



## **MINUTES FOR STUDY SESSION**

### **PARK COMMISSION**

**May 6, 2026**

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

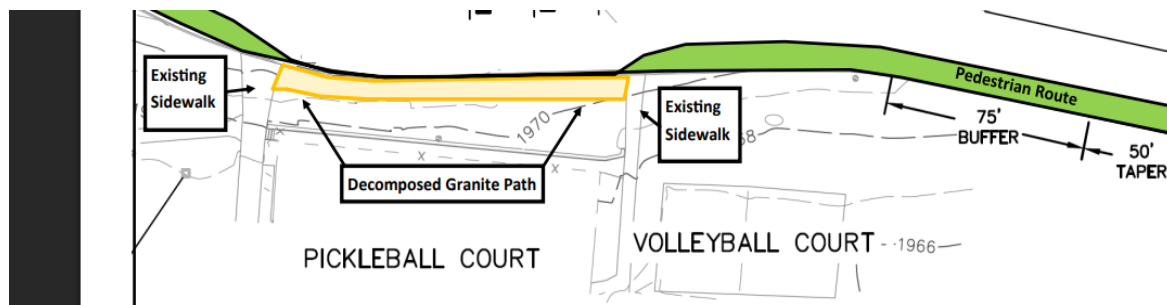
Commissioners Present: Landt, Weiner, Bachman (Chair), Gardiner (Vice Chair), Adams  
 Staff Present: Acting Director Dials, Parks Division Manager Caldwell, Public Works Director Fleury, Executive Assistant Mero  
 Absent: None

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chair Bachman called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM
- II. **ROLL CALL** – Commissioners Landt, Weiner, Bachman, Adams, and Gardiner present.
- III. **WINBURN WAY AND JAPANESE GARDEN ADA** – Acting Director Dials/Parks Division Manager Caldwell

**SITUATION & BACKGROUND** – The Lithia Park Master Plan (LPMP) identified a recommendation to address safety on Winburn Way. As part of the FY26–27 Parks and Recreation Department (Department) Work Plan, the Park Commission (PC) identified that the Department would work on a proposed solution to improve safety on Winburn Way through Lithia Park. This is in addition to the previous PC direction to add ADA improvements to the Japanese Garden on Winburn Way.

At the January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2026, meeting the PC took the following actions:

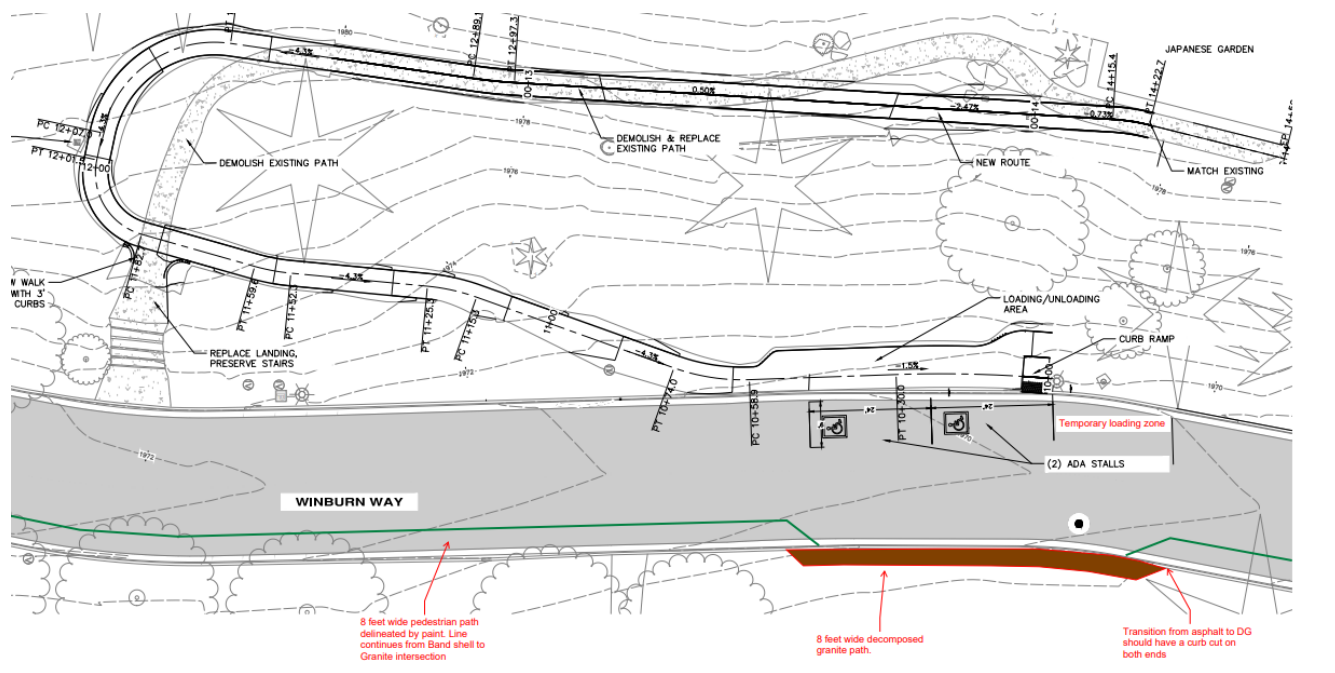
1. PC motioned to approve option #3 as the Winburn Way Safety Plan. That option includes no center line, and a decomposed granite (DG) path.



2. Directed staff to explore an ADA option that includes a connection above the existing stairs near the pickleball courts, minimizes grading with gradual slopes, and to confer with a landscape architect.

Staff met with a landscape architect onsite to get feedback and took their suggestions to the engineer to be incorporated into the design. The draft design incorporates the feedback from the PC, landscape architect, engineer, and APRD staff.

### **ADA DRAFT design w/ Option #3 for Winburn Way**



Because of the gradual slope needed for the pathway, the loading and unloading area, handicapped parking, and DG granite path were pushed back to accommodate. The draft plan meets ADA requirements. At the time of this memo, we are still waiting for cost estimates on both projects.

**ASSESSMENT** - With the above information and to continue efforts to collaborate with other city departments, staff reached out to Public Works Director Scott Fluery regarding the Japanese Garden ADA and Winburn Way Safety Plan. Director Fluery made suggestions regarding the Winburn Way project that the PC may want to consider in lieu of the pedestrian walkway and DG path. These ideas stem from the City of Ashland Transportation Master Plan and are currently used on some narrow roadways in Ashland to promote pedestrian and cyclist safety. These include:

1. Share the road signage
2. Sharrows (shared lane markings) pavement markings showing two chevrons above a bicycle symbol. These indicate that a lane is shared and cyclists may occupy the full lane.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS OR SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS** – Would the PC like to consider the suggestions from Public Works and change anything about the current Winburn Way Safety Plan?

Would the PC like to move the draft ADA plan forward as presented?

**POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED** – This addresses item six in the Department’s Workplan.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS** – As of the date of this memo staff does not have cost estimates for Winburn Way or the Japanese Garden ADA draft plans. Those cost estimates will be available soon. In the current Capital Improvement Plan there is \$50,000 for ADA improvements and \$250,000 for the LPMP.

**ATTACHMENTS** – Lithia ADA preliminary design w/Winburn Way Option #3., Lithia ADA with slope information

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

Questions/Discussion:

- Path should fit the contour of the land.
- Clarification that Magnolia would be spared? A: Yes, along with all of the trees.
- Would love there to be a connection from the decommissioned stairs that lead to the garden from Granite. Aware that would cost money.
- Suggestion to extend the DG path due to the sharp turn. Fleury recommends parking on Winburn to get a visual picture before proceeding with this.
- The base of the lantern should be up against the sidewalk to prevent weeds.
- Questioned the design’s safety with getting out of a vehicle to the curb cut.
- Provide the ramp for access so that people in the street don’t have to jump the curb. People exiting a vehicle would be able to exit directly onto the sidewalk.
- Could also make the parking space wide enough for a wheelchair to be pulled alongside the vehicle.
- Fleury: Want a flat loading and unloading zone. Primary design is to accommodate something on the passenger side to keep person out of the roadway. Suggested putting the ramp in between the two parking spaces.

Marking and striping will chevron off the unloading area to keep people from parking there.

- There would need to be a retaining wall (Part of the plan already). Need to allow for drainage on the flat area so it isn't slippery or a "bird bath".
- Gardiner: Is there any need for a ramp then? A: Still need truncated domes. Ramps are tricky in terms of compliance.
- Fleury: For Winburn Way safety, Public Works recommendation is to post share the road signs and perhaps some sharrows to alert drivers that the road is shared. \If you want people to use a specific path/place you have to provide the egress and ingress points. Hard to change the mindset of past practice.
- Do we need the truncated domes for ingress and egress to the DG path? A: Yes Look at Parks ADA requirements. They can be different from Transportation's.
- Should ADA access be provided to the restored Butler-Perozzi fountain? A: Yes. Have to plan for it to happen in the future not necessary to do it as the fountain work is done.
- Fleury: Also consider adding tabled crosswalks to that portion of Winburn Way.
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Direction: Commission wants to move forward on the plan as is for Winburn Way safety. For ADA access to Japanese Garden, looking for a flat entry point, make parking space wider, consider where to place the truncated domes, extend the curb cut. Make sure there's no gap between lantern and sidewalk.

Clarification from Dials: Ready to vote next week? No. Would like the ADA plan completed before voting (Will only be voting on the ADA portion as Winburn Way is good to go with the addition of sharrows).

#### **IV. NEXT STEPS: REFINING THE VISION – Chair Bachman**

**SITUATION** – At the Strategic Planning Workshop on Saturday April 18, the Commissioners discussed:

- The Commission's role in City of Ashland governance
- City-wide organization and budget challenges
- Defining the Park Director's Position
- Vision for the next five - seven years

At the May 6 study session, Chair Bachman will continue the discussion.

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

Chair Bachman's Handout:

## **Seven-Year Strategic Statement for 5/6/26 Ashland Parks and Recreation (APRC) Study Session**

**Introduction:** What follows is a summary of my thinking since our Strategic Workshop session. It includes Commissioner contributions gleaned from my notes. This memo is meant to serve as a starting point in the process of examining what **THIS** Commission (APRC) understands to be the course of both the Commission and the Department (APRD) over the seven years beginning July 1 this year. I see two main purposes:

1. It is meant to inform the upcoming biennial budget discussions that will be firming up about this time next year—spring of 2027—for the biennium ending June 30, 2029.
2. Every two years, two or three positions on the Commission go before the Ashland electorate. As some of us leave, and new members join the APRC, I believe that memorializing this Commission's view of the future will serve as a guide for policy implementation after the next Commission takes office January 1, 2027.

As you read the rest of the document, please think about what you want in the Strategic Statement in the following areas. I hope you value this process as much as I do. I'll be asking for an up-or-down vote at our Business Meeting next week (May 13th) which will determine whether to keep this process on upcoming agendas.

### **Seven-Year Strategic Statement**

The Commission's Role in Ashland City Government:

1. We believe that a separately elected APRC developing policy with the agency to implement those policies will best serve the public across our three divisions—Parks, Open Space and Trails, Recreation, and Senior Service.
2. We are committed to working with the Mayor/Council and the City Manager's Office to meet our community members' expectations that our elected government officials are on the same team.

The Commission's Seven-Year Vision for the APRD:

1. Parks, Open Space and Trails
  - The main chore for Parks will be scheduling and executing key previously deferred maintenance projects for existing park assets.
  - We do not see a need for developing new parks beyond completing the East Main Park.

- We do see the need to build new pickleball courts on the south side of town.
- We also believe that an aquatic center to replace or augment Daniel Meyer Pool ought to be planned and potentially begin construction.
- We stand ready to assist administering Ashland's current and prospective open spaces.
- We are committed to updating the Trails Master Plan and building-out Ashland's trail system as opportunities and funding become available.

## 2. Recreation

- We believe that the event programming and facility use managed by this division has proven to be a potent economic drivers for Ashland and will remain a priority.
- We also believe that programming recreation activities for all ages enhances the mental and physical well-being of our community and will continue to support expanding those activities.

## 3. Senior Services

- We understand that Ashland's senior population will continue to grow. We are committed to crafting the most robust palette of senior services—particularly for our most vulnerable seniors—that we can manage within our approved biennial budgets.

Respectfully submitted for consideration by the full Commission,

Jim Bachman  
APRC Chair

- Chair Bachman: He is continuing the conversation he started at the April 18 Strategic Planning workshop. He is trying to develop a set of statements that have two purposes (see Seven Year Strategic Statement above, Introduction numbers 1 and 2). Wants input from other Commissioners on whether they would like to be involved or if he should just continue refining his vision as a personal project.

Questions/Discussion:

- Broad and general enough for whole Commission.
- Clarification on "we stand ready to assist administering Ashland's current and prospective open spaces." Commissioners administrate; they don't assist. A: Example of Madrone Ridge given. More of an overall City acquisition for fire

mitigation. Not necessarily the Commission's to administrate but they would be willing to help.

- Some word smithing suggested.
- Process matters. Would like the process/document to be co-created. Not about the content, but thought it would have been a collaborative process at the strategic planning workshop. PROS plan data should be incorporated. Referenced the Commission retreat four years ago which was collaborative. A year and a half ago, didn't like the way the ex-director just presented the Commission with his list.
- Likes the part that details APRD as a three-part department. Suggests aligning with the City's strategic plan especially given the upcoming budget process.
- Completely in line with the City in wanting to focus on deferred maintenance of existing parks and not building new parks.
- The Lithia Park Master Plan is missing from the Parks Open Space and Trails section. A: Meant to include it.
- Can look at this as a draft and refine and revise it or can toss it out. Good to have a starting point.
- Should they schedule another multi-hour meeting to work on it? Referenced an upcoming retreat in August or September focused on the budget/goals.
- Appreciates the discussion but also challenged by the process. Doesn't disagree with any of the statements, but doesn't really know what the document is. Is it a vision statement, is it a strategic plan? It's some sort of conflation.
- It's about direction for the next biennium. Can't take for granted that the Commission will always exist, that some firebrand councilor or mayor might want to take it away. Wants the next Commission to think about that when he's gone.
- What's the next step? On the lookahead we don't even have another study session until September.
- For some reason there were no study sessions in July or August.
- Noted that the Park Commission voted on a meeting schedule with summer breaks when the previous director was still here.
- Bachman asked staff to bring the meeting schedule as an action item to the May business meeting. There will be revisions.

**V. LOOKAHEAD REVIEW –**

Date	Agenda Item	Presenter
5/13	Park Commission Regular Business Meeting Council Chamber 6:00 PM	
	Ashland Fish Rehabilitation Project (Information/Action)	Scott Howell

<b>6/3</b>	<b>Joint Session City Council/Park Commission Council Chamber 6 PM</b>	<b>Council Hosts</b>
	CIP Discussion-OKGC Driving Range Update (tentative) (move to 6/10?)	Caldwell/Dials
	Next Steps: Refining the Vision (move to 6/10?)	Chair Bachman
<b>6/10</b>	<b>Park Commission Regular Business Meeting Council Chamber 6:00 PM</b>	
	Park Walk Plaque for Front of Lithia Park (Action)	Gardiner
<b>7/1</b>	<b>NO Study Session in JULY-SUMMER BREAK</b>	
<b>7/8</b>	<b>Park Commission Regular Meeting Council Chamber-6:00 PM-Tentative</b>	
<b>8/5</b>	<b>NO Study Session in AUGUST-SUMMER BREAK</b>	
<b>8/12</b>	<b>Parks/Council Joint Meeting Council Chamber-6:00 PM</b>	<b>PC Hosts</b>
<b>9/2</b>	<b>Park Commission Study Session Council Chamber 6:00 PM</b>	
<b>PC Advisory and Management Advisory Committees</b>		
5/20/2026	Trails Advisory Committee, the Grove 4:15 PM	
7/16/2026	Recreation Division Advisory Committee, the Grove 3:30 PM	
7/13/2026	Ashland Senior Advisory Committee, Senior Center 3:30 PM	
<b>Council Business/Budget Meetings/Commissions</b>		
5/19/2026	City Council Bus Meeting – Miscellaneous Fees	Dials
6/3/2026	Joint PC/City Council Meeting Council Chamber 6:00 PM	Council Hosts

## Department Work Plan

- Complete projects identified in the adopted Capital Improvement Plan for FY 26-27
  - Preventative Maintenance Projects
  - Lithia – Butler Perozzi Fountain Restoration-**In process**
  - ADA Improvements
  - Lithia – Master Plan work plan projects
  - Hunter Park – Tennis Court Rehabilitation-**Out to Bid-May**
  - Irrigation Controllers
  - Siskiyou Mountain – Trail Re-route
  - East Main – Phase I development-**Out to bid April/May**
- Improve recreation and senior programming access by replacing staff eliminated during COVID-19 and developing a cost recovery policy.
- 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

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

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH
Budget Concepts (odd years) Adopt CIP (odd years)	VIP Annual Report ✓	Recommend Budget (odd years)
Golf Course Annual Report ✓	Budget Direction (odd years)	Recreation Division Annual Report ✓
	Calle Guanajuato Lease Agreement ✓	

Acting Director Dials reviewed the Lookahead

Questions/Discussion:

- Update on staff's use of the Community Center (CC)? A: The three City staff with desks in the main portion of the CC will be relocating to the Community Development building. Staff in the side rooms will stay in the CC. This will open up the main room for rental at a date to be determined. Still waiting on installation of doors.
- Request for clarification on the process for the trail proposal below Glenview. The Trails Advisory Committee voted 5 to 6 (sic: the vote was 5 to 1) to recommend the trail to the PC. There was a public meeting law complaint made by the lone dissenting vote which was determined to be unfounded by the City's legal team and the state ethics board. A: Acting Director Dials has gotten up to speed on the TAC, met with the Chair of TAC. The proposal will need to be brought before the PC. The process hasn't included addressing staff concerns on the proposed trail. As well the process needs to include a 30 public comment period.
- Suggestion made to also sign/mark the proposed trail.
- The TAC's job is to make the recommendation. The Commission's job is to determine how to receive that public input. Likes the idea of an open forum during a meeting. Recommends devoting a study session to the issue. Flagging the trail makes sense, there is currently a lot of poison oak.
- Recommended to schedule TAC to present the trail to the PC at the June 10 meeting.
- Important to have adding items like the driving range at the golf course, the proposed permanent cover to the ice rink, and additional pickleball courts to the CIP on the agenda soon.
- For the May 13 meeting, would like the information/presentation on the fish rehabilitation project asap.

V. **ADJOURNMENT** – Chair Bachman adjourned the meeting at 7:28 PM

Respectfully submitted by Nancy A. Mero, Executive Assistant