

Marking Ashland Places

Golden Connections Installation 4/23/2022

The Ashland Public Arts Commission will be holding a dedication ceremony for its newest installation, "Golden Connections" on Saturday, April 23rd at 12:00pm at Ashland Railroad Park.

Golden Connections was created by artists Jennifer Corio and David Frei of Cobalt Designworks. It represents the transformative period in Ashland's history when the city was chosen by the Southern Pacific Railroad to be the main stop between Portland and San Francisco. The golden spike in this sculpture symbolizes the final connection for Southern Pacific's complete rail service around the nation in 1887.

This connection fostered growth, prosperity and cultural connections in Ashland that remain impactful to this day. Golden Connections is also an offering of gratitude and a plea for forgiveness to the Chinese workers who faced discrimination and very difficult conditions while building these tracks.

This sculpture's placement in Ashland's Railroad District serves as a historic marker and wayfinding point to provide a connection from Ashland's history to its landscape today. In addition to Golden Connections, five bronze medallions will soon be installed throughout the Railroad District commemorating historic sites.

After years of planning, the "Marking Ashland Places" project for Ashland's Railroad District is in its final stages. The Public Arts Commission and Historic Commission have partnered on this project for several years with the purpose of providing a connection to the history of Ashland on today's landscape using site markers and artwork honoring specific places, events, and people throughout Ashland's 4 Historic Districts.