

Note: Anyone wishing to speak at any Planning Commission meeting is encouraged to do so. If you wish to speak, please fill out a Speaker Request Form and place it in the Speaker Request Box by staff. You will then be allowed to speak. Please note that the public testimony may be limited by the Chair and normally is not allowed after the Public Hearing is closed.

**ASHLAND PLANNING COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
June 25, 2019
AGENDA**

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** 7:00 PM, Civic Center Council Chambers, 1175 E. Main Street

- II. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- III. **PUBLIC FORUM**

- IV. **PUBLIC HEARINGS**
 - A. **PLANNING ACTION: PA-L-2019-0005**
OWNER/APPLICANT: City of Ashland
REQUEST: The adoption of the proposed Trails Master Plan as a supporting document to the Ashland Comprehensive Plan, Chapter VIII, Parks, Open Space, and Aesthetics.

- V. **ADJOURNMENT**

**CITY OF
ASHLAND**



In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Community Development office at 541-488-5305 (TTY phone is 1-800-735-2900). Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to the meeting (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title 1).

ASHLAND PLANNING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

June 25, 2019

PLANNING ACTION: PA-L-2019-0005

APPLICANT: City of Ashland

ORDINANCE REFERENCES: AMC 18.5.9 Comprehensive Plan, Zoning, and Land Use Ordinance Amendments

REQUEST: The proposal includes the adoption of the 2018 Trails Master Plan (TMP) as a supporting document to Chapter VIII Parks, Open Space, and Aesthetics of the City of Ashland Comprehensive Plan. The plan addresses trail connections to existing systems such as the Bear Creek Greenway and Central Ashland Bike Path, trails in creek corridors such as Wrights Creek and Hamilton Creek, and connections to trails in Forest Service lands and to Forest Service Road 2060. In addition, the plan includes chapters on trail standards, safety and protocols, indigenous peoples, geology, and flora and fauna.

I. Relevant Facts

A. Background

The Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission adopted the following goal in 2015 and 2017: Update Trails and Open Space Comp Plans and continue to purchase land according to the plans. The Transportation Commission reviewed the draft plan at the January 2019 meeting and recommended approval. The Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission is scheduled to review the TMP after the Planning Commission public hearing.

The original Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the City Council in November 1982 and included Chapter VIII Parks, Open Space, and Aesthetics. The same chapter was amended and replaced in 1991 (Ordinance 2652). The existing Parks, Open Space and Trails Program map was approved by the Parks and Recreation Commission and City Council in July 2002. Subsequently, the same map was updated in April 2005. Most recently, the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission worked with the Ashland Woodlands and Trails Association (AWTA) to develop the 2006 Trails Master Plan.

B. Proposed Amendment

The item before the Planning Commission is to hold a public hearing and make a recommendation to the City Council on the adoption of the 2018 Trails Master Plan as a supporting document to Chapter VIII Parks, Open Space, and Aesthetics of the City of Ashland Comprehensive Plan.

Plan Overview

Chapter 1 of the TMP includes a vision, mission and a description of the plan development and public process. Chapters 2-6 cover material that applies to all of the trails including standards, safety and protocols, indigenous peoples, geology and flora and fauna.

Chapters 7 and 8 cover two facilities that are paved and are also considered part of the transportation system in the Transportation System Plan – the Bear Creek Greenway and Central Ashland Bike Path. Chapter 9 covers the Ashland Canal. Chapters 10-14 cover creek corridors including Wrights, Ashland, Roca/Paradise, Cemetery/Clay/Hamilton and Tolman. Chapters 15 and 16 cover the Westside and Eastside Forestland trails located in areas above Ashland that transition to the Forest Service Lands and trails accessed by Forest Service Road 2060. Finally, Chapter 17 covers regional trail connections such as the Creek to Crest Trail and Emigrant Lake.

Each chapter that addresses a specific path or corridor (Chapters 7 – 16) includes a map which identifies existing and proposed trails. In addition, the written material includes a route description, discussion of important connections or linkages, the trail character, expected users, typical section and natural and cultural resources.

Change in Circumstances or Conditions

AMC 18.5.9.020.B permits amendments to the Comprehensive Plan to meet changes in circumstances and conditions. The Planning Commission makes a recommendation to the City Council and the City Council makes the final decision.

The existing TMP was developed in 2006 with a goal of creating a grid of trails that unified the urban area and reached outward to the greater regional open spaces. After ten years of implementation, the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission recognized the need for a ten-year update.

Examples of documents that are adopted as supporting documents to the Comprehensive Plan include the Housing Needs Analysis (2012), Local Wetlands Inventory (2005/2007) and the Normal Neighborhood Plan Framework (2015). The documents are identified as a supporting document to a specific Comprehensive Plan chapter. In turn, the Comprehensive Plan chapters address the Statewide Planning Goals. For example, the Local Wetlands Inventory (2005/2007) was adopted as a supporting document to Chapter IV Environmental Resources of the Comprehensive Plan, and Chapter IV Environmental Resources addresses Statewide Planning Goal 5: Natural Resources, Scenic and Historic Areas, and Open Spaces.

Technical studies that are required by state law (e.g., local wetlands inventory) are adopted as supporting documents. Supporting documents often involve data collection and analysis which is updated more frequently than the Comprehensive Plan policies.

The supporting documents do not create policy but rather the information, data and findings contained with the documents may be the basis for new policies or amending policies (see

Applicable Goals and Policies

The project addresses a variety of State goals and City policies.

Statewide Planning Goal 8: Recreational Needs recommends that local jurisdictions inventory recreation needs and opportunities, and develop long range plans and action programs to meet the recreational needs. Cities and counties are allowed but not required to prepare master plans for recreation facilities and amend acknowledged comprehensive plans to include the master plans.

The statewide guidelines for Goal 8 recommend giving priority to the following types of recreation facilities:

- meeting recreational needs of high density population centers,
- meeting recreation needs of persons with limited mobility and finances,
- meeting recreation needs providing the maximum conservation in the transportation of persons to the facility and in the recreation use itself,
- minimum environmental deterioration,
- are available to the public a nominal cost, and
- meet the needs of visitors of the state.

Chapter VIII Parks, Open Space, and Aesthetics of the *Ashland Comprehensive Plan* includes a goal “**To provide the people of Ashland with a variety, quantity and quality of parks, park facilities, open spaces, trails, and visual resources sufficient for their needs.**” In addition, the following policies specifically address planning for trails.

- **Policy 6:** The City shall adopt an official map that will identify the planned areas for parks, new natural areas, conservation areas and trails...
- **Policy 7:** Develop the system of corridors, linear park routs and trails outlined in the Park and Open Space map. Encourage interconnections between parks, open spaces, bicycle paths, easements, irrigation ditches, scenic roadway routes, railroad right-of-way, etc...
- **Policy 8:** Establish, where possible, trails along non-urbanized sections of stream corridors, ensuring the stream ecology and any residences are protected...

Chapter X Transportation of the *Ashland Comprehensive Plan* includes a goal (10.15.01) “**To raise the priority of convenient, safe, accessible, and attractive walking and bicycling networks.**” In addition, the following policy specifically addresses pedestrian and bicycle connections to recreation areas.

- **Policy 10.15.02.5:** Target walkway and bikeway improvements that link neighborhoods, schools, retail and service areas, employment centers and recreation areas.

The TMP also relates to policies included in the *City of Ashland Climate and Energy Action Plan (CEAP)*. Specifically, the *CEAP* includes a strategy to implement bicycle and pedestrian friendly actions including expanding urban trails.

Suggested Amendments

Commissioner Pearce suggested adding the following language to the Overview Section of Chapter 2 to address the geographic areas in the TMP that are located outside the City's jurisdiction. Examples of where the TMP shows trails in Jackson County that are outside the city limits and City of Ashland Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) are sections of the Bear Creek Greenway, Ashland Canal, Roca and Paradise Creek corridors, Cemetery/Clay/Hamilton Creek corridors, Westside Forestland and Eastside Forestland.

Most of the trails in this Master Plan are within Ashland's city limits or the City's Urban Growth Boundary and therefore within the City's planning jurisdiction. A number of trail sections are within Jackson County, whose comprehensive plan strongly supports cooperation with cities and encourages the development of recreational facilities and opportunities to meet the need of urban population centers. The City will work with the County on whatever planning requirements deemed necessary by the County to make the Master Plan trails and trail connections a reality.

Staff recommends a few minor corrections to the plan as outlined below. Recommended deletions are **~~lined through~~** and additions are in **bold underline**.

- Page 4, second column, last paragraph – "~~In addition, the 2018 TMP will provide a source of information that may be used to assist the community in the evaluation of local land use decisions.~~"

A discussed earlier in this report, the supporting documents to the Comprehensive Plan do not create policy as indicated in *Appendix A: Technical Reports and Supporting Documents* of the Comprehensive Plan. However, the information, data and findings contained with the documents may be the basis for new policies or amending policies.

The following excerpt is from "Oregon Land Use 101: A Primer for New City Councilors."

The Comprehensive Plan is a local government's chief land use document. Comprehensive Plans establish the policy framework for the local land use program. Comprehensive Plan policies are typically not directly applicable to individual applications, but this can vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. LUBA has held, however, that a local government may only apply its Comprehensive Plan as a regulatory document if such intent is clearly expressed by the language of the Plan.

- Page 12, first column, last paragraph – "Trail development should conform to City **floodplain, riparian and hillside** ordinances and regulations such as erosion control and setbacks. When appropriate, a geologist or geotechnical engineer will be consulted in areas of steep terrain, unstable soil conditions or severe erosion areas.

II. Procedural

18.5.9.020 Applicability and Review Procedure

Applications for Plan Amendments and Zone Changes are as follows:

B. Type III. It may be necessary from time to time to make legislative amendments in order to conform with the Comprehensive Plan or to meet other changes in circumstances or conditions. The Type III procedure applies to the creation, revision, or large-scale implementation of public policy requiring City Council approval and enactment of an ordinance; this includes adoption of regulations, zone changes for large areas, zone changes requiring comprehensive plan amendment, comprehensive plan map or text amendment, annexations (see chapter 18.5.8 for annexation information), and urban growth boundary amendments. The following planning actions shall be subject to the Type III procedure.

1. Zone changes or amendments to the Zoning Map or other official maps, except where minor amendments or corrections may be processed through the Type II procedure pursuant to subsection 18.5.9.020.A, above.
2. Comprehensive Plan changes, including text and map changes or changes to other official maps.
3. Land Use Ordinance amendments.
4. Urban Growth Boundary amendments.

III. Conclusions and Recommendations

Staff recommends approval of the 2018 Trails Master Plan as a supporting document to Chapter VIII Parks, Open Space, and Aesthetics of the Comprehensive Plan. Ashland residents have a long tradition of enjoying and connecting with the forest interface and the Ashland watershed through running, hiking and biking on trails and forest service roads. The work and dedication of the Ashland Parks and Recreation and the Ashland Woodlands and Trails Association has strengthened those connections to the city and expanded the trail network in the past two decades. The 2006 plan provided a valuable framework for advancements in these areas and the proposed update, the TMP, will continue to provide the template for increasing trail connectivity between neighborhoods, the city and surrounding natural areas.



Appendix A: Technical Reports and Supporting Documents

Periodically, the City may choose to conduct studies and prepare technical reports to adopt by reference within the Comprehensive Plan to make available for review by the general public. These studies and reports shall not serve the purpose of creating new city policy, but rather the information, data and findings contained within the documents may constitute part of the basis on which new policies may be formulated or existing policy amended. In addition, adopted studies and reports provide a source of information that may be used to assist the community in the evaluation of local land use decisions.

Chapter II, Introduction and Definitions

The following reports are adopted by reference as a supporting document to the Ashland Comprehensive Plan, Chapter II, Introduction and Definitions.

- 1) Croman Mill Site Redevelopment Plan (2008) by Ordinance 3030 on August 17, 2010
- 2) Normal Neighborhood Plan Framework (2015) by Ordinance 3117 on December 16, 2015

Chapter IV, Environmental Resources

The following reports are adopted by reference as a support document to the Ashland Comprehensive Plan, Chapter IV, Environmental Resources.

- 1) City of Ashland Local Wetland Inventory and Assessment and Riparian Corridor Inventory (2005/2007) by Ordinance 2999 on December 15, 2009

Chapter VI, Housing Element

The following reports are adopted by reference as a support document to the Ashland Comprehensive Plan, Chapter VI, Housing Element.

- 1) City of Ashland: Housing Needs Analysis (2012) by Ordinance 3085 on September 3, 2013

Chapter VII, Economy

The following reports are adopted by reference as a support document to the Ashland Comprehensive Plan, Chapter VII, The Economy.

- 1) City of Ashland: Economic Opportunities Analysis (April 2007) by Ordinance 3030 on August 17, 2010



Chapter XII, Urbanization

The following reports are adopted by reference as a support document to the Ashland Comprehensive Plan, Chapter XII, Urbanization.

- 1) City of Ashland: Buildable Lands Inventory (2011) by Ordinance 3055 on November 16, 2011