



# Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting Agenda

ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

BUSINESS MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday, May 13, 2026

Council Chamber, 1175 E Main Street - 6:00 PM

To attend the meeting or to provide public testimony, see participation instructions.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**II. ROLL CALL**

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

1. Park Commission Study Session April 1, 2026
2. Park Commission Regular Business Meeting April 8, 2026
3. Park Commission Strategic Planning Workshop April 18, 2026

**IV. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA**

**V. PUBLIC FORUM**

**VI. CONSENT AGENDA**

**VII. BUSINESS**

1. Ashland Creek Fish Rehabilitation Project
2. Update on Permanent Director Hiring
3. Updated 2026 Park Commission Meeting Schedule

**VIII. ACTING DIRECTORS REPORT**

**IX. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS/STAFF**

**X. UPCOMING MEETING DATES**

1. Trails Advisory Committee May 20, the Grove 4:15 PM
2. Joint Meeting with City Council June 3, Council Chamber 6:00 PM
3. Park Commission Regular Business Meeting June 10, Council Chamber 6:00 PM
4. Park Commission Regular Business Meeting July 8, Council Chamber 6:00 PM

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**





# Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting Agenda

*If you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact Nancy Mero at [Nancy.mero@ashlandoregon.gov](mailto:Nancy.mero@ashlandoregon.gov) or 541-552-2256 (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.*

## **Participation Instructions**

This meeting will be held in-person in Council Chamber 1175 E. Main St. Those who wish to provide oral testimony must attend the meeting, fill out a speaker request card, and give it to a staff member before the meeting begins. If you would like to give testimony electronically, please contact Nancy Mero at [nancy.mero@ashlandoregon.gov](mailto:nancy.mero@ashlandoregon.gov) by 10:00 AM the morning of the meeting. Please type “**Virtual Public Testimony**” in the subject line.

Written testimony will be accepted via email sent to Nancy Mero at [nancy.mero@ashland.or.us](mailto:nancy.mero@ashland.or.us). Please type “**Public Testimony**” in the subject line. Written testimony submitted by 11:00 AM the Tuesday before the meeting will be made available to the Park Commissioners before the meeting. All testimony will be included in the meeting minutes.

For ways to view this meeting and to watch previously recorded Park Commission meetings, please visit this web page. <https://ashlandoregon.gov/740/Watch-a-Meeting>





## **MINUTES FOR STUDY SESSION**

### **PARK COMMISSION**

**April 1, 2026**

Council Chamber, 1175 E Main – 6:00 PM

Commissioners Present: Weiner, Bachman, Adams, Gardiner, Landt

Staff Present: Acting Director Dials, Parks Division Manager Caldwell, Executive Assistant Mero

Absent: None

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chair Bachman called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Announced that audience members must be seated in the allotted seating per the Fire Marshal's limits for the room. The meeting is being shown on the monitor in the lobby. Audience members who have submitted a speaker request form will be called in to speak at the podium. No verbal excitations of support or lack of support. Use sign language gesticulation to show support.
- II. **ROLL CALL** – Landt via Zoom, Weiner, Bachman, Adams, Gardiner
- III. **HUNTER PARK TENNIS COURTS PROJECT** – Acting Director Dials

**SITUATION & BACKGROUND** – In 2024, the Ashland Parks and Recreation Department (APRD) secured a matching grant from the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) to rehabilitate the Hunter Park Tennis Courts. As the project approaches the bidding phase, staff are requesting feedback on proposed design amendments to better align with current regional multi-sport demand and participation trends.

The currently approved grant scope includes the rehabilitation of eight tennis courts, including one multi-use court designated for bike polo and futsal. Because any deviation from this scope requires a public process and formal submission to OPRD, staff seek direction on the following alternatives.

At the March 11, 2026, regular meeting, Park Commissioners (PC) directed staff to present options for the April study session.

**ASSESSMENT** – The following three options for discussion are:

- **Option 1: No change to grant submittal**

- Court #5 to remain available as a multi-use court for bike polo and futsal with a removable tennis net.
  - No addition of pickleball courts.
- **Option 2: Court #5 multi use tennis court dual lined for pickleball (addition of four pickleball courts)**
    - Eight tennis courts (one multi-use court #5).
    - Court #5 remains available for tennis with a removable tennis net and as a multi-use court for bike polo, futsal. Also lined for pickleball.
    - Pickleball nets are temporarily set up and removed by users after play.
    - Add option for versatility by adding removable tennis nets to all back courts #5-8 for future event needs.
    - Court usage evaluated in one year.
- **Option 3: Adding pickleball lines for up to 4 tennis courts #5, 6, 7, 8 (addition of up to 16 courts)**
    - 8 tennis courts (2-4 shared courts)
    - Pickleball nets would be temporarily set up and removed by users after play.
    - Continue the use of bike polo & futsal on court #5.
    - Add option for versatility by all back courts #5 - #8 having removable tennis nets to plan for future events/needs.

Option	Description	Key Features
<b>Option 1</b>	<b>No Change</b>	Maintain original grant submittal: <b>8 tennis courts</b> . Court #5 remains multi-use (bike polo/futsal).
<b>Option 2</b>	<b>Limited Expansion of Pickleball</b>	<b>8 Tennis Courts (1 shared)</b> . Court #5 dual-lined for 4 pickleball courts. Includes removable nets for courts #5-8.
<b>Option 3</b>	<b>Significant Expansion of Pickleball</b>	<b>8 Tennis Courts (2-4 shared)</b> . Courts #5-8 dual-lined for up to 16 pickleball courts. All back courts utilize removable nets.

**Proposed Management & Shared Use Plan:** If dual striping is implemented, staff recommend the following operational guidelines:

- **Reservations:** Non-net programs (futsal and bike polo) must be reserved through the APRD office; signage will indicate reserved times.
- **Priority Play:** Outside of reservations, play is first-come, first-served.
- **Seasonal Exceptions:** During High School Tennis Season from March to early June (3 PM to 6 PM) and during permitted tournaments, all eight courts will be reserved exclusively for tennis.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION** – Staff would advise the PC to consider Option 2 (one dual-striped court). This approach allows APRD staff to monitor usage, and report back in one year. This maximizes public resources by allowing up to 16 participants to utilize the same footprint that typically serves only two – four tennis players.

Staff would monitor usage by:

- Customer phone calls and emails
- Bi-weekly onsite tracking of use
- Reservation reports

#### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS OR SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS**

- Would the PC like to consider one of these three options?
- What other information is needed prior to a decision on April 8?

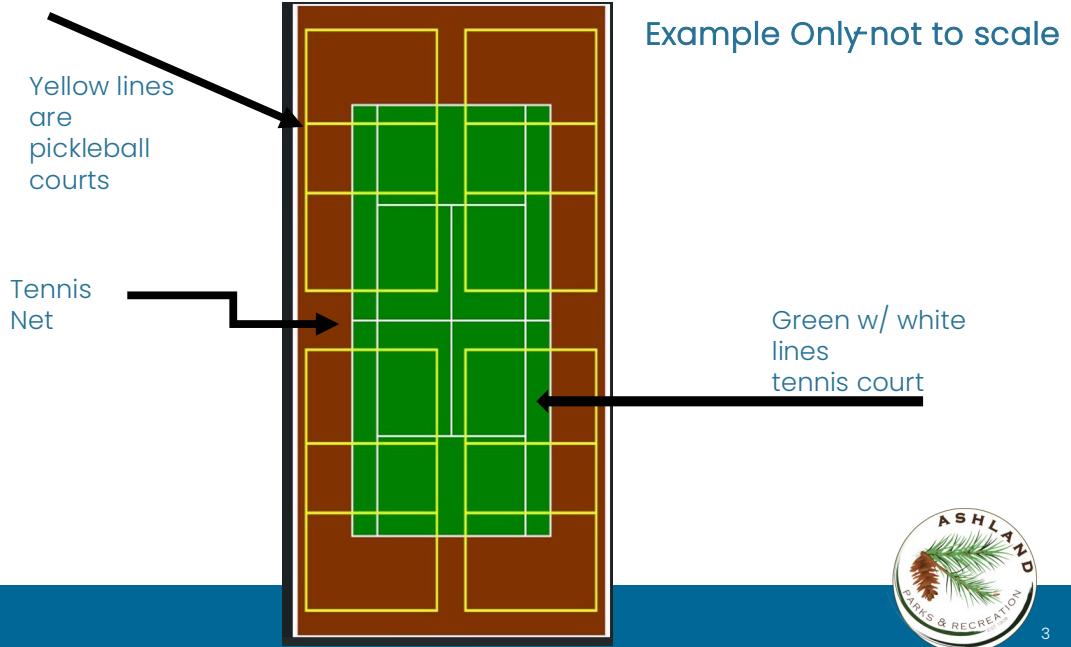
**POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED** – Parks Capital Improvement Project and workplan

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS** – This project is approved for grant funding through OPRD. \$720,000 (60%) grant, \$480,000(40%) from Parks CIP, for \$1,200,000 total project cost. These proposed amendments would have little impact on the approved budget.

**ATTACHMENTS** – Dual striped tennis and pickleball court example

**PREPARED BY** – Rachel Dials, Acting Director  
(Rachel took responsibility for the ‘staff’ recommendation.)

Hunter Park Tennis Courts Project



Hunter Park Tennis Courts Project



Option	Description	Key Features
Option 1	No Change	Maintain original grant submittal: 8 tennis courts. Court #5 remains multi-use (bike polo/futsal).
Option 2	Limited Expansion of Pickleball	8 Tennis Courts (1 shared). Court #5 dual-lined for 4 pickleball courts. Includes removable nets for courts #5-8.
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## Added Costs

- Pickleball Lines: four pickleball courts to one of the existing tennis courts:
  - **\$800-\$1000 per court additional**

## Public Comments

- Over 80 comments related to pickleball and tennis in Hunter and Lithia Parks have been received via the "Contact the Commissioner" Form on the City Website.
- 11 comments were sent via written public testimony which were shared with the Commissioners and will be included in this meeting's minutes.



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## Public Comments

- Keep Pickleball in Lithia Park: **32%**
- Convert some courts in Hunter Park for Pickleball: **31%**
- Keep Hunter Tennis Courts for Tennis only: **28%**
- Ideas for Reducing Pickleball Noise: **8%**
- Tennis Only in Lithia/Remove Pickleball: **.5%**



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## OSAA Regulations for HS Tennis Tournaments

- **Oregon Schools Activities Association (OSAA) play**, there is no rule prohibiting dual-lined courts, as long as the tennis lines remain the dominant and clearly identifiable markings.
- **Visibility Requirements:** The primary tennis lines must be of a single color that clearly contrasts with the court surface. Blended lines (typically for pickleball or youth tennis) should ideally be in a different color or a lighter/darker shade of the court color to minimize "line confusion."
- **State Championship Standards:** For the highest levels of competition (State Championships), OSAA typically utilizes premier facilities like the OSU Tennis Complex. While these facilities often have dedicated tennis courts, the use of dual-lined courts at the district or local level does not disqualify a match from being "official" under OSAA/USTA guidelines.



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## Proposed Management & Shared Use Plan

If dual striping is implemented, staff recommend the following operational guidelines:

- **Reservations:** Non-net programs (futsal and bike polo) must be reserved through the APRD office; signage will indicate reserved times.
- **Priority Play:** Outside of reservations, play is first-come, first-served.
- **Seasonal Exceptions:** During High School Tennis Season from March to early June (3 PM to 6 PM) and during permitted tournaments, all eight courts will be reserved exclusively for tennis.



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## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff would advise the Commission to consider Option 2 (one dual-stripped court).

This approach would allow APRD staff to monitor usage, and report back in one year. This maximizes public resources by allowing up to 16 participants to utilize the same footprint that typically serves only two – four tennis players.



Commissioner Weiner's statement: Disappointed his proposal was not seen by the community because it wasn't included in the packet. He shared it with the other Commissioners. Noted all Ashland user groups and stakeholder's goals should be evaluated when making a decision regarding programming in public parks with the intent of reaching a compromise(s).

Feedback received from the pickleball user group:

- They want more pickleball courts
- They want the courts grouped together for the social aspect of the game
  - They want to be able to hold tournaments which would require more courts and don't mind playing on dual lined courts
  - They spoke to the fact that pickleball is good for the mind and the body and that it brings diverse groups together

Feedback received from the tennis user group:

- No further erosion of tennis access in Ashland
- Courts are needed to support the Ashland High tennis teams
- Dual lined courts are distracting and a detraction from tennis
- Want distance from the noise and distraction of pickleball play

Feedback received from other park users:

- Want access to the peaceful environment of Lithia Park and it's features without the noise nuisance of pickleball. Features such as the Japanese Garden, the upper duck pond, Madrone Picnic Area, and creekside walking

- Want more parking access to these features. Pickleball users take up much of the parking.

#### Homeowners

- Want quiet enjoyment of their homes – a right of people in the United States.

#### Weiner's proposal:

- Three dual lined courts at Hunter Park expanding pickleball from 8 to 12 courts in a location amenable to noise mitigation
- Six dual lined tennis courts at Hunter Park
- Convert pickleball courts in Lithia to tennis only restoring peace and nature to Lithia park and the homeowners near the park.

Chair Bachman: Explained that he asked Commissioner Weiner to share his proposal to see how it fits into the bigger picture. Believes the proposal fits better into the strategic planning meeting. Not on the table for discussion. There isn't time to process it before a decision has to be made to get the project out to bid and built before the deadline for use of the grant money.

### **Public Testimony**

Cori Frank, Ashland: Need more pickleball courts. Read thank you letters from students. Children are playing pickleball, too.

Allen Kenner, Ashland: Spoke to keeping Hunter Courts as is. Recounted 200 lawsuits arising from dual striping. Most tennis players don't want to play on dual striped courts.

Sharon Bates, Ashland: Would like four permanent pickleball courts at Hunter and seven permanent tennis courts. Joyful sounds should not be made illegal in any public park. Parks are for fun.

Diane Paulson, Ashland: Has the number of pickleball players and tennis players playing in the summer been measured? Quiet in the home is something many don't have. Quiet shouldn't be the goal. Pickleball noise is joyful and invigorating.

Mark Reeve, Ashland: Plays tennis and pickleball. Recommends option 2 for Hunter Park courts. Encouraged Commissioners to think about adding more pickleball courts in the long term to respond to the huge interest in the growing sport.

Karl Carstensen, didn't state: Teaches pickleball at Ashland high school to 25 – 30 kids twice a week. The sound of pickleball is people being healthy. Make Ashland a blue zone. Encouraged coexisting.

Robin Donaldson, Ashland: Passionate about all the noises she hears living on Granite street. Recommended not negating the sounds of joy and engagement. The community is for everyone.

Dr. Kathleen Bates, didn't state: Former tennis player and coach. Never been happier than playing pickleball in beautiful, blessed Lithia Park. Rarely sees tennis players playing at Hunter. Many people waiting to play pickleball in Lithia.

Philippe Sprague, Ashland: Would like to know how many people complain about the pickleball noise. If the courts were in Lithia when the complainer moved to Granite, they should have known it was noisy. Cursed and was asked to stop by Chair Bachman.

Carlyle Stout, Ashland: One of the best things about Ashland is the sense of community, exemplified by Lithia park. The park has changed over the years. Sees pickleball as a salvation for most of the community. Keep it in Lithia and keep tennis striped for tennis only at Hunter.

Koeby Johnson, Ashland: Lithia park is not a one-use place dedicated to quiet peace and solitude. It has always been noisy. It was home to an auto park, there are loud commencement celebrations, and children having a blast on the playground. Pickleball fits into this scenario. Not recognizing that shows a lack of understanding of this community.

Russel Feingold, Ashland: Lives on Granite Street within earshot of the pickleball courts and cannot hear it from inside his home. Would be expensive to alter the courts in Lithia Park and funds are tight. The people have shown up and spoken, and they want pickleball to remain in Lithia Park.

Jared Rojo Meyer, didn't state: Ashland high school boys' tennis team coach. Pickleball is fine as long as it isn't eliminating tennis courts and reducing the opportunity for youth to learn tennis. Tennis has been around since the 1100s. The two sports should be separated. Choose Option 1.

Gail Patton, Ashland: Noted all the loss of tennis courts in Ashland. Already compromised by giving the Lithia courts to pickleball. Tennis and pickleball cannot share space. Each sport should have their own courts. Please choose option #1.

John Spitzley, Ashland: Spoke to the PROS Plan data on participation in different sports. Did a search of a data base called Playtime Scheduler to look at pickleball participants. Conservatively there are 15,000 – 20,000 yearly pickleball participants in Ashland.

Jack Gibbs, Ashland: Helped start a petition to keep pickleball courts in Lithia. Over 150 signatures in a couple days. Spoke to how pickleball enhances life, brings people together, etc. A social wonder. Pickleball is an economic driver for the City. Embrace it, enhance it.

Joel Heller, Ashland: Spends his winters in a town of 4,000 with 40 pickleball courts which are used. Courts in Fichtner–Mainwaring Park in Medford are dual striped, and they play tournaments there. Supports adding a few pickleball courts at Hunter Park.

Bruce Laidlaw, Ashland: Tennis player. No one has claimed to like playing on dual striped courts. Need to act quickly to keep the grant funding for Hunter. Noted the PC previously stated pickleball should be discussed in conjunction with the PROS Plan. No pickleball courts at Hunter, please.

Stan Mavis, Ashland: Lives close to Ashland, not bothered by pickleball noise. Pickleball is growing exponentially compared to tennis. To represent the constituents, protect and grow pickleball.

Martin Stadtmueller, Ashland: Co-coach of the Ashland high school girls team. Don't conflate what is allowed by OSAA with what actually works. Dual striped courts do not work for tennis. Doesn't understand why solving the pickleball issue has to fall on the shoulders of the tennis community.

Noah, Brun, didn't state: Did a soundscape at Lithia Park on March 29, 2026 at 4:30 PM. noise from cars, children, and picknickers accounted for most of the louder sounds. Louder than the noise produced by six pickleball courts in use. Nothing over 52 decibels from pickleball play which is less than the sound of a car

Lutie Lyman, Ashland: Tennis player for 40 years. Need to find another place to put pickleball courts. Maybe Bellview school if it closes. Maybe Lincoln school. There's already a large cement slab at Lincoln and parking at both. Large gyms at both schools. Three empty courts at SOU.

#### Questions/Discussion

- We are information gathering tonight, not arguing. Would like to focus on discarding options starting with option 3. It is a controversial issue with no clear consensus, making a major change like this seems premature and ill advised.
- Option 3 goes too far but should keep it as an option. Public testimony referenced all three options. Gives a good cross-section for decision making.
- Clarification: the Commission can only look at land that belongs to the City. Need to study the pickleball noise issues thoroughly before taking action. Stated the discussion of more pickleball belongs in a discussion of the strategic plan and the next budget cycle. The Hunter Courts project needs to move forward by next week.
- If the direction they move forward doesn't address any of the challenges/problems then they need to honor the previous agreement of pickleball only at Lithia and tennis only at Hunter.
- Job tonight is to frame up options for what they are going to vote on next week. Agrees these are the three options to consider. Feedback received clarifies this is not the time for Weiner's proposal. It is clear that many people want pickleball to remain in Lithia Park.
- Should encourage the school district to add pickleball courts on their property in the long term.
- Generally would like to see more cooperation between school district, SOU, and the City to create more space for recreation, fields, courts, etc.

#### **IV. PARK WALK MEDALLION** – Commissioner Gardiner

Commissioner Gardiner is presenting to represent Tom Foster. In addition to helping establish the Lithia Park walks in 1989, Tom helped found the Pacific Northwest Museum of Natural History. That museum was part of the draw for the forensics laboratory being

established in Ashland. People from the museum were some of the first nature guides in Lithia Park.

Tom guided for years and continues to train volunteer guides. Gardiner is one of the guides. Only one walk per week now down from three days a week pre COVID, but it is still very popular.

Tom would like to commemorate the dozens of volunteer guides from over the years with a medallion placed at the entrance to Lithia Park. Tom would also like there to be a time capsule buried beneath the medallion. He has begun working on a design for the medallion.

Process includes taking the proposal to the Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC). They would then maintain it. The medallion would need to be set in concrete for stability.

**SITUATION & BACKGROUND** - In 1989 Tom Foster lead a group of local citizens to develop an informative Park Walk program. Volunteers got together and trained themselves on the history of Lithia Park and early Ashland settlers and incorporated these tales, along with the identification of local flora and geological highlights, to create what came to be known as the Lithia Park Nature Walks.

These volunteers had been associated with the Pacific Northwest Museum of Natural History (now ScienceWorks). Over the years interest in these free guided tours has introduced more than 20,000 visitors to Lithia Park, the crown jewel of our park system.

This program operated uninterrupted for over 30 years until it was sidelined by the onset of the Covid pandemic in the early 2020's. After a few years off, the program was brought back to life and continues to sponsor weekly park walks on Saturdays at 10:00 from May through September.

These walks are coordinated by the Ashland Parks and Recreation Departments Volunteer and Events Coordinator, Sulaiman Shelton and lead by a group of four to six hearty volunteer guides.

At Tom's request, we would like the Park Commission to consider the idea of placing a sidewalk medallion near the main entrance to Lithia Park to recognize the volunteer efforts of all the many individuals that have led park walks in Lithia Park since 1989. The medallion would be similar in size and fashion to medallions that have been placed at many locations around town identifying important local historical events (MAP Project) and the current Public Art Advisory Committee's efforts to create the Literary Walk around town.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS OR SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS** – Would the PC like to consider this request?

**POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED** – N/A

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS** – We anticipate that this will be a private donation project that would be sponsored by the Ashland Parks Foundation.

**ATTACHMENTS** – N/A

**PREPARED BY** – Mike Gardiner, Vice Chair, Ashland Parks Commission

Park Walk Medallion

### Park Walk Medallion Request (Information Only)

- Consider placing a sidewalk medallion near the main entrance to Lithia Park.
- This would recognize the volunteer efforts of all the many individuals that have led park walks in Lithia Park since 1989.

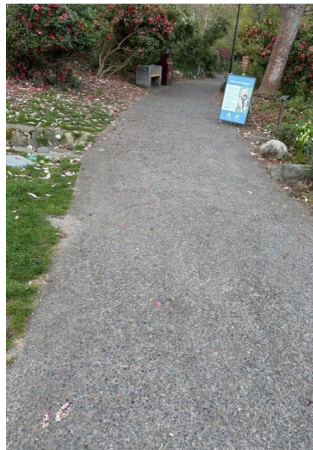




## Park Walk Medallion Request



## Park Walk Medallion Request



Questions/Discussion

- The proposal seems out of sync with the other historic marker medallions placed around Ashland. Might be confusing. Should be a different aesthetic, more like the recognition plaques. A plaque might be better for a time capsule too.
- Some of the literary markers are for contemporary writers, not just historical.
- Somewhat concerned about the number of words suggested – might be too small. Thinks the sidewalk in front of Lithia is in fact concrete rather than asphalt.
- General support for the concept.
- Request for the proposal to come back to the PC for formal approval. Gardiner is working with Tom (through the Ashland Parks Foundation) so that Tom can offer the proposed medallion as a gift to the City.
- There should be a mockup for the PAAC and PC to look at.
- Next step would be to bring a concept to the PAAC.

**V. LOOKAHEAD REVIEW** – Acting Director Dials

Date	Agenda Item	Presenter
4/8	Park Commission Regular Business Meeting Council Chamber 6:00 PM	
	Hunter Park Tennis Court Project (Action)	Dials
<b>5/6</b>	<b>Park Commission Study Session – No meeting due to Joint Meeting with City Council on May 5</b>	<b>CANCELED</b>
5/13	Park Commission Regular Business Meeting Council Chamber 6:00 PM	
	Winburn Way & Japanese Garden ADA (Information)	Caldwell/Fleury
	Ashland Fish Rehabilitation Project (Information/Tentative)	Scott Howell/Dials
	Public Art Proclamation (Information/Tentative)	PAAC
<b>6/3</b>	<b>Park Commission Study Session Council Chamber 6:00 PM</b>	
6/10	Park Commission Regular Business Meeting Council Chamber 6:00 PM	
<b>APRC Advisory and Management Advisory Committees</b>		
4/16/2026	Recreation Division Advisory Committee, the Grove 3:30 PM - <b>CANCELED</b>	
4/13/2026	Ashland Senior Advisory Committee, Senior Center 3:30 PM - <b>CANCELED</b>	
TBD	Trails Advisory Committee, the Grove	

TBD	Ashland Japanese Garden MAC Lithia Cabin 2:00 PM	
TBD	Bee City USA MAC	
TBD	Current Parks, Conservation, and Maintenance MAC	
<b>Council Business/Budget Meetings/Commissions</b>		
4/6/26	Food and Beverage Tax Discussion – City Council Study Session	Dials
5/5/26	Joint PC/City Council Meeting 6:00 PM Council Chamber	Council Hosts
5/19/26	Miscellaneous Fees – City Council Business Meeting	Dials

### Department Work Plan

1. Complete projects identified in the adopted Capital Improvement Plan for FY 26-27
  - Preventative Maintenance Projects
  - Lithia – Butler Perozzi Fountain Restoration
  - ADA Improvements
  - Lithia – Master Plan work plan projects
  - Hunter Park – Tennis Court Rehabilitation
  - Irrigation Controllers
  - Siskiyou Mountain – Trail Re-route
  - East Main – Phase I development
2. Improve recreation and senior programming access by replacing staff eliminated during COVID-19 and developing a cost recovery policy.
3. Complete the Parks, Recreation, Open space, & Senior services strategic plan (PROS)
4. Establish Equipment Replacement and Repair program to be consistent with Citywide fleet standards.
5. Update employee onboarding, training, and safety program
6. Complete work plan items identified for FY 26-27 to implement the Lithia Park Master Plan
  - Fuels reduction between Glenview Rd & Ashland Creek
  - Hazard tree removal
  - Development and promotion of citizen science and/or other environmental education
  - Winburn Way traffic speed and road design
  - Trail map update
  - Replacement of interpretive signs for flora
7. Develop funding strategy for future capital projects, specifically:
  - Pool replacement project
  - East Main future development phase(s)

## 2026

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH
Budget Concepts (odd years) Adopt CIP (odd years)	VIP Annual Report ✓ Budget Direction (odd years) Calle Guanajuato Lease Agreement ✓	Recommend Budget (odd years) Recreation Division Annual Report ✓
Golf Course Annual Report ✓		
APRIL	MAY	JUNE
		Senior Services Cookout with APD
JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER
July 4th Parade	Senior Services Ice Cream Social	
OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
Return of the Salmon Family Field Day	Senior Services Annual Report Ashland Rotary Centennial Ice Rink Opens Senior Services + Ashland Firefighters Union Thanksgiving Pie	Ashland Parks Foundation Annual Report First Frost Community Skate Event Senior Services Holiday Party

- Acting Director Dials and Parks Division Manager are meeting with Trails Advisory Committee (TAC) Chair Cott regarding restarting TAC meetings.

- Butler-Perozzi fountain will be removed April 9 and taken to the artist studio in Phoenix. Tentatively set May 1 as the project start date with the dismantling tentatively beginning on May 4.
- Does tearing out the fountain and altering the terrace and stairs constitute a new construction of a publicly accessible facility that requires ADA access? It might be accessible by the path from the Japanese Garden, but we should look at that.
- Chair Bachman asked to schedule a strategic plan retreat April 18 for four hours 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM at the Lithia Cabin. All Commissioners confirmed they could make that date. Will need to publicly notice the meeting.

V. **ADJOURNMENT** – Chair Bachman adjourned the meeting at 7:34 PM

Respectfully submitted by Nancy A. Mero, Executive Assistant

DRAFT



**MINUTES FOR REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING**

**PARK COMMISSION**

**April 8, 2026**

**Council Chamber, 1175 E Main – 6:00 PM**

Commissioners Present: Weiner, Bachman, Gardiner, Landt, Adams

Staff Present: Acting Director Dials, Senior Division Manager Mettler, Executive Assistant Mero

Absent: None

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chair Bachman called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM
- II. **ROLL CALL** – Commissioners Adams, Bachman, Gardiner, Landt, Weiner present

III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** -

- 1. Park Commission Regular Business Meeting March 11, 2026

Chair Bachman asked for unanimous consent for the approval of the minutes. No objections. Minutes approved by unanimous consent.

IV. **ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA** - None

V. **PUBLIC FORUM** - None

VI. **CONSENT AGENDA** - None

VII. **BUSINESS**

- 1. **Hunter Park Tennis Courts Project** – Acting Director Dials

**SUMMARY** - In 2024, the Ashland Parks and Recreation Department (APRD) secured a matching grant from the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) to rehabilitate the Hunter Park Tennis Courts. The approved grant scope includes the rehabilitation of eight tennis courts, including one multi-use court designated for bike polo and futsal. Because any deviation from this scope requires a public process and a formal amendment submission to OPRD, staff are seeking a final decision from the Park Commission (PC).

At the April 1, 2026, study session staff presented three options. The PC directed staff to bring these options to the April 8, 2026, regular meeting for discussion and action.

The three options are:

Option	Description	Key Features
Option 1	No Change	Maintain original grant submittal: <b>8 tennis courts</b> . Court #5 remains multi-use (bike polo/futsal).
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**Proposed Management & Shared Use Plan:** If dual striping is implemented, staff recommend the following operational guidelines:

- **Reservations:** Non-net programs (futsal and bike polo) must be reserved through the APRD office; signage will indicate reserved times. This operational plan is currently in place.
- **Priority Play:** Outside of reservations, play is first-come, first-served.
- **Seasonal Exceptions:** During High School Tennis Season from March to early June (3 PM to 6 PM) and during permitted tournaments, all eight courts will be reserved exclusively for tennis.

Over the past month, the PC heard from around 150 tennis and pickleball players by email and in person who are passionate about their sports. Some of the common themes heard are:

- Keep tennis and pickleball separate. Keep Hunter Park for tennis only.
- Keep pickleball in Lithia Park.
- Convert some courts in Hunter Park to shared use with dual lines for pickleball and tennis.

With financial resources stretched and no current plans for adding courts to the parks system staff recommends Option #2, a limited expansion of Pickleball at the Hunter Park tennis courts.

**POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED** – Parks Capital Improvement Project and workplan

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS** – This project is approved for grant funding through OPRD. \$720,000 (60%) grant, \$480,000(40%) from Parks CIP, for \$1,200,000 total project cost. These proposed amendments to add pickleball lines would have little impact on the approved budget. \$800-\$1000 per court additional cost.

**PROPOSED ACTIONS OR MOTION(S)** – Move to approve Option #1, #2 or #3

**ATTACHMENTS** – N/A

**PREPARED BY** Rachel Dials, Acting Director

Hunter Park Tennis Courts Project	Option	Description	Key Features
	Option 1	No Change	Maintain original grant submittal: 8 tennis courts. Court #5 remains multi-use (bike polo/futsal).
	Option 2	Limited Expansion of Pickleball	8 Tennis Courts (1 shared). Court #5 dual-lined for 4 pickleball courts. Includes removable nets for courts #5-8.
	Option 3	Significant Expansion of Pickleball	8 Tennis Courts (2-4 shared). Courts #5-8 dual-lined for up to 16 pickleball courts. All back courts utilize removable nets.



**Hunter Park Tennis Courts Project**

**Proposed Management & Shared Use Plan:** If dual striping is implemented, staff recommend the following operational guidelines:

- **Reservations:** Non-net programs (futsal and bike polo) must be reserved through the APRD office; signage will indicate reserved times. This operational plan is currently in place.
- **Priority Play:** Outside of reservations, play is first-come, first-served.
- **Seasonal Exceptions:** During High School Tennis Season from March to early June (3 PM to 6 PM) and during permitted tournaments, all eight courts will be reserved exclusively for tennis.





### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Over the past month, the PC heard from more than 150 tennis and pickleball players by email and in person who are passionate about their sports. Some of the common themes heard are:

- Keep tennis and pickleball separate. Keep Hunter Park for tennis only.
- Keep pickleball in Lithia Park.
- Convert some courts in Hunter Park to shared use with dual lines for pickleball and tennis.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

With financial resources stretched and no current plans for adding courts to the parks system staff recommends Option #2, a limited expansion of Pickleball at the Hunter Park tennis courts.



### **POTENTIAL MOTION**

Move to approve Option #1, #2 or #3



### Questions/Discussion

- If #2 is selected would there be two removable nets? A: We would likely have removable nets on all four back courts. That is possible with all options at a small cost.
- Might there be remaining CIP funds left over if the bid is lower than the estimate?
- Option #2 has only one dual lined court (#5)? A: Yes.
- Can removable nets be added to option #1? A: Yes.

### **Public Forum**

- Carlyle Stout, Ashland: Previous tennis player pickleball convert. Strongly feels Hunter courts should be for tennis only. Strongly recommends option #1.
- George Morgan, didn't state: Played pickleball for seven years nationally and internationally. The only time there's problems is when there aren't enough courts. Predicted High School competitive pickleball will occur within one to two year. Would like to see two or three pickleball courts at Hunter. Removable nets are not necessary. Dual lined courts are workable.
- Ron Owen, Ashland: Speaking as the president of the Ashland Oregon Pickleball Club (see his letter at end of minutes).
- Russell Feingold, Ashland: Pickleball is growing. Amazing to play in Lithia. Expansion of just one court in Hunter would be great.
- Rick Vann, Ashland: Here on behalf of the new Ashland Pickleball 501C3 in progress. Need more courts. People love pickleball. Needs of the tennis community are just as important. Supports option #2 with striping only for pickleball.
- Esther Brun, didn't state: She and her son play pickleball daily. A certified instructor. Invited Commissioners for a free lesson. Supports option#2 and Lithia Park courts remaining all for pickleball.
- Vanston Shaw, Ashland: Supports both sports. Supports Option #2 dual striping of one court at Hunter. Previously a commissioner when it was decided to have pickleball only in Lithia. Need at least seven tennis courts at Hunter.
- Denise Daehler, Ashland: Need pickleball courts on the south side of town. Need expansion of pickleball courts. It will help draw visitors who play pickleball when they travel. Sad about conflict between user groups. Would like to grow the two sports together.
- Ricky Riedl, Ashland: Speaking on behalf of bike polo. Very grateful for being able to use court five. Lines on courts don't affect bike polo however removable nets are needed. Would love to have removable nets on two courts so the bike polo club is able to host larger tournaments.

#### Questions/Discussion:

- Would like to hear from the Commissioners (Landt)(Gardiner) who were on the commission when the previous decision/promise was made to keep pickleball in Lithia and tennis at Hunter.
- Landt: There was conflict between user groups when both sports were played at the Lithia courts. Seemed like the right decision to remove the tennis courts in Lithia and leave Hunter park courts all tennis.
- Gardiner: Agreed with Landt's statement. The decision made was to have the same number of pickleball and tennis courts. The only tennis courts removed by Parks and Rec were the two in Lithia Park. The other tennis courts were removed by the School District and SOU.

- The tennis courts at Hunter might be better used when they are improved. We won't know that until we try. No doubt that we need more pickleball courts. Not possible in Lithia, not desirable at Hunter. Recommends working with the School District to make use of one of their properties as they now have pickleball in their curriculum. Should commit to adding eight pickleball courts within the next three years.

**Motion:** Move to approve option #1 with no lines on court #5.

- Motion died for lack of a second.

**Motion:** Move to approve option #1 with the addition that courts 5 – 8 have removeable nets.

- Gardiner: Would like to make a point to get more pickleball courts into the Park and Rec's Capital Improvement Plan. Need to identify locations.
- Adams: Important to go with option #1 because we promised under a previous Commission that Hunter would be for tennis. Agrees that creating more pickleball courts needs to be a priority of the Commission. Likes the idea of working with partners to build more pickleball courts.

Motion: Gardiner

Second: Adams

**Vote:**

<b><u>Gardiner</u></b>	<b><u>Yes</u></b>	<b><u>Weiner</u></b>	<b><u>Yes</u></b>	<b><u>Bachman</u></b>	<b><u>Yes</u></b>
<b><u>Adams</u></b>	<b><u>Yes</u></b>	<b><u>Landt</u></b>	<b><u>Yes</u></b>		

- Commissioner Landt asked to make a motion to direct staff to look for locations for future pickleball.

**Motion:** I move to direct staff to expediently look for property where a pickleball court could be placed and to look at how funding for that could be procured.

- Value in having expanding pickleball capacity in the City on the record.
- Support for the expansion of pickleball with careful consideration of location and the potential impact on other users and community members.
- Should the expansion of pickleball be formally in the CIP? A: The motion leaves it for staff to determine.

Motion: Landt

Second: Bachman

**Vote:**

<b><u>Gardiner</u></b>	<b><u>Yes</u></b>	<b><u>Weiner</u></b>	<b><u>Yes</u></b>	<b><u>Bachman</u></b>	<b><u>Yes</u></b>
<b><u>Adams</u></b>	<b><u>Yes</u></b>	<b><u>Landt</u></b>	<b><u>Yes</u></b>		

**VIII. ACTING DIRECTORS REPORT – Acting Director Dials**

- East Main Park – closer to finalizing bid packet with public works hope to put it out by end of April. The bid will be out for three or four weeks.
- Ice Rink permit approved by Planning Department. Working on a date to install the cabling.
- Bike Swap is on April 18 from 12 – 2:00 PM at the Grove
- Digital PlayGuide will be out next week on Monday.
- Busiest time for maintenance, testing/repairing irrigation, mowing has started.

Are we considering drought conditions? A: Yes

- We are working with a concessionaire to run the restaurant at Oak Knoll. Aiming for a May opening. The concessionaire would rent the kitchen area for a monthly fee. RFP and contract going through Legal.

Reflecting on the proposed permanent ice rink cover, will we still need the temporary ice rink cover with the additional cabling support for the coming season? A: Yes at least through the next year and likely longer.

- Interviewing for seasonal maintenance staff tomorrow. Internal movement of some Parks staff.
- Park Tech 1 starting at the end of April in the forestry/trails division.
- Thea Doyon, the new Rec Coordinator, started this week.

**IX. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS/STAFF**

a. Liaison Report

Gardiner:

- Oak Knoll golf course is in great shape. Recommends playing golf now.
- Park Walk Medallion follow up: City feedback says it needs to go through the PAAC for approval. Hopes to bring it back to the Commission soon.

**X. UPCOMING MEETING DATES**

1. Joint meeting with City Council May 5, Council Chamber 6:00 PM
  2. Park Commission Business Meeting May 13, Council Chamber 6:00 PM
  3. Park Commission Study Session June 3, Council Chamber 6:00 PM
  4. Park Commission Business Meeting June 10, Council Chamber 6:00 PM
- Bachman mentioned the strategic planning meeting Saturday April 18, from 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM. The meeting might be held at the Siskiyou room in Com Dev.
  - Dials mentioned the TAC meeting scheduled for May 20 at the Grove 4:15 PM.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT – Chair Bachman adjourned the meeting at 7:03**

Respectfully submitted by Nancy A. Mero, Executive Assistant

Written Public Testimony

Public Comment

Use this form to submit public comment for City Council meetings. This form must be submitted by **10 a.m.** the day of the meeting to be on the record.

**If you wish to speak to the Council in person at a meeting, you must fill out a Speaker Request form available on-site. Do not use this form.**

Full Name	ANDREA GOOD
Meeting Date	April 8, 2026
Email Address	
Are you a City of Ashland resident?	No
Indicate if you want to provide written testimony, or if you want to speak via Zoom.	Written
Which agenda item would you like to address?	Hunter Park Tennis & Pickleball Court Rehabilitation Project
Comments (Leave this section blank if you are requesting to speak electronically.)	<p>Dear Commissioners,</p> <p>As you vote on the future of court infrastructure in Ashland, I urge the Commission to address the root cause of the current conflict: Acoustic Frequency. We are currently debating a \$1.2 million real estate solution to a physics problem. Moving courts does not eliminate a nuisance; it simply relocates a "high-frequency pop" to a different group of residents.</p> <p>The Science: Frequency vs. Decibels The reason the Lithia Park noise feels like "torture" to neighbors is not just the volume (decibels), but the pitch (frequency). Standard pickleball hits register at approximately 1,000–1,200 Hz.</p> <p>Humans are biologically wired to find this specific high-pitched</p>

range intrusive. A decibel meter might show the sound is "legal," but to the human ear, it is a "piercing" sound rather than a "background" sound. Moving this sound 500 yards to Hunter Park does not change its piercing nature.

The "Third Way": Technical Vibration Management

The industry has already solved this via the USA Pickleball (USAP) "Quiet Category." Rather than expensive construction, I propose a \$5,000 Pilot Program for Lithia Park:

Mandate "Quiet Category" Gear: Require paddles and balls that shift the sound from a 1,200 Hz "crack" to a 600 Hz "thud."

Loaner Program: The City should provide high-quality quiet gear for free use. This removes the cost barrier for players and immediately restores the peace for neighbors and walkers.

Proven Equipment for Mitigation:

OWL Sport Silent Storm: USAP Gold Certified to reduce the acoustic "spike" by 50%.

The OWL CX: Uses a 16mm thick core to soak up high-frequency vibrations before they become airborne noise.

DigiPro 3.0 Quiet Ball: A TPE-based ball that eliminates the sharp plastic-on-plastic percussion.

Conclusion: It is fiscally irresponsible to spend over \$1 million of taxpayer funds on relocation before attempting a \$5,000 equipment mandate. Cities like Laguna Beach have already proven that changing the equipment is the most effective way to protect the "spirituality" of public parks.

Respectfully submitted,  
Andrea Good, Ashland Outskirt Resident

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Upload a file or image

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Ashland Oregon Pickleball Club

Ashland Oregon  
Pickleball Club  
900 Strawberry  
Lane  
Ashland, Oregon  
97520

April 6, 2026

Ashland Parks and  
Recreation Commission  
1195 East Main Street  
Ashland, Oregon 97520

Subject: Pickleball Club Position Letter

The Ashland Oregon Pickleball Club (AOPC) and its 400+ members actively promote pickleball in Ashland. The current discussion about pickleball venues in Ashland has generated significant interest in the pickleball community. The resurfacing of courts at Hunter Park gives us the opportunity to clearly state the Ashland Oregon Pickleball Club position on the pickleball usage of Hunter Park courts.

1. The Ashland Oregon Pickleball Club endorses and supports the pickleball stripping of four (4) regulation pickleball courts in what is now known as Court #5 at Hunter Park with no striping for tennis courts.
2. The Ashland Oregon Pickleball Club understands that the high school tennis team needs six (6) tennis courts to hold sanctioned tennis matches without dual striping.
3. The Ashland Oregon Pickleball Club understands that the Ashland Parks Foundation (APF) maintains a pickleball fund that the pickleball community has contributed to over the years and those funds could be used to stripe the four (4) pickleball courts, provide portable nets and install a lock box for those nets.
4. The Ashland Oregon Pickleball Club recognizes that four (4) additional pickleball courts at Hunter Park would significantly resolve the overcrowding at Lithia Park and that this solution could be realized in a relatively short period of time.

5. By striping the four (4) pickleball courts with no tennis striping, the issues associated with dual striping and usage disagreements are abated (2 tennis singles players versus 16 pickleball doubles players).
6. By striping four (4) pickleball courts at Hunter Park - Southern Oregon University, Ashland High School, Walker Elementary School, the Ashland Senior Center, and the local residents would have ready access to a quality pickleball venue.

The Ashland Oregon Pickleball Club appreciates the ongoing opportunity to work with the Commission and its staff. Sincerely,

Rona  
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Owe  
n  
Club  
Chair  
perso  
n

DRAFT

## Park Commission Strategic Planning Workshop

April 18, 2026

Present: Bachman, Gardiner, Landt, Adams, Weiner

Staff: Rooklyn, Dials

Visitors: Dylan Bloom, David Runkel

Meeting Started at 9:05am

### **The Draft Plan:**

Today: Start Vision Discussion (We believe statements)

May/June/July: Continue Refining Vision

July Business Meeting: Adopt up to 7 business statements (vision)

Aug: Budget Goals Workshop- 4 hours (commission goals for the dept)

Sept: Start 27-29 Budget Process

Spring 27: Budget Committee Gets to Work

# THE PLAN

TODAY: START VISION DISCUSSION

(WE BELIEVE . . .)

MAY, JUN: CONTINUE REFINING VISION

JUL

JUL BUS: ADOPT up to 7 "WE BELIEVE  
MTG: STMTS"

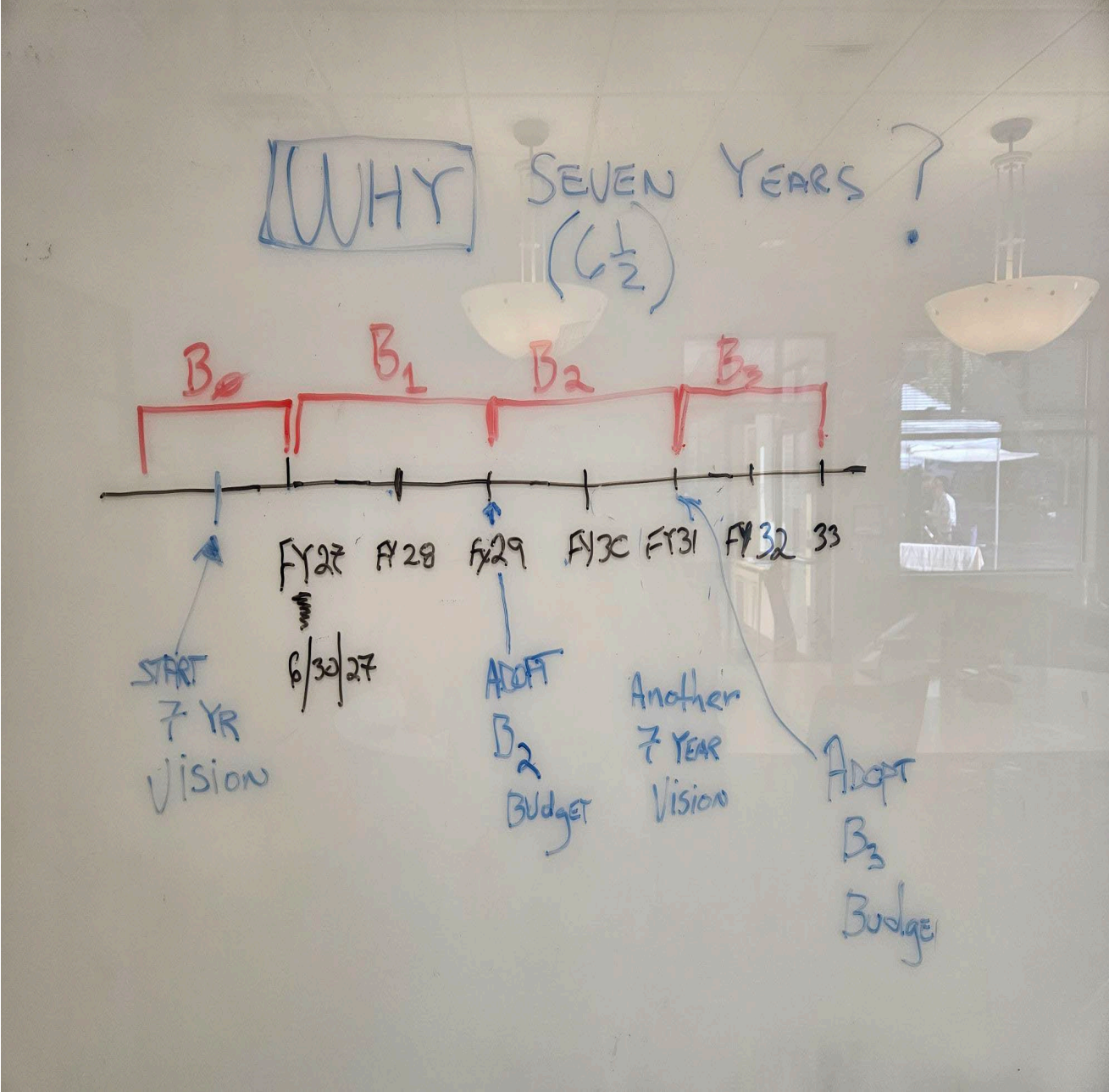
AUG: BUDGET GOALS WORKSHOP

4 HRS SATURDAY

SEPT: START '27-'29 BUDGET

PROCESS

SPRING: BUDGET COM GETS  
'27 TO WORK



Meeting Ended at 11:48am.



## REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING AGENDA BRIEF

**May 13, 2026**

<b>Agenda Item</b>	VIII. Ashland Creek Fish Rehabilitation Project – Rogue River Restoration Council	
<b>Presenter</b>	Rachel Dials	Acting Director
<b>Item Type</b>	Action <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

### **SUMMARY**

Scott Howell with the Rogue River Restoration Council (3RC) will give a presentation to the Park Commission on a proposal to restore spawning-sized gravel in Ashland Creek between Winburn Way and Granite Street Dam. This initiative directly fulfills recommendation #9 of the Lithia Park Master Plan to augment creek materials and aligns with the mandate to regenerate healthy habitats.

The project will take one to two days per year annually for five years. After five years, 3RC will review the program and likely apply for extensions.

APRD staff has spoken with the City of Ashland Planning staff regarding the proposed project and permitting process. Although it is a tight timeline, we are optimistic that the permit and the work can be completed prior to the deadline for the in-water work period which ends on September 15, 2026. 3RC will obtain all required permits prior to doing any work.

### **POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED**

Lithia Park Master Plan, Recommendation #9: Augment input of gravel, cobble and wood material to Ashland Creek. Pages 69 – 71.

### **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

None. If approved this project will be privately funded and executed by 3RC with Scott Howell as the lead.

**PROPOSED ACTIONS OR MOTION(S)**

APRD staff is recommending moving forward with this proposed project with a review with 3RC after the completion of the second year (Fall 2027) and after the fifth year (Fall 2030) of the project.

“Move to approve the privately funded Ashland Creek Fish Rehabilitation Project executed by 3RC pending all permits are received from the City of Ashland and Department of State Lands (DSL) with a review scheduled for Fall 2027 and Fall 2030. ”

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Request from Scott Howell, Rogue River Restoration Council (3RC)

Lithia Park Master Plan, Recommendation #9: Pages 69-71

**PREPARED BY:** Rachel Dials, Acting Director

**TO:** Ashland Parks Commissioners

**FROM:** Scott Howell, Rogue River Restoration Council (3RC)

**DATE:** May 5, 2026

**SUBJECT:** Proposal for Annual Spawning Gravel Restoration in Ashland Creek



## Executive Summary

The Rogue River Restoration Council (3RC) proposes an annual, volunteer-supported project to restore spawning-sized gravel in Ashland Creek between Winburn Way and the Granite Street Dam. This initiative directly fulfills **Recommendation 9** of the Lithia Park Master Plan to augment creek materials and aligns with the mandate to regenerate healthy habitats.

## The Need for Action

- **Habitat Shortage:** Current spawning gravel is severely limited, leading to "redd superimposition"—where multiple steelhead spawn in the same spot, damaging previous eggs.
- **High Impact:** Recent monitoring shows up to **50% of redds** have been damaged due to this lack of suitable habitat.
- **Ecological & Economic Value:** Restoring these populations supports regional fisheries and provides a unique educational attraction for park visitors.

## Proposed Methodology (Low-Impact Approach)

Unlike the Master Plan's suggestion of using heavy machinery, 3RC proposes a significantly less invasive "targeted" method:

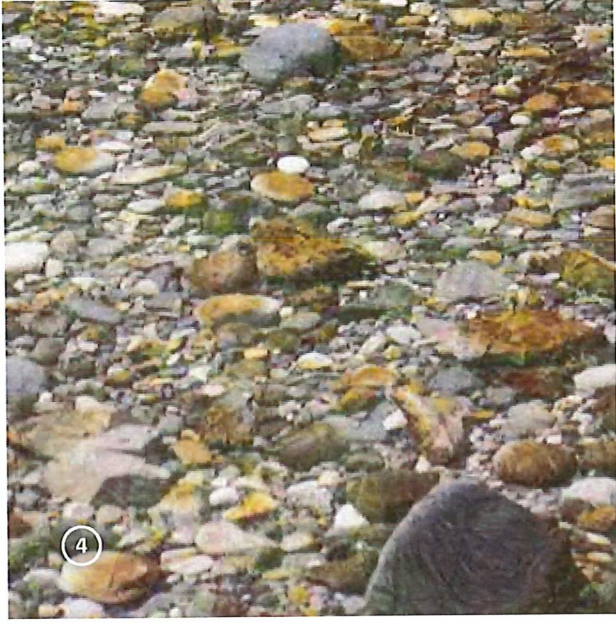
- **Manual Placement:** Up to **20 cubic yards** of 1–3 inch washed river gravel will be moved via wheelbarrows and placed by hand using buckets.
- **Strategic Sites:** Gravel will be placed at stable natural boulder structures to minimize downstream migration and ensure no channel blockages occur.
- **Timing:** Work is slated for the ODFW in-water window (June 15–Sept 15) to ensure negligible turbidity and zero impact on active spawning.

## Organizational Commitment

- **Funding & Labor:** The project is **privately funded** and will be executed by 3RC staff and local volunteers at no cost to the City.
- **Accountability:** 3RC commits to at least **five years of monitoring** to track a goal of 40 stable or increasing steelhead redds.
- **Collaboration:** We look forward to working with Parks staff on educational signage to help visitors steward these iconic wild fish.

## Permitting, Approval, and Support

- **Permits:** All permits from the City of Ashland Planning Department and DSL will be received before any work begins.
- **Approvals:** We have already received approval from ODFW pending all required permits are granted. We are hopeful to get Ashland Parks approval.
- **Support:** ODFW has been involved in the drafting of 3RC's proposal. They recognize the need for the restoration work proposed and are enthusiastically supportive of the project.



**Recommendation 9:** *Augment input of gravel, cobble and wood material to Ashland Creek*

Streambed gravel is important for aquatic species and spawning anadromous fish, such as steelhead and Coho salmon. The reach of Ashland Creek through the park has a substrate that is severely lacking in gravel and is somewhat lacking in cobble due to the two dams upstream that serve as sediment traps. Increasing the instances and amount of gravel and cobble in the creek will decrease channel downcutting, increase floodplain connection, and increase habitat diversity for aquatic species. Adding gravel to the substrate (gravel augmentation) will provide more opportunities for anadromous fish spawning to occur within the park. The overall objective of gravel augmentation is to try to mimic the sediment transport that might occur if the dams were not in place.

It is currently estimated that the average annual volume of gravel and cobble material deposited into Reader Reservoir by Ashland Creek is 2000 cubic yards. In

relatively dry years this figure should be much lower, and in high flow years it may be much higher. Due to the alteration of the Ashland Creek hydrograph by Hosler Dam and Reeder Reservoir, which results in lower peak stream flows through the Park, it is uncertain whether Ashland Creek below the Granite Street Dam has enough energy to transport and distribute the full volume of material deposited into Reeder Reservoir. It is likely that the appropriate volume of gravel augmentation will be less than the volume that is deposited to Reeder Reservoir.

Gravel augmentation is going to require a significant adaptive management approach and would ideally start out with small amounts of gravel that are gradually increased up to the carrying capacity of the creek through the park. The material assimilation and carrying capacity of the creek will be dynamic and unpredictable from year to year. Augmentation will require the oversight of a fisheries biologist or fluvial geomorphologist to inspect the

- 1: Wetland with more diverse species of waterfowl.
- 2: Emergent wetland.
- 3: Water quality in ponds can be improved by aerating with fountains. These can be run at night if a smooth, reflective pond surface is preferred.
- 4: A mix of sand and gravel critical to fish rearing.

## 4 RECOMMENDATIONS

channel on an annual basis and decide whether to add more or less gravel for the next round of augmentation. While removing Granite Street Dam will improve sediment recruitment (see related Recommendation 6), it's unlikely to resolve the lack of gravels upstream given the upstream dam and reservoir. Therefore, this recommendation includes a process for augmenting gravel in Ashland Creek before the removal or breach of Granite Street Dam and after.

The ideal source of material for gravel augmentation is the upper end of Reeder Reservoir where it is deposited by Ashland Creek and removed as part of ongoing maintenance of the Reservoir. It has been estimated that the average annual yield of sediment to Reeder Reservoir is 2000 cubic yards. Until Granite Street Dam is removed, gravel and cobble material, with an emphasis on gravel, should be transported from where it collects at the upper end of Reeder Reservoir during flood events to downstream reaches of Ashland Creek. Ideally the gravel augmentation would occur on the downstream side of the Granite Street Dam. Once the Granite Street Dam has been breached or removed, the ideal location for gravel augmentation would be at the most readily accessible location on the downstream side of the Hosler Dam.

Removal of Granite Street Dam is likely to improve sediment recruitment but unlikely to resolve the lack of gravels completely given upstream dam and reservoir. The stream gravel amount and composition used in augmentation should be monitored throughout the park on an annual basis to determine if material transport and augmentation is needed to optimize aquatic habitat and floodplain connection.

Material for use in augmentation could be selectively mined from the upper end of the Reeder Reservoir to match the type of material desired. Material selected for augmentation should be primarily gravel with the inclusion of some fines and cobble. The type of material that would be most beneficial to the augmentation process can be determined on an annual basis, or just prior to its removal from Reeder Reservoir. Placement of material into Ashland Creek should occur at a location with good access for dump trucks and other heavy equipment to facilitate the work. Timing of material placement should be at the beginning of the higher flow season (fall and early winter) to facilitate its distribution to downstream reaches by the high winter stream flows. Material should be placed over a long enough period to allow it to move downstream and to prevent blocking

the channel at the point of placement. If removal of material from Reeder Reservoir occurs more rapidly than the rate at which it should be placed in Ashland Creek, it can be stockpiled for later use. Prior to the removal of the Granite Street Dam, the material should be deposited below the dam. After dam removal and the stream restoration is completed, material should be distributed in areas below the Hosler Dam at a readily accessible location.

Woody material is also an important component of stream health. Large trees within the channel are important elements of pool formation and fish cover. They can be added to urban streams in a manner that ensures that they remain in place to prevent their migration downstream. Fish habitat restoration activities for the creek should be considered as soon as, and whenever, practical. These activities should include the creation of a series of pools distributed throughout the stream reach within the park, and the addition of large wood (whole or partial mature conifer trees) to provide hydraulic diversity and fish holding areas. Large wood added to the stream channel and floodplain should be anchored appropriately to prevent its migration downstream of the park. Trees that are removed from the park's forested areas

for maintenance purposes should be kept within the park for use as habitat, with as many of them placed within the stream channel and floodplain as is reasonable considering restoration objectives. Trees also have habitat value as downed wood in upland areas and nature play areas.



**Recommendation 10:** *Monitor and mitigate effects of climate change on low flows of creek during the dry season.*

Much of the negative impact of climate change in Lithia Park is expected to be to low creek flows and wildfire during the dry season, and erratic flows in winter and spring. Higher elevation snow serves as a vast reservoir that releases water to streams during the warmer months of the year. Historically, melting snow pack has provided cooler late summer

*1: Wood material helps increase the health of a stream's habitat by providing places for fish and amphibians to rest and hide.*



## REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING AGENDA BRIEF

**May 13, 2026**

<b>Agenda Item</b>	VII2. Update on Permanent Director Hiring	
<b>Presenter</b>	Jordan Rooklyn	Deputy City Manager
<b>Item Type</b>	Action <input type="checkbox"/> Information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

### **SUMMARY**

Discussion regarding permanent Parks Director hiring process and timeline.

### **BACKGROUND**

City staff will provide an overview of the typical hiring process and timeline for a Director-level position. This will include the recruitment firm selection process, the steps within a typical recruitment process, and anticipated timelines. The Park Commission will have an opportunity to discuss their preferred process.

The Parks and Recreation Department is currently overseen by Deputy Parks Director Rachel Dials as Acting Parks Director under the management of the City Manager. The Parks and Recreation Director position has been vacant since January 28, 2026.

**PREPARED BY:** Nancy Mero, Executive Assistant



**REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING  
 AGENDA BRIEF**

**May 13, 2026**

<b>Agenda Item</b>	VII3. Updated 2026 Park Commission Meeting Schedule	
<b>Presenter</b>	Rachel Dials	Acting Director
<b>Item Type</b>	Action <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information <input type="checkbox"/>	

**SUMMARY**

The Park Commissioners (PC) requested an update to the meeting schedule to make some adjustments for the July through December 2026 meetings. The changes include:

- Adding the study session back in August.
- Changing the business meeting to November 4, due to the Veterans Day holiday on November 11, 2026.

Confirmation has been received from the City Manager’s office that the Joint Meeting with Council on August 12 will move forward as planned. It is up to the PC if you prefer to have a Business Meeting after the Joint meeting on August 12.

**POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED**

10.68.030 Park Commission–Authority

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

None

**PROPOSED ACTIONS OR MOTION(S)**

Move to approve the updated meeting schedule.

**ATTACHMENTS**

- 2026 Park Commission Meeting Schedule
- Updated 2026 Park Commission Meeting Schedule

**PREPARED BY:** Rachel Dials, Acting Director

## 2026 Park Commission Meeting Schedule

January 7	PROS Plan – Service Level Goals Review	Council Chamber	
January 14	Regular Business Meeting	Council Chamber	
February 4	Study Session	Council Chamber	
*February 11	Joint/Business Meeting	Council Chamber	PC Hosts
March 4	Study Session	Council Chamber	
March 11	Business Meeting	Council Chamber	
April 1	Study Session	Council Chamber	
April 8	Business Meeting	Council Chamber	
*May 5	Joint Meeting w/ Council	Council Chamber	Council Hosts
May 13	Business Meeting	Council Chamber	
June 3	Study Session	Council Chamber	
June 10	Business Meeting	Council Chamber	
July 1	Study Session	No Meeting – Summer Break	
July 8	Business Meeting	Council Chamber - Tentative	
August 5	Study Session	No Meeting – Summer Break	
*August 12	Joint/Business Meeting	Council Chamber	PC Hosts
September 2	Study Session	Council Chamber	
September 9	Business Meeting	Council Chamber	
October 7	Study Session	Council Chamber	
October 14	Business Meeting	Council Chamber	
*November 3	Joint Meeting w/Council	Council Chamber	Council Hosts
November 11	Business Meeting	Council Chamber	
December 2	Business Meeting	Council Chamber	

\*Joint refers to a joint meeting with City Council.

## Updated 2026 Park Commission Meeting Schedule

May 13	Business Meeting	Council Chamber
June 3	Joint Meeting w/Council	Council Chamber
June 10	Business Meeting	Council Chamber
July 1	Study Session	No Meeting – Summer Break
July 8	Business Meeting	Council Chamber
August 5	Study Session	Council Chamber
August 12	Joint Mtg/Business Meeting	Council Chamber PC Hosts
September 2	Study Session	Council Chamber
September 9	Business Meeting	Council Chamber
October 7	Study Session	Council Chamber
October 14	Business Meeting	Council Chamber
November 3	Joint Meeting w/Council	Council Chamber Council Hosts
November 4	Business Meeting	Council Chamber
December 2	Business Meeting	Council Chamber