Council Study Session Meeting Agenda

ASHLAND CITY COUNCIL

STUDY SESSION AGENDA

Monday, April 14, 2025

Council Chambers, 1175 E Main Street

Live stream via rvtv.sou.edu select RVTV Prime.

HELD HYBRID (In-Person or Zoom Meeting Access) To attend via Zoom, you must register by contacting the City Recorder no later than 10 a.m. the day of the meeting.

Public testimony will be accepted for both general public forum items and agenda items.

If you would like to submit **written testimony** or if you wish to **speak electronically** during the meeting, please complete the online **Public Testimony Form** no later than **10 a.m. the day of the meeting.**

5:30 p.m. Study Session

I. PUBLIC FORUM
15 minutes – Public input or comment on City business not included on the agenda

II. Budget Background

a. Frequently Asked Budget Questions

III. Assistance Program Update

a. Assistance Program Update

IV. ADJOURNMENT

If you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact Alissa Kolodzinski at recorder@ashlandoregon.gov or 541.488.5307 (TTY phone number 1.800.735.2900). Notification at least three business days before the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to the meeting in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

***Agendas and minutes for City of Ashland Council, Commission and Committee meetings may be found at the City website, ashlandoregon.gov,

Council Study Session

Date: April 14, 2025

Agenda Item	Frequently Asked Budget Questions
From	Mariane Berry, Finance Director, Bryn Morrison, Deputy Finance Director
Contact	mariane.berry@ashland.or.us, bryn.morrison@ashland.or.us

SUMMARY

This session will focus on frequently asked budget questions and topics that generally need more detail in the lead-up and preparation for the budget committee meetings.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED

Administrative/Governance Goal:

"To ensure ongoing fiscal ability to provide desired and required services at an acceptable level."

BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In the last study session, an overview of the City's Fund Structure was provided. We discussed the various types of funds, some of our key fiscal policies relating to the City's budget, and unique attributes of Ashland's budget and overall operations.

In this study session, we will drill down into the General Fund and explore its various revenue streams. We will answer some questions across all funds that have been compiled over time, as well as those that have been received recently. Topics will include:

- Revenues such as Electric User Tax, Franchise Fees, Transient Lodging Tax and Food & Beverage Tax
- Internal Services Allocation
- How Does the Equipment Replacement Fund Work?
- Understanding Miscellaneous Fees
- Contingencies & Reserve Fund - What is the Right Balance?
- Others that may arise

The objective is to continue to inform and educate the community and the Citizens' Budget Committee about the City's budgetary needs, the framework upon which it is built, and prepare the Committee for its important work of reviewing the Proposed Budget.

FISCAL IMPACTS

N/A

SUGGESTED ACTIONS, MOTIONS, AND/OR OPTIONS

N/A

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

None

Council Study Session

Date: April 14, 2025

Agenda Item	Assistance Program Update
From	Mariane Berry, Finance Director, Bryn Morrison, Deputy Finance Director
Contact	mariane.berry@ashland.or.us, bryn.morrison@ashland.or.us

SUMMARY

Staff shall provide additional information that will assist in updating and restructuring the Utility Assistance Program.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED

Vision Statements for Success
Organization:
Sustainability through creativity, affordability and rightsized service delivery

Administrative/Governance Goal:
"To ensure ongoing fiscal ability to provide desired and required services at an acceptable level."

BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Per Council request, Staff returns to provide additional information on OHP and SNAP attributes. At the time of this writing, information has been requested from the agencies and we have not yet heard back, but will continue to follow-up. It was also requested that we detail eligibility scenarios and how that may equate to the proposed budget for the program.

From the last Study Session, it was determined that the discount would be:

- Year-round
- Only apply to electric, water and sewer, not other fees
- Integrate a conservation efficiency assessment into the program
- Simplify program administration by only applying an income eligibility requirement
- Discount would be capped
- Meet the proposed budgetary requirement, which increased the biennial budget from $382K to $573K

Staff will outline eligibility scenarios and offer recommendations that will assist in staying within the proposed budget and address council priorities. We will do our best to provide the slide deck in advance of the session for review.

FISCAL IMPACTS

N/A

SUGGESTED ACTIONS, MOTIONS, AND/OR OPTIONS

Council shall provide guidance or confirm the direction for the updated program.

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

None