childcare are predominantly delivered via a private market, characterized by a fee for service payment structure, that annually approaches the cost of a years' college tuition. According to the 2020 Oregon Child Care Market Price Study a year of fulltime preschool is approximately \$14,400 annually, \$1,200 per month. The same study cites fulltime infant and toddler care at approximately \$19,200 annually, \$1,600 per month⁴.

To further compound the challenge for childcare providers, many report absorbing the cost of Covid-19 protocols. This increases the strain on existing programs especially with fewer paying clients⁵. Finally, the City of Ashland, and the Ashland School District before the city, leased the Briscoe School to the Oregon Childhood Development Coalition (OCDC). OCDC operates preschool and childcare opportunities specifically designed to serve Southern Oregon's migrant worker families. The City of Ashland's policy related to the OCDC program is strictly as that of tenant/ landlord and does not constitute a formal policy endorsement of early learning solutions for Ashland working families.

Footnotes:

1. <https://www.qualityinfo.org/-/oregon-s-child-care-industry>
2. <https://health.oregonstate.edu/early-learners/research/supply-and-demand-oregon-young-children>
3. <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/household-pulse-survey/data.html>
<https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/ASSISTANCE/CHILD-CARE/Documents/CCMR%202020%20Report.pdf>
5. <https://www.ijpr.org/education/2021-12-09/oregon-child-care-industry-grapples-with-funding-delays-staffing-shortages>

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2. <https://health.oregonstate.edu/early-learners/research/supply-and-demand-oregon-young-children>
3. <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/household-pulse-survey/data.html>
4. <https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/ASSISTANCE/CHILD-CARE/Documents/CCMR%202020%20Report.pdf>
5. <https://www.ijpr.org/education/2021-12-09/oregon-child-care-industry-grapples-with-funding-delays-staffing-shortages>



Council Business Meeting

June 20, 2023

Agenda Item	Ad Hoc Committee for Affordable childcare and Early Learning Appointments	
From	Melissa Huhtala	City Recorder
Contact	recorder@ashland.or.us , 541-488-5307	
Item Type	Requested by Council <input type="checkbox"/> Update <input type="checkbox"/> Request for Direction <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input type="checkbox"/>	

SUMMARY

Confirm Mayor Graham’s recommendations for the appointments of committee members to the Ad Hoc Committee for Affordable childcare and Early Learning:

- John Love
- Helga Motley
- Kristen Roy
- Jessica Therkelsen
- Lisa Verner
- Sarah Wardwell

BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

N/A

ACTIONS, OPTIONS & POTENTIAL MOTIONS

I move to approve the Mayor’s recommendations for the appointments to the Ad Hoc Committee for Affordable Childcare and Early Learning.

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Committee Charge and Scope
- Attachment 2: Committee Roster
- Attachment 3: Welcome Letter
- Attachment 4: Application – Love
- Attachment 5: Application – Motley
- Attachment 6: Application – Roy
- Attachment 7: Application – Therkelsen
- Attachment 8: Application – Verner
- Attachment 9: Application – Wardwell



Early Learning Ad Hoc Committee

Mission:

Create a tangible network of early learning care options within our community, supportive of working families, the Ashland economy, and most importantly our children.

Goal:

Support Ashland working families with affordable early learning childcare solutions that focus on attracting and retaining Ashland's workforce, strengthening Ashland School District enrollment, and preparing our youngest citizens for kindergarten, independent of economic status.

City of Ashland Value Statements Supported by this Ad Hoc Committee

- Community affordability, including in available housing and childcare
- Belonging through mutual respect and openness, inclusion, and equity
- Quality of life that underpins the City's economic vibrancy

Committee Charge:

Define the existing early learning environment in Ashland including total number of early learning seats, both private and non-profit, composition of programs (in home, centers, other) and economics of existing programs (Head Start, Preschool Promise, Private Tuition, annual costs to family and caregivers).

Assess and define Ashland's unaddressed early learning requirements.

Identify resources capable of contributing to an early learning solution including, but not limited to:

- Physical Assets (Brick and Mortar, tangible supplies to provide service, etc)
- Business Partners
- Non-Profit Partners
- Coordination of Service Expertise
- Options to support families with special needs

Consider and plan for the needs of the care providers, specifically:

- Living wage positions,
- Appropriate benefits,
- Training opportunities, and
- Recruitment of educators and staff.

Recommend a communication plan, including:

- Where residents and families can find information about early learning opportunities
- How to keep such resources up to date
- Contact information for existing programs

Develop a strategic plan capable of tangibly providing for Ashland's unaddressed early learning needs.

Scope of Authority: The Early Learning Ad Hoc Committee will provide strategy recommendations to the Ashland City Council and its' community partners.

Membership: The Early Learning Ad Hoc Committee will be comprised of representatives from the following:

- Ashland School District
 - *Representatives from the District will provide subject matter expertise on where they are seeing deficiencies in preschool education in preparing children for kindergarten and provide insight, support, and suggestions for how to overcome.*
- City of Ashland
 - *The representative from the City of Ashland will aid in convening partners, monitor relevant state legislation/funding opportunities, and advise on possible local policy that will further support the creation of sustainable and affordable early learning programs for Ashland families.*
- Chamber of Commerce
 - *Subject matter experts from the Chamber will provide members feedback regarding early learning needs pertaining to workforce recruitment. Additionally the Chamber can help connect community partners as we seek a viable solution for early learning and childcare, supportive of an economically vibrant Ashland.*
- Hospital System
 - *Representatives from our hospital systems will provide insight into childcare efforts affecting their workforce and service delivery, at a time when attracting and retaining hospital/ healthcare employees is challenging.*
- Key Local Business Leaders
 - *Subject matter experts from local business will provide specific feedback into childcare efforts affecting their workforce and provide insight and suggestions on what supporting early childhood education would mean for working individuals and the success of their businesses.*
- Community Members
 - *Representatives from the community will provide a mix of perspectives including but not limited to: feedback on lived experience, early learning education expertise, and non-profit expertise, specific to development and continued operation of early learning programming.*

Why Solving for Early Learning Matters for All Ashlanders:

(Information supplied by Rene Brandon, Southern Oregon Early Learning Hub)

Continued workforce shortages across all sectors. The overall workforce is comprised of families who need childcare to work. 53% of families with children 0-5 are in poverty and could be staffing local businesses except they cannot afford childcare due to the gap between entry level wages and the cost of providing childcare. Businesses will continue to struggle to recruit and retain staff without financial support for childcare.

Continued Decline and Destabilization of Child Care workforce. We have 18% fewer childcare programs than we had pre-Covid. Many of those programs have empty classrooms because they cannot find qualified teachers willing to work for low wages and also due to families being unable to pay for child care without assistance.

Childcare is called out as a key stabilizer for education, health and economic prosperity of our state:

- Oregon Business Council Strategic Plan includes “make child care and early learning more accessible”.
- Our workforce board and ODHS self-sufficiency partners have identified that soft skills – those directly tied to early social-emotional development - as the key ingredients needed for a successful employee. Employees can be trained to do the function of a job, but an employer cannot teach self-regulation and pro-social skills on the job.
- Southern Oregon’s Community Health Assessment has identified families having access to childcare as a Community Health Improvement Plan Goal. Investment in the next generation. Our K-12 research/science has identified high quality early learning prior to kindergarten as an indicator of SE regulation and subsequent academic success. Cost SAVINGS over time. 7-10% return on investment over the lifetime of children who experience high quality preschool.

PARTNERSHIP 3. Ad Hoc Committee for Affordable Childcare and Early Learning

Partner Organization		
Partner Organization	Name	Note
CoA	City Managers Office Designee TBD	
CoA	Councilor Dylan Bloom	
CoA	Councilor Paula Hyatt	
ASD	Samuel Bogdonove (Thru Fall '23)	
ASD	Christine McCollom (in Fall '23)	
Asante General Council /Communittee Member	Kristen Roy	Mayor to appoint 6/20
Communittee Member	John Love	Mayor to appoint 6/20
Communittee Member	Lisa Verner	Mayor to appoint 6/20
Communittee Member	Sarah Wardwell	Mayor to appoint 6/20
Communittee Member	Jessica Therkelsen	Mayor to appoint 6/20
Communittee Member	Helga Motley	Mayor to appoint 6/20
Subject Matter Experts		
Partner Organization	Name	Note
YMCA	Heidi Hill	Potential Contractor - Cannot sit on the committee
Ivy School	Sunny Spicer	Potential Contractor - Cannot sit on the committee
Science Works	Cynthia Salbato	Potential Contractor - Cannot sit on the committee
Building Developer	Allan Sandler	Potential Contractor - Cannot sit on the committee

June 21, 2023

Welcome, and thank you for volunteering to serve on the Early Learning Ad Hoc Committee. We look forward to working together to assess our current early learning environment, engage with current subject matter experts, identify gaps, and solve for affordable access to quality programming for all Ashland families.

Informed by the community, and local partner feedback at the March 6, 2023 Economic Round Table, your Ashland City Council identified affordability and economic development as two key priorities for the 23/25 biennium budget period. Early learning access, and affordable options for working families, support both priorities, and more specifically, support Ashland families and businesses. Our youngest citizens remain at the heart of this committee's work. Research has found a correlation between early learning and long-term academic success. Concurrently, the social and emotional learning at this stage is of immense value for children over the course of their academic career and beyond.

Our next step includes determining a time for our initial meeting and establishing a future meeting schedule. Included with this welcome is a doodle poll. Please provide your availability and we will do our best to accommodate. Additionally, attached you will find the committee charge. We will review and discuss this document as part of our kick-off meeting agenda.

Again, thank you for your willingness to volunteer and help solve for this critical community service need.

With Gratitude,

Tonya Graham
City of Ashland, Mayor

**APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO
CITY COMMITTEE/COMMISSION**

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Attach additional sheets if necessary. *Rather than attach additional sheets, I thought my application would be easier to read if I expanded each section so the text of each response appears together and readers don't have to skip to attached pages to read it.*

Name: John M. Love

Requesting to serve on: Ad Hoc Committee on Affordable Childcare & Early Childhood Development

Mailing Address:

Physical Address:

Occupation: Retired

Phone (Home and Mobile)

Work None

Email

Fax None

1. Education Background

What schools have you attended? UC Davis, San Jose State, University of Iowa

What degrees do you hold? BA and MA in Psychology; PhD in Child Behavior & Development

What additional training or education have you had that would apply to this position?

I have not had specific additional training, but have extensive on-the-job training (see also 2. Related Experience). I think that three experiences, however, count as training relevant to the purposes of the ad hoc committee:

- 1) In 1970-1971, when I was teaching psychology and child development classes at a small college in Denver, I was on the board of a new neighborhood childcare center; I was responsible for curriculum design and helped interview potential teachers.
- 2) From 2003 to 2005, I served on the Commission on Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC); I learned a lot about how NAEYC defines quality and developmentally appropriate early childhood curricula and practice.
- 3) In 2014-2015, I served on the Oregon Department of Education's Kindergarten Content and Assessment Advisory Committee. This committee was charged with reviewing the assessment that had recently been administered to entering kindergartners and recommending improvements. In other words, we focused on what is most appropriate to measure as the outcomes or benefits of a

good prekindergarten program. Although my primary contributions were in the area of child development assessments, I knew that any assessment tools needed to be relevant to the nature and content of the early education program content.

2. Related Experience

What prior work experience have you had that would help you if you were appointed to this position?

I spent 45 years planning, designing, and implementing dozens of research studies with early childhood education programs that were serving families with children who ranged in age from birth through the early elementary school grades. For many years, the studies I was involved with were designed for preschool-aged children in the year or two before kindergarten entry (for example, Head Start, childcare programs, and state prekindergarten programs). From 1995 through 2002, I directed the national evaluation of the Early Head Start (EHS) program (designed for pregnant women and families with children up to the age of 3). This was for the Administration on Children and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This national study included 17 EHS programs in diverse communities around the country. In addition to what we learned about the impact program participation had on the children and families, we learned about the important role of childcare in the lives of both the children and their families.

After I retired, I spent six years working with Arizona's First Things First (FTF) program, the state early childhood initiative funded by their tobacco tax. The national research advisory panel I chaired advised FTF on what the important studies would be, given the varied focus of FTF programs. Our first and most important recommendation was that FTF conduct studies to learn about issues of access, affordability, and quality of their highest priority programs. These are the same issues the ad hoc committee needs to grapple with.

Do you feel it would be advantageous for you to have further training in this field, such as attending conferences or seminars? Why?

I think it will be important for committee members to attend events that will enable us to learn more about the availability of funding sources that would support implementation of programs that will help make childcare more available and more affordable in Ashland. These sources may include local, state, and federal government agencies as well as private foundations. I have had experience obtaining funding from all such sources, but I need to learn more about what is available right here in Southern Oregon, in 2023-2024 and beyond. I will make it a priority to be available to attend conferences and seminars in Jackson County and the State of Oregon that would provide me, and the committee, with knowledge directly related to the

committee's planning for ways to address our community's needs for accessible and affordable childcare and early learning.

3. Interests

Why are you applying for this position?

I care about the community my wife and I chose to live in twenty years ago. I have been involved in the community in a variety of ways (AIFF board for six years; volunteering at the Ashland Emergency Food Bank; leadership positions in our church), but I haven't yet become involved in local early education work, which I have done in other parts of the country. Although we no longer need childcare for ourselves, we know young parents who do. We know, for example, the challenges young families in our church have in finding good programs that (1) parents can afford; (2) are open the hours they need childcare; (3) are really accessible, that is, located at least somewhat convenient to their homes or places of work; and (4) have well-qualified staff with low turnover.

I am interested in contributing to bring life into Ashland's childcare "desert" that we clearly have, as documented by Barbara Cervone in a recent article in the online <https://ashland.news>. I understand the issues of access and affordability, and I understand how difficult it is to find solutions. When SOU was considering closing the Schneider Children's Center for financial reasons, I presented President Roy Saigo with arguments for the value of the center, and he agreed. SOU met the accessibility criterion but could not make childcare affordable within their budget. That was in 2015, and the situation today is even worse. I learned from this experience that the challenge is not so much convincing people of the importance of childcare and early education, it's finding ways to make it accessible and affordable given current issues and circumstances in Ashland and the Rogue Valley.

Part of the challenge is recognizing the extent to which childcare is a community economic issue. A survey conducted last fall by the Oregon Values and Beliefs Center found that 42 percent of Oregon employers report that access to childcare impacts their "ability to hire and/or retain employees" either "somewhat" or "a lot." The experience of Indra Nooyi, former CEO of PepsiCo, reinforces this view. She found that establishing on-site childcare in their headquarters building enhanced employee loyalty, gave staff peace of mind knowing their child or children were nearby, saved commuting time, and helped in recruiting new employees. With much smaller companies in Jackson County, the committee could explore the potential for consortia of businesses, the school district, various organizations, SOU and RCC, and the City of Ashland, or find ways agencies and organizations could partner with existing childcare providers. How can we fit into, become part of, the Southern Oregon Early Childhood Support Network that Peter Buckley and Pam Marsh are working on? The planned composition of this committee seems ideal as the forum for dialog around how to create the best solutions.

4. Availability

Are you available to attend special meetings, in addition to the regularly scheduled meetings? Do you prefer day or evening meetings?

Yes, I am definitely available to attend special meetings, and I am very interested in doing so. I prefer evening meetings, but will do my best to be flexible as I know you have many individuals' schedules to accommodate.

5. Additional Information

How long have you lived in this community? Almost 20 years.

Please use the space below to summarize any additional qualifications you have for this position:

I have been fortunate to have been involved in research that others felt was important, and useful. The Early Head Start evaluation I mentioned in Section 2 has been widely cited for the useful findings about why and how an early education program can be effective. In 2002, after we published the final report of the EHS national evaluation, The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services awarded Mathematica (the company where I worked) one of six awards for excellence in "Program Improvement 2002" for the evaluation's final technical report because the report's "soundness of design, methodology, appropriateness of conclusions, and *significance and usefulness of findings*" created "*outstanding potential for use by the larger health and human services community.*" In 2013, the Society for Research in Child Development honored me with its Distinguished Contributions to Public Policy for Children award, "in recognition of an SRCD member's continuous lifetime contributions to *research that informs policy and practice for the benefit of children.*"

These two awards demonstrate something critically important to me and indicate what I believe I have to offer the City of Ashland, so I italicized those phrases: For me, research and early childhood program evaluation studies have never been simply exercises in trying to find out what "works." These studies are valuable only if they demonstrate how programs can really benefit the children and families being served, and can point the way to making programs even better and more effective. But, of course, the programs also need to be affordable and accessible for working parents.

Thank you for considering my application. I will be happy to respond to any questions you have or provide any additional information you may need.

May 1, 2023
Date


Signature

*** FORM FIELD DATA***

Name: **Helga Motley**

Committee or Commission interested in: **Ad Hoc comm on childcare**

Address: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Occupation : **self employed after school & summer camps (at various locations, including my home)**

Educational background: **University of Connecticut Masters in German, SOU educ (1 year) preparation for elem education I have 47 years of experience as an events & news photographer. I have been a crafts person most of my life, and started a crafts store in Cambridge, Mass in 1968. I am self taught in photography and various crafts.**

Related Experience: **Im not sure about further training being needed. I have initiated and run programs for kids since 1983, when I had my first playgroup with 4 families. The kids were 2-3 years old at the time, and I went to the family's homes to do the playgroup. Eventually I set up a site in downtown Ashland, where I had after school and summer programs. I set up a vast miniature play area with the Playmobil toy system, and did crafts using plastilina clay, taught sewing on sewing machines during summer camps, did various handcrafts with kids of ages 5 to 11. I initiated a monthly Lego building at several libraries - and brought my own collection of organized legos to build with. I still do a Lego class every 2 weeks at an Ashland classroom (Catalyst Ashland). I have volunteered with the Talent Boys and Girls club by bringing my Legos during summer camps. I have worked with elementary age kids since 1983, with my own programs. You can see examples of what I have done on my website www.helgasplayhouse.com**

Interests: **I love teaching kids to make things with their hands. These skills are especially important to start when kids are young. Although K-12 schools expose kids to art with paper and pens, the other art skills are not taught till they are in middle school. I want to contribute my years of experience to the planning process for childcare.**

Availability: **Since I am self employed, I am flexible with attending meetings at most times.**

Additional Information : **I moved to Ashland in 1980, and the rising rents forced me to move to Talent in 2015. I still am involved with issues and events in Ashland, and many people recognize and know me. If language is an issue, I understand lots of Spanish and am bilingual in German. I have a long history of knowing what the issues are in Ashland. Pam Marsh knows me, and through my years of doing events photography, many other people are familiar with me.**

Signature: **Helga Motley-Tschinkel**

*** USER INFORMATION ***

SubscriberID: **-1**

SubscriberUserName:

SubscriberEmail:

RemoteAddress: **66.241.70.76**

RemoteHost: **66.241.70.76**

RemoteUser:

APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO CITY COMMITTEE/COMMISSION

Please type or print answers to the following questions and submit to the City Legal Department at City Hall, 20 E Main Street, or email dana.smith@ashland.or.us. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the City Legal Department at 541.488.5350.

Attach additional sheets if necessary.

Name Kristen Roy

Requesting to serve on: Affordable Childcare (Committee/Commission)

Mailing Address _____

Physical Address _____

Occupation Attorney

Phone: Home _____

Work _____

Email _____

Fax _____

1. Education Background

What schools have you attended? Dartmouth College (B.A.), Univ. of NH (Law School)

What degrees do you hold? Juris Doctor

What additional training or education have you had that would apply to this position?

see attached

2. Related Experience

What prior work experience have you had that would help you if you were appointed to this position?

see attached

Do you feel it would be advantageous for you to have further training in this field, such as attending conferences or seminars? Why? Yes, because I think any Committee could benefit

from ongoing training and education.



3. Interests

Why are you applying for this position? See attached

4. Availability

Are you available to attend special meetings, in addition to the regularly scheduled meetings?
Do you prefer day or evening meetings? Early morning meetings or day meetings are preferable

5. Additional Information

How long have you lived in this community?

6 years

Please use the space below to summarize any additional qualifications you have for this position:

See above

Date

Signature



Application for Appointment to Ad Hoc Committee on Affordable Childcare and Early Childhood Development (Supplemental Information)

Name: Kristen Roy

1. Education Background

What additional training or education have you had that would apply to this position?

In addition to my current role, I also served as an adjunct professor for Health Law. In that role, I was able to see how lack of affordable childcare impacted fellow professors and students enrolled in law school with children.

2. Related Experience

What prior work experience have you had that would help you if you were appointed to this position?

I currently serve as the General Counsel (in house attorney) for Asante, which is the largest employer in the Rogue Valley. One of the issues that we face with recruitment and retention of our employees is – affordable childcare. I am looking to establish community connections to assist our employees and other community members to solve for the childcare crisis.

3. Interests

Why are you applying for this position?

I am applying for this position because Ashland lacks options for affordable childcare. I have personally been impacted by this with a now 3.5 year old. I also see Asante's employees struggle to find childcare options. I want to help create solutions.

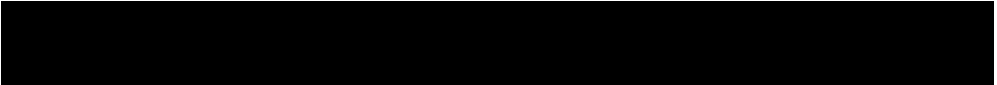
APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO CITY COMMITTEE/COMMISSION

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Attach additional sheets if necessary.

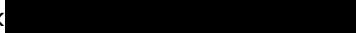
Name Jessica Therkelsen

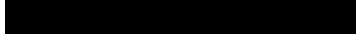
Requesting to see Ad Hoc Childcare Committee

Mailing Address 

Physical Address 

Occupation Nonprofit leadership Phone: Home 

Work 

Email 

Fax _____

1. Education Background

What schools have you attended? University of San Francisco, School of Law, UC Irvine

What degrees do you hold? JD, BA

What additional training or education have you had that would apply to this position?

I have experience drafting and proposing policy

2. Related Experience

What prior work experience have you had that would help you if you were appointed to this position?

Experience in policy drafting; experience in program design; lived experience as a working parent in three cities

Do you feel it would be advantageous for you to have further training in this field, such as attending conferences or seminars? Why? Yes, in order to better understand the options for

government supported programs related to childcare



3. Interests

It is incredibly difficult to balance work and family life in the US.

Why are you applying for this position?

Specifically, Ashland has very limited childcare - no centers that offer care before 3 years of age

and only 1 preschool that operates past 1:30pm. Many do not cover Fridays.

4. Availability

Are you available to attend special meetings, in addition to the regularly scheduled meetings?

Do you prefer day or evening meetings? Yes. I prefer day meetings but can make either work.

5. Additional Information

How long have you lived in this community?

3 years

Please use the space below to summarize any additional qualifications you have for this position:

I am a parent of two children who has tried to balance work and family life in

the San Francisco, Bay Area, Portland, and Ashland. I have worked full time, part time,

and not at all (outside the home). COVID was extremely stressful for everyone

but on a personal level, the lack of childcare for children under 3, and lack of

care after 1:30pm for my preschooler contributed to my burn out and significant

health decline. I left my career in late 2022 to recover and spend more time focused

on family. My choices are my own, but many people cannot afford to stop working

to prioritize personal and family health.

5/17/22

Date

Signature



APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO CITY COMMITTEE/COMMISSION

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Attach additional sheets if necessary.

Name _____

Requesting to serve on: _____ (Committee/Commission)

Mailing Address _____

Physical Address _____

Occupation _____

Phone: Home _____

Work _____

Email _____

Fax _____

1. Education Background

What schools have you attended? _____

What degrees do you hold? _____

What additional training or education have you had that would apply to this position?

2. Related Experience

What prior work experience have you had that would help you if you were appointed to this position?

Do you feel it would be advantageous for you to have further training in this field, such as attending conferences or seminars? Why? _____



3. Interests

Why are you applying for this position? _____

4. Availability

Are you available to attend special meetings, in addition to the regularly scheduled meetings?
Do you prefer day or evening meetings? _____

5. Additional Information

How long have you lived in this community? _____

Please use the space below to summarize any additional qualifications you have for this position:

Date

Signature



**APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO
CITY COMMITTEE/COMMISSION**

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Attach additional sheets if necessary.

Name Sarah Wardwell

Requesting to serve on: Early Childhood Adhoc Committee (Committee/Commission)

Mailing Address _____
Physical Address _____

Occupation Diplomat Phone: Home _____
Work _____
Email _____
Fax _____

1. Education Background

What schools have you attended? University of Oregon, Portland State University

What degrees do you hold? B.S.Biology, M.S. International Relations

What additional training or education have you had that would apply to this position?

2. Related Experience

What prior work experience have you had that would help you if you were appointed to this position?
Early on in my career, I served in the Peace Corps as a middle school science teacher.

When I returned, I managed before and after school programs for two years.

Do you feel it would be advantageous for you to have further training in this field, such as attending conferences or seminars? Why? I'm always interested in learning more, but

I am not able to represent the City government due to my commission as a Foreign Service Officer. (Hatch Act)



3. Interests

Why are you applying for this position? _____

As a working mother with two children I have a keen interest in making it easier for other working mothers to live and work here.

4. Availability

Are you available to attend special meetings, in addition to the regularly scheduled meetings?
Do you prefer day or evening meetings? Yes, afternoons, evenings or weekends might be best .

5. Additional Information

How long have you lived in this community? _____

3 years

Please use the space below to summarize any additional qualifications you have for this position:

As a Foreign Service Officer, I bring a wealth of experience dealing with different cultures.

I work in communications and am knowledgeable about different ways to message.

4/13/2023

Date

Signature





Council Business Meeting

June 6, 2023

Agenda Item	Early Learning Small Grant Opportunity – Scienceworks Museum		
From	Joseph Lessard	City Manager	
Contact	Joe.lessard@ashland.or.us ; 541-552-2103		
Item Type	Requested by Council <input type="checkbox"/> Update <input type="checkbox"/> Request for Direction <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input type="checkbox"/>		

SUMMARY

Scienceworks Museum is requesting a \$5,000 grant to serve as matching funds to help secure \$75,000 in combined funding from the Oregon Community Foundation and Ford Family Foundation (see attached Scienceworks Museum Early Learning Project Grant Application). Combined funding from the City and two foundations will be used to purchase modular building units with the goal of providing approximately 40± early learning and childcare placement positions/spots. The modular units are temporary classrooms leased by the Ashland School Districts (ASD) and placed at the Scienceworks Museum, on Southern Oregon University property, as part of the remodeling/expansion programs at Ashland Middle School and Walker Elementary. With completion of the ASD work, the modular units are subject to removal unless they can be purchased for continued use locally. The Scienceworks Museum is working with The Ivy School and other regional partners to provide early learning programs in the modular units for the Ashland community. The opportunity to secure these structures is time sensitive since they will be removed from the Scienceworks Museum site unless purchased.

Jackson County currently has the infrastructure and capacity to serve just 23% of the 0-5 yrs. of age population. In the Southern portion of the County, Ashland/Talent, that percentage is even lower. The pandemic, the Alameda fire and the limited availability of usable facilities forced the closure of many of the smaller childcare providers in the valley, exacerbating the shortage. In the same period, to navigate the pandemic, Scienceworks leased their undeveloped land to the Ashland School District so that Ashland Middle School and Walker Elementary could remodel their schools.

The ASD schools have now been successfully remodeled, Scienceworks has negotiated to purchase two of the modular building units and a bathroom unit for a favorable price with the two foundations and private donors pledging supporting resources. The infrastructure of water, sewer, and power, and modular classrooms and bathrooms are already installed on the Scienceworks Museum property. The modular buildings are currently under a conditional use permit for temporary buildings at the Scienceworks Museum site. To retain the modular buildings at the current site, Southern Oregon University will need to apply for a site review for permanent buildings through Community Development.

These classrooms represent an opportunity to develop community collaborations to meet a community need. ScienceWorks’ long-range plan is to partner with the Ivy School to deliver quality early learning programs. The first step in this process is to secure the modular buildings. The requested City grant support will enable





Council Business Meeting

Scienceworks to meet match funding requirements and leverage additional support to expand early learning and childcare within the City of Ashland.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED

The Council's Economic Roundtable of March 6, 2023, identified three next step efforts to help confront Ashland economic challenges. One of the identified next steps was the establishment of a partnered effort by key Ashland economic institutions to plan potential joint efforts on affordable childcare and early childhood development. In follow-up to the Economic Roundtable, the City Council authorized the establishment of an Ad Hoc committee on Early Learning at the request of Councilor Hyatt at the March 15, 2023, Regular Meeting (see attached Request for Early Learning Ad Hoc Committee). The committee membership solicitation has closed, and the list of potential participants is being finalized for appointment consideration by the Mayor. Councilor Hyatt has offered to act as Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee.

FISCAL IMPACTS

The proposed 2023-2025 BN Budget includes \$240,000 (\$120,000 for FY 2023-2024) for early childhood development and childcare, a portion of which would be used to fund the \$5,000 Scienceworks Museum grant request.

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS

City staff recommends Council approve the issuance of a \$5,000 grant for Scienceworks Museum to acquire modular buildings for the provision of an early childhood learning program in cooperation with regional partners, including the Ivy School. A motion to authorize grant would be as follows:

I move to authorized the City Manager to enter into a grant agreement with Scienceworks Museum for \$5,000 to serve as matching funds for the purchase of two modular classroom and one bathroom unit for use in an early childhood learning program.

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

- Request for Early Learning Ad Hoc Committee
- Scienceworks Museum Early Learning Project Grant Application

Request for Early Learning Ad Hoc Committee

Challenge Statement

The current inventory of pre-school seats is not adequate to meet the demand of Ashland families as evidenced by waitlists in excess of 6 to 12 months. Limited early learning opportunities in Ashland are directly related to the following:

1. Program closures,
2. Reduced seats due to relocation, and
3. Increasing staffing challenges, consistent with national job market trends, resulting in fewer pre-school options for families.

These challenges result in subsequent concern for future enrolment in Ashland School District, kindergarten readiness, socialization opportunities for our children, a continuation of the worker shortage due to lack of childcare and impacts to the economic vitality of Ashland as a whole.

The Economic Round Table discussion held on March 6, 2023 further highlighted the need for early learning options in our community. Many stakeholders communicate strong support for affordable early learning and childcare programs. Specifically, such support focused on the need for early learning to attract and sustain working families in Ashland, and as a key service required to sustain and grow our economy.

Request:

- Convene an Ad Hoc Committee comprised of the City of Ashland, ASD, and local partners to respond to our mutually recognized need for early learning access in Ashland, and the Rogue Valley.
- Develop a charge that explores tangible actions we can take, as economic partners, in support working families, our economic development, and most importantly, our children.
- Respond to the conversation on March 6th with action.

Past Policy Analysis

The advent of the Covid-19 pandemic highlighted the critical nature of quality, reliable, affordable early learning, and childcare options for working families in Ashland, across the state of Oregon and nationally.

State Level Policy

Insufficient slots for childcare and early learning opportunities were a serious challenge in Oregon Prior to the Covid-19 outbreak in March of 2020¹. The prevalence of inadequate childcare supply across Oregon was exceptionally high with a blended rate of 72% of communities lacking necessary care options². This translates to only enough early learning and childcare options to support one third of the total need. When studying more detailed data, 85% of communities lacked a satisfactory number of slots for infant and toddlers while 61% of communities required additional preschool options². According to conversations with Oregon Community Foundation, Ashland and the Southern Rogue Valley are considered childcare deserts.

Addressing the challenges of childcare and preschool options in a community must not be considered a micro issue specific to an individual household. When such challenges endure, they transform into economic development and operational problems for businesses and local economies. Staffing paradigms suffer and directly impact the viability of businesses as well as the local economies these businesses comprise. The Census Household Pulse Survey for October 2021 found, in Oregon, over 88,000 eligible workers reported difficulty with childcare as the main reason for opting to stay home and not participate in the workforce³.

Local Policy

Local to Ashland, preschool is not the direct responsibility of city government or the local school district. Traditionally preschool and childcare needs are met through a patchwork of private and non-profit providers of varying size, philosophy, and licensure status. Programs with ten or fewer students in a home environment are not required to be licensed and comprise a significant segment of the preschool slots available to Ashland residents. This patchwork model is not unique to Ashland, nor the state of Oregon. Preschool and childcare are predominantly delivered via a private market, characterized by a fee for service payment structure, that annually approaches the cost of a years' college tuition. According to the 2020 Oregon Child Care Market Price Study a year of fulltime preschool is approximately \$14,400 annually, \$1,200 per month. The same study cites fulltime infant and toddler care at approximately \$19,200 annually, \$1,600 per month⁴.

To further compound the challenge for childcare providers, many report absorbing the cost of Covid-19 protocols. This increases the strain on existing programs especially with fewer paying clients⁵. Finally, the City of Ashland, and the Ashland School District before the city, leased the Briscoe School to the Oregon Childhood Development Coalition (OCDC). OCDC operates preschool and childcare opportunities specifically designed to serve Southern Oregon's migrant worker families. The City of Ashland's policy related to the OCDC program is strictly as that of tenant/ landlord and does not constitute a formal policy endorsement of early learning solutions for Ashland working families.

Footnotes:

1. <https://www.qualityinfo.org/-/oregon-s-child-care-industry>
2. <https://health.oregonstate.edu/early-learners/research/supply-and-demand-oregon-young-children>
3. <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/household-pulse-survey/data.html>
4. <https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/ASSISTANCE/CHILD-CARE/Documents/CCMR%202020%20Report.pdf>
5. <https://www.ijpr.org/education/2021-12-09/oregon-child-care-industry-grapples-with-funding-delays-staffing-shortages>

Application for Grant

Organization	Scienceworks Museum		
Mailing Address	1500 East Main Street Ashland 97520		
Contact Name	Cynthia Salbato	Phone	541-261-2828
Email	cynthia@scienceworksmuseum.org		
Secondary Contact	Ash Friend	Phone	531-646-4790
Email	ash@scienceworksmuseum.org		
Federal Tax ID	93-1309725	IRS Class (exemption)	501(c)(3)

Grant Request	
Total Request	\$ 5,000.00

- 1) Briefly describe the purpose and objectives of your organization and mission statement ***(please limit to 200 words)***.
- 2) Briefly describe how the City grant would be used ***(please limit to 500 words)***.

3) If your grant request is for date specific events, programs or activities, please complete the following table *(use additional pages as necessary)* :

Scienceworks Museum is requesting a \$5K grant as matching funds to help secure \$75K in combined funding from Oregon Community Foundation and Ford Family Foundation. This funding will be used to purchase modular units with the goal of providing 40+ early learning and childcare spots. We are working with The Children's Museum/The Ivy School, regional leaders in providing early learning programs to develop a partnership that will yield affordable and accessible early learning for the Ashland community.

The need for this funding is urgent, the opportunity to secure these structures is time sensitive.

Jackson County currently has the infrastructure and capacity to serve just 23% of the 0-5 population. In the Southern portion of the County, Ashland/Talent, that percentage is even worse. The pandemic, the Alameda fire and the limited availability of useable facilities forced the closure of many of the smaller childcare providers in the valley, exacerbating the shortage.

In the same period, to navigate the pandemic, Scienceworks leased their undeveloped land to the Ashland School District so that Ashland Middle School and Walker Elementary could remodel their schools. The infrastructure of water, sewer, and power, and leased classroom modulares and bathrooms were installed on our property.

The schools have now been successfully remodeled and Scienceworks has negotiated to purchase two of the modulares and bathrooms for a very good price. We have foundations and private donors pledging their resources.

These classrooms are a perfect opportunity to develop community collaborations to meet an urgent community need. ScienceWorks' long range plan is to partner with the Ivy School to deliver quality early learning programs.

The first step in this process is to secure the buildings.

A demonstration of support from the City of Ashland will help us meet the funding requirements and leverage additional support for this priority community need - expanding early learning and childcare for the City of Ashland

Program/ Event Title	Anticipated Event Date(s) Start End		Funding Request
Foundation for Early Learning/Childcare Center			\$5000K

			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$

4) If you do not receive the full amount of your request, describe how your organization would use a smaller amount of funds. Be specific. **(please limit to 500 words).**

Organization Board Member
(use additional sheets as necessary)

Name	Jessica Murrey Board President 541-941-6967
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Name	Chris Brimhall
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Name	Krynn Lukacs
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Name	Candy Hoppe
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Name	Cassandra Dexter
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Name	Anna Dunlap
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Name	
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Grants Program Budget*

Please use this form to identify costs associated with the program, activity or event that you are requesting funds for.

***This form is provided as a template to use. If your organization tracks grant related financials in a different reporting format, please submit in that format.**

Program/Event Name	Early Learning/Childcare Program at Scienceworks
Project Period:	ongoing

REVENUE		
Source	Funding title	Amount
City of Ashland Grant Funds:		\$5,000
Jackson County Funds/ Identify:	United Way of Jackson County	\$1,000
State Funds/ Identify:		\$
Federal Funds/ Identify:		\$
Other funds/ Identify:	Ford Family Foundation	\$50,000
Other funds/ Identify:	Oregon Community Foundation	\$25,000
Other Funds:	Don Kaizer	\$60,000

Other funds/ Identify: \$

TOTAL REVENUE

\$ 141,000

EXPENDITURES

Personal Services		
Total Salaries:	% of Time to Project/Event:	Salaries specific to

		Project/Event:
	\$ %	\$
Total Benefits:	% of Time to Project/Event:	Benefits specific to Project/Event:
\$	%	\$
Total Project/Event-Specific Personal Services		\$
Materials & Services		
2 Modular Classrooms at 25K each		\$50,000
2 Modular Bathrooms at 40k each		\$80,000
Installation of modular Classrooms 5k each		\$10,000
		\$
Total Project/Event Specific Materials & Services		\$ 140,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		\$

Signature Page

Thank you for your time and efforts in preparing this information for consideration by the Grants Committee.

By signing below you certify that:

You, the grantee, understand that you must comply with all federal, state, and local requirements applicable for the activities funded by this grant. Award of a grant by the City does not waive the grantee's obligation to obtain, at grantee's sole expense, all applicable permits that may be required for grantees program or project.

And, that a grant will be conditioned on submission or other approvals to the City of a Certificate of General Liability Insurance Per City Contract, naming the City of Ashland, its officers and employees as additional insured.

And, that you the undersigned have legal authority to submit the above information on behalf of the organization named below.

Signature *Cynthia Salbato*

Name (print): Cynthia Salbato

Title: Board Member Scienceworks Museum Board of Directors

Organization: Scienceworks Museum