

Council Communication

September 1, 2015, Business Meeting

First Reading of three separate ordinances amending the City of Ashland Comprehensive Plan, Comprehensive Plan Maps, Transportation System Plan, and Land Use Ordinance (Chapter 18) to adopt the Normal Neighborhood Plan

FROM:

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SUMMARY

The three ordinances presented for consideration amend the Comprehensive Plan, Transportation System Plan, and Municipal Code Chapter 18 (Land Use Ordinance) to implement the Normal Neighborhood Plan.

The Normal Neighborhood Plan area includes 94 acres that is presently outside the city limits, yet within the established Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). The existing Comprehensive Plan designations for the area anticipate the future urbanization of this area with single family (SFR) and suburban residential developments. The housing density expected for SFR lands would range from 4.5 to six units per acre on average. Suburban residential lands typically accommodate attached housing options with densities between 7.2 and nine units per acre

The Normal Neighborhood Plan will guide future development associated with approximately 94 acres of unincorporated lands within Ashland's Urban Growth Boundary. Upon annexation of properties in the Normal Neighborhood district, the plan establishes land use policies, standards, and guidelines that promote the construction of diverse housing types and a neighborhood network of connected streets, walkways and cycling facilities, while requiring integration of, and protection for, the neighborhood's natural areas, consisting of wetlands, creeks and associated floodplains and riparian areas. The neighborhood plan includes detailed maps and graphics illustrating key objectives while providing flexibility and encouraging innovative development alternatives.

BACKGROUND

In March of 2011, the City Council directed the Community Development Department to apply for a Transportation and Growth Management (TGM) grant to prepare a neighborhood master plan for the 94 acre Normal Neighborhood area. A detailed scope of work highlighting the key objectives of the plan was produced and the City of Ashland was awarded a TGM grant in May 2012. An extensive public involvement process was undertaken to understand existing conditions, and to develop and refine the plan. In total there have been 50 public meetings over the course of three and a half years where the viewpoints of a variety of participants including the general public, property owners and neighboring residents have affected the plan's evolution.



The City Council held public hearings on a draft Normal Neighborhood Plan on [May 6, 2014](#), [May 20, 2014](#), and continued public testimony and deliberations to a special meeting on [May 29, 2014](#). During the May 29th meeting, the Council directed the establishment of an ad-hoc working group to examine the fundamental objectives that were addressed in developing the plan, as well as conduct a more in depth review of a number of plan elements. The appointed working group included two Planning Commissioners (Richard Kaplan, Michael Dawkins), two City Councilors (Pam Marsh, Mike Morris), and Mayor Stromberg.

Over the course of twelve public meetings, held between June 2014 and May 2015, the working group explored each of the specific areas identified by Council. A series of meetings specifically focused on housing and land use, open space and natural resources, transportation and infrastructure, and included an exercise where working group members conceptualized alternative neighborhood plans independent of the original draft proposal. Additionally, a special round table meeting was held (September 18, 2014) where a panel was brought together to provide feedback on what they liked and disliked about the draft plan, identified barriers to agreement, and explored how the plan could be amended to work from their perspective. In consideration of public input provided, and a review of the Planning Commission's recommendations as presented in the [Planning Commission Report dated 4/22/2014](#), the working group drafted a general vision for the neighborhood and formulated a summary list of recommended plan amendments ([Working Group memo dated December 2, 2014](#)) for Council's consideration.

The City Council directed the working group to work with staff to amend the plan to incorporate the amendments to land use classifications, allowable housing densities, and internal transportation network layout, thus altering the initial draft of the plan the Planning Commission had based the April 22, 2014, Planning Commission report upon. The working group did concur with the Planning Commission's recommendation that the open space areas are a neighborhood defining characteristic and should remain as presented in the original draft plan, however changed the amendment process for potential reductions of open space areas to correlate with approved wetland delineations. Upon review of this open space amendment process change the Planning Commission has provided specific recommendations as outlined within the Commission Recommendations section below.

The Council further requested staff obtain cost estimates regarding needed Capital Improvements to East Main Street and the future Railroad crossing at Normal Avenue, and that the working group examine City's potential role in making such off-site improvements. The working group determined that a public railroad crossing and improvements to East Main St., are integral and should proceed in concert with development and recognized that the city may need to play a role in the financing/ implementation of these projects. The Public Works Department and Hardy Engineering completed a general cost analysis for improvements to public rail crossing and East Main Street and further evaluated the role of private and public financing. which was presented to the Working Group on April 15, 2015. Upon review of the [Hardy Engineering Executive Summary](#) the working group amended the plan framework to include a new section, *Advance Financing and Phasing of Public Improvements* (p30), that acknowledged that a phased approach to East Main Street improvements may be an option to consider with future annexation proposals, and that the City would consider the participation in an advance financing district to assist in acquiring full street improvements at the initiation of development within the area.



The Normal Neighborhood Plan is comprised of Normal Neighborhood Plan Framework document, official Normal Neighborhood Plan maps, and the proposed Normal Neighborhood District land use ordinance amendments (Ch. 18.3.4). Collectively these documents create the underlying physical form and regulatory structure for the area's future development. Development of this area is expected to occur in an incremental way, as individual parcels propose annexation for specific housing developments. The adoption of a Neighborhood Plan for the area will ultimately provide a general framework for evaluating future annexation requests to ensure that in addition to housing the coordination of streets, pedestrian connections, utilities, storm water management and open space are considered as part of development proposals.

A detailed description of the proposed Normal Neighborhood plan's land use, transportation, and open space, frameworks is provided in the attached Planning Action (PL-2013-01858) [Staff Report dated July 28, 2015](#), and [Staff Report Addendum dated August 11, 2015](#).

NEXT STEPS

Upon approval of first reading of the Normal Neighborhood Plan's implementing ordinances, the final plan and ordinances, as amended, will be presented to the City Council for second reading on September 15, 2015.

COUNCIL GOALS SUPPORTED:

Goal 7. Keep Ashland a family friendly community:

7.3 Support land-use plans and policies that encourage family-friendly neighborhoods.

Goal 13. Develop and support land use and transportation policies to achieve sustainable development.

13.1 Create incentives and ordinances for energy-efficient buildings.

13.2 Develop infill and compact urban form policies.

13.3 Support alternative transportation choices.

Goal 14. Encourage and/or develop public spaces that build community and promote interaction.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

N/A.

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

Transportation Commission

To evaluate the changes made by the Working Group to the Normal Neighborhood Plan's transportation elements, the Transportation Commission held a public hearing on [April 23, 2015](#). The Transportation Commission approved a motion (5-0) to recommend approval of the amendments to the Transportation System Plan, and Shared Street classification as follows:

Accept the presented revised plan as an amendment of the TSP with the following conditions:

1) Should the development occur along East Main, at a minimum, a sidewalk is to be developed between Walker and Clay Street.

2) Should the development occur along the railroad tracks, at a minimum, the railroad crossing needs to be completed.

These recommendations have already been incorporated into the Normal Neighborhood Plan Framework's Mobility section (pg 30) as is presented to the City Council for consideration.

Housing and Human Services Commission

The Housing and Human Services Commission did not hold a public hearing regarding the draft plan



and as such provided no formal recommendation pertaining to plan adoption. Upon being updated on the plan and future development potential of the area, the Commission did express the importance of the area in meeting Ashland's affordable housing needs and they emphasized the value of integrating affordable housing throughout the plan area consistent with the existing requirements of the City's annexation ordinance.

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the Normal Neighborhood Plan's land use framework, transportation framework, open space framework, and implementing Land Use Ordinance (Ch. 18.3.4) with the following specific recommended amendments to Ordinances 1, 2, and 3, as outlined below. These recommendations have not been incorporated into the Normal Neighborhood Plan pending City Council direction at First Reading.

Ordinance #1 – Comprehensive Plan amendments

- Elimination of a sentence within the framework document (pg 28):that indicates the use of alleys and rear lanes reduces pavement:
 - *“the narrow street section of rear lanes reduces the extent of impervious surfaces in the Normal Neighborhood and supports wetland and stream health”.*
- Amend the Normal Neighborhood Plan Framework housing types description for Pedestrian-Oriented Clustered Residential Units (pg.8) to newly include NN-1-5 as a zoning classification that permits such units.
 - This change pre-supposes a related change to the Land Use Ordinance (#3) to include Pedestrian Cluster Housing as a permitted use within the Single-Family zoning designation (NN-1-5).

Ordinance #2 – Transportation System Plan

- Broaden the Shared Street description to allow this new street type to be applied in areas other than those that are physically constrained. If directed by Council to amend the description staff would revise the proposed language to read as follows:
 - *Provides access to residential uses in an area in which right-of-way is constrained by natural features, topography or historically significant structures. The Shared streets may additionally be used in circumstances where a slower speed street, collectively shared by pedestrians, bicycles, and autos, is a functional and preferred design alternative. The design of the street should emphasize a slower speed environment and provide clear physical and visual indications the space is shared across modes.*

Ordinance #3 – Land Use Ordinance

- Amend Table 18.3.4.040 Land Use Descriptions to list the “Pedestrian Clustered Housing” as a “Permitted” (P) use within the NN-1-5 zone
- Amend the Major and Minor amendment sections (18.34.030c) to require any reductions in open space obtain a major plan amendment, and only alterations that do not reduce the size of a designated open space be permitted through the minor amendment process.
 - Should the Council elect to maintain the minor amendment process for open space reductions due to approved wetland delineations, as was recommended by the Working Group, the Planning Commission recommend the revisions to 18.3.4.060 presented below to clarify the criteria to be evaluated in granting such a minor amendment.
 - Staff supports the Planning Commission's recommendation to amend the Normal Neighborhood District Site Development and Design Standards to incorporate the proposed



section 18.3.4.060.A as presented below, which would codify the “stated purpose” of open space. Staff believes this newly proposed section should be added to the Normal Neighborhood District standards independent of the decision to require either a minor or major amendment process for reductions in open space areas.

Amend the Normal Neighborhood District Site Development and Design Standards (18.3.4.060) to directly reference the language in the framework document, and to include a *stated purpose* for open space within a new section as follows:

18.3.4.060 A

5. Conformance with Open Space Network Plan

New developments must provide open space consistent with the design concepts within the Greenway and Open Space chapter of the Normal Neighborhood Plan Framework and in conformance with the Normal Neighborhood Plan Open Space Network Map. The open space network will be designed to support the neighborhood’s distinctive character and provide passive recreational opportunities where people can connect with nature, where water resources are protected, and where riparian corridors and wetlands are preserved and enhanced.

- a. The application demonstrates that equal or better protection for identified resources will be ensured through restoration, enhancement, and mitigation measures.
- b. The application demonstrates that connections between open spaces are created and maintained providing for an interlinked system of greenways.
- c. The application demonstrates that open spaces function to provide habitat for wildlife, promote environmental quality by absorbing, storing, and releasing stormwater, and protect future development from flood hazards.
- d. The application demonstrates that scenic views considered important to the community are protected, and community character and quality of life are preserved by buffering areas of development from one another.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND REQUESTED ACTION:

Staff believes the revisions that have been made by the Working Group refined and improved the neighborhood plan, and are largely consistent with the [original goals and objectives](#) (see attached) for the planning project. Staff recommends Council approve first reading of the ordinances amending the Comprehensive Plan, Comprehensive Plan Map, Transportation System Plan, and Land Use Ordinance as presented below:

Council approval of Ordinance #1 (as presented, incorporating the Planning Commission recommendations, or with specific recommended changes) would affect the following:

- Amend the Comprehensive Plan Map creating a plan designation for the Normal Neighborhood Plan District
- Amend the Introduction and Definitions, and Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan to incorporate the Normal Neighborhood district and land use classifications as proposed.
- Adopt the Normal Neighborhood Plan Framework as a Comprehensive Plan supporting document .

Council approval of Ordinance #2 (as presented, incorporating the Planning Commission recommendations, or with specific recommended changes) would affect the following:



- Amend the Transportation System Plan to incorporate the Normal Neighborhood Street network as proposed:
 - Amend the Street Dedication Map (TSP Figure 10-1) to incorporate the plan area's proposed Street Network, and reclassification of Normal "Avenue" to be a Neighborhood Collector.
 - Amend the Planned Intersection and Roadway Improvement Map (TSP Figure 10-3) to include East Main Street as a Planned Roadway Project.
 - Amend the Planned Bikeway Network Map (TSP Figure 8-1) to incorporate the planned multi-use trails within the Normal Neighborhood Plan.
- Amend the Street Design Standards (Chapter 18.4.6) to incorporate the new Shared Street classification.

Council approval of Ordinance #3 (as presented, incorporating the Planning Commission recommendations, or with specific recommended changes) would affect the following:

- Amend the Land Use ordinance to include the Normal Neighborhood District Chapter (18.3.4) including the Normal Neighborhood Plan Zoning Classification map, and Site Development and Design Standards.

SUGGESTED MOTION(S):

Individual motions are required to address each of the three proposed ordinances separately:

Ordinance 1

I move to approve the first reading by title only of an ordinance titled:

“AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY OF ASHLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO ADD A NORMAL NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN DESIGNATION TO CHAPTER II [INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITIONS], ADD THE NORMAL NEIGHBORHOOD LAND CATEGORIES TO CHAPTER IV [HOUSING ELEMENT], CHANGE THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAP DESIGNATION FOR APPROXIMATELY 94 ACRES OF LAND WITHIN THE CITY OF ASHLAND URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY FROM SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL AND SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL TO THE NORMAL NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN DESIGNATION, AND ADOPT THE NORMAL NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN FRAMEWORK AS A SUPPORT DOCUMENT TO THE CITY OF ASHLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN,”

[with the following changes...] and move the ordinance on to second reading.

Ordinance 2

I move to approve the first reading by title only of an ordinance titled:

“AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE STREET DEDICATION MAP, PLANNED INTERSECTION AND ROADWAY IMPROVEMENT MAP, AND PLANNED BIKEWAY NETWORK MAP OF THE ASHLAND TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM PLAN FOR THE NORMAL NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN AREA, AND AMENDING STREET DESIGN STANDARDS WITHIN THE ASHLAND MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER 18.4.6 TO ADD A NEW SHARED STREET CLASSIFICATION”,

[with the following changes...] and move the ordinance on to second reading.

Ordinance 3

I move to approve the first reading by title only of an ordinance titled:

“AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE ASHLAND MUNICIPAL CODE CREATING A NEW CHAPTER 18.3.4 NORMAL NEIGHBORHOOD DISTRICT, AMENDING CHAPTER 18.2.1.020 TO ADD A NORMAL



NEIGHBORHOOD ZONING CLASSIFICATION, AND AMENDING CHAPTER 18.2.1.040 TO ADD A NORMAL NEIGHBORHOOD SPECIAL DISTRICT. ”,

[with the following changes...] and move the ordinance on to second reading.

ATTACHMENTS:

- [Staff Report Addendum dated August 11, 2015.](#)
- [Staff Report dated July 28, 2015,](#)
- **Ordinance #1** – Comprehensive Plan amendments
 - [Exhibit A](#) (introduction amendment)
 - [Exhibit B](#) (framework document)
 - [Exhibit C](#) (map)
- **Ordinance #2** – Transportation System Plan and Street Design Standards amendments
 - [Exhibit A](#) (Street Network Map)
 - [Exhibit B](#) (Pedestrian and Bicycle Network Map)
- **Ordinance #3** – Land Use Ordinance (Ch 18) amendments
 - [Exhibit A](#)
- [Planning Commission Report \(4/22/2014\)](#)
- [Working Group memo dated \(12/2/2014\)](#)
- [Normal Neighborhood Plan Goals and Objectives](#)
- [Hardy Engineering Executive Summary](#) East Main Street & Railroad crossing infrastructure costs and financing assessment.

Electronic links

- Working Group Meeting Minutes:

○ 5/21/2015	○ 11/20/2014	○ 9/18/2014	○ 7/24/2014
○ 5/7/2015	○ 10/23/2014	○ 9/4/2014	○ 7/10/2014
○ 4/15/2015	○ 10/09/2014	○ 8/21/2014	○ 6/19/2014

- Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
 - [7/28/2015](#)
 - [8/11/2015](#) (Draft Minutes, pending Planning Commission review)
- Transportation Commission Meeting Minutes
 - [4/23/2015](#)
- Housing and Human Services Commission Meeting Minutes
 - [3/27/2014](#)

- **Letters**

Public letters submitted relating to Planning Action PL-2013-01858 , including prior iterations of the draft plan (pre-July 2015), are not physically attached to this Council Communication, however they remain available online at www.ashland.or.us/normalplan, which includes the following electronically linked letters:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2015
All 2015 letters combined - PDF <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Vidmar letter (7/13/2015) ○ Vidmar letter (3/31/2015) | 2014
All 2014 letters combined - PDF <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jones/MaharHomes letter (11/20/2014) | 2013
All 2013 letters combined - PDF <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ DeMarinis letter and exhibits (10/31/2013) |
|---|---|---|



- [Miller letter \(3/23/2015\)](#)
- [Alvarez letter 8/20/2015](#)
- [Hoffman letter 8/11/2015](#)
- [Lutz letter 7/28/2015](#)
- [Anderson letter 7/28/2015](#)
- [Hoffman letter 7/27/2015](#)
- [DeMarinis letter 8/25/2015](#)
- [Vidmar letter \(11/15/2014\)](#)
- [ACCESS Inc. letter \(11/12/2014\)](#)
- [Vidmar letter \(10/27/2014\)](#)
- [Miller letter \(9/29/2014\)](#)
- [Mahar Homes Concept Plan \(9/18/2014\)](#)
- [Lutz letter \(9/17/2014\)](#)
- [Miller letter \(9/12/2014\)](#)
- [Miller letter \(9/03/2014\)](#)
- [Boyer letter \(8/20/2014\)](#)
- [DeMarinis letter \(8/06/2014\)](#)
- [Boyer Letter \(8/06/2014\)](#)
- [Vidmar letter \(7/30/2014\)](#)
- [Breon letter \(7/22/2014\)](#)
- [DeMarinis letter \(7/22/2014\)](#)
- [Vidmar letter \(7/21/2014\)](#)
- [DeMarinis letter \(7/15/2014\)](#)
- [DeMarinis letter \(5/19/2014\)](#)
- [Anderson letter \(4/08/2014\)](#)
- [Grace Point letter \(5/06/2014\)](#)
- [Livni letter \(4/29/2014\)](#)
- [Mandell letter \(5/05/2014\)](#)
- [Marshall Letter \(04/30/2014\)](#)
- [Miller Letter \(4/30/2014\)](#)
- [Neher letter \(5/02/2014\)](#)
- [Quiett letter \(5/1/2014\)](#)
- [Wallace letter \(5/01/2014\)](#)
- [Seidler letter \(4/30/2014\)](#)
- [Sharp letter \(4/29/2014\)](#)
- [Jacobson letter \(4/27/2014\)](#)
- [Arsac letter \(4/29/2014\)](#)
- [Brannan letter \(5/04/2014\)](#)
- [Gerschler letter \(5/04/2014\)](#)
- [Open City Hall public comments \(3/5/14\)](#)
- [GracePoint letter \(3/11/2014\)](#)
- [Anderson Letter \(3/11/2014\)](#)
- [Skuratowicz letter \(3/11/2014\)](#)
- [Hunter letter \(2/25/14\)](#)
- [DeMarinis letter and exhibits \(10/8/2013\)](#)
- [Meadowbrook Home Owners \(Anderson\) letter and exhibits \(10/8/2013\)](#)
- [Ashland Meadows \(Skuratowicz\) letter \(10/8/2013\)](#)
- [Koopman letter and exhibits \(10/8/2013\)](#)
- [Lutz letter \(9/26/2013\)](#)
- [Vidmar letter \(7/29/2013\)](#)
- [Carse letter \(6/27/2013\)](#)
- [Gracepoint letter \(6/12/2013\)](#)
- [Vidmar letter \(4/26/2013\)](#)
- [Shore letter \(4/10/2013\)](#)
- [Marshall letter \(4/10/2013\)](#)
- [Horn letter \(3/05/2013\)](#)
- [Filson letter \(2/25/2013\)](#)
- [Vidmar letter \(2/25/2013\)](#)

Additional background information

To inform the neighborhood planning process a number of studies were completed and previously presented to the Planning Commission and City Council (2014 public hearing) in support of this project including:

- [Normal Neighborhood Existing Traffic Conditions technical memorandum](#) (dated September 5, 2012)
- [Normal Neighborhood Future Traffic Analysis](#) (dated November 19, 2013)



- [Buildable Lands Inventory](#) (approved November 15, 2011- ordinance #3055) provided a basis for evaluation of the amount of available land within the City Limits and Urban Growth Boundary.
- [Housing Needs Analysis](#) (approved September 3, 2013 - ordinance #3085), summarized the types of housing that have been developed throughout the City in the recent decades, as well as the projected needed housing based on income and population demographics.
- [Normal Neighborhood Executive Summary of Existing Conditions](#) to provide background information for the Normal plan area including the [results of a resident survey](#) conducted in June-July 2012.
- An analysis of five components of the neighborhood design including infrastructure, mobility, sustainability, open space and greenways, and housing and land use.
 - [Infrastructure Framework](#)
 - [Sustainability Framework](#)
 - [Mobility Framework](#)
 - [Greenway and Open space Framework](#)
 - [Housing and Land Use Framework](#)

