Council Study Session Meeting Agenda

ASHLAND CITY COUNCIL

STUDY SESSION AGENDA

Monday, June 16, 2025

Council Chambers, 1175 E Main Street

Live stream via RVTV Prime at rvtv.sou.edu or broadcast on Spectrum 180 & 181.

Public comment is welcome on agenda items.
To **speak electronically** during the meeting or to submit **written comments** in advance, please complete the online Public Comment Form by 10 am the day of the meeting.

5:30 p.m. Study Session

I. CALL TO ORDER - Citizens' Budget Committee

II. APPROVAL OF CBC MINUTES

a. Approval of CBC Minutes from May 7, 2025 Meeting

b. Approval of CBC Minutes from May 14, 2025 Meeting

III. ADJOURNMENT

IV. CALL TO ORDER - City Council

V. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

a. APD Annual Report

b. Strategic Planning Process & Next Steps

VI. 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: June 16, 2025

Agenda Item	Approval of CBC Minutes from May 7, 2025 Meeting
Department	Finance
From	Mariane Berry, Finance Director

TIME ESTIMATE

CATEGORY

Action Needed - Motion to approve an action

SUMMARY

Draft minutes from Citizens' Budget Committee on May 7, 2025 for approval.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED

BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

FISCAL IMPACTS

SUGGESTED ACTIONS, MOTIONS, AND/OR OPTIONS

I motion to approve the May 7, 2025 Citizens Budget Committee minutes as drafted in the packet.

I motion to approve the May 7 2025 Citizens Budget Committee minutes with the following corrections:

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

1. DRAFT Budget Com #2 05.07.2025
2. Public Comment Mozina 5.7.25 Meeting

Ashland Citizens Budget Committee
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 7, 3:00 PM -5:30 PM
Council Chambers, 1175 E Main Street

I. Call to Order

Chair Shane Hunter called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm

a. Land Acknowledgement

II. Roll Call

Present: Mayor Tonya Graham, Councilor Eric Hansen (arrived 3:04 pm), Councilor Gina DuQuenne (arrived approximately 3:30 pm), Councilor Dylan Bloom, Councilor Bob Kaplan, Councilor Shane Hunter, Councilor Jeff Dahle. Citizens Budget Committee (CBC) members Linda Peterson Adams, Kristen Roy, Michael Murray, Ariana Spiegler, Meg Wade (arrived 3:19 pm)

Absent: James Fredericks

III. Approval of April 25, 2023, Citizens Budget Committee Minutes

Motion: Linda Peterson Adams Second: Jeff Dahle Motion

Roll Call Vote: Graham, Hansen, Bloom, Kaplan, Hunter, Dahle, Adams, Roy, Murray, Spiegler YES. Motion Passes.

IV. Public Forum

Nancy Seward- Shared concern for HeadStart/early childhood losing funding.

Kelly Jean Hammond- Discussed gratitude for the preschool program at the Ashland YMCA

Paul Mozina- Provided ambulance service comments, which are attached to the minutes.

Heidi Hill- CEO of the Ashland Family YMCA. Provided comments regarding the Childcare Affordability Grant.

Emily Triuette- Representing Ashland Youth Baseball. Provided comments on field rental fees.

Keri Pennell- President of Ashland Little League. Provided comments on field rental fees and proposed $1,000 flat fee instead of an hourly fee.

Stacia Stimac- Serves on the Ashland Little League Board, Provided comments on field rental fees.

V. Budget Presentations

Finance Director Mariane Berry provided a recap of the April 30, 2025, meeting where proposed budgets were presented by the Ashland Fiber Network, Electric, Public Works Divisions, Fire and Police departments and discussed which presentations would be seen in the current meeting. She also noted that the recording of the April 30th meeting was available on the City's website.

Community Development Director, Brandon Goldman, presented the proposed Community Development budget. He discussed changes to the structure of the Department's 14 full-time employees (FTEs) and how the budget is substantially unchanged from the prior biennium but does have a reduction in professional service costs. Goldman discussed a document digitization project and funding to update software that will reduce maintenance costs for IT by moving documents to cloud hosted storage. Goldman discussed accomplishments in the current biennium and said the department will continue to seek grant opportunities. He discussed property that was donated to the City for the purpose of affordable housing and the City's eight-year Housing Production Strategy. Goldman discussed the upcoming fee comparison for the Building Division, how the Building Division is currently funded, in the General Fund, and the plans for a separate Building Fund in the following biennium.

Finance Director Mariane Berry discussed the proposed budget for the Finance and Information Technology departments. She discussed the functions of the different divisions of the Finance Department as well as the duties of the IT Department. Berry mentioned the Finance Department FTE will stay the same as the current biennium and the IT Department's FTE had been reduced to 4.5 FTE. Berry went over the accomplishments of both departments, including revisions of Ashland Municipal Code, investment improvements, the City's credit rating, increased IT security and monitoring and process improvements. Berry discussed reductions in IT staffing, including the Finance Director taking on the duties of the IT Director.

City Manager Sabrina Cotta discussed the proposed budget for the Administrative Department, including the Department's divisions; Economic Development, City Recorder, Communications, Emergency Management, Human Resources (HR), which includes Risk Management and Courts, and the City Attorney's Office. She discussed the Department's FTES, including an increase in FTE in the HR division, an additional analyst, which freed one analyst to specialize in risk management. Cotta discussed upcoming projects, including a strategic plan, and the digitization of city records, transitioning communications to video, continuing City partnerships, updating City processes, developing an event calendar, and implementing payroll/HR software. Cotta spoke of the accomplishments made during the current biennium, including launching the City's new website. Cotta discussed capital funds in the proposed biennium for the City's homeless shelter.

Parks Director Rocky Houston discussed the proposed Parks Department budget. Houston went over the Department's organization chart, and then the Department's accomplishments over during the current biennium, including an increase in senior participation, grants received, volunteer hours, a new ordinance, and a concert that was held due to the ordinance. Houston discussed significant changes, an elimination of a program and how the Department looked to cut costs while providing services and keeping parks open. Houston discussed how the capital projects in the proposed budget were shovel ready.

Presentations are included with minutes.

VI. Q&A and Deliberation

Chair Hunter opened the floor for questions from the Committee.

Councilor Kaplan asked about the City's philosophy on cost recovery and for a response to be framed with overall direction. City Manager Cotta acknowledged that revenues are not keeping up with expenses, that some cost recovery, like in the Building Division, is part of state law, that the City has had a long period of not raising fees and which has created a lack of revenue to support services moving forward. Departments are responsible for forecasting revenue and determining whether fees are reasonable compared to industry standards and peers.

Kaplan asked whether it was the City's intention to present the budget as cost centers in the General Fund, similar to enterprise funds. Cotta replied that the intent was to have the City be on the same playing field as other jurisdictions as far as cost recovery, but some things will always be subsidized, because the true cost would not make the services affordable and it's finding the balance to ensure services are moving forward at the level the community wants.

Kaplan asked whether the intention was not to cover the entire cost but to just cover an amount that seems reasonable and consistent with other jurisdictions. Cotta said, yes, that given the widening deficit between General Fund revenue and costs of providing services, evaluations are needed and cost recovery needs to be considered and assessed.

Councilor Jeff Dahle discussed how the City has seemed relatively okay and asked if Cotta could provide clarity on why it feels like there has been a drastic change. Cotta replied that there is an assumption that everything has been fine, but if past budget messages were reviewed, there is a trend that expenses are going to outpace revenues in the General Fund. Due to COVID, there was a buildup of funds from staffing shortages, but the City's intent is not to become a savings bank, but to provide services. Staffing is now on board and the projects have moved forward and expenses are now back on track to exceed revenues. Cotta discussed the increase in personnel costs, including health care, which is a significant amount when the City has 265 employees. She noted that it seems like everything is happening at once, because the City has delayed acting on keeping pace with raising fees, including the utility rates, and that the Electric Users tax allowed a delay on implementing other fees. Cotta said the City is now at the point where revenue no longer provides the services the Community is looking for, hence the public safety, the wildfire mitigation fee, and the request for a parks fee.

Mayor Tonya Graham asked what the current subsidy was for the Building Division annually, and whether the City could adjust the schedule of fees early on in the biennium to address the subsidy. Cotta replied that the City needed to do the research to determine how much cost recovery the City currently has, and where the fees need to be to get full cost recovery. She also noted that revenue for the Building Division is not steady, so there also needs to be a cushion to have funds for the years with less revenue. How to get there is a project of the Building Division.

Community Development Director Brandon Goldman said that the Building Division was at 75% cost recovery, so the other 15% was being subsidized by the General Fund and that state law requires that building permit fees are used exclusively for Building Division services. Many communities create a separate Building Fund, so that reserves from boom development can offset slow years. Graham asked how much money was currently being subsidized. Goldman replied that the annual budget of the Building Division was around $870,000, so 25% of that amount.

Graham asked whether an interim fees schedule could be put in place that would be refined earlier in the biennium. Goldman said that it was the expectation and there would be an analysis so there was parity in Ashland with nearby communities, and that the building permit fees had not been increased since 2019.

Councilor Dylan Bloom asked why, since previous budget messages brought this up, the City wasn't planning for this two years ago. Cotta responded that the City was, and recommendation was fees, but the other part is a strategic planning process because a community wide discussion is needed to determine the communities priorities. But since that is a prolonged 10–15-year plan, there are a lot of things that need to happen, and revenue fix fees can be changed as needed. This will be a continued discussion moved forward. Property tax would be the ultimate fix, but the City isn't in control of that, but there are several things the City is in control of and community discussion is part of that, assessing the level of the fees the community is willing to pay for services.

Bloom asked why, since the City knew it was going to be at this point, didn't it do this a year or two years ago? Cotta responded that the City doesn't get projections, like insurance, far in advance, so doesn't know the magnitude of the gap. And decisions have been made to fund projects that may not have been ideal for long-term. It's a learning process for every jurisdiction as priorities and conditions change. Consistency, leadership and a sustained vision are very important moving forward.

Kaplan discussed how his reading of the problem was about projections into the future, that there was uncertainty about future revenue vs future expense and a widening gap. When he looks at the General Fund balance, it is 182% of minimum fund balance, not much different than in June 2024, so the City is not in a crisis. The City Manager's approach to prepare for the future is entirely reasonable, but it is not about lack of taking steps in the past. Kaplan said he was impressed with the number of things staff has done to become efficient, and that this is really about preparing for the next two years – there is no deficit. Departments have stayed within their budgets, and the City has maintained a healthy fund balance.

Cotta followed up that the budget is different from the spending, and is the best estimate given the information at the time to make a two-year projection. Given the level of uncertainty, the City does not want to overestimate and find itself on the wrong side of the estimation and have to make rapid changes midstream. The City has streamlined and has unfunded state mandates, like the paid leave program, that puts pressure on the General Fund.

Citizen Budget Committee (CBC) Linda Peterson Adams said that in the last 2023/2025 biennial budget CBC meeting there were recommendations to consider other revenue sources and that fees are the most regressive of those. Adams mentioned that the Food and Beverage tax will sunset and there are ways to support revenues like levies through long term planning, but that these fees are a band-aid.

Councilor Gina DuQuenne mentioned that there was more community involvement during the last biennial budget process and that the Oak Knoll golf course had been a recommended cut. DuQuenne asked whether the City had thought about other ways of generating revenue other than fees, taxes and utilities. She said the population in Ashland had not increased, but the cost of services and staff has. She asked what the City was going going to do so it didn't find itself in this place again and what revenues are the City considering that do not hit the rate payor? She asked why the 5% food and beverage tax, which was put in place to pay for the wastewater treatment plant could not be used to pay for the water treatment plant.

Cotta responded that she could not speak to Oak Knoll, as that was an Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission (APRC) decision, and that there was overwhelming support for the water treatment plant project through a ballot measure, so the City is moving forward with the loan. Cotta said she couldn't guarantee that the City would not be in the same place next biennium, so needs to work on the strategic plan and have a conversation with the community about levels of service and that this is happening with all jurisdictions. Cotta said that there were City properties that would be coming forward for divestment, including Park properties.

DuQuenne said that her mention of Oak Knoll was her listening to the City and asked with the budget process starting in November, how Cotta saw the City moving forward with speaking to the community and looking at the forecast across all departments together as part of the strategic plan. Cotta responded that for the current budget a livability study was conducted, where parks were the number one thing the community appreciated, and if the strategic plan was funded, the hope was to partner with Southern Oregon University (SOU) and the School District to get a wide array of feedback. The plan will take many months with many public forums, and the Parks plan with public meetings throughout the City is a good model.

DuQuenne asked whether the 5% food and beverage tax could be taken back to the voters to see if the voters would like a portion of it to pay for the water treatment plant project. Cotta replied that it had been discussed previously and was a Council decision.

Graham reminded the CBC that before COVID hit, the City was getting ready to start the strategic planning process, and like everything, it got put aside. Federal funding helped, but the City was hit hard with resignations and retirements, like other communities. Graham discussed that the process of putting qualified people back in positions has taken time and now it's time to move forward. Graham asked that the Committee consider a formal recommendation to the Council to reconvene mid-biennium for a budget recap and forecast to look for major changes so there is time to have a conversation with the community ahead of the next biennial budget process.

CBC member Meg Wade asked whether the City had a regular practice during the budget process to consult with community organizations during the budget process, whether the Parks Department consulted with organizations over the fees, and whether departments have a practice of consulting with organizations over miscellaneous fees. Cotta replied that for miscellaneous fees, the increase is based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), and that the City doesn't typically ask community members how much they'd be willing to pay, but is something the City can consider moving forward. Houston responded that the Parks fee process corresponds with the budgeting process and the department looks at how much something costs and its cost recovery goal, which sets the fee. The Department also looked at costs in neighboring cities for comparison and made proposals to the Parks Commission.

Wade asked Houston to clarify that there was no conversation with the communities groups that were impacted by the fees. Houston responded that the Department didn't reach out in advance, but information is sent out in advance of APRC meetings, so groups are aware of any actions being proposed.

Councilor Eric Hansen discussed that the APRC had a new recommendation to cover Parks costs for service reductions and wondered what a $6.50 parks fee would cover. He also discussed that it was not a question of a misuse of funds, rather the Parks Department living within its means, and that it was a General Fund problem with escalating costs and limited revenues. He asked whether the Nature Center employees had been laid off. Houston responded that the Nature Center employees had been notified but not laid off. Houston discussed the history of the fee and said the $6.5 fee equates to $1.4 million in revenue. The goal was to not have as large as reductions in recreation resources and restrooms and to try to make sure existing programs are still available for the community.

Hansen asked how the $6.50 fee and other rate increases impacted community groups. Houston responded that the recommended fee was coming forth to Council will all of the other City department fees and the Department would revisit its budget to see if there were any changes. Houston discussed how the Department was working towards providing more transparency on how much programs cost and the goal was to have things look the same for the next two years, knowing that the Department will have to continue to change, and meet the needs of the community through strategic planning goals while controlling costs.

Dahle expressed his appreciation for the difficulty in forecasting that the departments in the General Fund have, since they do not have ending funding balances, and asked that innovation and structural forecasting be kept in mind while moving forward, and whether that sounded reasonable. Cotta responded that there was an element of innovation, but the discussion would eventually be about service level for the community and that staff had been innovative and responsive to requests for change, often with Council's approval, but innovation often cost money.

Bloom asked whether it was a good time to discuss changes to the budget to allow for the time needed to make adjustments. Hunter asked that a few more questions be allowed.

CBC member Kirsten Roy discussed how she appreciated the work done on the budget, how every industry is in a similar position coming out of COVID, and that a mid-biennium review was important and input from stakeholders critical. She discussed it was hard to look at program expenses without seeing program revenues, how cuts in Parks seem to be aimed towards programs with child participation and noted that there were 11 leadership roles in Parks and asked if there could be consolidation.

Cotta responded that the focus for Parks has been maintaining access to free spaces, like playgrounds and open spaces, as to not violate the City's wildfire mitigation ordinances, which is the bulk of what the Parks Department does and its expense. Then APRC has to assess what to do with the remaining funding.

Houston reiterated that 66% of the workforce was used to maintain the City's parks, and that 12 years ago the Department had 50.5 FTEs and now had 35, so changes have been made over the years. Houston discussed that there was a level of maintenance expected for Lithia Park and that the Department has been doing what it can to cut operational costs, but even the parks with the lowest barriers to come in and have fun have costs. Houston spoke about programs, users and cost recovery, including the staffing, maintenance and facility costs, and how the General Fund is there to support those programs that do not recover costs, and how the Nature Center is not used as much by children as it was in the past, so the Department was trying to transition to environmental education, a different business model, but there was about a half a million in costs, and only $12,000 in revenue. Houston continued that the Department was trying to determine how to keep as many programs open and still hit the Department's budget goal.

Berry clarified that fund accounting was inherent for governmental entities but was not a typical profit and loss and that none of the departments in the General Fund could sustain itself. Berry discussed how a user of the budget book could drill down in the reports to find specific revenue streams.

Houston discussed how the City was in the middle of a classification and compensation study, so couldn't go forth and make any changes in recreation staffing until it was complete, but that Parks managers were working managers, who are out there actually working in the City's parks.

Kaplan noted the Parks proposed budget was 3.2% less than the fiscal year 2024 and 2025 budget, but that the budget for the Operations division was increasing by 22%, while Open Space, Recreation and the Nature Center budgets were decreasing. Kaplan asked what kind of things could be done so the Parks Department didn't have to gut the Open Space, Recreation and Nature Center if Council were to approve a fee. Kaplan discussed how he would be looking for commitments from Houston and the APRC on containing costs moving forward and mentioned that this budget was the first time that he had heard the Parks Department call out the number of volunteers as an accomplishment and asked whether if the Parks Department was thinking about a strategy to invest more in volunteers.

Houston responded that he had moved staff around, which was why the volunteer number had increased. He spoke about the graffiti removal volunteer group and has been looking to see if volunteers can do more, but they are not trained employees and are limited in what they can do. The Department works to make them feel supported and happy and that they enjoy the work. Houston continued that the Department was looking at different levels of service for different parks and making adjustments while making sure mandates are met and assessing capacity to meet the expectations of the community.

Wade said she agreed with comments made by Roy that it seemed cuts seemed to be impacting youth programming and that the question from community members seemed to be about priorities. She asked if there was data on cost per user for the Parks programs and how much support each program was getting from the General Fund. Houston responded that his data wasn't consistent and that he had data on programs like the Pool and Ice Rink, but not for some of the other recreation programs. Wade asked if the data could be provided with notes about where it was incomplete. Houston said that what was available had been shared with APRC and was available. Cotta noted there was a joint Council and APRC meeting afterwards where a lot of what was being talked about would be discussed.

CBC member Ariana Spiegler asked whether the $6.50 fee would offset some of the cost recovery. Houston said that the Department would have work with the Parks Commission and Council for any modification of the fees. Spiegler noted there was $17,000 in the budget for the Nature Center and asked whether it should have been eliminated along with the Nature Center expenses. Houston replied that without the Nature Center; the City would not have that revenue source.

Roy asked for clarification of whether the $6.50 fee would cover the cost of the Nature Center, or if the cuts and the fee were being proposed. Houston responded that if the fee were to bring in $1.4 million, the Department could offer the same level of services that was currently being offered and would look into having an environmental education program. Roy asked if, the $6.50 fee was approved, whether the two Nature Center employees would get their jobs back. Houston responded that the Department would work with Human Resources to retain those positions.

Berry provided a tutorial on drilling down to different revenue streams in the budget book.

CBC member Michael Murray discussed how the APRC and the Council made policy decisions, and the CBC participates from an Oregon regulatory statue standpoint, and although he would like to ask policy questions, he wasn't sure that the CBC meeting was an appropriate place to discuss those types of questions.

Bloom discussed the City's values and vision and pointed out that at the Council retreat economic development was right under wildfire mitigation in order of ranking and included a discussion about childcare grants. Bloom discussed how childcare affects the community and urged the CBC to restore the $240,000 Early Learning Grant in FY25/27 budget. Discussion ensued.

Motion: Request that staff include the $240,000 Early Learning Grant in the FY25/27 budget and come back at the next CBC with a variety of options, two to three, and then make final recommendations.

Motion: Bloom Second: DuQuenne

Discussion: DuQuenne voiced her support for the motion. Wade asked for clarification about whether the CBC could decide not to add the grant if the options by staff were not optimal. Graham expressed her support and asked that consideration be given for a more permanent funding source in the future, using the first 12 months of the biennium in finding a longer-term solution. CBC member Linda Peterson Adams asked whether money from the Reserve Fund could be used. Cotta replied that it could and asked for a sidebar with Bloom.

Motion withdrawn: Bloom, stating a conflict of interest.

Motion: I move that the Budget Committee direct staff to return next week with options for a $240,000 Early Learning Item in the budget and to give at least a couple of options about how it might be funded.

Motion: Graham Second: DuQuenne

Roll Call Vote: Hunter, Murray, Graham, Adams, Hanson, Roy, DuQuenne, Bloom, Dahle, Spiegler, Wade, Kaplan: YES Motion passed

Motion: Recommend a Parks fee of $6.50 to make the Parks whole.

Motion: Hansen

Discussion ensued about the upcoming meeting between the CBC and Council and whether the motion should be for the revenue the fee would generate.

Motion withdrawn: Hansen

Motion: The Citizens Budget Committee add $1.4 million in revenue towards the Parks budget.

Motion: Hansen Second: Adams

Discussion ensued.

Motion withdrawn: Hansen

Motion: The Citizen's Budget Committee add $1.4 million to the Parks Department Budget.

Motion: Hansen Second: Kaplan

Discussion ensued.

Motion: Amended motion to direct staff, depending on the outcome of the Council and Parks Commission Study Session to bring back to this Body options for closing the gap of the $1.4 million in the Parks Department.

Motion: Graham Second: Adams

Roll Call Vote Amendment: Hunter, Graham, Adams, Kaplan, Roy, Hansen, Murray, Spiegler: YES DuQuenne, Bloom, Dahle, Wade: NO. Motion passed.

Original Motion Roll Call Vote: Graham, Hunter, Hansen, Adams, Roy, Murray, Kaplan: YES DuQuenne, Bloom, Dahle, Wade, Kaplan: NO. Motion passed

Hunter asked for a temperature on whether the budget could be passed the next session. Discussion ensued and an agreement was made that a fourth session would be necessary.

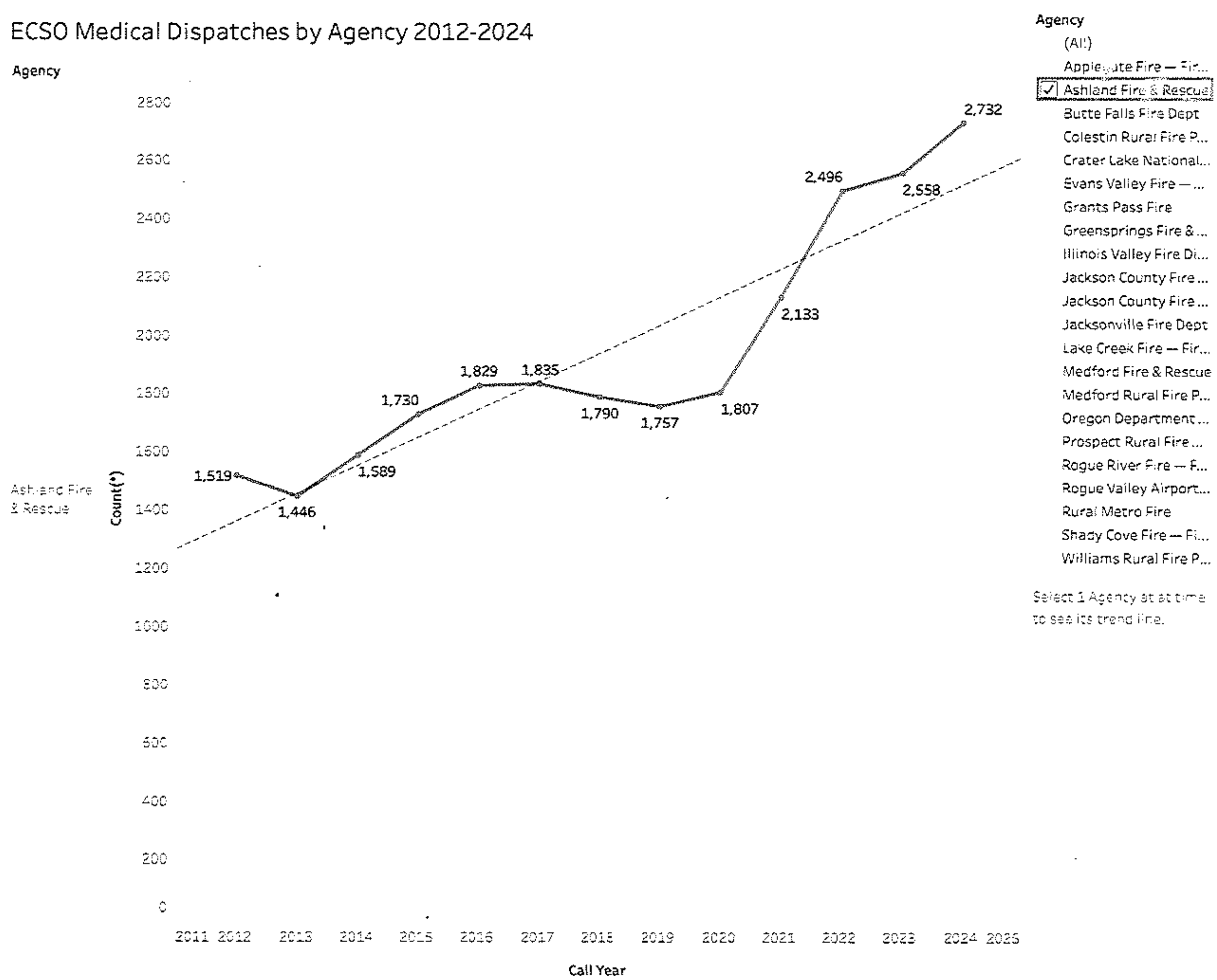
Meeting adjourned at 5:37 pm.

The Council claims to be running AF&R's Single Role EMS Ambulance Program "like a business". Ok, then let's see the balance sheet and find out why the Single Role program needs to be subsidized by a $3.50 increase in the public safety fee.

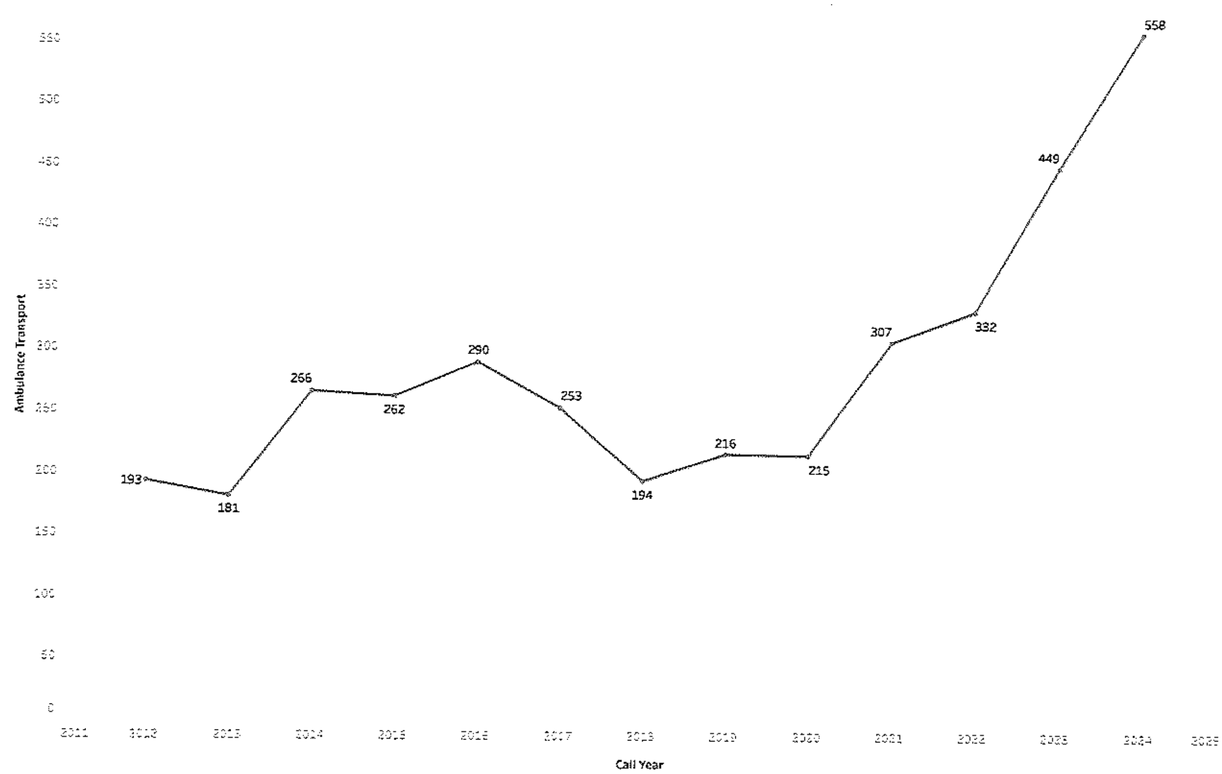
In 2021 the city received a report documenting an average **cost** to the city of $840,000 per year from 2015-2019 to provide ambulance service. As of today, the administration has not reported the Net Position of the ambulance service for the years 2020-2023 and we are told that the revenue from the Single Role EMS program in 2025 is not generating the same level of cost recovery i.e., contribution to the general fund, that the dual role ambulance program did in 2020-2023. Hence, the need for the increase in the public safety fee.

At the March 3rd study session, we learned that the estimated 2025 Net Position after accounting for personnel costs of the Single Role EMS program was in the range of $1.2M. That is a significant improvement over the $840,000 average cost per year of the ambulance service in 2015-2019.

What caused the turnaround? AF&R has seen a 55% increase in medical dispatches and a 160% increase in scheduled, non-emergency ambulance transports since 2019. But no one cares to ask why. (data below is directly from Emergency Communications of Southern Oregon)



Ashland Fire and Rescue Scheduled Non-Emergency Ambulance Transports 2012-2024



This activity generated an increase in revenue from the ambulance service. What was the Net Position of the ambulance service in 2020-2024, understanding that 4 Single Role FTE's started in the second half of 2023 and 4 more FTEs were added in the spring of 2024? We are told that the estimated $1.2M Net Position of the Single Role program in FY 2025 would provide less cost recovery than the ambulance service did in previous years when it was staffed by dual role FTEs. Can we see the numbers?

Administrator Cotta said at the March 31 study session that the cost of 8 Single Role FTE's was $1.5M/Year, and this figure was used to make the case for the increase in the Public Safety fee, but the 2025-2027 biennial budget says the cost will be $1M/Year? Which is it?

Emergency Medical Services Expense by Type

	2022 - 23 Actual	2023 - 24 Actual	2024-25 Adopted Budget	2025-26 Proposed Budget	2026-27 Proposed Budget
Material and Services	$0	$395,291	$2,133,345	$527,940	$527,940
Personnel Services	$0	$549,341	$554,316	$1,000,861	$1,060,390
TOTAL	$0	$944,632	$2,687,661	$1,528,801	$1,588,330

How do we know that the estimated cost recovery of the Single Role EMS program in 2025 is less than that of the dual role ambulance program in 2020-2023 without seeing the numbers? The Budget Committee should request this data so that the Council can fairly judge the Single Role Program before being asking the people of Ashland to subsidize it via an increase to the Public Safety fee.

Council Study Session

Date: June 16, 2025

Agenda Item	Approval of CBC Minutes from May 14, 2025 Meeting
Department	Finance
From	Mariane Berry, Finance Director

TIME ESTIMATE

CATEGORY
Action Needed - Motion to approve an action

SUMMARY
Draft minutes from Citizens' Budget Committee on May 14, 2025 for approval.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED

BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

FISCAL IMPACTS

SUGGESTED ACTIONS, MOTIONS, AND/OR OPTIONS
I motion to approve the May 14, 2025 Citizens Budget Committee minutes as drafted in the packet.

I motion to approve the May 14, 2025 Citizens Budget Committee minutes with the following corrections:

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS
1. DRAFT Budget Com #3 05.14.2025

Ashland Citizens Budget Committee
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 14, 3:00 PM -5:30 PM
Council Chambers, 1175 E Main Street

I. Call to Order

Chair Shane Hunter called the meeting to order at 3:00pm

II. Roll Call

Present: Mayor Tonya Graham, Councilor Eric Hansen, Councilor Gina DuQuenne, Councilor Dylan Bloom, Councilor Jeff Dahle, Councilor Bob Kaplan. Citizen Budget Committee (CBC) members Shane Hunter (Chair), Linda Adams, Kristen Roy, James Fredericks, Michael Murray, Ariana Spiegler, Meg Wade

III. Approval of May 25, 2023, and April 30, 2025, Minutes

<u>Approval of the May 25, 2023 Minutes</u>

Motion: Linda Peterson Adams Second: Gina DuQuenne

Unanimous YES. Motion passes.

<u>Approval of the April 30, 2025 Minutes</u>

CBC member Linda Peterson Adams suggested a few corrections to the minutes of April 30, 2025. Shane Hunter is not a Councilor and Councilor Bob Kaplan was absent from the meeting. Councilor Bloom asked questions about public meeting law which were answered by the legal department prior to the next meeting, questions and explanations concerning the WIFIA loan from Councilor DuQuenne, and clarification from Chief O'Meara regarding catching up on fees should have been recorded in the minutes.

Motion: Linda Peterson Adams Second: Gina DuQuenne

Unanimous YES. Motion passes.

IV. Public Forum

Paul Mozina: Provided comment on the Public Safety Fee and shared concerns about the single role program's revenue.

V. Budget Items

1. Increase Parks budget with possible motion.

Finance Director Mariane Berry noted an inconsistency in the agenda and clarified that, upon Council request, the Parks Fee would be effective July 1, 2025, for 24 months and for a total of $1.5 million. She discussed that the Citizens Budget Committee would provide their recommendation on the 24-month parks fee timeline and Council would provide their recommendation at a later meeting.

Council Jeff Dahle asked for clarification on the types of meters and number of meters used to calculate the Parks fee. Berry responded clarified the number of meters was 12,500 and electric meters would be used.

CBC member Ariana Spiegler asked for clarification on the timeline of the Parks fee. Berry responded that the CBC has the ability to make approve recommendations for the budget before it gets pushed to Council and that the recommendation could include a dollar amount to increase a program, service, function or department. The CBC would determine the amount, and then it would go to Council as part of the recommended budget. Then Council would decide whether to adopt it or make changes. If changes were over 10% of that particular fund, then a public hearing would be needed.

Spiegler asked whether she should consider whether the amount was appropriate or the length of time. Cotta replied that as a CBC member, she was deciding on a 24-month budget, so that period was appropriate.

Bloom asked questions regarding the motion and reconvening the CBC for an additional meeting if the amount was lowered. Berry responded that once the CBC made its recommendations to Council it would not need to reconvene, but a public hearing would be needed if Council changes to the recommendations made by the CBC exceeded 10% for any particular fund.

Councilor Bob Kaplan asked whether the CBC had already recommended an increase to the Parks budget of $1.4 million, pending Council's decision on the Parks fee. Mayor Tonya Graham responded that direction was given to staff to investigate options on how to bring $1.4 million in, but there was not a motion. Kaplan responded that he thought there had been a motion. Berry said that staff had completed the minutes from the prior meeting, but they had not been completed in time to be added to the agenda. Deputy Finance Director Bryn Morrison read her notes on the motion from the meeting, which was to direct staff, depending on the Joint meeting, to bring back options for closing the gap of $1.4 million in the Parks budget. Councilor Dylan Bloom recalled that there was an initial discussion about the recommendation mentioned by Kaplan, but then it was amended. Berry read the amended motion from the draft minutes. Cotta clarified that the direction from the joint meeting was to bring Council back a resolution for a $5 fee, and no decision had been made for the length of time of the fee, but for the purpose of the CBC, the budget was for 24 months.

CBC member Linda Adams asked whether Berry had given the amount of $1.5 million when she had clarified the amount earlier. Berry affirmed.

CBC Chair Shane Hunter said a motion was needed if the CBC wanted to take action.

Motion: I move to add $1,500,000 to the Park Department Operational budget in the General Fund on passage of a pending resolution by Council to establish a $5.00 parks fee charged on all electric meters to fund parks operations in the general fund with a 24-month term starting July 1, 2025.

Motion: Adams Second: Hansen

Adams read that, as a former Councilor once said, the budget had been sliced and diced through Parks and the Parks Commission. The Parks Department has worked diligently with the Council and the City Administration through multiple meetings and public engagement to present a compelling case for the addition of these fees to keep operations funded at a service level that is sufficient to accommodate one of the most vital threads in the fabric that holds Ashland together, our collective commitment to our parks.

Bloom said he felt the best process was for Council to make the decision, then convene CBC, and then include the fee in the budget. He said it was not reflective of how he felt able the fee, or the budget item, but he would be voting no simply because he thought that the Council decision should be first.

Councilor Eric Hansen said that he was impressed with the collaborative meeting after the last CBC meeting with the Parks Commissioners, Parks Department and Council. There was support among both Commissioners and the Council for the increase to the Parks budget. He stated that it was a General Fund issue that the CBC was putting into Parks to help relieve the budget. He thanked everyone for their hard work and said that he looked forward to keeping parks open for tourists and Ashlanders and was confident Council would give it a thumbs up.

Motion: Proposed amendment to the motion, to only increase the Parks budget to $1,400,000 rather than $1,500,000.

Motion: Kaplan Second: Bloom

Kaplan said the reason for the amendment was that the Parks funding request was $1.4 million, not $1.5 million, and that the discussed fee was not the only source of funding, so if it generated over $1.4 million, the excess could be used elsewhere. Councilors Bloom and Dahle concurred

Graham expressed her support for the motion.

CBC member Michael Murray asked for clarification about what happened to increase the amount from $1.4 million to $1.5 million. Berry answered that the lower amount was what the Parks Director had put forth for his specific budget, but when Finance calculated the amount generated from the fee based on the 12,500 electric meters for 24 months, it came to $1.5 million. Murray asked whether the CBC should approve the $5 fee or the amount. Berry replied that it was the amount.

Roll Call Vote Amendment

Graham, Hansen, DuQuenne, Bloom, Dahle, Kaplan, Hunter, Adams, Roy, Fredericks, Murray, Spiegler, Wade: YES Motion Passes.

DuQuenne expressed her appreciation for Kaplan and said that she felt the Parks budget was more of a money management issue than a funding issue and that she did not support the motion.

Spiegler said she would support the motion, but from what she understood from conversations about the Parks Department, there were structural issues that needed to be solved, and she would vote on it because there was a time period.

Wade expressed her support and that she appreciated everything that was brought forward at the joint session and that Parks was trying to manage and tighten its budget.

Graham said that this was not a situation of not living withing ones means, but where the community built a world class park system and the City had not kept up with the expenses needed to manage that world class system. She expressed her appreciation for the conversation with Parks, and that the bigger community conversation is needed to determine the ways the City is going to sustainably pay for the maintenance of that system. She said she would be supporting the motion.

Morrison said that the amended motion on the floor was to increase the budget by $1.4 million instead of $1.5 million. Cotta clarified that the CBC had already voted on the amendment, and now the original motion needed to be addressed.

Roll Call Vote Amendment

Motion: I move to add $1.4 million to the Parks amendment's operational budget in the General fund on passage of a pending resolution by Council to establish a $5 Parks fee charged on all electric meters to fund Parks operations in the General Fund with the 24-month term starting July 1st, 2025.

Motion: Adams

Discussion ensued and Adams withdrew her motion.

Motion: I move to increase the Parks operation budget by $1.4 million in the General Fund.

Motion: Bloom Second: Murray

Roll Call Vote Amendment: Bloom, Graham, Hunter, Dahle, Adams, Fredericks, Hansen, Murray, Spiegler, Kaplan, Wade, Roy: YES. DuQuenne: NO. Motion passed

In response to the Chair's inquiry about a question he had, Murray asked how much the City had spent on health care in the last three or four years and how it compared to receiving predictable insurance from a carrier. He also asked if the City was bounded to the benefits by union contracts. He said the reason he was inquiring was that about 62% of the General Fund went to salaries and benefits, and that salaries were 60% of the cost. Berry demonstrated how the Committee could look up actual amounts for salaries and benefits using the tables in the budget book and discussed the different union splits between City paid and employee paid healthcare. Cotta reiterated that the splits were negotiated, and the City had potentially seven unions.

Graham asked how the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) unfunded actuarial liability (UAL) influenced the cost of benefits. Berry responded that UAL amount was 6%, but she needed to confirm the number, and it was a slice of the cost that was refreshed annually by PERS. Murray asked whether the City considered the UAL for long-term planning. Kaplan asked if Ashland had considered PERS side accounts, and Berry replied that it was on the City's radar for consideration and that side accounts were a method of setting aside funds for reducing the City's UAL contribution.

Spiegler asked if the City was self-insured. Berry responded that the City was self-insured but was no longer as it was more cost efficient to go out for insurance.

Hansen asked whether CIS covered the City's general liability insurance. Berry responded yes. Hansen asked who provided the City's healthcare insurance. Berry responded that it was CIS. Hansen asked whether the City could go on the open market for insurance, or if it was tied to CIS. Cotta responded that the City was not tied to CIS, but there was a benefit to having the City's insurance rolled together and the City had brokers that periodically looked for the best options for the City. Hansen asked whether CIS was a nonprofit, since it covered member cities of the League of Oregon Cities. Cotta replied that she thought it was. Hansen asked whether all unions were covered by CIS. Cotta replied yes.

2. Increased budget for Childhood Grants with sample motions and discussion.

Dahle asked for clarification on the amount put forth as an option for funding from the Homeless Shelter. Cotta responded that there was $100,000 budgeted each year and that if that option was selected it could be reduced by $50k each year.

Mayor Tonya Graham asked how the reduction in homeless funding would affect the Severe Weather Shelter. City Manager Sabrina Cotta responded the funding was for staffing of the Severe Weather Shelter but the Dusk to Dawn program would also be affected.

Wade asked if there was a process for the social service grants and whether groups were already applying for them. Cotta described the grant process and said although the call had not gone out for applications, the process had been around for a while.

CBC member Kristen Roy asked for a recap of the amount being asked to fund childcare grants and how much would be saved from the option of eliminating positions. Cotta said the amount requested for childcare grants was $240k.

Dahle asked if the breakdown in spending between the homeless shelter and the Dusk to Dawn program was available. Cotta responded that it was $120K with additional funding from grants that will not be in place this biennium. Cotta said that another complicating factor was that the City didn't have a building that could function as a severe weather shelter.

Berry followed up on Roy's previous question and said that two years of salary and benefits for the Deputy City Manager was $552,000, for the Emergency Management Manager was $443,000 and for the Communications Officer was $369,000.

Kaplan clarified the amount budgeted for salaries in the General Fund and asked what the vacancy rate in the General Fund was. Cotta replied that it was currently about 6%. Kaplan said that one percent would equate to about $164k a year and said the City was projecting $2.1 million in reserve, which he was not comfortable using. He asked if it would be reasonable to assume 99% staffing to free up the $164k for one year, and then the $5 Parks fee would raise $1.5 million for $1.4 million allocated to Parks. If the City was 100% staffed, there would be recourse to use contingency. Berry said that it was a fair assumption, but the City was required to maintain a certain percentage of contingency and ending fund balance and it was not advisable.

Kaplan said that he agreed that contingency was non-negotiable and the City had a minimum fund balance policy equivalent to three months, or 16.67%, which was approximately $8 million. If the City funded the personnel line at 99%, and was incorrect, there would be buffer to cover the rest from the ending fund balance. Berry said that the City had methodologies in place which shouldn't be changed, such as allocating the costs of internal controls, and one of those methodologies was fully funding authorized FTEs. If the City decided it wanted to change its methodologies, it would need to be consistent moving forward. Kaplan said that was a fair point, and he supported it, but he would also support flexibility given the City had very generous buffers. Berry responded that it was the role of Finance to ensure those buffers stay in place. Kaplan said he respected that, which is why the City has a favorable credit rating.

In reference to changing methodologies, CBC member James Fredericks said that in Corporate America, that type of decision making came up all the time but reverted back because the numbers were subject to manipulation. He acknowledged the difficulty of the CBC determining which of the options presented for childcare was important and asked whether the CBC could agree to draw from reserves and ask Council to make the determination of whether the positions were needed.

Graham noted that Council had been discussing childcare needs for years and that the program was gaining momentum and was at a transformational point in community response. She asked whether there was a way to research the amount of savings from position vacancies to see if there was a way to fund the grants, with a last option of pulling from reserves.

Cotta responded that relying on vacancies for funding would be precedent setting, that the City budgets for personnel to ensure it has funding for needed positions, and that budget process has controls for consistency.

Hunter asked if the City could draw from reserves and then put money back in reserves if the City was not fully staffed.

DuQuenne discussed the value of the childcare grants to the community, and asked whether amount budgeted for FTEs was authorized FTEs or the current number of FTEs. Berry responded that it was authorized FTEs. DuQuenne said she would support using the difference between actual and budgeted, if it could be done.

Bloom said that he could not deliberate or vote on the childcare grants, as someone who serves on the Ad Hoc Committee (for Childcare grants), but could answer questions.

Wade asked for clarification on the amount targeted for childcare grants, and whether the childcare grants could be opened up to providers other than the YMCA. Bloom responded that Children's World Montessori and YMCA were the only two programs that applied that were qualified, but others can apply as long as they qualify according to the standards set by the Ad Hoc Committee. He said that Children's World no longer qualifies and that the YMCA expanded 40 extra seats, anticipating the grant would be available. Wade asked whether there were enough qualified applicants to use the $235k. Bloom responded that there's was difficulty getting teachers in general, but capacity could be expanded and funding could be used for staffing and operations as well as for parents and children.

Hunter asked whether the Committee was in favor of the $240k to childcare grants and the funding source. Discussion ensued.

Spiegler asked if the grant would add 40 seats. Bloom responded that when the program started, the YMCA recognized that it would increase demand and expanded the amount of seats. Spiegler asked how many children the grant covered. Bloom replied that it was 40. Spiegler asked if there was data on the impact on the City's economy. Cotta responded that there was not. Bloom said that the Ad Hoc Committee was working on collecting that data. Spiegler said that "transformational point and moving into long term sustainability" was mentioned, and what that meant. Graham responded that the Ad Hoc Committee wasn't designed to go on forever but was put together to tackle the lack of childcare in the City, and that there was talk of endowing money from the community, so the City was not the only source of funding.

Bloom added that the Ad Hoc Committee was working on a business engagement program to encourage businesses to take part. He discussed ideas for the endowment and asked how to expand the program long term to deal with the lack of childcare.

Roy expressed her support for funding the childcare grants and that the City has to be consistent in its methodology with regards to budgeting for FTEs. She said her preference was for the options provided and asked if the City had to maintain a minimum reserve and asked for the amount.

Berry responded that when the Reserve Fund was established, requirements for use were vague, without a specific minimum and that it should be used to stabilize the budget. Berry added that it would be difficult to use an FTE vacancy percentage to fund the childcare program, as the adjustments would be manual to keep the budget in compliance. She said another option would be a mid-cycle budget reconciliation to determine if there were cost savings, draw from contingency, or refresh the homeless program budget.

Kaplan thanked everybody for asking questions, expressed his support, and that if Council approved the $5 Parks Fee, it would raise $1.5 million for the needed $1.4 million in the Parks Department, freeing up $100k. He discussed the projected ending fund balance of the General Fund and whether, based on current ending fund balance which was almost 200% of the minimum required amount, a portion could be used to fund the grants.

Deputy Finance Director Bryn Morrison responded that the budget is built on projections, and the projected ending fund balance of fiscal year 2025 is part of the scenario. With that projection, the ending fund balance was just at policy.

Kaplan responded that the City had $40,000 in the Reserve Fund before the current biennium started and now had $2.1 million because the City over projected expense and under projected revenues, and that the City was projecting using the entire amount over the minimum fund balance, which had grown to almost twice the amount needed over the course of the biennium.

Berry replied that when the budget is developed, the 16.67% needed in the General Fund was a stop line and was inclusive of the carry forwards of whatever cost savings that the City realized during the biennium.

Kaplan expressed that he was not in favor of taking money from homeless service programs to fund something else.

Berry reiterated that the City does not use the minimum required fund balance and that anything above that 16.67% (for the General Fund) was already appropriated.

Graham asked for clarification on how the amounts would be budgeted. Berry responded that it could be allocated however it best made sense, and that there could be a mid-cycle reconciliation, much like was done with the interest income, and if there was additional revenues or cost savings, the City could reappropriate it.

Councilor Jeff Dahle asked if the CBC allocated money out of the Homeless program and the Community Development Social Service Grants, and community partnerships came forth with grants, if the funds (homeless program/social services grants) could be replenished. Berry replied that it could if 100% of the appropriation was spent.

Dahle asked if someone wrote a check for $15k, could Council approve a budget supplemental to put in a specific Fund. Berry responded that Council could, as long as the money was not restricted in use.

CBC member Michael Murray asked if a recommendation was needed on the total amount and Council would work through the options. Cotta responded that the CBC could recommend the amount and where it's coming from to Council. Once the recommendation went to Council, they could adjust as they saw fit. But the expense could not be added without the revenue.

Motion: I moved to increase the administration budget for Childcare Grants $235,000 and remove that amount an equal amount to draw from reserves.

Motion: Fredericks Second: Murray

Discussion ensued. Fredericks said he didn't like taking anything connected to homeless monies or Community Development and suggested that if the CBC was invested in the program, it should make sure it has the funding for it. He added that the City Council should determine if the funds could be better taken from elsewhere.

Murray added that the CBC did not have the budget experience to make the calls that Council does.

Hunter expressed his support for the program to draw from reserves to get the program on its feet.

Dahle expressed his support for the program and that program was critical to families and the local economy but could not support pulling from the Reserve Fund.

Motion: Proposed amendment to the motion, to change that title to Childcare Program Support.

Motion: Graham Second: Dahle

Roll Call Vote Amendment: Graham, Hunter, Dahle, Adams, Fredericks, Hansen, DuQuenne, Murray, Spiegler, Kaplan, Wade, Roy: YES. Bloom: Recused

Motion passed

Discussion ensued. Spiegler said that she agreed with Dahle regarding drawing from reserves, but understood the program was at a transformational point, and would be voting for it.

Kaplan said that he was not in favor of taking money out of reserves but thought there were ample buffers that would allow him to support [the motion] in hopes of Council finding a better funding source.

Amended Motion: I move to increase the admin budget for Childcare Program Support Grants by $235K and move that amount from reserves.

Motion: Bloom Second: Murray

Roll Call Vote Amended motion: Graham, Hunter, Adams, Fredericks, Hansen, Murray, DuQuenne, Spiegler, Kaplan, Wade, Roy: YES. Dahle: NO. Bloom, Recuse. Motion passed.

Bloom said he appreciated Mayor Graham's amendment, that the City may see some program closures, but other programs will step up and expand, and this gives the flexibility to do so.

Wade asked, that given the discussion on the lack of a clear policy, whether it was within the ability of the committee to recommend to Council that a reserve policy is established.

Motion: I move that the Committee recommend the Council to establish a reserve policy this year.

Motion: Wade Second: Spiegler

Wade said that Finance had expressed a desire for a policy and the City needed to have a better understanding of the role of the reserve and a healthy level for it to be at. Spiegler concurred.

Adams added that the City was going to be entering into a strategic planning process, and that this source was all about finding financial policies for the reserve fund.

Dahle expressed his support, and that it was the start of discussions around strategic forecasting by staff leadership and Council.

DuQuenne expressed her appreciation for Murray's earlier questions and comments about insurance.

Kaplan expressed support, and that it would good idea for the Council to spend time with staff developing a reserve policy.

Roll Call Vote on Motion: Graham, Hunter, Dahle, Adams, Fredericks, Hansen, Murray, DuQuenne, Spiegler, Kaplan, Wade, Roy, Bloom: YES. Motion passed.

Wade said the Committee had discussed reconvening in a year to check in, as opposed to meeting in two years.

Motion: I move that we recommend that council call the budget committee to meet in one year's time

Motion: Wade Second: Fredericks

Discussion ensued. Fredricks said that two years was a long time between meetings and that the Committee would have a better sense of the success of programs that have allocated funds.

DuQuenne expressed support as well.

Hansen asked the City Manager how it might affect staff time. Cotta deferred to Berry, who replied that it could potentially be a study session. She said that Committee member terms would have to be evaluated, there may not be a full committee in a year, it would take staff time to put together the agenda and seat the meeting.

Hansen said it would be a great opportunity and could be a study session.

Bloom said that it would be good formalize in motion so the meeting would be scheduled, and it would be good to see what happens over the course of a year. He also expressed his appreciation to the citizens members of the CBC.

Graham said that she thought an annual check-in was important to determine if there was something out on the horizon past the next fiscal year that would create a significant disruption, which would give the Council a year to plan and have community conversations. She thanked Wade for bringing forward and expressed her support.

Roll Call Vote on Motion: Bloom, Graham, Hunter, Dahle, Adams, Fredericks, Hansen, Murray, DuQuenne, Spiegler, Kaplan, Wade, Roy: YES. Motion passed

Motion: I moved to approve the property tax levy in the amount of $4.2865 per $1,000 of assessed value for fiscal year 2025 to 2026 and fiscal year 2026 to 2027 respectively and approved property taxes for the payment of general obligation principal and interest bonded debt in the total amounts of $213,552 for fiscal year 2025 to 2026 and $202,774 for fiscal year 2026 to 2027.

Motion: Adams Second: Graham

Discussion ensued. Adams said that setting the tax limit at the most that the City could request from the state was the only choice the Committee had and that the City needs to continue efforts to persuade both Ashland citizens, and state and federal legislators that equitable and progressive tax reform is needed.

Graham expressed her support.

DuQuenne said she wanted to let residents know that this was not a tax hike.

Roll Call Vote on Motion: Bloom, Graham, Hunter, Dahle, Adams, Fredericks, Hansen, DuQuenne, Murray, Spiegler, Kaplan, Wade, Roy: YES. Motion passed.

Motion: I moved to approve the City of Ashland 2025-27 Biennial Budget as revised and recommended the budget to the City Council for adoption.

Motion: Spiegler Second: Bloom

Discussion ensued: Spiegler said the Committee had put in a lot of work and that it was a wonderful experience. She thanked everyone for their service and said she thought the budget had come to a good conclusion. Bloom agreed.

Graham expressed her appreciation for the Budget Committee process, and everyone who devoted time to it, especially staff. She spoke to the fact there were people behind the numbers that the Committee dealt with, and in order to bring the budget to the Committee, cuts to existing programs had to be made. She acknowledged the good work of the group and the consequences of bringing programs in which the City invests in line with available resources.

Frederick acknowledged the work done by the Finance Director, her team and the City, and expressed his appreciation for her being available for questions and the time and effort that was put into the budget.

Roy expressed her appreciation as well and said it had been a great learning process.

Murray acknowledged the amount of work that went into the budget, and said it was one of the better budget processes he'd seen, and the City had well-structured financial support, which he didn't know until he got involved. He thanked staff and Council.

Hansen said that the Committee came into the budget process after staff had done hard work and made cuts, knowing there were going to be hard decisions as well as opportunities for collaboration and citizens to pitch in more. He acknowledged that proposed fee increases were going to have an impact and that the Council and Commissioners had been trying their best to represent the citizenry. He said he was proud of the work, collaboration and open-mindedness, and thanked staff.

Kaplan thanked the members of the Budget Committee and said they had asked good, difficult questions and made good recommendations, and that it was helpful for Council to get their perspectives and have a broader conversation about what was going on and the issues. He also thanked staff for putting together the budget, being in good humor despite difficult questions and always being super professional and doing a great job.

DuQuenne expressed appreciation for everyone's work and laughter. She said she would not be able to support the budget because she did not see how sustainable it was and could not support something that would impact so many people on unknown.

Roll Call Vote on Motion: Bloom, Graham, Hunter, Dahle, Adams, Fredericks, Hansen, Murray, Spiegler, Kaplan, Wade, Roy: YES. DuQuenne: NO Motion passed.

VI. Q&A Deliberation

Hunter thanked everyone for their hard work and noted it was good to get the community involved every two years. He referenced the mid-year meeting to keep engagement and learning moving forward and asked about the next meeting. Berry replied that it hadn't been noticed and if the Committee did not want to meet, it could be taken off the schedule.

Graham asked whether it would be a good idea to have a quick convening meeting to approve the two meeting minutes from the series, so the next budget committee didn't have to approve minutes that they weren't present at. Bloom thanked her for bringing it up and asked if the meeting could be around 5:00 pm. Fredricks asked whether it was necessary for a physical meeting or if the minutes could be emailed. Cotta responded that a way would be figured out and now that the CBC was meeting mid-year, the minutes could be brought back then.

Adams thanked Hunter for running a great meeting, and he thanked everyone for voting him Chair.

Meeting Adjourned

Meeting Adjourned at 5:11 PM.

Council Study Session

Date: June 16, 2025

Agenda Item	APD Annual Report
Department	Police
From	Tighe O'Meara, Police Chief

TIME ESTIMATE
15 minutes

CATEGORY
Informational - this is to inform the body on a particular topic. No motion or direction needed.

SUMMARY
Since 2008 the police department has come before Council to provide an annual use of force report. This presentation has grown in scope and now includes use of force, crime and clearance rates, an update on the enhanced law enforcement area (ELEA), as well as the most recent data from Statistical Transparency Of Policing (STOP), select city parks and the new camping ordinance.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED

BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Use of Force Information

During 2024 the Police Department saw 43 incidents reportable under our use of force policy. This is a substantial increase from the 11 reported the previous year. This is due to several factors. Starting in 2024, the department adjusted policy and procedure on what constitutes a reportable use of force incident. Previously, if an officer displayed a weapon, but did not use the weapon, it was not captured as a use of force incident. In order to better capture the nature of officer/suspect interaction, this change was made. Additionally, the downward trend over several years was likely influenced by a lack of staffing, and therefore a decrease in proactive policing. As staffing has increased and department procedures have increased reporting requirements, the number of incidents has increased.

APD lodged 717 people in the jail in 2024, up from 637 in 2023, 645 in 2022 and 557 in 2021.

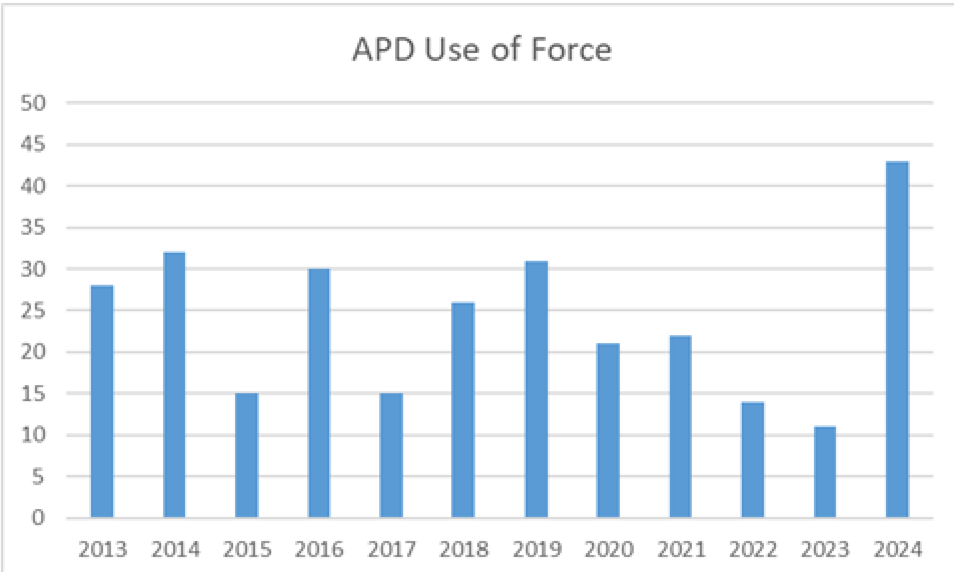
In 2024 all 43 of the incidents involved subjects who were identified as white. 30 of the use of force incidents involved suspects as were identified as male, and 13 as female.

Of the 43 uses of force:
-the TASER was used three times in 2024
-the TASER was displayed but not used nine times in 2024
-the less lethal shotgun was deployed once but not used in 2024
-OC spray was used twice in 2024
-a firearm was displayed six times in 2024

-the rest of the incidents involved empty-handed techniques such as take downs, joint locks, control holds and empty-handed strikes.

The department's use of force review board reviews all instances of use of force. All the incidents of use of force in 2024 were deemed to be within policy.

In 2024, the Ashland Police Department handled 30,278 calls for service down slightly from 32,753 in 2023 and investigated 2,571 cases, down slightly from the previous year. This means that less than 2% of the cases handled by the department resulted in a use of force.



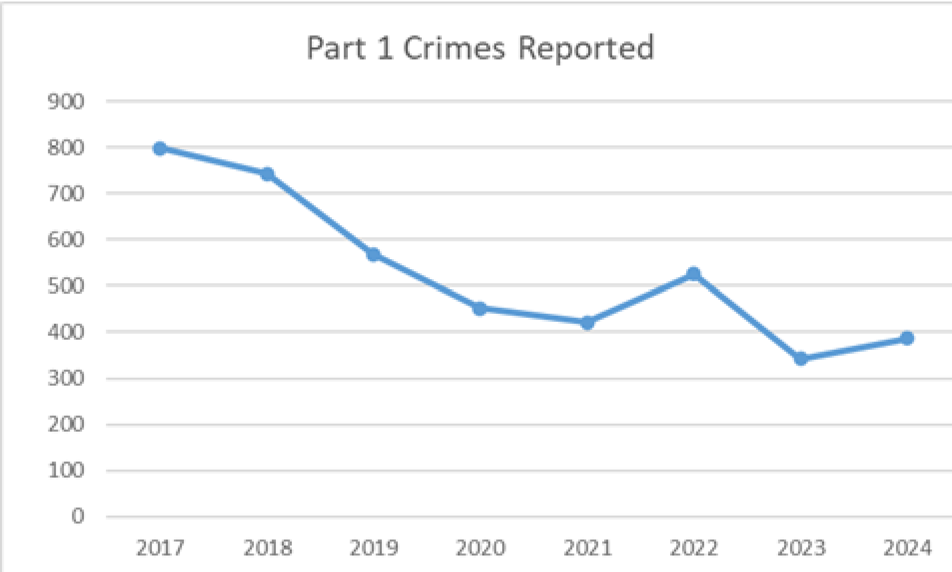
During 2024, Ashland officers received a total of 1,391 hours of use of force training.

Crime Rates and Clearances

Reported crime statistics can be influenced by several factors. Several team members, both internal and external, both sworn and non-sworn, touch APD reports and ensuring 100% accuracy in reporting is very problematic and hard to achieve. Every year the APD reports its crime statistics to the State of Oregon, and through them to the Federal Bureau of Investigation. While these reported crime statistics may not be exactly a 1 for 1 match depending on which database is accessed and which report is analyzed, they do paint a generally accurate picture of crime in Ashland. Additionally, staffing changes have caused some processes to be lost, leading to those processes needing to be recreated.

APD continues to work toward additional training for its entire team to ensure the most accurate reporting possible going forward.

In previous years APD has brought info to Council on what had been termed “Part 1 Crimes.” “Part 1 crimes” were those that were reported annually to the FBI for inclusion in the Uniform Crime Report. They were homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, auto theft, arson and larceny. Nationally all law enforcement agencies have moved from Uniform Crime Reporting to a new system called National Incident Based Reporting System that has re-categorized reported crimes. However, for purposes of continuity APD is still reporting what were previously called “Part 1 crimes.” In 2024 Ashland saw 387, up slightly from 342 of 2023.



Violent crime is defined as homicide, rape, robbery and aggravated assault. There were 40 violent crimes in 2024 up from 29 in 2023. Clearance rates for violent crime remain very high at 80%.

In 2024 two rapes were reported, along with 9 robberies and 29 aggravated assaults.

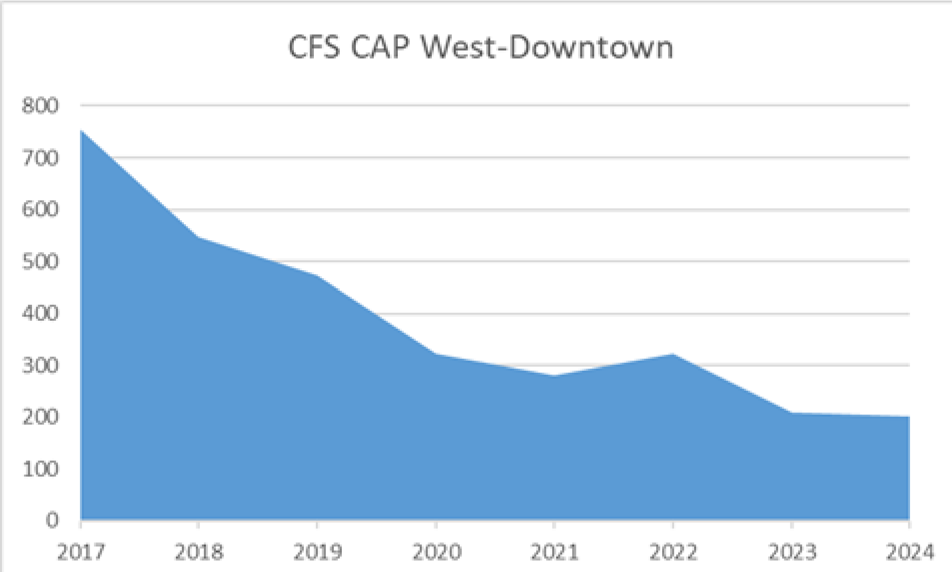
Crime data for the state is available for public viewing at oregon.gov/osp/pages/uniform-crime-reporting-data.aspx

Enhanced Law Enforcement Area

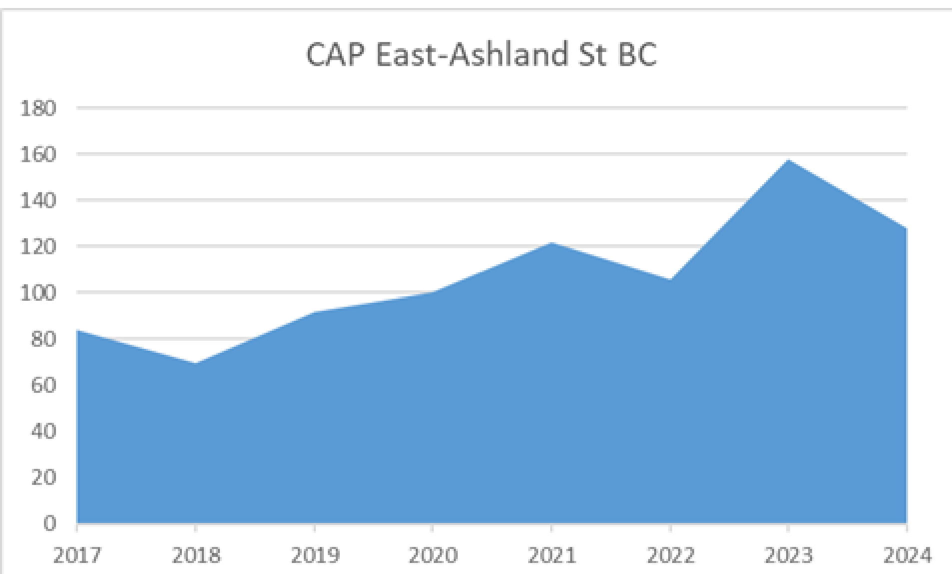
The Enhanced Law Enforcement Area (ELEA) ordinance has been in effect since August of 2012. The ELEA is roughly defined as downtown for CAP (Concentrated Area Patrol) West and the Ashland Street business corridor for CAP East. In these areas we have seen a concentrated number of complaints and disorderly behavior. A conviction of three or more qualifying violations in Ashland Municipal Court, or crimes in any court, within a six-month period may result in a person being expelled from the downtown area. The expulsion has judicial review, in that only the Municipal Court Judge can authorize it.

The qualifying violations are: scattering rubbish; unnecessary noise; dogs-control required; consumption of alcohol; open container of alcohol; dog license required; or use of marijuana in public. In 2024 there were 104 ELEA violation convictions in the municipal court. There were eight people expelled from the downtown area (CAP West). The ELEA ordinance continues to be a valuable tool to address chronic negative behavior.

For several years we have used calls for service downtown for disorderly-type behavior as a metric for quality of life issues downtown. 2024 saw a similar number of CFS as 2023 (202) from the high in 2017 for CAP West. The metric tracks calls for service such as disorderly behavior, drinking in public, urinating in public as well as others.



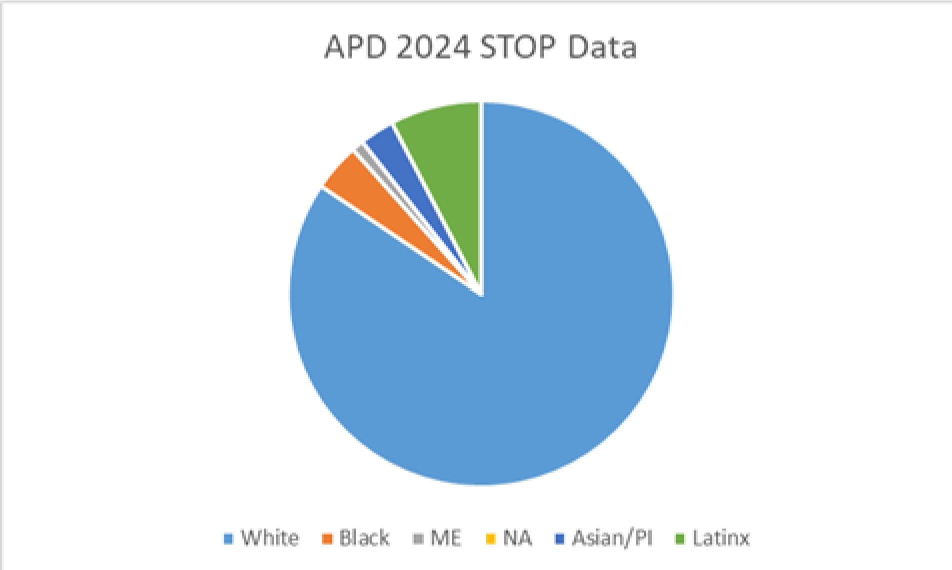
The City has a second ELEA along the Ashland Street Business corridor. This has only been in place since January of 2025. In the future enforcement and expulsion data will be brought forward. For reference the same calls for service data graphed out for the same period of time for CAP East is shown here.



Statistical Transparency of Policing (STOP)

The Oregon legislature has mandated that all police officers in the state record certain demographic and enforcement data for officer-initiated enforcement stops. The most recent data that is available is for the period of July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024. This data is available through the department's webpage under the "STOP Data" button.

For that period of time data for the Ashland Police Department indicates that officer-initiated enforcement stops involving individuals identified as follows:



Asian or Pacific Islander	2.9%	Middle Eastern	1%
Black	4%	Native American	<.5%%
Latinx	7.6%	White	84%

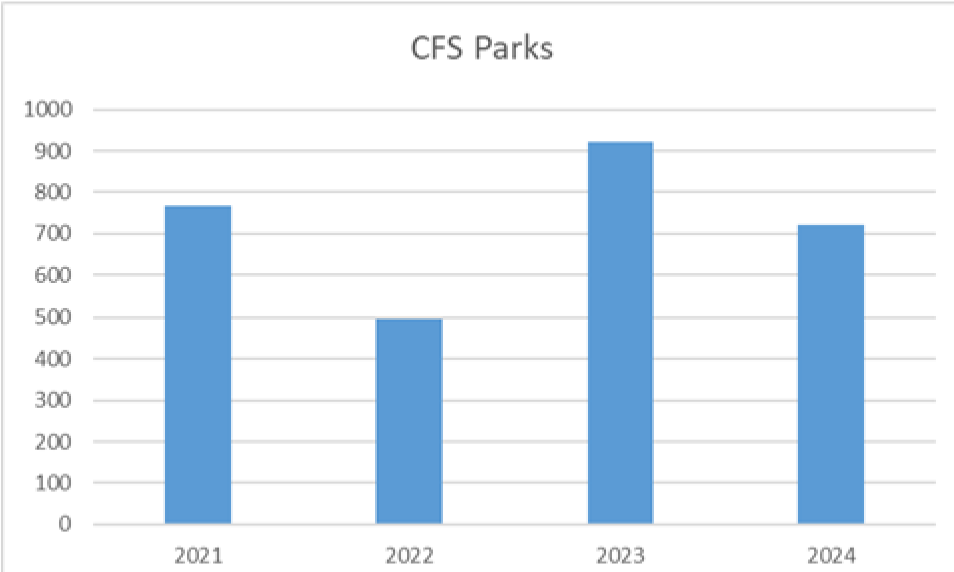
This data is dependent on an officer's observations, not an inquiry, and seems to be consistent with Ashland's demographics. Age information is not available through this report.

The Ashland Police Department will always strive to equitably serve the entire community. With that in mind, we need to recognize that STOP data will never match perfectly with demographic data for the community. Demographic data varies from source to source, so the exact representation of a specific race within the community cannot be perfectly known. Also, we need to recognize that STOP data is solely dependent on an officer's perception and is not derived from an inquiry into how the person identifies. STOP data does not allow for a person to be identified as multi-racial, which many people do. Demographic data does allow for this, and 3-4% of the Ashland population identifies as such. Ashland is a tourist town, a university town, and is on the I-5 corridor as well. All of this information skews the data on who is actually present in the community and how they might be perceived by the officer. Again, this all comes together to create a situation that will never allow the STOP to perfectly match up with the demographic data.

Also, again, and most importantly, we will always work to make sure all members of the community are being treated equitably.

Calls for Service Around Parks

At Council's request, staff is continuing to bring forward information on CFS in parks. APD pulled data from four of the main parks, Lithia, Triangle, Garfield and Clay Street. Overall, CFS are down overall to 722 CFS from 920.



The most prevalent ordinance violation complaint in each park was prohibited camping, although that does not mean it was the most prevalent CFS type.

Information on all CFS, broken down by type and year, is attached.

Camping Ordinance Enforcement

The camping ordinance was amended in January of 2024 to allow for enhanced penalties for repeat violations. In 2024 there were 157 violations of prohibited camping, with 21 of those being misdemeanors. YTD 2025 there have been 26 violations enforced, with three of those being misdemeanors.

FISCAL IMPACTS

None

SUGGESTED ACTIONS, MOTIONS, AND/OR OPTIONS

No action needed

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

1. CFS by park by year
2. Annual report to Council 06162025

Garfield Park 2021	Count	Case #
Extra Patrol	12	
Suspicious	4	1
Welfare Check	4	
Animal Problem	4	
Ordinance Violation	3	
Noise Complaint	2	
Traffic Stop	2	
Subject Stop	2	1
911 Cell Hangup	2	
Foot Patrol	2	
PHONE	2	1
Assist to Public	1	
UEMV	1	
Theft Report	1	
COMP AT STN	1	1
Harassment	1	
Utility Problem	1	
Theft	1	
Disorderly Conduct	1	
Hit & Run	1	
Domestic Dispute	1	
Family Offense/Abuse	1	
Public Safety Hazard	1	
POSS UEMV	1	
Prop Lost/Found/Rec	1	
(blank)		
Grand Total	**53**	4

Garfield Park 2022	Count	Case #
Extra Patrol	13	
Ordinance Violation	11	
Prop Lost/Found/Rec	4	1
Noise Complaint	4	
Disorderly Conduct	4	
Animal Problem	3	
Suspicious	3	
Juvenile Problem	3	1
Subject Stop	2	
Welfare Check	2	
Harassment	2	
Assist to Public	2	
911 Cell Hangup	1	
Fireworks	1	
Citizen Flag-down	1	
Suspicious Report	1	
Subpoena Service	1	
Traffic Stop	1	
512	1	
Assist to Medical	1	
Utility Problem	1	
AT STATION	1	
Police Info	1	
MVC w/ Prop Damage	1	
(blank)		
Grand Total	**65**	2

Garfield Park 2023	Count	Case #
Extra Patrol	80	1
Foot Patrol	51	
Ordinance Violation	49	5
Disorderly Conduct	11	1
Noise Complaint	9	
Suspicious	9	
Animal Problem	9	
Drug Laws	4	
Follow-up	4	
Assist to Public	3	
Traffic Stop	3	
Welfare Check	3	
Prop Lost/Found/Rec	2	
Harassment	2	
516	2	
Liquor Law Violation	2	
Drugs Report	1	
Assist Agency	1	
OIC OR 521	1	
Family Offense/Abuse	1	
Cust. Interference	1	
911 Cell Hangup	1	
ANY	1	
Indecent Exposure	1	
ORD	1	
Juvenile Problem	1	
Person Down	1	
DUI	1	1
Sex Offense	1	1
Assist to Medical	1	
Trespass	1	1
NOISE	1	
Marijuana	1	1
Found Child	1	
GUN	1	
(blank)		
Grand Total	**262**	11

Garfield Park 2024	Count	Case #
Extra Patrol	42	2
Ordinance Violation	22	6
Foot Patrol	8	
Disorderly Conduct	7	1
Subject Stop	7	
Suspicious	4	
Follow-up	4	
Welfare Check	4	
Abandoned Vehicle	3	
Person Down	3	1
Assist to Public	3	
Noise Complaint	3	
Domestic Dispute	2	1
Prop Lost/Found/Rec	2	2
Assist Agency	2	1
Property	1	1
POSS DUI	1	
Family Offense/Abuse	1	
Theft Report	1	
911 Text Disconnect	1	
Public Safety Hazard	1	
Menacing w/a Weapon	1	1
Traffic Stop	1	
Drug Laws	1	
Animal Problem	1	
Parking Violation	1	
Citizen Flag-down	1	
Juvenile Problem	1	
Medical (NRUR)	1	
Grand Total	**130**	16

01/01/2025-06/06/2025

Garfield Park 2025	Count	Case #
Ordinance Violation	5	
Extra Patrol	3	
Subject Stop	3	1
Disorderly Conduct	3	1
Welfare Check	3	
Trespass	2	1
Foot Patrol	2	
Assist to Public	2	
Suspicious	2	
Theft	1	
Citizen Flag-down	1	
Criminal Mischief	1	
Utility Problem	1	
Traffic Complaint	1	
Animal Problem	1	
Assist Agency	1	
Noise Complaint	1	
Juvenile Problem	1	
Medical (NRUR)	1	
Grand Total	**35**	3

Lithia Park 2021	Count	Case #
EXPAT	211	1
ANIMAL	38	
ORD	33	4
PROP	28	8
SUSP	24	
WELCHK	23	2
DOC	21	4
SS	18	3
FOLUP	13	
FOOTP	11	
MEDICAL	10	
ASSTPP	9	
T	8	
SAFEP	7	
ASSTAP	5	
DOMEST	5	
SUICP	4	2
INFOP	4	
NOISE	4	
THEFT	4	2
VAND	3	1
FCHILD	3	
MADULT	3	1
HARASS	3	
ATL	3	
HRUN	3	
WAR	2	2
UEMV	2	2
TRES	2	1
ASLTP	2	1
MENACE	2	1
DRUG	2	2
ALARMB	2	
ASLTWP	2	1
LLAWS	2	2
CIVIL	1	
MVCPDP	1	1
PERDNP	1	1
PINFO	1	
UTIL	1	
INDEXP	1	
PARKV	1	
ROV	1	
MVCP	1	
ASSTM	1	
UNSPRM	1	1
JUVP	1	
DRUGMJ	1	
911C	1	
WEAP	1	1
FLAG	1	
ABAND	1	
911UNK	1	
(blank)		
Grand Total	534	44

Lithia Park 2022	Count	Case #
EXPAT	124	4
ANIMAL	32	
ORD	31	2
PROP	28	4
FOOTP	26	2
DOC	24	3
WELCHK	21	
FOLUP	18	
ASSTPP	16	
MEDICAL	16	
SUSP	13	
NOISE	9	
SS	8	
SAFEP	6	1
HRUN	5	
MVCP	4	1
THEFT	4	3
HARASS	3	
ASSTAP	3	
MADULT	3	3
WAR	3	3
DOMEST	2	1
SUICP	2	
ASLTP	2	
T	2	
TRES	2	
FLAG	2	
VAND	2	1
ALARMB	2	
ATL	2	
JUVP	2	
INDEXP	1	
PARKV	1	
TRFCOM	1	
ROV	1	1
PSYCHP	1	1
ABAND	1	
INFOP	1	
GRASSP	1	1
UTIL	1	
DRUG	1	
CUST	1	
MESSP	1	
DWS	1	
LLAWS	1	
(blank)		
Grand Total	431	31

Lithia Park 2023	Count	Case #
EXPAT	147	2
ORD	31	4
ANIMAL	29	
SUSP	26	2
PROP	23	6
FOOTP	22	
FOLUP	19	1
SS	14	4
DOC	13	1
ASSTPP	12	1
MEDICAL	10	1
WELCHK	10	
NOISE	7	
TRES	6	4
ASSTAP	5	
THEFT	5	3
PARKV	5	
VAND	5	2
INFOP	5	
FLAG	3	
MVCP	3	3
TRFHAZ	3	
ALARMB	3	
T	3	
ABAND	2	1
ASLTP	2	1
SEXOFF	2	1
ASSTM	2	
MCHILD	2	
PERDNP	1	
ALARMP	1	
FAMABU	1	
HRUN	1	
DUI	1	1
SAFEP	1	
911C	1	
INDEXP	1	1
MENACE	1	
SEXREG	1	1
DOMEST	1	
SHOTS	1	
HARASS	1	
CIVIL	1	
SUICP	1	1
(blank)		
Grand Total	434	41

Lithia Park 2024	Count	Case #
EXPAT	178	2
FOOTP	40	1
SUSP	29	2
ANIMAL	26	1
ORD	24	3
PROP	23	4
DOC	20	5
SS	19	3
ASSTPP	15	1
T	13	
WELCHK	11	2
NOISE	10	
MEDICAL	10	1
TRES	8	7
FOLUP	7	
PARKV	5	
WAR	5	5
MISCP	4	
FLAG	4	
JUVP	3	
911UNK	3	
THEFT	3	3
VAND	3	2
TRFCOM	3	
ABAND	3	1
INFOP	3	
SEXOFF	3	2
HARASS	3	
MCHILD	3	
911C	2	
MVCP	2	
UTIL	2	
ALARMB	2	
CIVIL	2	
ATL	2	
DOMEST	2	
PERDNP	2	
SAFEP	2	
BURG	2	2
MESSP	1	
ASSTAP	1	
BITEP	1	1
ASLTP	1	
ROV	1	
LLAWS	1	1
RUN	1	
THREAT	1	
FAMABU	1	
HRUN	1	
Grand Total	511	49

01/01/2025-06/06/2025

Lithia Park 2025	Count	Case #
EXPAT	44	
PROP	9	1
SUSP	8	
SS	6	1
MEDICAL	5	
ASSTPP	5	
DOC	4	1
INFOP	4	
ANIMAL	4	
ORD	4	
NOISE	3	
ALARMB	3	
911UNK	3	
HARASS	3	
FOOTP	3	1
WELCHK	3	
FOLUP	2	
ASSTAP	2	
MADULT	1	
ATL	1	
SEXOFF	1	1
911C	1	
THEFT	1	1
ASSTM	1	
THREAT	1	
PERDNP	1	
VAND	1	
HRUN	1	1
INDEXP	1	
Grand Total	126	7

Triangle Park 2021	Count	Case #
Extra Patrol	116	
Ordinance Violation	10	2
Disorderly Conduct	4	
Animal Problem	2	
ANY	2	
Criminal Mischief	2	2
PHONE	2	
Prop Lost/Found/Rec	2	
Subject Stop	2	
Suspicious	2	
TRFHAZ	2	
Follow-up	2	
Juvenile Problem	2	
(blank)		
Grand Total	**150**	4

Triangle Park 2022	Count	Case #
Extra Patrol	5	
Ordinance Violation	3	
Disorderly Conduct	3	
Welfare Check	2	
Juvenile Problem	2	
Subject Stop	1	
Warrant	1	1
Suspicious	1	
Animal Problem	1	
DUI	1	
JUV	1	
JUVP	1	
(blank)		
Grand Total	**22**	1

Triangle Park 2023	Count	Case #
Ordinance Violation	41	3
Extra Patrol	33	
Drug Laws	3	
Animal Problem	3	
Suspicious	3	
Follow-up	3	
Juvenile Problem	3	
Prop Lost/Found/Rec	2	2
Subject Stop	2	
Warrant	2	2
Disorderly Conduct	2	
Traffic Stop	1	
PHONE	1	
Assist to Public	1	
Indecent Exposure	1	
POSS DUI	1	
CAMPING	1	
HRUN	1	
Citizen Flag-down	1	
Theft	1	1
NOISE/WELCHK	1	
OIC	1	
Welfare Check	1	
Marijuana	1	
Miscellaneous	1	
Grand Total	**111**	8

Triangle Park 2024	Count	Case #
Extra Patrol	8	
Person Down	2	
Animal Problem	2	
Suspicious	1	
Trash Fire	1	
Traffic Stop	1	
Welfare Check	1	
Indecent Exposure	1	
Disorderly Conduct	1	1
Ordinance Violation	1	
Grand Total	**19**	1

01/01/2025-06/06/2025

Triangle Park 2025	Count	Case #
Extra Patrol	1	
Ordinance Violation	1	1
Subject Stop	1	
Welfare Check	1	
Grand Total	**4**	1

Clay St Park 2021	Count	Case #
Extra Patrol	24	
Suspicious	2	
Domestic Dispute	1	
Prop Lost/Found/Rec	1	1
Welfare Check	1	
Foot Patrol	1	
Ordinance Violation	1	
(blank)		
Grand Total	**31**	1

Clay St Park 2022	Count	Case #
Extra Patrol	10	
Animal Problem	7	
Abandoned Vehicle	2	
Welfare Check	2	
Ordinance Violation	2	
NOISE	1	
Theft Report	1	1
Noise Complaint	1	
Found Child	1	1
UNLEASHED DOGS	1	
Person Down	1	
Suicidal Subject	1	
Suspicious	1	
(blank)		
Grand Total	**31**	2

Clay St Park 2023	Count	Case #
Extra Patrol	49	1
Ordinance Violation	23	
Suspicious	12	
Foot Patrol	4	
Animal Problem	3	1
Traffic Stop	3	
Welfare Check	2	
Drug Laws	2	
Abandoned Vehicle	2	
Subject Stop	1	
Warrant	1	
Traffic Complaint	1	
Fireworks	1	
Prop Lost/Found/Rec	1	1
Cardiac Arrest	1	
Assist Agency	1	1
OIC	1	
FOLLOW UP	1	
ORD	1	
Assault	1	
Harassment	1	1
Noise Complaint	1	
(blank)		
Grand Total	**113**	5

Clay St Park 2024	Count	Case #
Extra Patrol	25	
Ordinance Violation	6	1
Subject Stop	5	
Animal Problem	4	
Traffic Stop	4	
Foot Patrol	4	
Suspicious	2	
Welfare Check	2	
Domestic Dispute	1	
Disorderly Conduct	1	
Parking Violation	1	
CAMPING	1	
SUSP	1	
Noise Complaint	1	
Follow-up	1	
ORD/EXPAT	1	
911 Cell Hangup	1	
Medical (NRUR)	1	
Grand Total	**62**	1

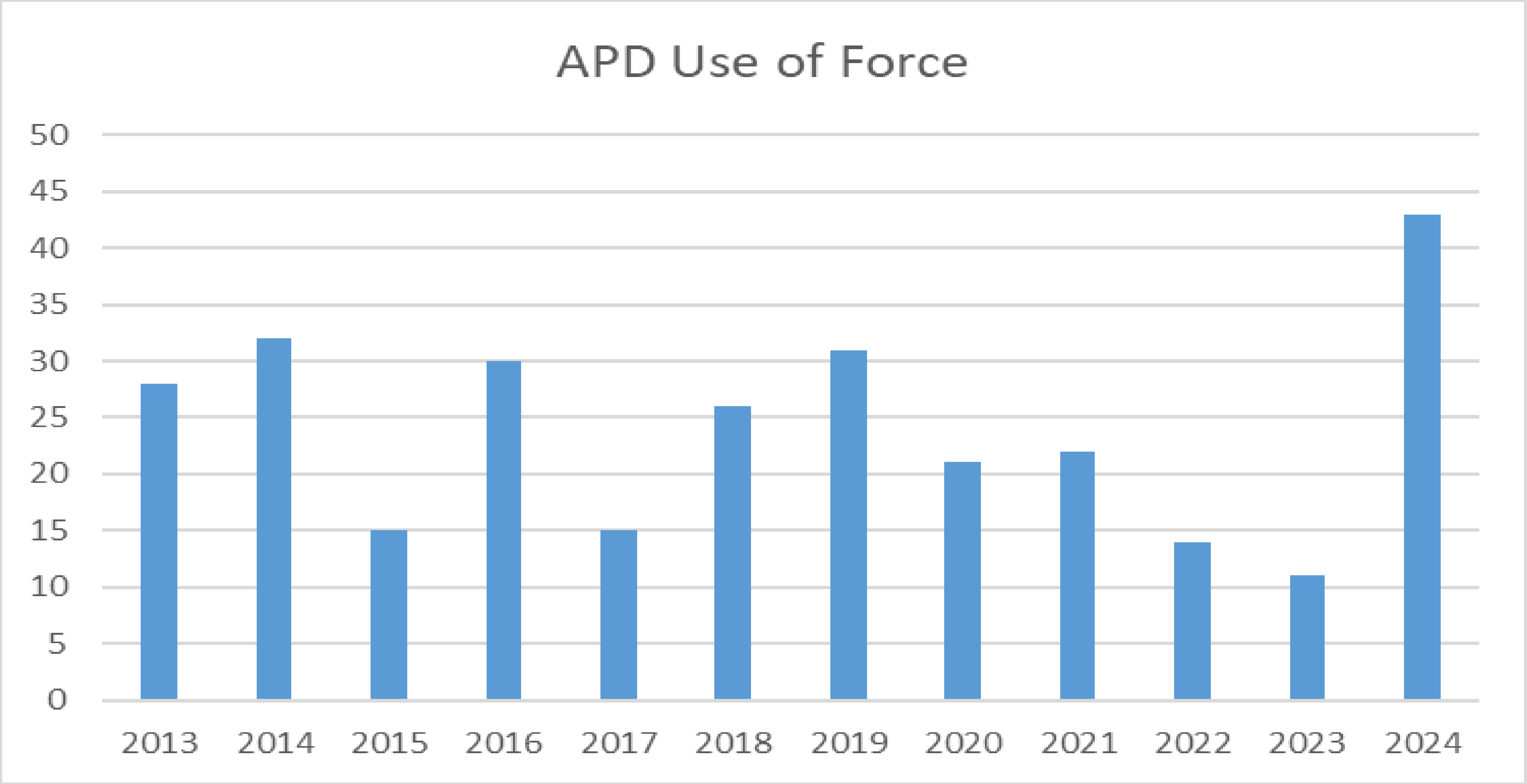
01/01/2025-06/06/2025

Clay St Park 2025	Count	Case #
Extra Patrol	6	
Suspicious	2	
Disorderly Conduct	1	
Traffic Stop	1	
Trespass	1	
Noise Complaint	1	
Ordinance Violation	1	
Grand Total	**13**	0

Annual Report to Council

Chief Tighe O'Meara

Use of force



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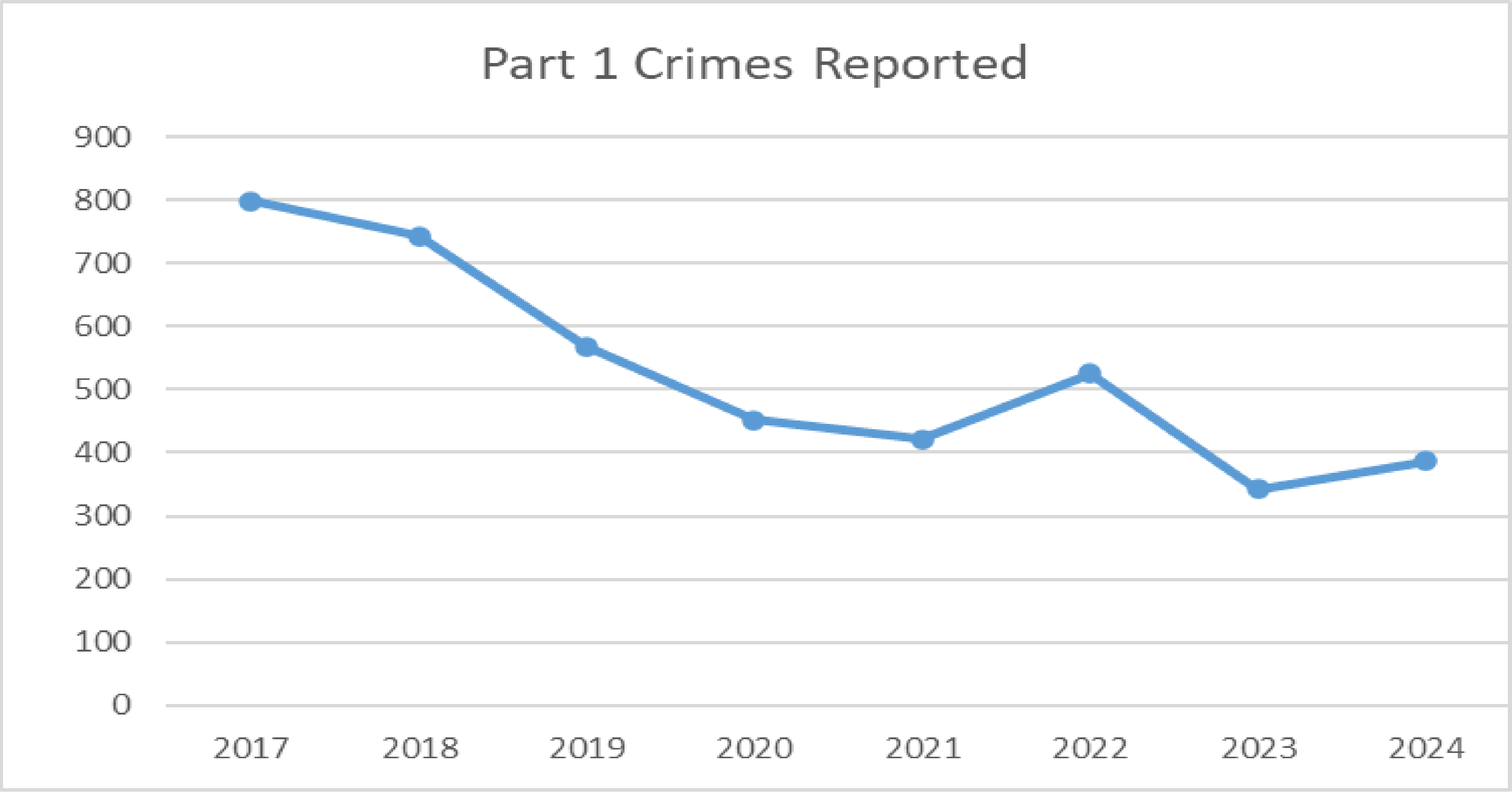
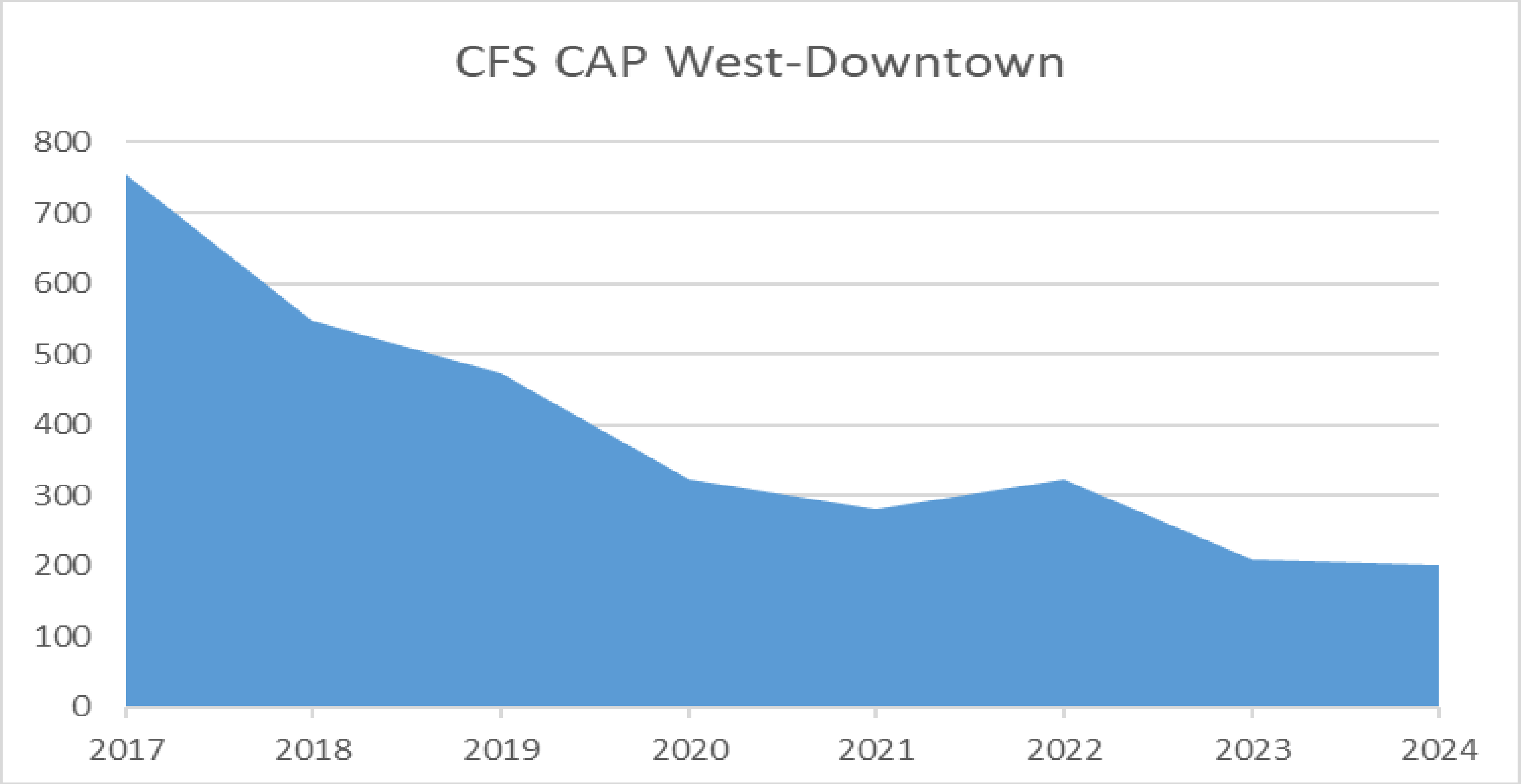
ASHLAND POLICE

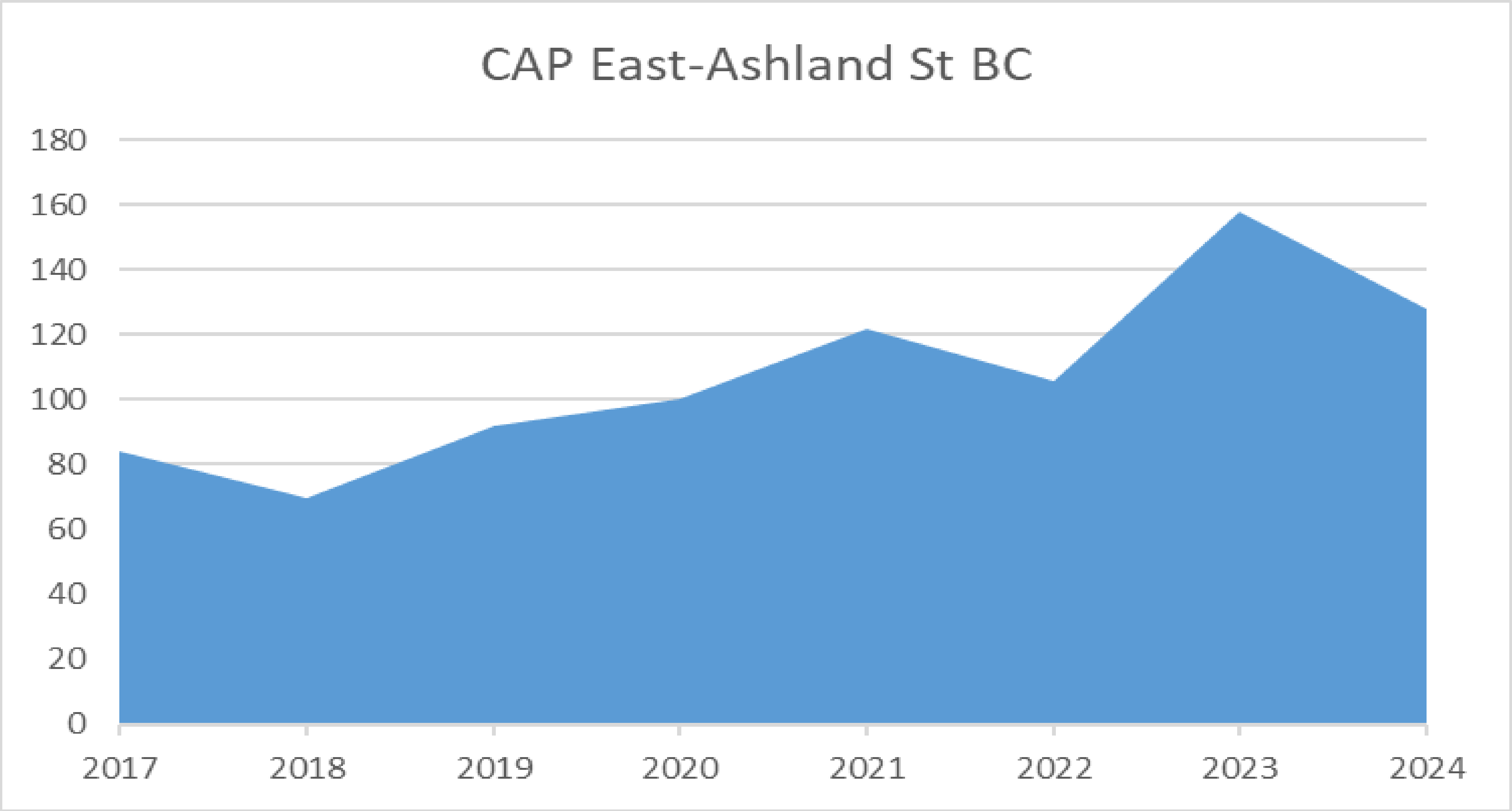
“part 1” crime


Part 1 Crimes Reported
900
800
700
600
500
400
300
200
100
0
2017
2018
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024

ELEA CAP West

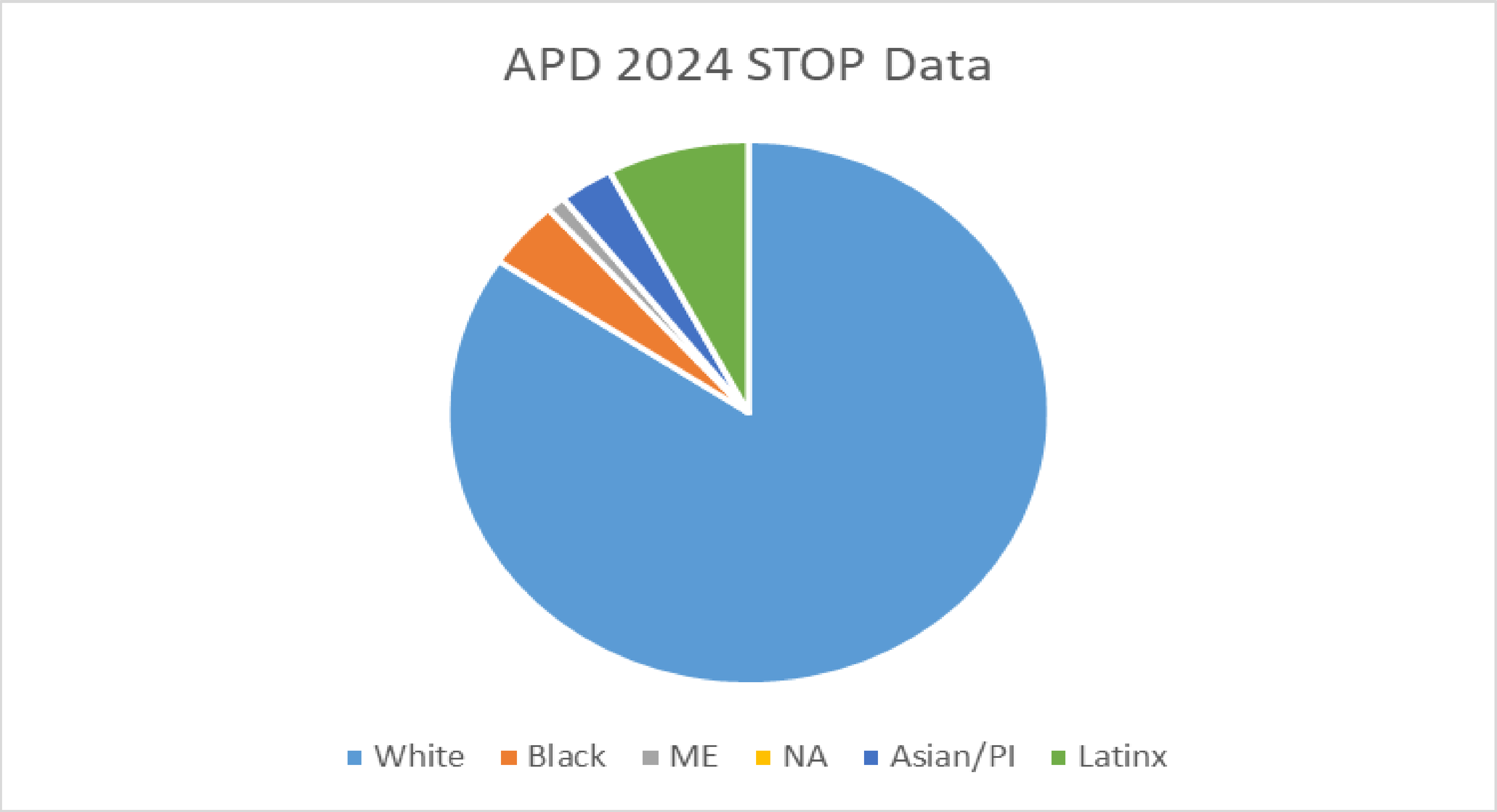


ELEA CAP East

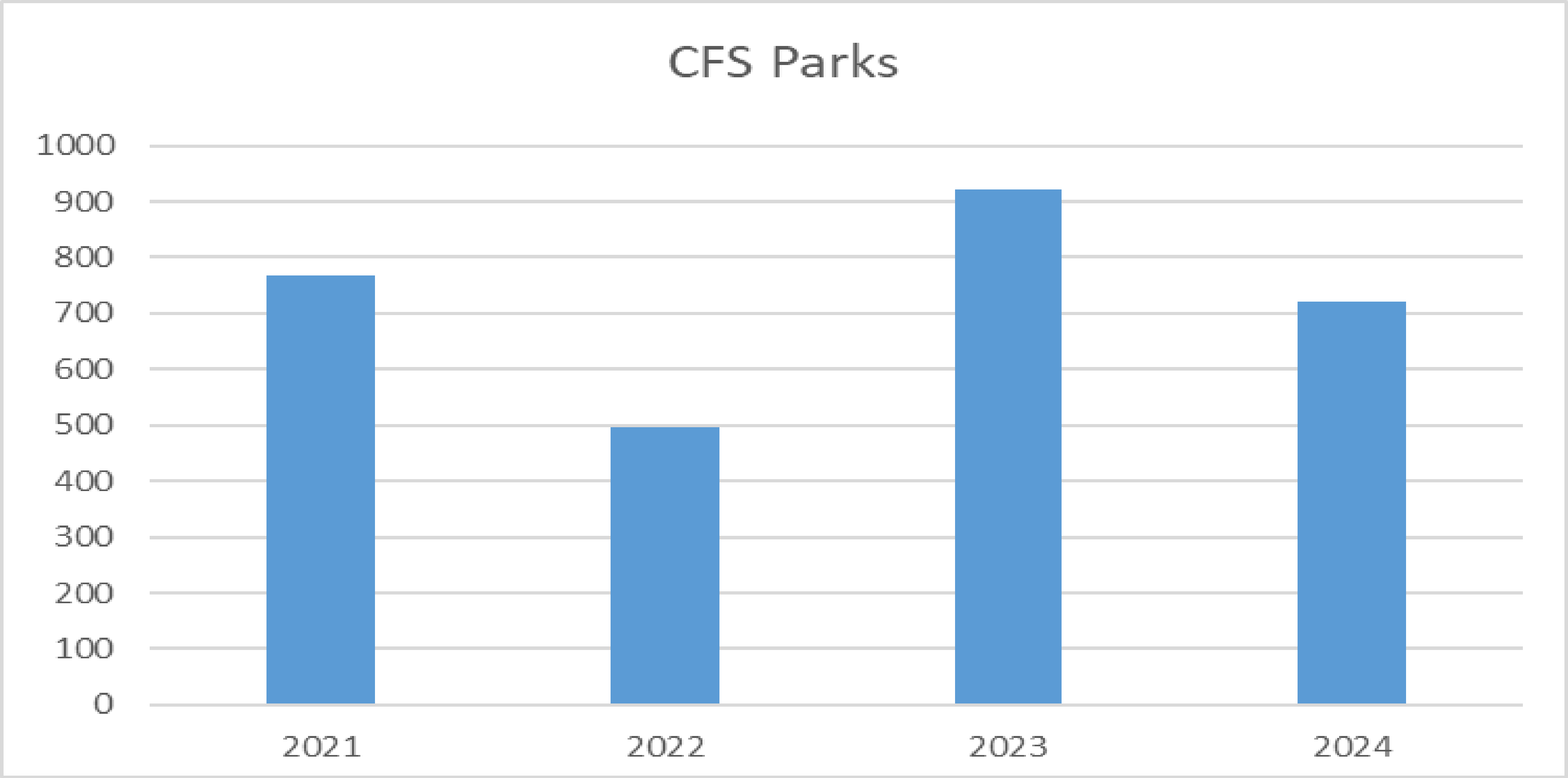


Better Together

STOP Data



CFS Parks


CFS Parks
1000
900
800
700
600
500
400
300
200
100
0
2021
2022
2023
2024

Ords CFS parks

Ordinance Calls

	2021		2022		2023		2024		2025	
									01/01/2025 - 06/06/2025	
Garfield Park	BBQ concerns	1	Camping	11	Camping	40	Camping	6	Camping	3
	Dog off leash	1			DOC transients	3	Storing property	5	No notes in CAD	2
	Park curfew	1			No notes in CAD	3	Bus camping	4		
					Unleashed dog	1	No notes in CAD	4		
					Trash dumped	1	Smoking	2		
					Homeless in playground	1	Curfew	1		
							No notes in CAD			
Ordinance totals		**3**		**11**		**49**		**22**		**5**
Lithia Park	Camping	11	Camping	20	Camping	15	Camping	14	Camping	2
	Skatboarding	5	Dogs	2	Car camping	4	Dog	3	Dog	1
	Car camping	4	Car camping	2	Dogs	2	Car camping	2	Noise	1
	Fire pit/camp stoves	3	Erosion control	1	Curfew	2	Noise	2	No notes in CAD	1
	Litter	2	Skateboarder	1	Urinating	1	Permit required	1		
	Dogs	3	Warming fire	1	Smoking	1	Drinking	1		
	No violations seen	2	Drinking	1	Drinking	1	Curfew	1		
	Bounce house	1	Fishing	1	Warrant	1	Panhandle	1		
	Abandoned car	1	No notes in CAD	2	Bathing in fountain	1	No notes in CAD	1		
	Drug use	1			Campfire	1				
					Fishing	1				
					No notes in CAD	1				
Ordinance Totals		**33**		**31**		**31**		**26**		**5**
Triangle Park	Camping	4	Person urinating	1	Camping	41	camping	1	Person urinating	1
	Park Curfew	1	Smoking	1			Person urinating			
			No notes in CAD	1						
Ordinance Totals		**5**		**3**		**41**		**1**		**1**
Clay Street Park	Camping	1	RV camping	2	Camping	23	Camping	6	No notes in CAD	1
Ordinance Totals		**1**		**2**		**23**		**6**		1

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QUESTIONS?

Council Study Session

Date: June 16, 2025

Agenda Item	Strategic Planning Process & Next Steps
Department	City Manager's Office
From	Sabrina Cotta

TIME ESTIMATE
30

CATEGORY
Staff Direction - provide direction to staff on the body's desired next steps.

SUMMARY
Council has allocated funds towards a strategic planning process in the BN 25-27 budget. Staff are looking for Council feedback on the following regarding the upcoming Strategic Planning Process:

- Ashland Vision Areas
- Community Feedback Groups
- Timeline of process
- Consultant preference

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED
Excellence in governance and City services.
Respect for the citizens we serve, for each other and for the work we do.

BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
In August 2024, staff recommend the City undertake a strategic planning process, which is a systematic process by which a community anticipates and plans for its future. This process:

- Defines goals and priorities
- Guides the allocation of resources
- Addresses challenges
- Promotes coordination
- Enhances the quality of life of the community.

A strategic plan will help the City decide where energy (staff time) and resources (budget) go. The benefits of a strategic plan include clear guidance on the goals of the community, adopted by the government body, which the City Manager and staff can work towards. The plan works as a communication and stabilizing device by ensuring that, over numerous years, the community, elected officials and City organization are aligned with what the priorities are year over year. The strategic plan helps guide decision-making and sets the framework to ensure sustained effort by the City towards large policy goals.

City staff would like feedback on the following topic areas:

Ashland Vision Topic Areas for Community Feedback:

- **Quality of Life**
  - Climate Reslience
  - Economic Development
  - Homeless Services

- City Service levels to include Parks and Recreation, Police, and Fire

- **Fiscal Sustainability**
  - Revenue versus Service Levels: Future of food and beverage tax, City fees
  - Regional opportunities for collaboration: Police & Fire
  - Future of City Facilities: Properties to divest or invest

Ashland Community involved in the process:

- Elected and appointed officials : City Council, Appointed Committee and Commission members
- Community: Multiple public engagement opportunities with the hope of partnering with Ashland School District and Southern Oregon University to get family and student feedback
- Major institutions
  - SOU
  - ASD
  - OSF
  - Asante
  - Chamber & Travel Ashland
- City Staff

Timeline:
Summer 2025: Contract with consultant
Fall/Winter 2025: Public Engagement (Fall is desirable for kick-off with the hope of capturing students and families who may be absent over the summer)
Spring/Summer 2026: Drafting and Adoption
Post adoption: Development of performance measures
Annually: Feedback on implementation from community and institutional partners

Consultant:
Staff would like to give preference to a local consultant to assist with the development of the plan, including meeting facilitiation, synthesizing feedback, and drafting plan contents.

FISCAL IMPACTS

The project has $80,000 budgeted in BN25-27 to complete the plan. This amount includes funding for consultant services as well as funds to accommodate multiple community engagement opportunities.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS, MOTIONS, AND/OR OPTIONS

Council feedback request:
What topic areas are missing?
What community partners are we missing?
Any issues with the timeline?
Any qualities of a consultant you are particularly interested in?
What outcomes are you looking for with this process?
Anything else you want staff to know related to this process?

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

1. Strategic Planning Initiative Presentation

Council Study Session

Date: August 19, 2024

Agenda Item	Strategic Planning Initiative Presentation
From	Sabrina Cotta
Contact	sabrina.cotta@ashland.or.us

SUMMARY
Strategic Planning is a systematic process by which a community anticipates and plans for its future. Strategic Plans:

- Define goals and priorities
- Allocate resources
- Address Challenges
- Promote Coordination
- Enhance Quality of life

Currently, the City of Ashland has several studies underway that would provide information for a large strategic planning process recommended to occur in BN 2026-2027. Staff requests that City Council consider and anticipate a request for the development of a strategic plan be added to the workplan for the next biennium as well as a budget request to fund the process.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED
Excellence in governance and City services.
Respect for the citizens we serve, for each other and for the work we do.

BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
A strategic plan helps City's decide where energy (staff time) and resources (budget) go. The benefits of a city-wide strategic plan are the following:

- Clear guidance on the goals of the governing body and community to the City Manager and staff.
- Communication device.
- Helps with prioritization of work in the organization give limited financial resources.
- Assist in decision making by both staff and elected officials.

The strategic plan serves as an accountability tool for city staff and provides a framework for staff to achieve the goals and priorities of the governing body. A strategic plan will provide the framework in which progress on goals and strategies can be reported on leading to increased accountability. This serves as a transparency and communication tool for both the City Council as well as the public. A strategic plan will help the community and City Council priorities staff and financial resources.

The strategic plan provides the justification for budget allocation and programmatic requests. A strategic plan serves as a communication tool around the vision to residents about the agreed upon vision of the community and what the City hopes to achieve, as well as communicates to staff why they do what they do and why resources are made available for some things and not others.

Most fiscal resources are directed toward mandated and direct services in the community. Strategic plans can provide guidance on discretionary funding initiatives around policy goals. Strategic plans can also help city council navigate contentious issues as well as refocus energy on broad goals over the long term.

The City is currently developing or already has many existing plans that can inform a strategic plan to include: Comprehensive plan, CEAP, EOA, CIP, Housing Production Strategy, Utility Master Plans, and Transportation System plan. Staff is currently working of financial projections for the City which would be included in this planning process.

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The timeline for the development of a strategic plan is an estimated six to ten months. The initial investment of time and money will result in a strategic plan dictating the goals and strategies for a set period of time (commonly between four to ten years). The plan will need to be updated and adjusted periodically, which will require additional investment moving forward if the City Council continues to find value in the City have a Strategic Plan. Strategic Plan Examples:

- Strategic Plan / Strategic Doing | City of Colorado Springs
- Pueblo West Metropolitan District 2020-25 Strategic Plan | Pueblo West, CO
- Lake-County-Strategic-Plan-2023 (lakecountyil.gov)

FISCAL IMPACTS
It is recommended that an RFP for consulting services be utilized to bring experienced consultants on board to help with the process. It is recommended the Council consider budgeting $40,000 - $60,000 for the project to include consultants and resources for public outreach tools and events.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS, MOTIONS, AND/OR OPTIONS
Direct staff to bring forth a funding recommendation in the BN2026-2027 budget process.

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS
None