



AGENDA FOR STUDY SESSION
ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
January 3, 2024
Electronic Meeting – 6 P.M.

Public Participation Instructions

This meeting will be held electronically via Zoom Webinar. Registration is required to view the meeting. A link to the meeting will be sent to you once registration has been completed: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_9Ahvu5w_Q_WR7shb7TnU-g

Written testimony will be accepted via email sent to Nancy.mero@ashland.or.us. Please include “**Public Testimony**” in the subject line. Written testimony submitted before 12:00 pm the Tuesday before the meeting will be made available to the Parks Commissioners before the meeting. All testimony will be included in the meetings minutes.

Oral Testimony will be taken during the electronic public meeting. If you wish to provide oral testimony, send an email to Nancy.mero@ashland.or.us, preferably before 12:00 pm the Tuesday before the meeting. Late requests will be honored if possible. Please provide the following information: 1) make the subject line of the email “**Speaker Request**”, 2) include your name, 3) the agenda item on which you wish to speak on, 4) specify if you will be participating by computer or telephone, and 5) the name you will use if participating by computer (Zoom Name) or the telephone number you will use if participating by telephone. Staff will provide information necessary to attend the meeting on request.

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. PUBLIC FORUM
- III. CONVERSATION CLUSTERS DEMONSTRATION PROJECT – FINAL REPORT
- IV. PARKS, TRAILS, AND OPEN SPACE MAP TECHNICAL SUPPORT DOCUMENT
- V. SUMMARY OF DANIEL MEYER POOL REPLACEMENT PROJECT
- VI. LOOKAHEAD REVIEW
- VII. ADJOURNMENT

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Administrator's office at (541) 488-6002 (TTY phone number (800) 735-2900). Notification 72 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to the meeting (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title I). Parks Commission meetings are broadcast live on Channel 9, or on CHARTER CABLE CHANNEL 180. Visit the City of Ashland's website at www.ashland.or.us.

ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

340 S PIONEER STREET • ASHLAND, OREGON 97520

COMMISSIONERS:

Rick Landt
Jim Bachman
Justin Adams
Jim Lewis
Stefani Seffinger



Leslie Eldridge
Interim Director

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STAFF MEMORANDUM

TO: Ashland Parks and Recreation Commissioners

FROM: Isleen Glatt, Senior Services Superintendent

DATE: 12/18/23

SUBJECT: Conversation Clusters Demonstration Project – Final Report

Situation

On August 9, 2023, the Commission approved specific locations and CIP funding for a Conversation Clusters Demonstration Project. At that time, staff promised to report back after the seating was installed and the survey results were complete.

Background

Three different models of Conversation Clusters seating were installed during October 2023 at Lithia, Garfield and Glenwood Parks.

Lithia Park
20 movable, stacking chairs



Garfield Park
an arc of 3 fixed benches



Glenwood Park
a circle of 4 fixed benches



Staff marked each of the stacking chairs in Lithia park with large, vinyl stickers of the APRC logo on both front and back. Sign boards were set up at each location with a [poster](#) explaining the project and directing people to an online survey to provide feedback on the different seating arrangements. The project publicity launched with a [press release](#) on October 31. A [Facebook post](#) spread the word on social media.



The survey was open from October 30 through December 17. The fall timing, while not ideal, was the earliest possible after the funding was approved for the biennium and before the January staff transition in Senior Services.

Assessment

The news release generated positive publicity for APRC on [Channel KDRV Newswatch 12](#) and [Rogue Valley Times Outdoor Adventures section](#). The Channel 12 story was then picked up by [Oregon Health News](#), a weekly e-newsletter sent by the Oregon Health Authority to readers throughout Oregon. The article titled, "[Loneliness: coping with the loss of human connection](#)," referenced "Chat Benches" in Wales and our own "Conversation Clusters" in Ashland as creative solutions to decrease loneliness.

Interim Parks Director Leslie Eldridge also heard positive feedback from Acting City Manager Sabrina Cottle, other City staff, and members of the public including commentator Dean Silver.

As noted when this project was first approved by the Commission, the biggest experiment was the set of movable chairs in Lithia Park, to see the chairs would remain in the park or disappear. As of this writing, all 20 chairs are still present at Lithia Park. Chairs have occasionally been moved to the sidewalks outside of nearby businesses, but local business owners cooperate with Parks staff to return them to the Lithia Park lower lawn. However, on about half the chairs, someone covered the front APRC logo sticker with a different circular sticker. Staff will have to explore whether the offending stickers can be removed and the logo stickers replaced.

There were 15 responses to the formal survey. Not surprisingly, due to the late timing, anecdotal comments reported by ASAC members suggest that the colder weather starting in November decreased use of the seating and the potential number of survey responses. This was echoed by one survey respondent who noted, "You might get more response if you survey during the warmer seasons when more people are out and the weather is more conducive to sitting outside and visiting."

Survey results will be presented at the January 3 Commission meeting.

Recommendation

This report is for information only, but staff welcome any feedback or direction from Commissioners.

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STAFF MEMORANDUM

TO: Ashland Parks and Recreation Commissioners

FROM: Leslie Eldridge, Interim Director

DATE: Jan 3, 2024

SUBJECT: Technical Support Document to the Parks, Trails, and Open Space Map

Situation

The Official Parks, Trails, and Open Space Map was presented to Parks Commissioners for feedback at the Dec 6, 2023 Business Meeting. Parks Commissioners asked for some minor changes to the map and for the inclusion of a Technical Support Document with the map to provide a narrative of the APRC strategy and changes over time. The map and narrative will be presented for final approval by the Parks Commissioners at the Jan 10, 2024 Business Meeting before moving to a public hearing with the Planning Commission, and then on to City Council.

Background

The Parks, Trails, and Open Space Map is a guide for APRC land acquisition and designates properties for different usage including neighborhood parks, potential sports fields, open spaces, trail connectivity, and riparian areas.

The last official update of the map was done in 2002 with a "Light Update" done by APRC in 2012 without formal adoption.

On October 11, 2023, APRC approved the updated Parks, Trails, and Open Space Map.

On Nov 28, 2023, the Planning Commission reviewed the comparison and official maps at their Study Session. Some minor corrections were made to the comparison and the official maps based on feedback from the Planning Commission.

At the Dec 6, 2023, APRC Business Meeting, Parks Commissioners asked for some minor changes to the map and for the inclusion of a Technical Support Document with the Map to provide a narrative of the APRC strategy and changes over time. A draft of the requested document is attached.

A public hearing to consider the proposed Parks, Trails, and Open Space Map amendment is tentatively scheduled before the Planning Commission for January 23, 2024. A public hearing and first reading of the proposed ordinance before the City Council is tentatively scheduled for February 20, 2024, with second reading scheduled for March 5, 2024.

Attachments

Draft Technical Support Document

October 11, 2023 APRC Business Meeting Minutes:

https://www.ashland.or.us/SIB/files/FinalMinutes_10_11_23_RegularMeeting.pdf

Nov 28, 2023 Planning Commission Study Session packet:

https://www.ashland.or.us/files/2023-11-28_PC_Packet_Print.pdf

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STAFF MEMORANDUM

TO: Ashland Parks and Recreation Commissioners

FROM: Interim Director Eldridge

DATE: Dec 6, 2023

SUBJECT: Technical Support Document to Parks, Trails, and Open Space Map

A goal of the Ashland Parks & Recreation Commission (APRC) Board of Commissioners' (the "*Commissioners*") is to update the Parks, Trails, and Open Space Map (the "*map*") every ten years. Although a "Light Update" was done by APRC in 2012, it was not reviewed and approved by City Council. The last official update of the map was done in 2002.

In preparation for the 2002 update, APRC held a series of community meetings to gather input from citizens on updating the 1991 map. Following the meetings, Commissioners developed an updated map that included changing the name of the program to the "Parks, Trails, and Open Space Map". For the 2023 update, a Parks, Trails, and Open Space Subcommittee (the "Subcommittee") was formed by the Commissioners to review the map and make recommendations. The Subcommittee has prepared the 2023 update, and that body has recommended the 2023 map for approval by the Commissioners and City Council. There have been five subcommittee meetings and three APRC meetings where public input was solicited. This Plan was approved by Commissioners on XXXXX, 2023 and by City Council XXXX.

The current situation with Ashland's park land is very different than in 1991 when the Comprehensive Plan was first developed and approved by City Council. In 1991, Ashland had less park land per capita than Roseburg, Medford and Klamath Falls. Now, after 30-plus years of effort, Ashland's per capita park land ranks it among the State's leaders. It has been determined that procurement of land for developed parks is no longer a high priority. Additionally, since the City Charter states that "the City Council shall not use the power of condemnation to acquire fee simple ownership of land for Open Space purposes or for trails," (Article 19a, section 2) originally more property than needed was on the

map to ensure sufficient land could be acquired from willing sellers. For the reasons stated and after careful review by the Subcommittee and approval by APRC Commissioners, roughly 277 acres of property projected for purchase from the 2005 map has been removed from this updated 2023 map.

One of the goals of the City's Comprehensive Plan is to have a neighborhood park located within a 1/4 mile of every resident living inside the current city limits. With the exceptions of the Mistletoe (Croman) neighborhood, fully developed sections of the City where no open lands exist, and areas in the urban-forest interface characterized by large lots where Commissioners have deemed that the benefits are not great enough to justify the costs, sufficient property has been obtained to meet this goal. If the City's boundaries are expanded, additional property may need to be identified, for example, a part of the Billings Ranch, and acquired to meet the neighborhood goal.

The majority of properties left on the map for future purchase provide protection of significant natural areas like streams and riparian areas and/or are land and easements that provide trail connectivity. The connectivity goal is to secure land, through outright purchase, donation, grants, or easements, on which to develop a trail system that would provide connecting links to neighborhoods and additional trails throughout the City and surrounding area for non-motorized, recreational use. Efforts to accomplish this goal will be advanced through collaboration with other organizations, such as the Ashland Woodland and Trails Association, Rogue Valley Mountain Bike Association, and Southern Oregon Land Conservancy.

The APRC Trails Master Plan, which identifies critical bike and pedestrian corridors in Ashland, was approved by City Council in 2020 as a technical report supporting the Parks, Open Space, and Aesthetic Chapter (Chapter VII) of the City of Ashland Comprehensive Plan. The Parks, Trails, and Open Space Map includes a layer that represents the Trails Master Plan corridors. The map is intended to be used in conjunction with the Trails Master Plan.

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STAFF MEMORANDUM

TO: Ashland Parks and Recreation Commissioners

FROM: Interim Director Eldridge

DATE: December 28, 2023

SUBJECT: Goal # 2 Improve public aquatic recreation and competitive options (Information & Discussion)

Situation

Parks Commissioners requested a complete summary of the historical process for the Daniel Meyer Pool replacement project. This summary will serve to bring all commissioners up to date on the issue and be a jumping-off point for commissioners to provide staff direction for next steps.

For the 23-25 Biennium, APRC adopted Goal #2 “to improve public aquatic recreation and competitive options in Ashland consistent with the findings and recommendations of the Pool Ad Hoc Committee and ensure the continuous operations of an adequate recreational pool in Ashland during the summer months, at a minimum, until construction begins on a new pool.” This goal, in various forms, has been on the APRC goals list since 2017.

History & Background of DMP

Daniel Meyer Pool, at almost 40 years old, opened in 1983/84, with funding spearheaded by a local resident whose son drowned and wanted to ensure all Ashland children learned to swim. The intent was that it would serve as a seasonal community pool, which would be open just a few months per year for swim lessons, recreation swimming and casual lap swimming.

Over the years, the pool has become an asset to the community and has moved from a seasonal pool to a year-round facility. It is currently used for competitive sports training and serves a population of approximately 10,500 per year, much larger and for many more months than was originally intended.

The pool was resurfaced around 2005 and for the past 10-15 years, staff have worked to keep up with the needed maintenance and care of the pool, but the volume and frequency of use, as well as budget

limitations have all contributed to the deterioration and rapid aging of the pool. Repairs have been attempted with significantly decreasing success and increasing costs. Most recently (November 2023), the liner of the pool was replaced giving a lifespan for the liner of approximately 10 years.

Until 2015, Ashland citizens had access to both a year-round indoor public pool (SOU), the year-round Ashland YMCA pool and an outdoor seasonal public pool (DM Pool). Since the removal of the SOU indoor pool, the DMP has only been able to fill a portion of a major deficiency in pool accessibility for Ashland. Below is a history of meetings and process related to the Daniel Meyer Pool, with a focus on formal recommendations and action items.

TIMELINE

Pool Ad-Hoc Committee APRC formed the Pool Ad-Hoc Committee in June 2018. The two-month recruitment process included a press release and news articles seeking community members to dedicate time and expertise to the committee process. This 11-person committee was comprised of Commissioner Landt and former Commissioner Gardiner, staff, and community stakeholders. The committee was tasked with:

1. Determining the aquatic needs of the Ashland community by performing a needs analysis/feasibility study, determining stakeholders, and performing a site analysis study.

Pool Ad-Hoc Committee Public Process: The Ad-Hoc committee met 12 times in 2019.

Two community listening sessions were held by the Ad-Hoc Committee to help determine the most appropriate course of action for improved public aquatic access in the Ashland community.

In spring of 2019 a community survey was created by the Ad-Hoc Committee. The survey was mailed to 2500 randomly selected Ashland residents asking for input regarding their aquatic needs.

Project webpage: staff created a webpage for the community to view project information and timeline. <https://gis.ashland.or.us/parks/cip/>

The Pool Ad Hoc committee made the following recommendations to the board of Commissioners in September of 2019: [Pool Ad Hoc Committee Recommendations](#)

1. **Pool Design:**
 - a) The Committee recommends the aging DMP be replaced with a new 25-yard x 25-meter outdoor community pool, with the characteristics detailed in the Site Analysis section above, including an attached recreation/therapy alcove, to be located at the current DMP site in Hunter Park.
2. **Timing:**
 - a) The Committee recommends immediate action to plan, design, and construct a new swimming pool supporting the identified aquatic needs of the Ashland community, of which this recommendation is based upon.
3. **Funding:**
 - a) The Committee recommends that APRC staff and Commissioners address the funding requirements for meeting the Committee's recommendations in the most appropriate and expedient manner possible.
 - b) The Committee recommends that APRC seek out non-profit organizations and partners to support the funding and implementation of strategies to improve aquatics in Ashland.

The following were submitted by the pool ad-hoc committee as “**supplemental recommendations:**”

1. Additional Needs Identified by the Committee, for future phases (in no particular order):
 - a. The Committee recommends the following projects and improvements, as funds allow:
 - i. Seasonal cover
 - ii. Infrastructure and budget to support year-round operations for groups and individuals.
 - iii. Redesign or reconstruction of bathhouse using highest standards for reducing long-term maintenance costs and decreasing carbon footprint.
 - iv. Amenities for user groups to improve experiences in aquatic programs, including spectator and aquatic recreation equipment and facilities.
 - v. Other facility improvements to improve operational efficiency, address long-term maintenance and sustainable practices supporting the longevity of a new aquatic facility.
 - vi. Conversion of the attached recreation/therapy pool to its own separate tank with independent equipment system

Parks Commissioners approval of Ad-Hoc Pool Committee recommendations: The Parks Commissioners approved the recommendations of the Pool Ad-Hoc committee at the [September 23, 2019 Business Meeting](#).

Pool “Draft Design” Contract and Process: In January and February of 2020, the APRC board of Commissioners and then the City Council approved a contract award and authorization of a contract for design services of the Daniel Meyer Pool Rebuild project to Robertson Sherwood Architects.

On December 9, 2020 a public meeting with Robertson Sherwood Architects and APRC staff was held virtually to discuss the [draft design](#) and [concept](#) of a new pool with the public.

Energy Assessment: On July 6, 2022, the Board of Commissioners held a Study Session where [“System West Engineers” presented the Renewable Energy Assessment for the Daniel Meyer Pool](#).

Assessment & Recommendations for Next Steps: At this time, all deliverables have been received from the consultant (Robertson Sherwood Architects).

Staff is seeking direction on the following items:

1. The proposed geographic location of the pool
2. The proposed size/scope of facility
3. Favored funding mechanism(s)
4. Next steps for staff

Electronic Attachments:

[Pool Ad Hoc Committee Recommendations](#)

[Daniel Meyer Pool DRAFT Design Report](#)

[DMP 3-D Concept Drawing](#)

[System West Engineers Energy Assessment of the Daniel Meyer Pool](#)

[DMP Energy Presentation from 7.6.22 APRC Meeting](#)

[September 23, 2019 APRC business meeting minutes](#)

		Information	Action	Lead Staff / Commissioner or Entity Responsible
1/3	Parks Commission Study Session (Zoom) 6:00pm			
	Review of Daniel Meyer Pool Replacement Plans and Next Steps	x		Deputy Director Dials
	Conversation Clusters	x		Superintendent Glatt
	Draft of Technical Support Doc for Parks, Trails and Open Space Map	x		Interim Director Eldridge
1/10	Parks Commission Regular Meeting Council Chambers 6:00pm			
	Commission Chair/Vice Chair Election	X	X	Commissioner Landt
	Rogue World Music Festival Rebranding and Expansion	x		Recreation Manager Flora
	Parks Trails and Open Space Final Approval (Action)	X	X	Interim Director Eldridge
	Smart Rec Online Registration (information)	x		Deputy Director Dials
	The Freshwater Trust Presentation			Eugene Weir
2/7	Parks Commission Study Session (Zoom) 6:00pm			
	North Mountain Park Nature Center discussion	X		Deputy Director Dials
	Update on progress towards Goal 1 Best Management Practice	X		Interim Director Eldridge
	Events in the Parks update	X		Deputy Director Dials
2/14	Parks Commission Regular Meeting Council Chambers 6:00pm			
	Q2 FY24 Budget Report	X		Interim Director Eldridge
3/6	Parks Commission Study Session (Zoom) 6:00pm			
	Oak Knoll Golf Course Contract Review (tentative)	x		Interim Director Eldridge
3/13	Parks Commission Regular Meeting Council Chambers 6:00pm			
	Oak Knoll Golf Course Contract (Potential Action)		X	Interim Director Eldridge
4/3	Parks Commission Study Session (Zoom) 6:00pm			
4/10	Parks Commission Regular Meeting Council Chambers 6:00pm			
	APRC Subcommittees			
1/8/2024	Ashland Senior Advisory Committee - Jan 8 (Zoom 3:30pm)			Interim Superintendent Mettler
	Trails Advisory Committee - TBD (Lithia Cabin TBD)			Interim Director Eldridge
	Ashland Japanese Garden MAC - TBD (Lithia Cabin 2:00pm)			Interim Director Eldridge
	Bee City USA MAC - TBD			Deputy Director Dials
	Current Parks, Conservation, and Maintenance MAC - TBD			Superintendent Caldwell
	Golf Course MAC - TBD			Deputy Director Dials
	Council Business / Budget Meetings/Commissions			
TBD	Parks, Trails and Open Space Plan to Planning Commission & then Council			Interim Director Eldridge
TBD	East Main Park to Planning Commission			Interim Director Eldridge
1/16/2024	Hours of Parks Closure Second Reading			Interim Director Eldridge
2/20/2024	First reading ordinance adopting the Parks, Trails and Open Space Map			Interim Director Eldridge
3/5/2024	Second Reading ordinance adopting the Parks, Trails, and Open Space Map			
	Parking Lot Topics			
	Calle Guanajuato Restaurant Contracts			
	Mission, Vision and Values Report (GOAL: Master Plan)			Manager Flora
	Gas Powered Small Equipment Inventory/Replacement Schedule (GOAL: Environmental Sustainability)(tentative)			Parks Superintendent
	Standard Memorial Report			
	Annual Reports			
	Ashland Parks Foundation Annual Report (November)			APF President
	Standard Memorial Report (December)			
	Advisory Committee & Management Advisory Committee reports (December)			
	Volunteers in Parks Report			Coordinator Shelton