



HPAC Committee Agenda

Note: Anyone wishing to speak at any HPAC meeting is encouraged to do so. If you wish to speak, please rise and, after you have been recognized by the Chair, give your name and complete address for the record. You will then be allowed to speak. Please note the public testimony may be limited by the Chair. **Times noted for each item are approximate...**

December 4, 2024

AGENDA

(4:00) CALL TO ORDER: Meeting held in person at 51 Winburn Way and via Zoom at:

<https://zoom.us/j/91534353734?pwd=hjkivpacZwsiRC5nksDm5zud9MhPBp.1>

READING OF LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

"We acknowledge and honor the aboriginal people on whose ancestral homelands we live, –the Ikirakutsum Band of the Shasta Nation, including the original past indigenous inhabitants, as well as the diverse Native communities who make their home here today. We also recognize and acknowledge the Shasta village of K'wakhakha – "Where the Crow lights"–that is now the Ashland City Plaza."

- I. **(4:05) APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
- II. **(4:10) APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
Minutes of November 6, 2024
- III. **(4:15) PUBLIC FORUM**
- IV. **(4:30) LIASON REPORTS**
 - A. Council Liaison – Jeff Dahle
 - B. Community Center Management Advisory Committee – Dale Shostrom
 - C. Staff Liaison – Derek Severson
- V. **(4:45) DISCUSSION ITEMS**
 - A. Review Board Assignments – January
 - B. Discussion of the Preservation Plan
- VI. **(6:00) ADJOURNMENT**



HPAC Committee Minutes (Draft)

November 6, 2024

4:00PM – 6:00PM

Community Development/Engineering Services Building – 51 Winburn Way

4:00PM CALL TO ORDER

Scharen called the meeting to order at 4:00pm

Commissioners Present:	Council Liaison:
Shostrom	Jeff Dahle
Repp	Staff Present:
Emery	Derek Severson; Planning Manager
Bonetti	Regan Trapp; Admin Support - ABSENT
Scharen	
Whitford	
Committee members absent:	Skibby
	Brouillard

READING OF LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Land Acknowledgement was read by Scharen.

"We acknowledge and honor the aboriginal people on whose ancestral homelands we live, – the Ikirakutsum Band of the Shasta Nation, including the original past indigenous inhabitants, as well as the diverse Native communities who make their home here today. We also recognize and acknowledge the Shasta village of K'wakhakha – "Where the Crow lights"—that is now the Ashland City Plaza."

(4:05) APPROVAL OF AGENDA (5 min)

There were no changes to the agenda.

(4:10) APPROVAL OF MINUTES (5 min)

Historic Committee meeting of October 2, 2024

Repp/Shostrom m/s to approve the minutes of October 2, 2024. ALL AYES. Motion passed.

(4:15) PUBLIC FORUM (15 min)

There was no one in the audience wishing to speak.

(4:30) LIAISON REPORTS (5 min)

Council Liaison Jeff Dahle gave the liaison report with a brief background on the Council discussion of the Community Center, recounting that there had been a tour of the building by Council, the Parks Commission and HPAC, followed by a Council study session. Shostrom attended the Council meeting and presented a letter he prepared on his own behalf. Ultimately, a Management Advisory Committee (MAC) was formed to advise the Public Works



HPAC Committee Minutes (Draft)

Director of options. Appointees include Shostrom, developer/former city planner/former Historic Commission staff liaison Mark Knox, architect Steve Ennis, the Building Official, the Public Works project management staff and representatives of Outlier Construction. There will be at least two meetings to formulate a recommendation on viable options and realistic costs to the Public Works Director before the issue comes back to Council.

Severson gave the staff report and gave a brief update on the Climate Friendly Areas project, noting that staff had appeared before Council recommending the Railroad Property and part of the Transit Triangle as CFAs, with Croman's inclusion to be deferred until details of their master plan application are available. Severson suggested that staff's recommendation with regard to the downtown, would be to change the codes to allow the heights and densities required of CFAs, but to not designate as a CFA so that the design standards could remain as currently in place.

Severson noted that after promising to send a link to the B Street poll last month, he found that the poll had already closed. He indicated that he would consult with Public Works staff and report back next month.

Severson further noted that the first plaque for the Playwright's Walk had been installed in front of the Chamber of Commerce on East Main Street and that more would follow around the downtown.

(4:45) DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Review Board Assignments

Members volunteered for Review Board assignments for the remainder of November and the month December.

B. Community Center Recommendation

Community Center Recommendation

Whitford noted his strong feelings on this issue, emphasizing that the Community Center is not falling down, and that demolishing it and replacing it with a replica would be a very bad idea. Buildings should reflect their time, and a new building should appropriately reflect the 2020's if that were the option pursued.

Shostrom discussed construction and cost issues, noting specifically the state of the roof trusses and floor level among other issues.

Bonetti questioned if seismic issues were a consideration.

Repp inquired about formation of the Management Advisory Committee and the original condemnation of the building.

Scharen suggested that there needed to be a clear revised cost estimate accurately reflecting the work necessary to make an informed decision.



HPAC Committee Minutes (Draft)

Shostrom suggested emphasizing the importance of the building to Ashland's history, noting he had provided the Council with HPAC-prepared brochures and that there needed to be education as to how historic preservation is considered in the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Use Ordinance. There was discussion of HPAC members each writing individual letters on their own behalf so that there is a letter in each Council packet and the issue remains top of mind. Severson emphasized that these could not be drafted through any sort of serial e-mail or phone communications between committee members outside of public meetings.

Bonetti suggested that in addition to the need to have the Community Center operational, another Community Center is needed to serve the southside of town, perhaps as part of the new master-planned Croman development.

With regard to Scharen's draft letter which was included in this month's packet for approval by HPAC, Bonetti suggested adding a clear heading indicating, **"COMMUNITY CENTER – DEMOLITION IS NOT THE ONLY PATH FORWARD!"**

Repp/Whitford m/s to approve the letter with Bonetti's proposed heading added. Voice vote: All AYES. Motion Passed.

C. 2025 Work Plan

Work plan goals for 2025 to be presented at the December Council meeting

Members discussed achievements over the last year and priorities and workplan for the coming year to be presented to Council at their December 16th study session. See attached exhibit. (See attachment A)

(5:30) PLANNING ACTION REVIEW

PLANNING ACTION: PA-TI-2024-00251

SUBJECT PROPERTY: 264 Fourth Street

OWNER/APPLICANT: Carlos Delgado

DESCRIPTION: A request for Commercial Site Design Review for an addition to an existing structure at 264 Fourth Street. The proposal is for a 1,200 square foot addition to the rear of the existing building. The request also includes the removal of two trees within the development footprint of the addition. **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DESIGNATION:** Employment; **ZONING:** E-1; **MAP:** 391E09AB **TAX LOT:** 5,600

Applicants present

Carl and Johanna Wright – Owners

Carlos Delgado –Architect

Scharen recused herself from this project as she was part of the project team, and she exited the room for the discussion. Vice Chair Shostrom assumed the role of Chair during her absence.



HPAC Committee Minutes (Draft)

Severson provided a brief staff report.

Applicants Carl & Johanna Wright explained the proposal, noting that they have acquired the property and will be converting it to a meditation center. The proposal includes the removal of two trees that are within the footprint of the addition. Both trees will be replaced. They presented a photo dating to 1989, prior to the current restoration, and explained that their proposed white with blue trim color scheme was largely similar to that in place pre-restoration.

Architect Carlos Delgado discussed the proposal, noting that the intent was to change the paint color as depicted in the submittal. He noted the recessed windows on the addition for compatibility with the existing building, and the extension of the fire wall at the property line extending above the shed roof of the addition. There may or may not be a new awning which would be similar to the Revive awning, and the Revive signage would be updated for the new use. The fencing along the alley would be a solid, six-foot cedar fencing rather than the chain link depicted in the renderings, and there will be a landscaped meditation garden behind the new addition.

Shostrom suggested that the post-restoration color scheme seemed more organic and historically compatible than the proposed white with blue trim, and that the current greyish color was complementary to the Miracle Block construction.

Emery recounted the discussion at the Review Board, where the primary concern had been with moving or removing the restored gas pump currently in front of the building. It was noted that the current proposal was to retain the pump in place but repaint it to match the newly proposed colors of the building. He questioned whether Shostrom was comfortable with the windows and trim as proposed. Shostrom indicated that the recessed windows were a great approach as they related well to the windows in the historic Miracle Block portion. He noted that his primary issue was that the bright white with blue trim seemed a bit overdone.

There was discussion of changing the color of the gas pump, which dates to 1920 when the Fire Department acquired its first gas-powered fire truck, noting that its original pre-restoration colors were unclear, and that the current red might be part of a standard Texaco branding relied upon during the restoration. The applicants indicated they intended to keep the Texaco cap in place, but the intent was to repaint the pump to match the blue and white treatment of the building, consistent with the 1989 photo that had been provided to them by the owners when they acquired the building.

Bonetti and Repp both indicated that they were good with the colors proposed and the proposal as a whole and thanked the applicants for leaving the gas pump.

Repp/Bonetti m/s to approve PA-TI-2024-00251 as submitted. Voice vote: All AYES. Motion passed.

Scharen returned.



HPAC Committee Minutes (Draft)

(6:00) ADJOURNMENT

Next meeting is scheduled December 4, 2024, at 4:00pm at, 51 Winburn Way.

There being no other items to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 5:55pm.

Respectfully submitted by Regan Trapp

Members (Shostrom, Repp, Emery) who had volunteered for this week's Review Board opted to stay and review permit submittals for 27 North Main Street and 500 A Street in lieu of meeting separately on Thursday.

Memo

DATE: December 16, 2024
TO: Mayor Graham and City Council
FROM: Shelby Scharen, Historic Preservation Advisory Committee (HPAC) Chair
RE: HPAC 2024 Achievements & 2025 Priorities and Workplan

2024 Achievements

Over the course of 2024, the Historic Preservation Advisory Committee (HPAC):

- Resumed the HPAC Review Board, a bi-weekly subcommittee to review building permits and pre-application proposals as well as being available by appointment to discuss potential historic preservation issues.
- Celebrated Historic Preservation Week 2024. This event was a celebration of the first phase of the Marking Ashland Places (MAP) project in the Ashland Railroad Addition Historic District presented cooperatively with the Public Arts Advisory Committee (PAAC), Ashland Chamber of Commerce, Ashland Parks Department, Southern Oregon University (SOU) and WalkAshland. .
- Continued to review and advise on land use applications in Ashland's four National Register-listed historic districts including single-family, multi-family, commercial, public and legislative projects.
- Reviewed the "Walking Upstream" painted crosswalk treatment, the "Playwright's Walk" proposal, and mural proposals for Northwest Nature Shop, the Ashland Elks Lodge and KS Wild.
- Created a subcommittee and provided detailed recommendations to the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) through its Architectural Historian on the rockwork treatment in crosswalk accessibility projects and for utility box replacement proposals.
- Continued the successful partnership with the Public Arts Advisory Committee and Parks Department in a subcommittee to begin looking at the next phase of the Marking Ashland Places project in the downtown.
- Met with the Parks Foundation to discuss restoration of the Butler-Perozzi Fountain and had two members (Shostrom and Whitford) who served on the Parks Foundation's steering committee for the planning and fundraising effort.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

51 Winburn Way
Ashland, Oregon 97520
ashland.or.us

Tel: 541.488.5305
Fax: 541.552.2050
TTY: 800.735.2900

ATTACHMENT A



- Toured the Community Center building and had one member (Shostrom) appointed to the Management Advisory Committee (MAC) looking at options for the future of this individually-listed historic resource from the National Register of Historic Places.

2025 Priorities & Workplan

The Historic Preservation Advisory Committee (HPAC) discussed priorities and a work plan for the 2025 calendar year at regular meetings in October and November. The list below is provided in anticipation of the December 16th conversation with Council, and is in addition to continuing the Review Board and review of applications and proposals that .

- **Update the City's Historic Preservation Plan.** The current Historic Preservation Plan was completed in 2008 using consultant services funded by a Certified Local Government (CLG) grant. The plan speaks to the city's planned preservation activities from 2009-2018. Members believe it overdue for an update and will revisit the plan and work at updating it systematically through regular meetings when there aren't land use items on the agenda.
- **Update HPAC Webpage** – HPAC members will work with staff to update the committee page of the city's new website.
- **Continuing Education for HPAC Members** – When meeting time is available, HPAC will look at continuing to educate new and existing members on the information needed to carry out their responsibilities, including role and responsibilities; reviewing planning action procedures and development standards; reviewing the Secretary of the Interior's national standards for historic preservation, and becoming familiar with the responsibilities of being designated as a Certified Local Government in Oregon.
- **Raise Public Awareness of Preservation and HPAC** – Promote preservation and the committee through events, activities and partnerships including the Preservation Awards, direct mailings to new property owners in the districts, targeted outreach to professional groups, the Committee webpage, on-going work with the Public Arts & Advisory Committee to continue the Marking Ashland Places project.

Next Steps

HPAC looks forward to the December 16th study session as an opportunity to communicate HPAC's priorities and proposed workplan to the Council and hear any feedback.

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

None.

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Ashland, Oregon 97520
ashland.or.us

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City of Ashland to establish committee to review Community Center options



The interior of the Ashland Community Center after initial refurbishing work. City of Ashland photo

November 15, 2024

Panel tasked with coming up with recommendation whether

to repair or rebuild historic structure

By Morgan Rothborne, Ashland.news

A management advisory committee will begin meeting to investigate the best course of action for the historic Ashland Community Center on Winburn Way, according to a release from the city.

“This initiative is part of the Council’s effort to gather input from community members with expertise in construction and renovation, as well as from facility users, to ensure that any decision reflects the needs of the community. The (management advisory committee) will work to balance the preservation of a historical building with the functionality of a new structure,” the release said.

The building was being renovated by Outlier Construction, which is under contract to repair both the Community Center and Pioneer Hall next door. After renovation work began, contractors discovered the Community Center would require more extensive and potentially riskier renovations than anticipated. The project was put on hold pending further direction from Ashland City Council, as previously reported by Ashland.news. (<https://ashland.news/repair-or-raze-committee-tasked-with-researching-community-center-options/>)

At the Oct. 14 Ashland City Council study session, council was presented with a comparative analysis of costs and benefits to either restore the historic building or demolish and build a new one in its place.



The Ashland Community Center on Winburn Way in January 2024, shortly before the beginning of renovation work. Ashland.news photo by Bob Palermini

Councilor Jeff Dahle suggested a management advisory committee (MAC) instead of an additional ad hoc committee to explore restoration. The MAC could potentially acquire additional information at a faster pace than an ad hoc committee with its requirements under public meeting law and larger body of members

leading to potential lengthier deliberation. Council voted five to one in favor of the MAC with only Councilor Eric Hansen voting against.

In an email, Ashland Communications Officer Dorinda Cottle confirmed MAC meetings are not open to the public.

“MACs may be established to serve at the request of the City Manager or Department Heads to provide technical advice, and community support and input that can assist in preparing recommendations to enhance City operations or program implementation or for City Council consideration,” Cottle wrote. “Membership on MACs will be established based on the type of advice sought and availability of potential qualified participants, urgency of issue or program being addressed, timeframe for the committee’s role/participation, availability of City staff support resources, and/or other circumstances or considerations affecting the ability for effective MAC role participation.”

The first meeting of the MAC will include a tour of the structure with Public Works Director Scott Fleury and staff from Outlier Construction, the city’s contractor for the project. Plans call for the committee to meet three times before coming up with recommendations for the building’s future.

For more information on the Community Center, the city has created a dedicated webpage. (<http://ashlandoregon.gov/CommunityCenter>.)

Email Ashland.news reporter Morgan Rothborne at morganr@ashland.news (<mailto:morganr@ashland.news>).

Related articles:

Repair or raze: Committee tasked with researching Community Center options (<https://ashland.news/repair-or-raze-committee-tasks-with-researching-community-center-options/>) (Oct. 16, 2024)

Contract approved for Pioneer Hall and Community Center rehabilitation (<https://ashland.news/contract-approved-for-pioneer-hall-and-community-center-rehabilitation/>) (June 5, 2024)

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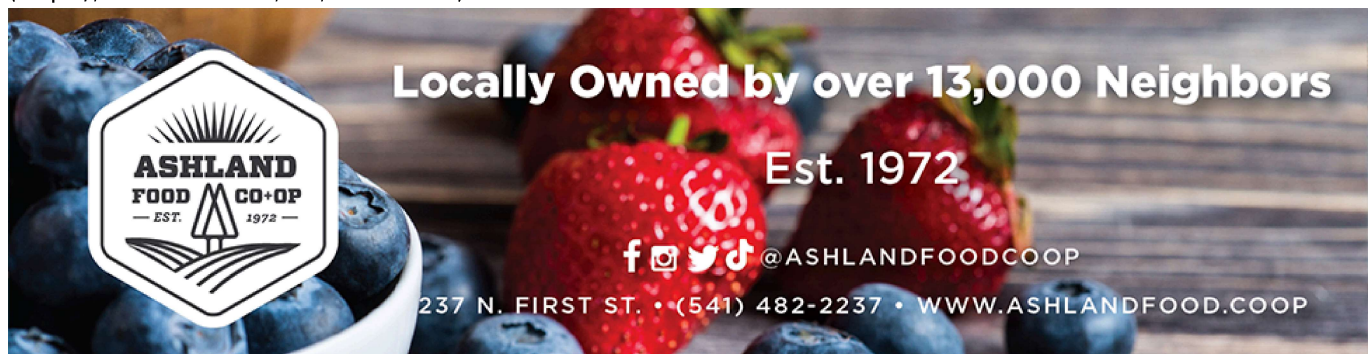


Bert Etling

Bert Etling is the executive editor of Ashland.news. Email him at betling@ashland.news (<mailto:betling@ashland.news>).



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REVIEW BOARD JANUARY 2025



Jan 2025

HPAC Review Board

Meet at 3:00pm – Lithia Room

Every other week

****Staff to email if there is anything to review on the off weeks****

<u>DATE</u>	<u>COMMITTEE MEMBERS ATTENDING</u>		
Jan 2nd			
Jan 16th			
Jan 30th			

*Call 541-488-5305 to verify there are items on the agenda to review

HPAC Preservation Plan

Memo

DATE: December 4, 2024
TO: Historic Preservation Advisory Committee (HPAC)
FROM: Derek Severson, Planning Manager
& HPAC Community Development Liaison
RE: Historic Preservation Plan Discussion

Background

Ashland's current [Historic Preservation Plan](#) was completed in 2008 using consultant services funded by a Certified Local Government (CLG) grant. The plan speaks to the city's planned preservation activities from 2009–2018. As has previously been discussed, the plan is overdue for an update, but it is unlikely that consultant services will be available as an option in the near term. HPAC has accordingly identified it as a priority for the coming year to revisit the plan and work at updating it systematically through regular meetings when there aren't land use items on the agenda.

Next Steps

To begin the process of looking at the Historic Preservation Plan, staff would suggest that HPAC members review the first 20 pages of the plan at: <https://ashlandoregon.gov/DocumentCenter/View/192/Historic-Preservation-Plan-2008-PDF> . These initial pages include an historic overview of Ashland and a discussion of the existing Cultural Resource Management Program at the time, and also include discussion of the land use procedures and the role of historic review therein. There is also a discussion of surveys of commissioners and staff back in 2008, and those survey questions and results are fully detailed in appendices on pages 72–90 of the plan.

These pages provide background to inform further discussion of the plan and will also serve as some de facto continuing education for HPAC members in terms of

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

51 Winburn Way
Ashland, Oregon 97520
ashlandoregon.gov

Tel: 541.488.5305
Fax: 541.552.2050
TTY: 800.735.2900



providing an update on the land use procedures and HPAC's role therein which was one of the other priorities identified for the coming year.

In staff's view, this initial meeting discussion can be an informal one, and we can look at these initial sections of the plan and the surveys and results as context before we move more deeply into the substance of the plan at later meetings. If HPAC members can read the attached pages and bring any notes, questions, comments or ideas to the meeting we'll move ahead from there.

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

Historic Preservation Plan pages 1-20 and 72-90

(For the full plan, see: <https://ashlandoregon.gov/DocumentCenter/View/192/Historic-Preservation-Plan-2008-PDF>)

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Ashland, Oregon 97520
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Fax: 541.552.2050
TTY: 800.735.2900



ASHLAND PRESERVATION PLAN 2009-2018



**ASHLAND OREGON
2008**

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Credits

My deepest appreciation to all the helpful staff with the City of Ashland, especially Angela Barry and Maria Harris. I'm especially grateful to the Historic Commission for supporting this project. Special thanks to all of the historic property owners and Ashland residents who participated and provided valuable input. It has been a privilege to work with your community.

Kimberli Fitzgerald, Fall 2008

Consultant:

Kimberli Fitzgerald, MCP/CHP, Historic Preservation Consultant

Historic Landmarks Commission:

Dale Shostrom, Chair
Terry Skibby, Vice-Chair
Alexander Krach, Secretary
Alison Renwick
Keith Swink
James Watkins
Sam Whitford
Henry Baker
Tom Giordano

Staff:

Bill Molnar, Community Development Director
Maria Harris, Planning Manager
Brandon Goldman, Senior Planner
Derek Severson, Associate Planner
Angela Barry, Assistant Planner
Amy Anderson, Assistant Planner
Adam Hanks, Permit Center Manager
Billie Boswell, Account Clerk
April Lucas, Administrative Assistant

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Purpose

The Preservation Plan is intended to provide the City and the Historic Commission with a strategic roadmap for implementing preservation related projects in Ashland. This Plan is based upon what the community has identified as important in the area of historic preservation and includes five general program areas where needs were identified. Specific projects and a ten year implementation plan to implement these projects has been provided to assist the Historic Commission and city staff in applying for funding, and deciding where to dedicate valuable City resources for historic preservation related projects.

Methodology

The consultant worked with the City staff first to evaluate existing conditions relating to historic preservation within the City of Ashland. Questionnaires were distributed to both City staff and members of the Historic Commission.

Needs were then evaluated relating to historic preservation within the community. In order to understand these needs, we contacted owners of historic properties as well as contractors and developers, inviting them to participate in the online survey. A notice was also placed on the City of Ashland website and in the local newspaper, the *Ashland Daily Tidings*.

Based upon input from these surveys and questionnaires, needs were identified in five different program areas. Recommendations for code changes and alternative projects to address these needs were presented to the Historic Commission for their input. After careful consideration and discussion, the Historic Commission identified their priorities for projects to accomplish in the next ten years within each program area, and an implementation plan was prepared.

Historic Overview

Ashland, Oregon, is a thriving cultural center in southern Oregon. Located in the upper Bear Creek region of the Rogue River Valley, Ashland is cradled by the Siskiyou Mountains on the city's southern and western border and beautiful valleys extending toward the north. With over 21,000 residents, Ashland maintains the feel of a small community while providing economic and cultural opportunities available in large cities.

Ashland sits on a portion of the original Applegate Trail that carried industrious and hopeful pioneers north from California to the Oregon Territory starting in 1846. With the Donation Land Claim Act of 1850, people were looking for arable land and temperate climates, and found both in the valleys of southern Oregon. As the population of the region grew, Jackson County was designated by the Territorial legislature on January 12, 1852.

Soon after, a group of men from California, including Abel Helman and Eber Emery, traveled north and stopped at Ashland Creek. They decided to capitalize on the available water power, building a sawmill, and later a flourmill. As more settlers arrived and took land claims nearby, the area around the flourmill became a popular meeting spot, as farmers would exchange wheat for flour. A permanent road was built to provide access to the flourmill, and the town became known as Ashland Mills.

Ashland's development was steady in the early years. The economy was largely based around farming until the 1880s. In addition to wheat, farmers produced fruit and raised livestock. The first fruit nursery in Jackson County was built by Ashland resident Orlando Coolidge in the late 1860s. Ashland Woolen Mills was constructed in 1867, using local fleece to produce wool clothing and blankets. Residential growth accompanied the area's economic growth, with residents constructing houses around the downtown Plaza and extending outward. In response to Ashland's development, the Oregon State Legislature granted the town a charter on October 13, 1874.

The 1880s brought railroad development and significant change to Ashland's economic and residential development. Southern Pacific Railroad was constructing the Oregon and California Railroad to provide continuous service between Portland, Oregon, and San Francisco, California. Ashland was slated to be the meeting point of the northern and southern construction efforts. In anticipation of growth to come, a Railroad Addition plat that doubled the size of the town was recorded February 26, 1884. It was located north of Ashland's downtown and provided space for residential and commercial development. In May of 1884 the first passenger train connected Portland and Ashland, and on December 17, 1887, a golden spike was driven into the railroad in Ashland, announcing the completion of the North-South line.

The affect of the railroad on Ashland was remarkable. In addition to providing freight services that opened Ashland's economy to outside markets, the passenger trains brought tourism to the town as well. Between 1880 and 1890,

Ashland's population rose from 842 to 1,784. In response to this growth and to better provide public services, Ashland was incorporated as a city in 1885. Ten new additions were platted in 1888 due to a continuous housing shortage for the rail workers, entrepreneurs, and new families that flooded the area. Providing quality education was a concern, too, leading to the reopening of the defunct Ashland Academy that had closed in 1879. In 1882 it became a state school, and is now known as Southern Oregon University. A Chautauqua, or educational and entertainment show, was established ten years later by local Methodists, providing education and amusement for Ashland's citizens and visitors.

Despite a short depression in the early 1890s, and another during World War I, the city thrived. Industry was growing strong, with orchards now selling Ashland fruit nationwide. Population grew steadily (5,020 in 1910), as did the city infrastructure. In 1910 the City paved roads near the central Plaza and purchased land around the dismantled flour mill and near the Chautauqua site to create what eventually became Lithia Park. A Carnegie Library was built in 1912 and construction continued in neighborhoods around the city. Construction also began on the Pacific Highway over the Siskiyou Mountains in 1913, including Ashland's East Main and North Main Streets as part of the route.

Significant changes occurred in the late 1920s and 1930s causing Ashland's economic growth to slow drastically. Southern Pacific opted to reroute their rail service through the Natron Cut-off and halted continuous trains through Ashland in 1927. This combined with the 1929 stock market crash to create hardships for Ashland citizens. Railroad employees were forced to leave town, houses were left vacant, and tourism halted.

The onset of World War II brought a revival to Ashland. The U.S. Army built Camp White just north of Medford in 1942. Nearly 110,000 soldiers were trained there and often visited Ashland on their free time. Homes were remodeled to provide space for renters, applications for building permits increased, and the rise in auto traffic brought alterations to Ashland's roadways. In the post-war years, the city's economy was boosted as sawmill operations became very successful. Entertainment and cultural exposure returned as plays resumed on the Chautauqua site in 1947. The Oregon Shakespeare Festival constructed their outdoor Elizabethan Theater in 1959 within the foundation wall of the original Chautauqua building.

Ashland continued to grow and develop in the coming years. Interstate 5 opened in 1964, relieving traffic within the city. Ashland citizens began to petition for orderly, planned growth, resulting in the adoption of the city's first zoning ordinance that year. After increasing interest in historic preservation, Ashland's Historic Commission was established in 1975. The Commission established four areas of the city with significant historical resources, all of which were listed on the National Register of Historic Places between 1999 and 2002. They include the Ashland Railroad Addition Historic District, the Ashland Downtown Historic District, the Skidmore Academy Historic District, and the Siskiyou Hargadine Historic District.

Today Ashland is a popular destination city. The moderate climate that attracted settlers 160 years ago still draws people from around the globe. Over 350,000 people visit the city each year to attend the many plays of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and participate in outdoor sports and sightseeing. Southern Oregon University is also a central part of the city's economy, and is a great resource for the community, serving approximately 5,000 students.

In 2008, Ashland was named as a Smart21 Community for the second consecutive year. This award is granted by the Intelligent Community Forum to 21 communities around the world who display signs of intelligent growth and development. It is a notable achievement and an honor for Ashland, as the City was among only five recipients from the United States.



Existing Cultural Resource Management Program

Comprehensive Plan

Ashland has had an established program for protecting historic resources for many years. Included within Ashland's Comprehensive Plan adopted on November 2, 1982, there are policies and specific language relating to preservation, particularly in the Downtown and three residential districts which include the Railroad Addition, Siskiyou-Hargadine, and Skidmore Academy districts. While these areas of historic interest were identified early in the establishment of Ashland's program, and a map was produced by the City in the 1970s, these four historic interest areas were not formally delineated until 1984 when the City of Ashland asked the Oregon SHPO for an opinion regarding the eligibility of these four areas of historic interest in preparation for an extensive housing rehabilitation project. In 1984 and 1988-1990 surveys were completed of these areas. In 1999 the Railroad Addition District was listed on the National Register, and in 2000 the Ashland Downtown District was listed. The Skidmore Academy Historic District was listed in 2001, and the Siskiyou-Hargadine Historic District was listed in 2002.¹

The Historic Preservation component of the Ashland Comprehensive Plan includes nine policies related to historic preservation. Five of these policies are implemented through the land use process and identified in the Ashland Municipal Code.²

Development Code

The Ashland Historic Commission (HC) was originally established in 1975 as a five member Historic Preservation Committee. Currently the Historic Commission is a nine-member, advisory body that meets monthly. A subset of this Commission is the three member Historic Design Review Board, which meets weekly to review building permit applications within the historic districts. The HC is bound by the procedural requirements and criteria set forth in Chapter 2.24, 18.72 and 18.108.20 of the Ashland Municipal Code (AMC).³

¹ It should be noted that the boundaries for the four National Register Districts follow the boundaries of these areas of historic interest generally, but as adopted by the National Park Service, the boundaries do not match exactly. The map adopted by the Council with the Comprehensive Plan is Map I-1 and notes these original areas of historic interest boundaries, not the National Register District boundaries.

² See Appendix # 1

³ See Appendix # 2

Types of Review

Per AMC 18.108.020 there are three general types of procedures for land use actions:

1) Ministerial Actions; 2) Planning Actions and 3) Legislative Amendments. For projects located within one of the historic districts, either city staff, the Historic Review Board or the Historic Commission will review and comment on the proposal.

It is rare that the Historic Commission would be involved in a Legislative Amendment, unless the text of the proposed amendments would directly affect the Historic Commission and its duties.

The Historic Review Board primarily reviews Building Permits, and is involved in Ministerial Reviews for projects located within the historic districts. Both the Historic Review Board and the Historic Commission review pre-applications. Normally sign and mechanical permits are considered Ministerial reviews, however per AMC 18.96.160 Historic Signs are reviewed as a Type I by the Historic Commission.

The Historic Commission primarily reviews all Planning Actions for projects located within the local historic districts. In 2006, the Historic Commission reviewed a total of 15 projects, a majority of which were Conditional Uses, Site Design Reviews and Variances. Projects were both residential and commercial, with some new construction and some change of use and additions.⁴

In 2007 the Historic Commission reviewed a total of 14 projects, a majority of which were also Site Review, Variance and Conditional

⁴ See Appendix #3 for total number and types of reviews. While the Historic Commission reviews an average of 3 cases a month many of these reviews span more than one meeting, especially if the projects are large and have complex issues.

Ministerial Review

Over the counter, City Staff approvals with Historic Review Board review;

Examples:

Building Permits that don't require site review

Planning Actions

Type I

Review by the Historic Commission recommendations to Staff; appeal to Planning Commission

Examples:

Exterior alteration to a structure individually listed on the National Register
Site Review
Partition
Conditional Use
Variance
Historic Sign

Type II

Review by the Historic Commission recommendations to Planning Commission; appeal to Council

Examples:

Downtown Site Review over 2500 sq.ft
Outline Plan Conditional Use
Variance

Type III

Examples:

Zone Change
Comp. Plan/Map Change
Annexation

Legislative Amendments

Initiated by Council, Planning Commission or resident; review by Planning Commission recommendation to Council

Examples:

Amend text of Land Use Ordinance to better conform with Comprehensive Plan.

Table 1: Types of Review

Uses. Projects included the construction of office and mixed use buildings as well as changes in use.

In 2008, to date, the Historic Commission has reviewed approximately 20 projects. Projects primarily include Site Design, Conditional Use and Variance like in years past. Projects include the construction of a new school as well as conversion of existing buildings to office use or travelers accommodations as well as change in use to allow the operation of an outdoor farmers market and the use of a school for artists workspaces and community events.

One of the changes implemented by the new Ordinance is the requirement that any exterior alteration to a contributing commercial building requiring a building permit within a National Register District must be reviewed as a Type I before the Historic Commission.

Site Design and Use Standards

The Site Design and Use Standards were originally adopted by Ashland City Council in 1986. In 1992 these standards were replaced and the Detail Site Review Standards were added. In 1998 the Downtown Design Standards were added. For new construction, applicable standards can be found primarily in Section II, Basic Site Review Standards. These standards address orientation and scale, streetscape, landscaping, parking, designated creek protection, and noise and glare. Section II C-1g addresses the expansion of existing sites and buildings (ie if the building is to expand by 25%, then 25% of the site must be brought up to the standards outlined in this section). Certain properties within the downtown, on North Main Street, East Main Street and Siskiyou Boulevard also fall within the Detail Site Review zone and have additional requirements relating to orientation and scale, streetscape, parking, buffering and screening, lighting and building materials. Additional requirements relating to orientation and scale, public spaces, transit amenities, and recycling are included for larger scale projects (above 10,000 square feet). These are included in Section II-C-3.

Section IV-B Historic District Development includes eleven rehabilitation and remodel standards. Additionally, Section IV-C includes ten standards primarily relating to new development and renovation of existing structures within the historic districts. Criteria relating to height, scale, massing, setback, roof shapes, rhythm of openings, platforms, directional expression, sense of entry and imitation are included here. Illustrations, primarily demonstrating appropriate residential development, are utilized.

Section VI, Downtown Ashland, of the *Site Design and Use Standards* includes additional standards relating to commercial buildings in the downtown. Six approval criteria (VI-1 through VI-6) are related to guiding new development downtown. Additional standards VI-A through I address height, setback, width, openings, vertical rhythms, roof forms, materials, and awnings for new construction or redevelopment of existing buildings. Illustrations demonstrating appropriate commercial development are presented.

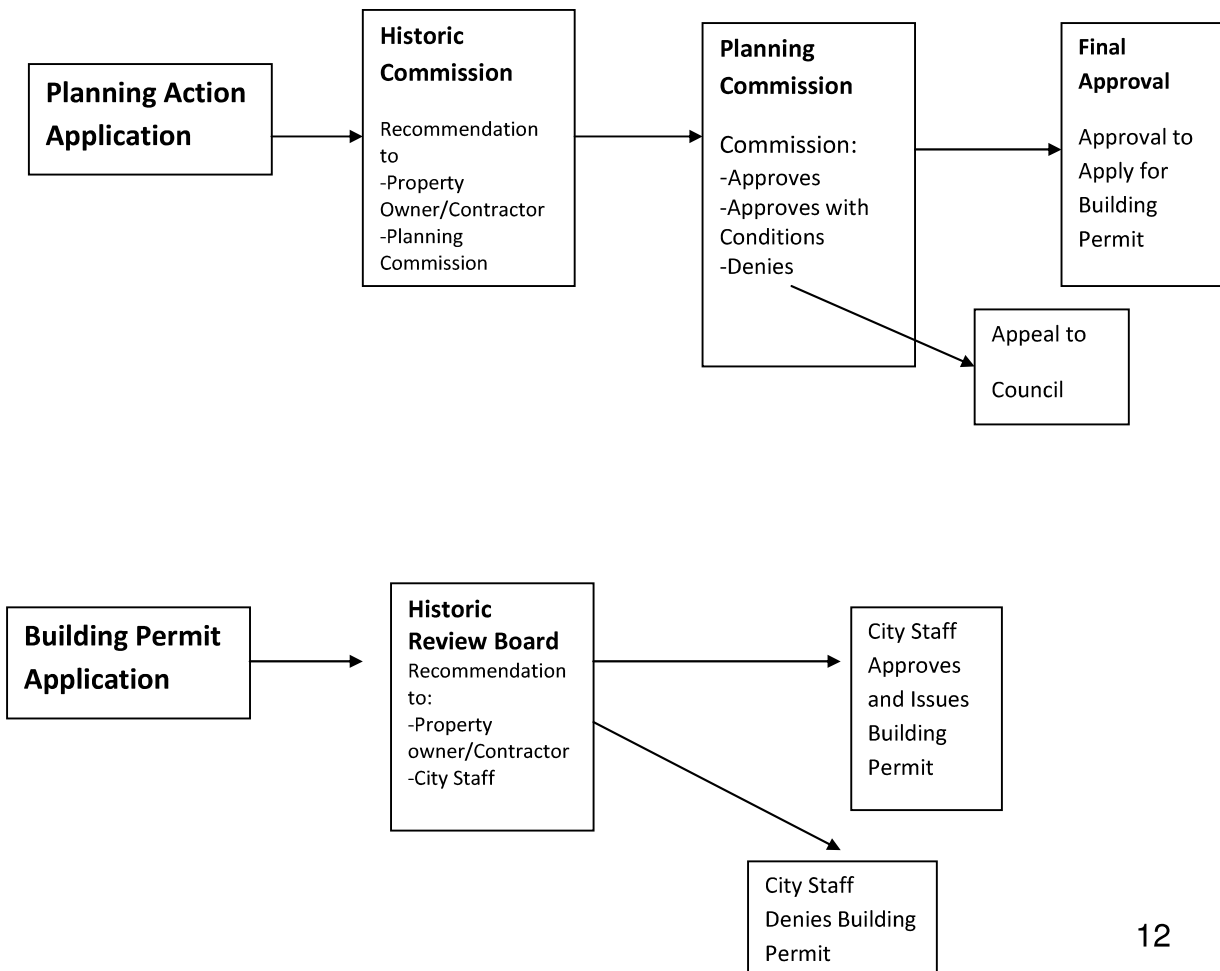
Several standards within this section specifically address the restoration or remodeling of existing structures. For example, Section VI-D-2 requires that the scale and proportion of altered or added building elements be compatible with the original architectural character of the building. Additionally, Section VI-J- 2 specifically requires that the visual integrity of the original building be maintained when altering or adding building elements. Section VI- J) 3) requires that restoration, rehabilitation or remodeling projects incorporate original design elements that were previously removed, remodeled or covered over.

Current Review Process

Historic Commission Review

Currently the Historic Commission reviews certain Planning Actions for projects located within the designated local districts (those areas identified by Comp. Plan Map I-1). Typical reviews include Site Design Reviews, Conditional Uses, and Variances. After the Historic Commission makes a recommendation to the Planning Commission about a Planning Action, specifically if that Planning Action involves the exterior alteration of an existing structure or new construction, individual Commissioners are assigned to monitor that project through its completion. Sometimes conditions of approval are placed upon a project requiring the Historic Commission to review specifics of a design prior to issuance of the Building Permit.

Table 1: General Review Process for Projects within Local Historic Districts

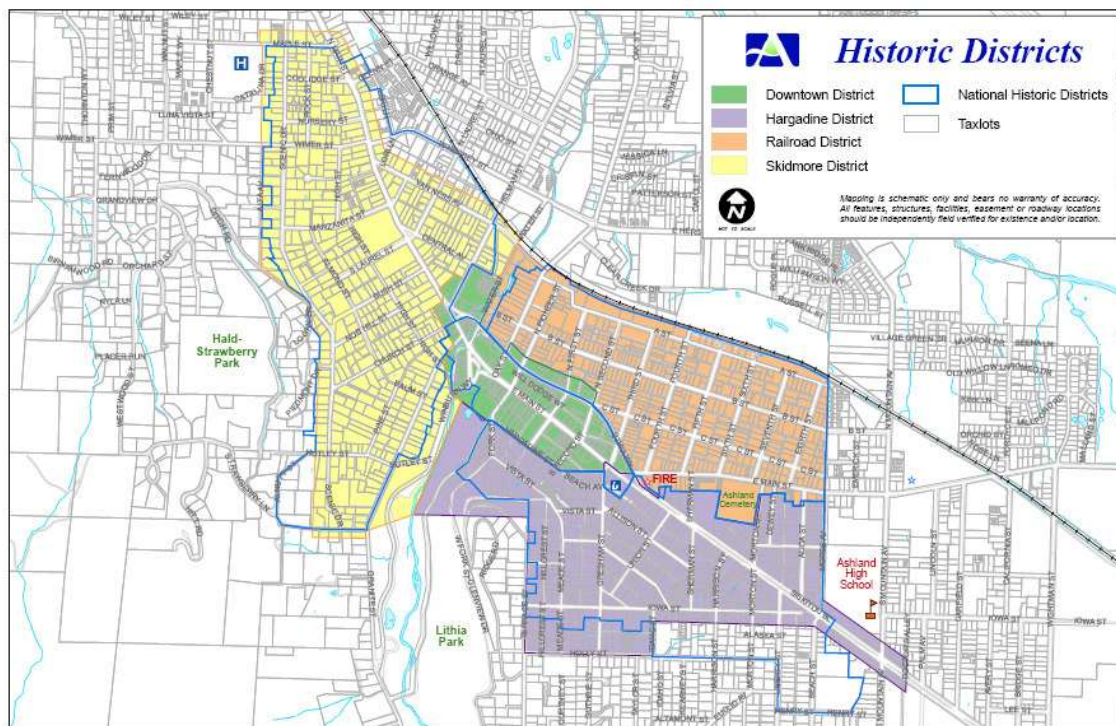


Historic Review Board

Three members of the Commission meet weekly as the Historic Review Board to review building permits for projects within historic districts which do not require Planning Actions. The three members who meet weekly vary. At each monthly Historic Commission meeting a schedule for the upcoming month is made. These meetings are informal and are not attended by City staff. The Board members record their recommendations on a form and they take their own notes regarding each meeting. These meetings are generally an opportunity for the Board to meet informally with the applicant and make suggestions and recommendations about improving design or compatibility issues.

Ashland's Resources

Ashland's historic resources are contained primarily within the four National Register historic districts, as well as within the four areas of historic interest. In addition, Ashland has 30 individual resources listed in the National Register.



Ashland has four National Register Historic Districts:

District	Contributing	Noncontributing
Ashland Downtown District	73	27
Railroad Addition District	256	115
Siskiyou-Hargadine District	274	186
Skidmore Academy District	300	184

Additionally, there is a local sign inventory with three historic signs that have been designated.⁵ Other areas which have been surveyed include the Ashland North quadrant area which was surveyed in 2006 (95 Eligible Contributing/Significant, 40 Not Eligible, 5 Eligible/Out of Period). Recommendations regarding potential future historic districts were made as part of this project.⁶

Existing Incentive Programs

The City of Ashland became a Certified Local Government (CLG) in 2000. The CLG program is a national program which offers non-competitive grants for historic preservation projects and programs to communities which are administered through the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office. The annual grant through the Certified Local Government program administered through the State SHPO office is currently the primary source of funding for additional city preservation programs in Ashland. In addition, the Oregon State Special Assessment Program is available to any historic property owner who owns a contributing resource within a National Register district, as well as those which are individually listed in the National Register. In Ashland, currently 25 properties take advantage of Special Assessment program.⁷

Additionally, individually listed and contributing income producing properties are eligible for Federal Tax Credits through the National Park Service program. 10 properties have taken advantage of this program over the last ten years.

The Historic Commission currently distributes Historic Preservation Awards annually during historic preservation week in May. Awards are given in several categories for outstanding historically compatible new construction and additions, as well as outstanding restoration work. An award is also given to an outstanding organization or individual for their work in the area of historic preservation in Ashland.

⁵ Designated signs include: the Varsity Theatre sign at 166 East Main Street, which is located in the Downtown Historic District. Another is the Peerless Rooms sign at 243 Fourth Street, which is located within the Railroad Historic District. The last is the Palm Motel sign at 1065 Siskiyou Blvd., which is not in a Historic District but is down near SOU on Siskiyou.

⁶ Kramer, George. MS. Kramer & Company. *Ashland North Reconnaissance Level Survey, August 2006*.

⁷ 8 commercial and 17 residential

Questionnaires for Historic Commission Members and Staff

Historic Commission Needs:⁸

The following needs were identified based upon Commissioner responses to the questionnaire.

Training

A majority of commissioners responded positively to the possibility of additional training which could include training about city codes and the duties of a Historic Commissioner as well as how to read construction and building plans. It was noted that it might be helpful to have more commissioners with design/history background. Additionally it was indicated that a mentoring program for new Commissioners would be beneficial.

Development Code

Overall the Commission is happy with the code and they appreciate its flexibility. It was expressed that the Commission relies heavily upon staff to interpret the code. Commissioners identified the need to amend the code so that it is more restrictive in certain cases. Additionally there is concern that some issues such as changing siding or window replacement are never reviewed by the Historic Commission or the Review Board because they don't require a building permit and that this is causing the integrity of the historic districts to be compromised.

Overall, Commissioners are happy with the current process. It was noted that there was an interest in the Commission having more input and authority to make final decisions than it currently does. Additionally, it was noted that the process needs to be more consistent, and that fluctuations in the way applications are handled in different situations can be frustrating.

Education of Property Owners

A majority of Commissioners felt that the Commission could improve their education of historic property owners. An idea was proposed suggesting that everyone who purchases a property in a historic district should get a handbook and be invited to the Review Board so that they know what is involved when they want to make changes to their property.

Communication with Planning Commission and Council

All respondents suggested communication between the Historic Commission, Planning Commission and Council could be improved.

⁸ A more complete summary of the questionnaires is located in Appendix #4.

Preservation Programs

Commissioners had several suggestions for additional programs including: Incorporation of archaeological resources in the interpretation of the city's history and prehistory; Making new owners in the historic district aware of codes regarding historic preservation; Training for commissioners and attending training sessions and conferences and working closer with state affiliate, the Historic Preservation League of Oregon, the National Trust and the University of Oregon historic preservation program.



Staff Needs

The following needs were identified from the city staff:

Development Code

While overall staff feels that the current code is well balanced, it was noted that while the standards in Section IV-C of the Site Design and Use Standards work well for residential applications, there is sometimes difficulty in applying these standards to commercial projects, along with the associated standards for the Downtown and Detail Site Review. It has been a goal for both the Commission and staff to identify and implement more specific standards for exterior changes to contributing structures in the residential historic districts.

Staff indicated that the changes as a result of the new Ordinance that went into effect on July 1 would not significantly change the current process. However several new requirements were noted, including: larger scale drawings with more detail, and Type I review by the HC of all exterior changes requiring building permits on commercial structures identified as contributing.

Staff identified concern that changes to siding, roofing and windows are not reviewed, because they do not require permits. Additionally it was noted that the Commissioners are advisory only and have no authority to deny an application, which leads some applicants to forgo appearing before the Review Board.

Review Process

Staff noted that the new process implemented on July 1 will take additional time. Specifically, concerns were expressed about those applications that have to be reviewed by both the Tree and Historic Commissions as well as the Planning Commission. However, staff believed it was important to have a more thorough review. Some concern was expressed about the need to educate property owners that regardless of whether or not their property is historic, all applications within the districts must be reviewed by the Historic Commission. Additionally, it was noted that for some land use actions (which do not involve physical changes to a structure or site) it does not always make sense to bring it before the Historic Commission.

Staff noted that sometimes there were issues related to running a formal meeting. Specifically, it may be necessary to provide additional training so that during a meeting it is clear that the proper process is being followed. Additionally, sometimes the make-up of the Review Board at any given meeting affects the consistency of the results, in that the same issues are not addressed in the same manner. In general staff noted that the Historic Commissioners were very helpful, and volunteered significant time to assist staff. Commissioners are available weekly and provide regular feedback on a variety of issues.

Office Resources

Staff stated that they knew of easily accessible maps available on-line and at the office. Maps are available to staff electronically, but only the district map is on the website. It was noted that the National Historic District boundaries do not match up with the local Ashland Historic District boundaries which can sometimes cause confusion. Staff felt that the historic inventories are well done and useful and that it might be useful to provide the inventory on-line to the public. Additionally it was noted that there is a need to organize old historic information resource files.

Programs

Staff identified a variety of different programs that could be beneficial to Ashland, including: additional identification and survey of historic structures outside the historic districts; educational programs such as brochures for homeowners; Historic Preservation Week; brown bag lunches on preservation topics such as historic window restoration; and special assessment programs to encourage restoration.

Survey

The survey distributed to stakeholders in Ashland's Preservation Program was designed to identify general needs and goals within the community. In general, open ended questions were asked, allowing respondents to reply freely based upon their experience with preservation in Ashland. A total of 200 notices were distributed and we received about a 20 percent return (40 responses) to this survey.⁹

Respondents felt that the Downtown District was most in need of protection, with the Railroad District the next most in need. A majority of respondents felt that the City is doing a good job protecting Ashland's historic resources through the code, however some felt that the City should have some requirements for basic maintenance of both structures and landscaping. There was some concern expressed about rental housing being detrimental to the fabric of the districts.

Most Respondents felt that a majority of Ashland's historic resources have been identified within the four districts. However, some respondents noted that local resources, such as small orchard and farm homes outside of these districts, especially farmhouses in the Bellview District, should be identified and protected. It was noted that an effort should be made to collect oral histories, in particular about the mill sites in Ashland.

Overall a majority of respondents feel that they know what sort of work requires review, and they believe the process is fair. However, respondents felt that the City should make it easier to utilize energy and resource saving measures, such as solar energy, on historic structures. It was suggested that all of the city codes, ordinances and Site Design Standards relating to historic review and design criteria should be pulled into one section of the code, to make it easier for applicants, staff and Commissioners to understand the historic preservation portion of the code.

Most respondents felt that additional historic preservation programs are necessary, and a majority also were interested in grant or loan programs facilitated by the City which would benefit historic property owners.

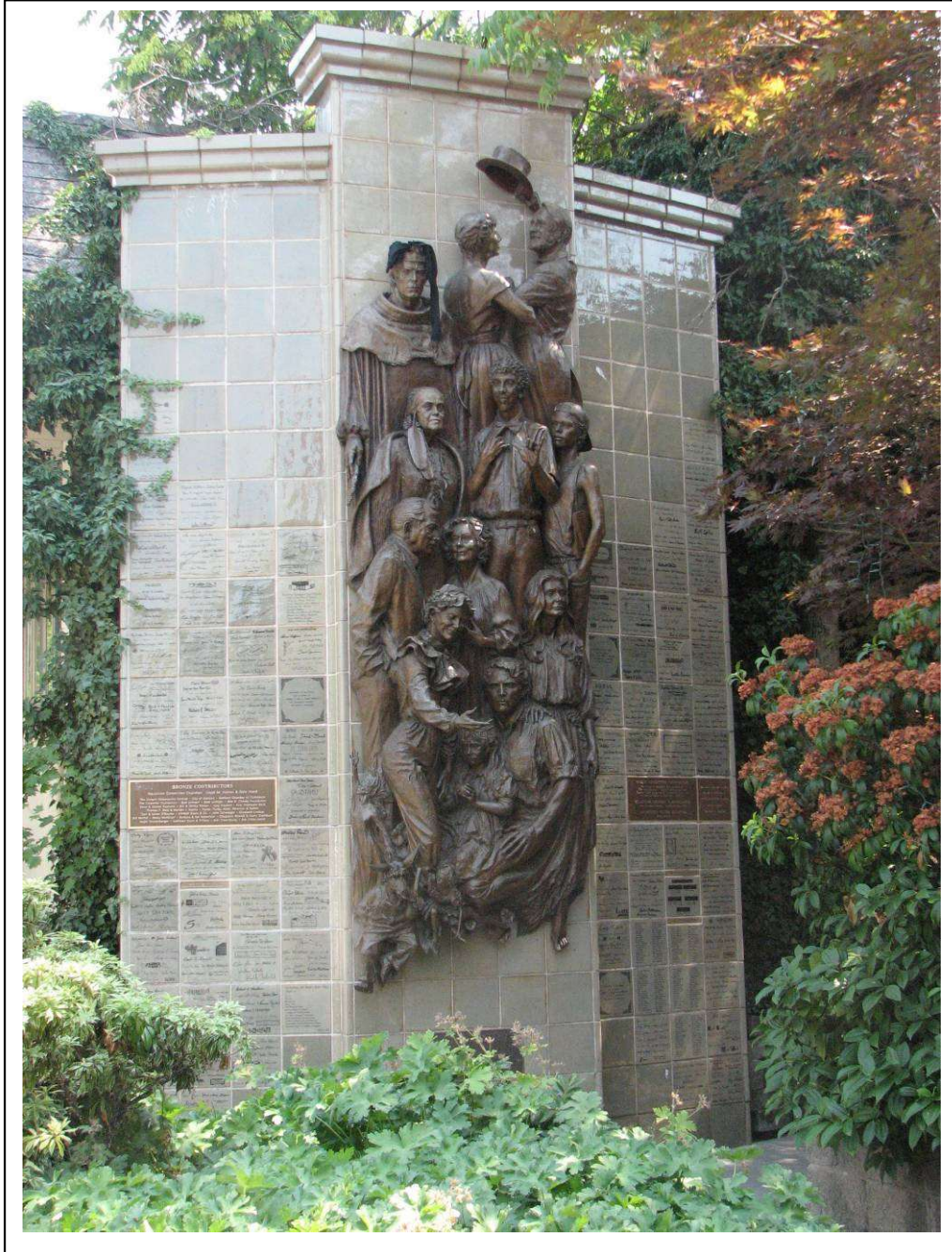
Respondents were interested in programs which included: study sessions or workshops (on weekends); walking tour with markers/plaques; special speakers; inventory with photos placed online; assistance with historic research or nominations; grade school history education; and history articles in the newspaper.

A majority of respondents were interested in receiving a newsletter from the Historic Commission. They were interested in the following educational topics: identifying historic home styles; green preservation; foundation repair;

⁹ See the Appendix # 5 for the specific questions and a more detailed summary of responses.

appropriate siding & window replacement; Ashland history; theater history; spotlight on current restoration projects.

A majority of people have had a positive experience with the City with regard to historic preservation.



Appendix #4: Summary of Questionnaires for Staff/Historic Commission

1. Do you feel that the current code gives you as staff enough clarity to make recommendations to the Historic Commission? Are the codes too vague or restrictive? How will the new Ordinance requirements which go into effect in July impact your work with the Commission?

One staff respondent felt that the current code was “well balanced...fairly restrictive but provides for measures of flexibility.”

One respondent felt that the Site Design Standards work for commercial buildings but not for residential buildings.

Two respondents did not address the current code.

Four of four respondents address the changes that will occur with the new ordinance. All felt that the new ordinance would not significantly change the current process. One respondent stated that the primary change required by the new ordinance will be larger scale drawings with more detail. Another stated that the biggest change would be how the Historic Commission provides comment on administrative decisions.

2. Are there specific issues that arise repeatedly (replacement of windows, infill construction, etc) that you feel need to be better addressed by code? Are there situations that arise which are not addressed by the code? If so, what are they and how do you handle them?

Three of four respondents answered this question by stating the issues that they perceived were important to the Historic Commissioners. These included changes to siding, roofing and windows, which the commissioners do not review because they do not require permits. One respondent noted that the Commissioners are advisory only and have no authority to deny an application, which leads some applicants to forgo appearing before the Review Board at all.

One respondent was not aware of any specific issues that have not been addressed, but did bring up infill as a broader community issue. The respondent stated that issues such as house size or demolition of historic resources arose in the past they were addressed with code modifications.

3. How would you describe the current process in place for processing and reviewing historic resource permit applications? Is this process easy to explain to the public and is it timely and efficient?

One respondent described the process this way: With the new ordinance revisions taking effect in July, any exterior modification to a contributing resource which requires a building permit will also require a Site Review approval (a land use action). As part of this requirement, applicants will be required to conduct a pre-application conference where the process specific to their proposal can be explained, and the applicants advised to speak with the Historic Commission’s Review Board, the Historic Commission staff support person, and/or the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) early on in the planning of their project. The process is relatively easy to explain.

Two respondents noted that the new process will take additional time. “While it will not be as timely and efficient as what could have been a simple over-the-counter building permit, we believed it was important to have a more thorough review.” “The need to have the Commission review all the planning applications does present some challenges timing-wise under our new code, since all administrative applications will have to be timed such that they can go through Historic and Tree Commission Review before approval, which depending on when they are turned in may add several weeks to the process.”

Two respondents noted difficulties with the process. One stated that the public does not “understand that whether or not your home is historic, all applications within the districts will be reviewed by the Commissioners.”

Another respondent noted that because the historic review comments are not binding, some applicants feel it is a waste of time “since they have no obligation to follow the suggestions. It also causes some confusion and rarely compliance problems if the applicants assume or are led to believe that the suggestions are required and they find out later that they aren’t. The Review Board has on occasion stated their suggestions as a condition rather than a suggestion.”

4. What sorts of decisions do you make administratively? Would you like the ability to make additional decisions this way? If so, which ones?

One respondent stated that staff does not do historic review administratively. The respondent felt this was appropriate because staff have limited knowledge of historic architecture, and so the Review Board and Commission are more able to conduct this type of review.

One respondent noted that with the new ordinance, building permits affecting historic contributing resources will require a site review as a result of staff suggestions. “These decisions will be an administrative approval, but will enable more thorough review by staff and the commission and allow for input from neighbors with the possibility to request a hearing if they have concerns.”

One respondent stated that “Non-contributing resources could still be reviewed and given ministerial approval, pending review by the Historic Commission Review Board for general compatibility with the district.”

Some land use actions are use actions rather than physical changes to a structure or site. In some cases it may make sense for Historic to comment, but in many others there is little reason to bring it before them

5. Do you feel that there is adequate staff available to address historic preservation issues?

Three of four respondents felt that staffing is generally adequate or that the Historic Commission is staffed as well as other boards.

Two of four respondents noted that the historic commissioners were very helpful, and volunteered significant time to assist staff. Commissioners are available weekly and provide regular feedback on a variety of issues.

Two respondents felt that the planning department was understaffed in all areas, but that this was unlikely to change.

6. Do you have a code enforcement officer? If not, who is responsible for responding to and dealing with preservation related enforcement issues?

One respondent noted that historic commissioners often report problems themselves that are then dealt with by Code Enforcement.

One respondent stated that the code enforcement officer position was considered for elimination in the current budget cycle and will likely be considered again next year. In that case, the respondent assumes that planners would have to deal with code enforcement.

One respondent was not aware of many preservation related enforcement issues.

Two respondents stated that the building inspectors are responsive and aware of historic preservation issues.

One respondent said that complaints are researched by planners with support from the code enforcement officer.

One respondent noted that the city has “a Code Compliance Officer as well as a Permit Center Manager that manages the Code Compliance Program. Between the two, preservation related enforcement is able to be responded to quickly.”

7. Is there adequate information available to you about historic resources, and is it organized and easily accessible? Do you feel there are adequate maps of the historic resources and that they are accessible to both staff and the public?

Four of four respondents stated that they knew of easily accessible maps available on-line and at the office. One respondent stated that the National Historic District boundaries do not match up with the Ashland Historic District boundaries. One respondent stated that maps are available to staff electronically but only the district map is on the website.

Two of four respondents stated that the historic inventories are well done and useful. Three of four expressed the opinion that inventory information should be available on-line to the public.

One respondent stated that there is “some interesting stuff on file in the back, but it needs to be gone through, which would be time-consuming.”

8. What preservation oriented programs do you think would be the most useful for the city given enough time and funding? What programs have been successful in the past? Are there certain programs which have already been started/funded by the City and not implemented? If so why?

Two respondents stated that they did not feel knowledgeable enough to respond to this question.

One respondent mentioned the Commission’s desire to register some historic structures outside the historic districts.

Two respondents expressed that educational programs could be effective, such as brochures for homeowners, Historic Preservation Week, and brown bag lunches on preservation topics such as historic window restoration.

One respondent suggested special assessment programs to encourage restoration, as well as land use policies encouraging traveler’s accommodations in the districts.

9. Does the Historic Commission usually accept the recommendations of Staff? If not, in what way do they deviate? Do you feel that the Historic treats all applicants the same and applies the codes fairly and evenly?

Three of four respondents felt that the Commission is willing to take the recommendations of staff, and are respectful of staff. “Their review and recommendations provide valuable input which enhances the level of detail provided in the staff recommendations. It seems to me that the Commission and staff work very well together and that our efforts are mutually beneficial.”

One respondent felt that the reason the commission might disagree with staff is that staff is trying to balance all code requirements while the Commission is “primarily focused on issues of historic preservation and compatibility within historic neighborhoods.” Another respondent felt that they agree with staff about mass, scale and compatibility but differ about “actual designs and often ask for detail design changes to the exteriors.”

Two respondents stated that they feel that the Commission treats all applicants fairly and evenly. “Applicants generally recognize the value of their input and benefit through its integration in their projects. There are still one or two people within the local development community who take an adversarial view of the process and who may have a more difficult time with the Commission or the Review Board, but I think the Commissioners are aware and able to deal with them fairly and evenly.”

One respondent felt that there were issues related to running a formal meeting in order to “preserve the sense that process is being followed and no one has a chance to influence the Commissioners by “for instance, talking while the Commission is deliberating.”

One respondent felt that the make-up of the commission at any given meeting affects the consistency of the results. “There are several strong members that can sway things and when they are not in attendance the same issues may not be addressed or may be in a lesser manner.”

10. Do you have anything else to add?

One respondent answered this question: “I am impressed by the Commission's commitment to historic preservation in Ashland. Collectively and individually, they have a lot of knowledge relating to Ashland's history. Also, it seems that the community as a whole is more sensitive to the value of historic preservation than in many other Southern Oregon cities. It seems like these are real assets to the job of preservation that can be built on despite some of the constraints that budget may put on the program.”

Historic Commission Summary

1. Do you feel adequately trained to perform the duties of a Historic Commissioner? Would you like additional training?

No training was provided to commissioners by the city. Three out of five commissioners responded that they felt their educational and professional backgrounds adequately prepared them to be commissioners.

Three of five commissioners responded positively to the possibility of additional training. One suggested a mentor for new commissioners. One mentioned a desire to learn more about city codes and the duties of a historic commissioner. One mentioned the need to be knowledgeable about construction and building plans.

2. Do you feel that the current code gives you as a Commission enough clarity to make clear and consistent decisions? Is the code too vague? Is it too restrictive? Not restrictive enough?

One commissioner answered that he relies on city staff to interpret and explain the code to the commission.

Two commissioners felt that the code was not restrictive enough on historic properties. One commissioner noted that some land use actions are never reviewed by the commission, such as changing siding. This commissioner also felt the need for binding design review within the historic districts.

One commissioner recommended looking to Medford and Jacksonville for more restrictive code models.

Two commissioners mentioned that the code needs to be applied more consistently. One mentioned that the subjective nature of the code means that sometimes it is applied more strictly than at other times.

3. If you feel that the code sometimes requires significant interpretation and lacks specifics, do you feel comfortable interpreting the code and applying it evenly, or would you prefer more specific direction be written into the code?

Commissioners were divided on this subject. One felt that the code was understandable. One relies on staff for interpreting code. One feels that the code should be clearer and more restrictive. One feels that more specificity is not needed but more clarity and consistency is. One feels that there are enough specifics, but interpretation is challenging because one needs depth of knowledge in zoning and code.

4. Are you happy with the current review process? Do you feel it provides property owners with a fair and timely review? If not, what would you like to change?

Four of five respondents are happy with the current process. One would like the commission to have more input than it currently does. One respondent noted that the process needs to be more consistent, and that fluctuations in the way applications are handled are frustrating to property owners.

5. Do you feel that your Commission effectively communicates with and educates historic property owners in Ashland?

One commissioner felt that the commission does a good job educating owners.

Two felt that the commission was not effective in this area. One felt that this was because the commission is advisory rather than regulatory. One felt that everyone who purchases a property in a historic district should get a handbook and be invited to the Review Board so that they know what is involved when they want to make changes to their property.

One commissioner feels that the Commission is very effective when they are in crisis mode and there are historic resources threatened, but are not proactive in education. Time is spent in reviewing land use applications rather than in education.

6. Are there specific issues that arise repeatedly (replacement of windows, infill construction, etc) that you feel need to be better addressed by the Commission? If so, how would you like to see them addressed?

Two commissioners noted that there are numerous recurring issues, but felt that the commission addressed them adequately on a case by case basis.

Specific issues raised by commissioners include windows, porches, gables, rooflines, siding replacement, paint colors and new construction.

Suggestions for improving the way the commission deals with these issues include a more restrictive code for historic properties, including stricter standards within the written code, and having more commissioners with design/history background. Another suggestion is having commissioners meet with property owners to “look at the property and discuss its design features to be preserved/followed, before the owner goes to the trouble of hiring the contractor.”

7. Do you feel that communication between your Commission, Planning Commission and Council is effective? If not, how would you like to improve it?

All respondents mentioned that there is little to no communication between the Historic Commission, Planning Commission and Council. The Council rep rarely attends Historic Commission meetings.

One commissioner wondered if the Planning Commission and Council pay attention to the Historic Commission findings and recommendations, because there is no verbal or written communication of their opinion to the Commissions actions. One commissioner noted that the do usually accept the Commissions findings.

8. What preservation oriented programs do you think would be the most useful for the City given enough time and funding?

- Incorporate archaeological resources in the interpretation of the city’s history and prehistory.
- Make new owners in the historic district aware of codes regarding historic preservation.
- Addition budgets for training of commissioners and attending training sessions and conferences.
- Work closer with state affiliate, the Historic Preservation League of Oregon, the National Trust and the University of Oregon historic preservation program.
- Amend the special assessment program to allow an additional 1 year tax freeze as allowed by the state.

9. Is there anything else you would like to add?

“When plans and elevations are presented to Review Board, the designer needs to include more specifics— photos of the existing building, if it’s an addition, perspectives, a sense of context, and definitely scale! Some

drawings come in hand-drawn and not at all to scale. If there were a consistent standard required of all presenters, it would improve the process.”

“I feel that the commission spends far too much time dealing with new construction, new building downtown in particular and almost no time dealing with historic properties which I feel what the commissions major mission is!”

“Again, the single most important thing we can do as a community to protect our historic fabric is to strengthen the code and provide for binding design review.”

“Interpretive signage and other techniques could be used to interpret and increase understanding of the city’s past. Specific features include: (1) the original Ashland mill sites, (2) structures in the vicinity of Bluebird Park, (3) the prehistoric and historic Shasta village site that was formerly located where the planning department stands today. The city-owned historical and archaeological features at the Lithia Springs site should be interpreted on-site and open to the public.”

*Individual responses are on file at the Planning Department

Appendix #5: Summary of Survey Results

City of Ashland Historic Preservation Questionnaire

First Respondent Date: 19 Jun 2008 18:20

Last Respondent Date: 25 Jul 2008 22:19

Number of Completed Surveys: 40

In your opinion, which of the identified geographic areas have historic or cultural resources that are most in need of protection?

Downtown District	27
Hargadine District	12
Railroad District	20
Skidmore District	8
Other:	7
Total:	74

Do you think the City is doing a good job of protecting these historic resources?

Yes	23
No	10
Total:	33

Do you believe that most of the existing historic resources within the city have been identified?

Yes	27
No	9
Total:	36

If not, what additional resources would you like to see identified and preserved within the City of Ashland?

Total:	18
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Do you feel that the current City Codes adequately address the protection of historic resources?

Yes	24
No	11
Total:	35

If you are an historic property owner, do you feel like you know what sort of work requires historic review?

Yes	16
No	6
Total:	22

Do you understand the review process, and do you feel it is fair?

Yes	17
No	8
Total:	25

What changes would you like to see in the Codes or the review process if any?

Total:	23
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What sorts of programs are you aware of in the City to educate residents and visitors about the history of Ashland?

Total:	25
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Do you think additional programs or services are necessary?

Yes	19
No	10
Total:	29

If so, what kind of programs would you like to see?

Total:	21
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Would you be interested in receiving a regular newsletter from the City with articles about local history and proper techniques for restoration?

Yes	25
No	11
Total:	36

What other sorts of educational topics would interest you?

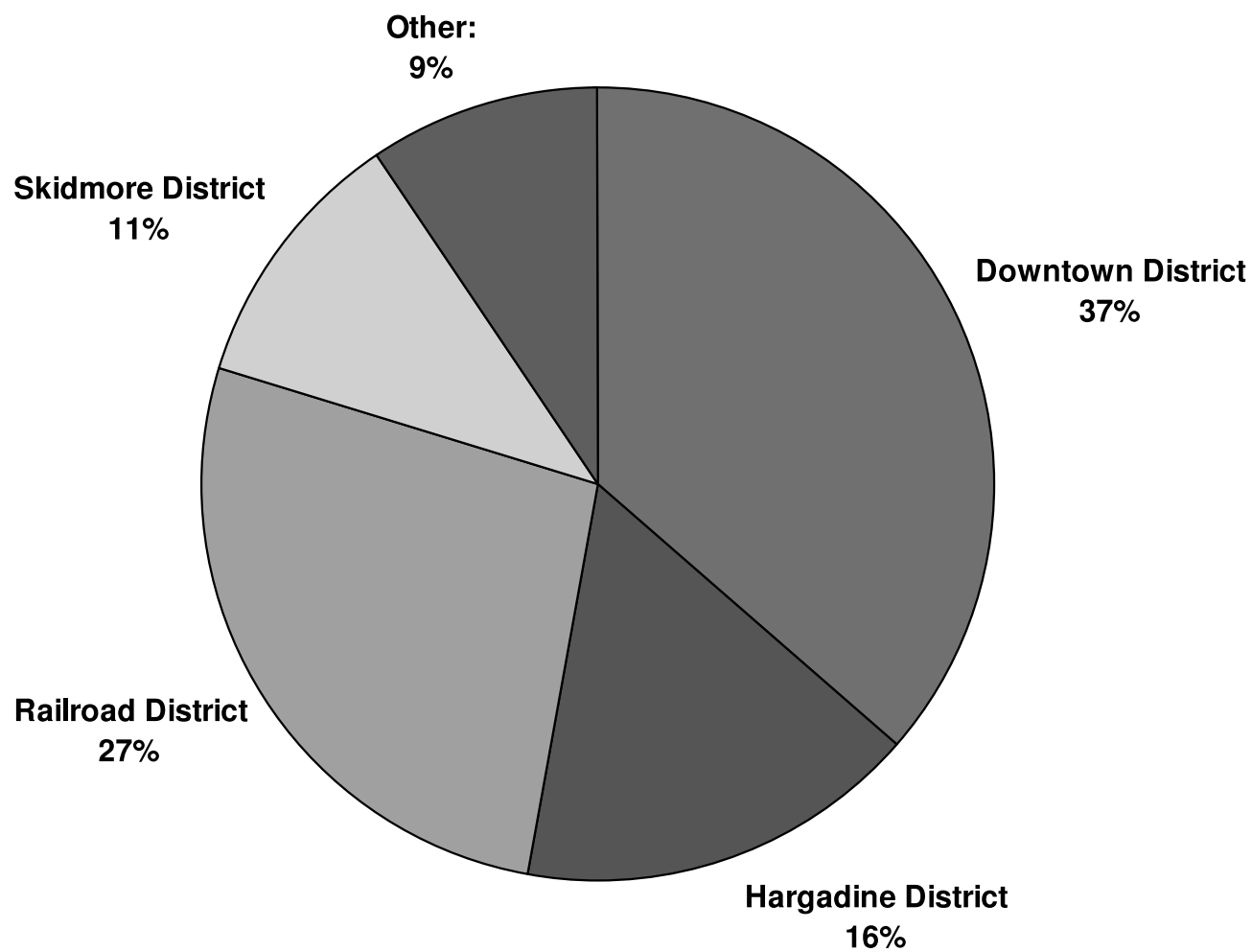
Total:	13
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Do you think the City should offer grants or loans to historic property owners?

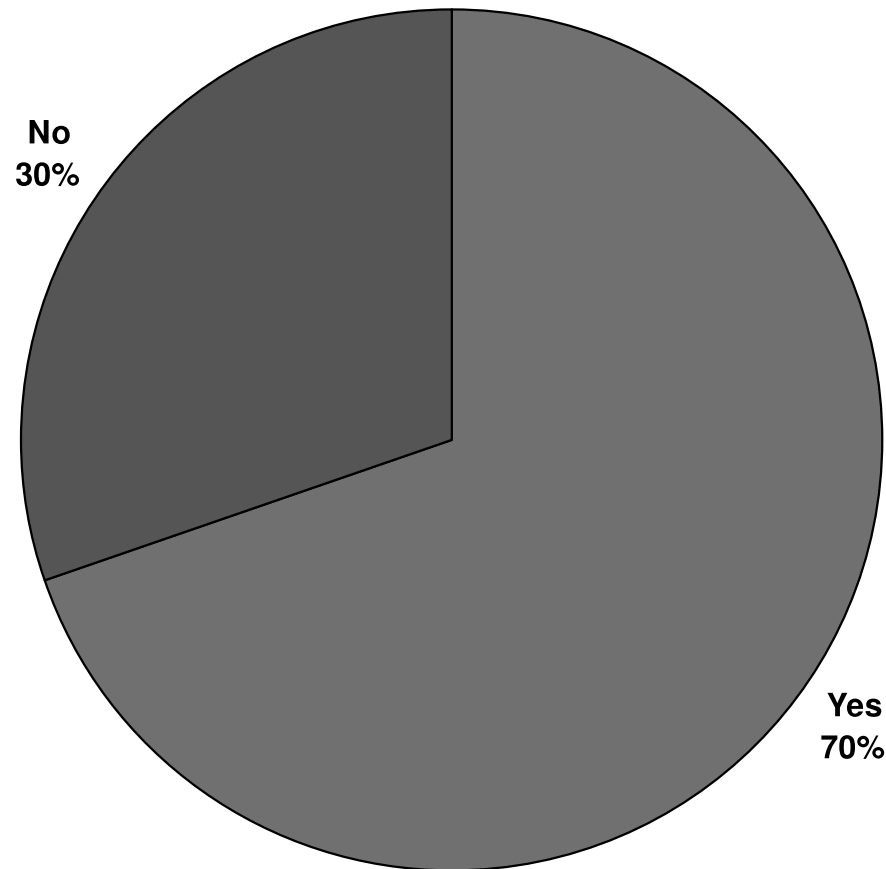
Yes	25
No	9
Total:	34

*For a more complete copy of responses, including names and contact information, please contact the Ashland Planning Department

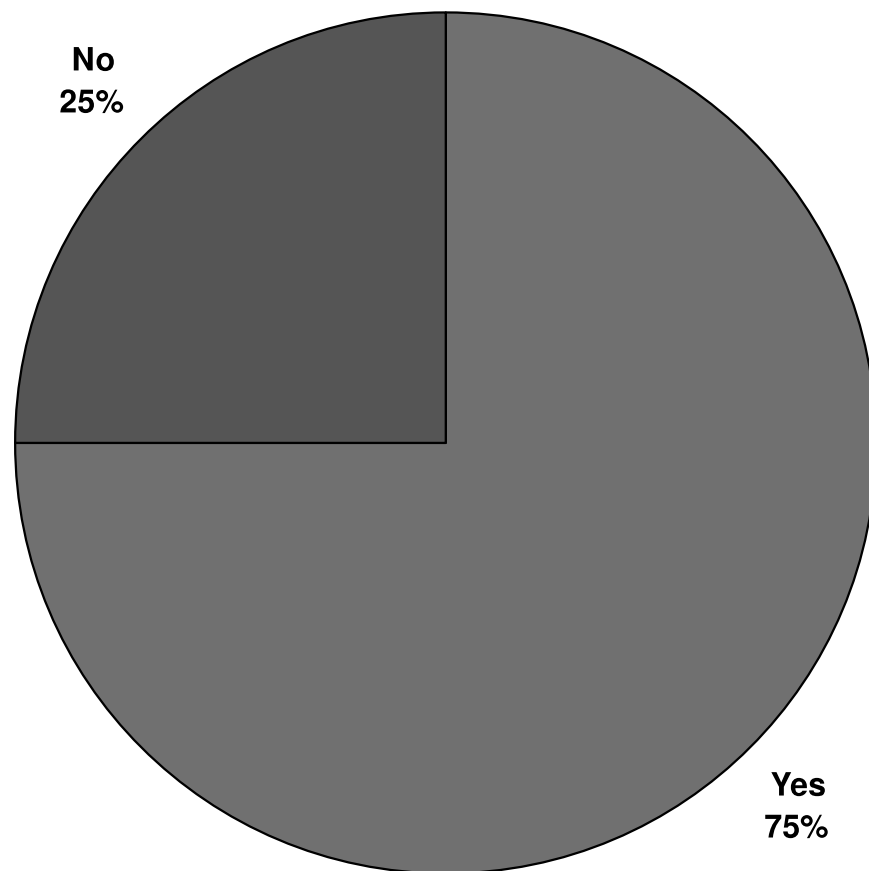
In your opinion, which of the identified geographic areas have historic or cultural resources that are most in need of protection?



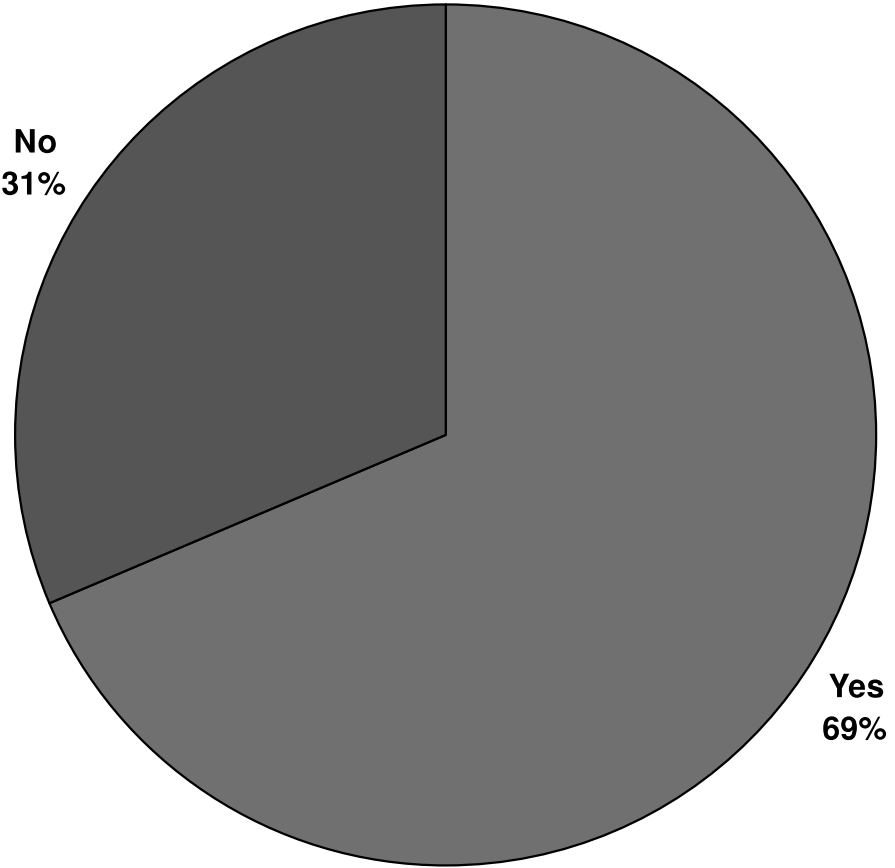
Do you think the City is doing a good job of protecting these historic resources?



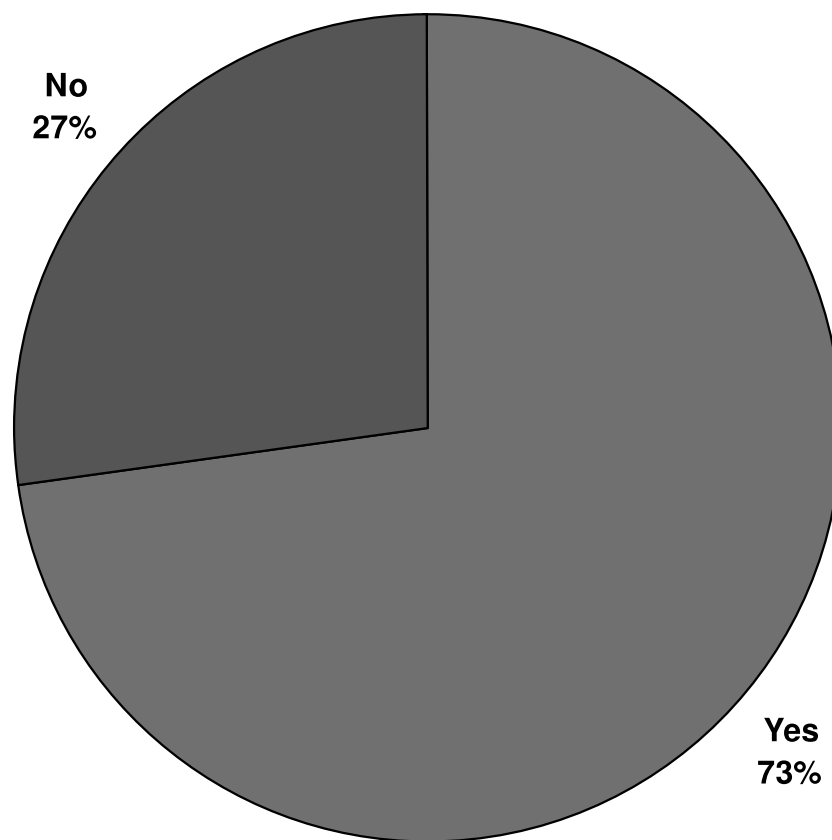
Do you believe that most of the existing historic resources within the city have been identified?



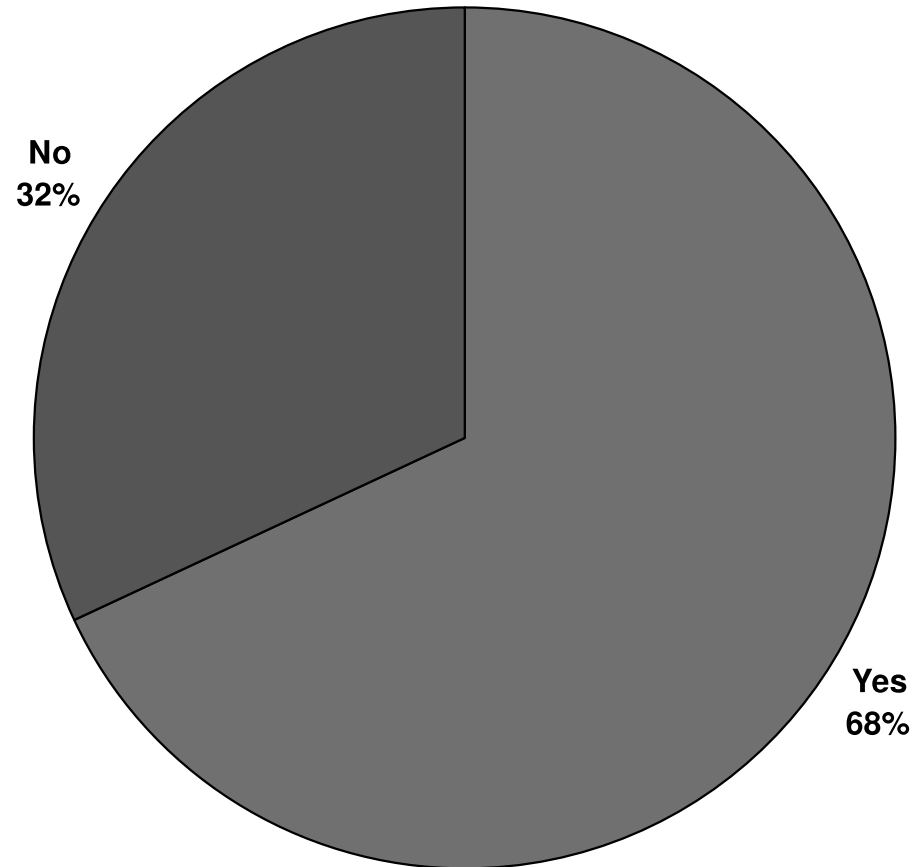
Do you feel that the current City Codes adequately address the protection of historic resources?



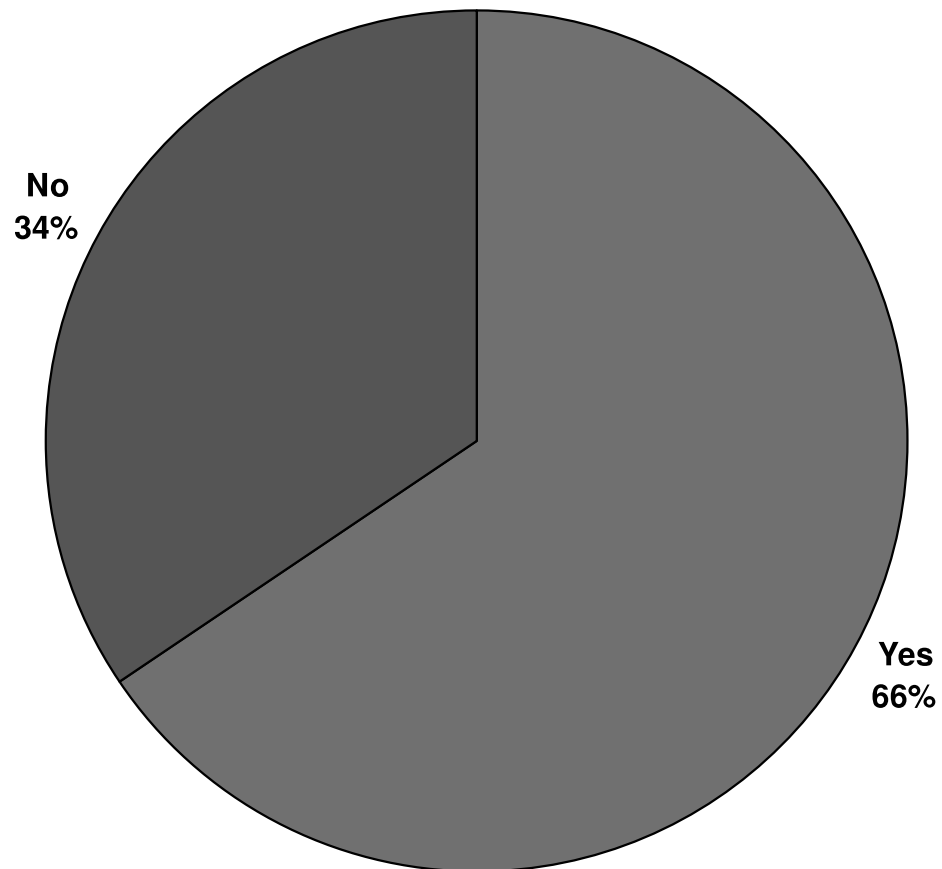
If you are an historic property owner, do you feel like you know what sort of work requires historic review?



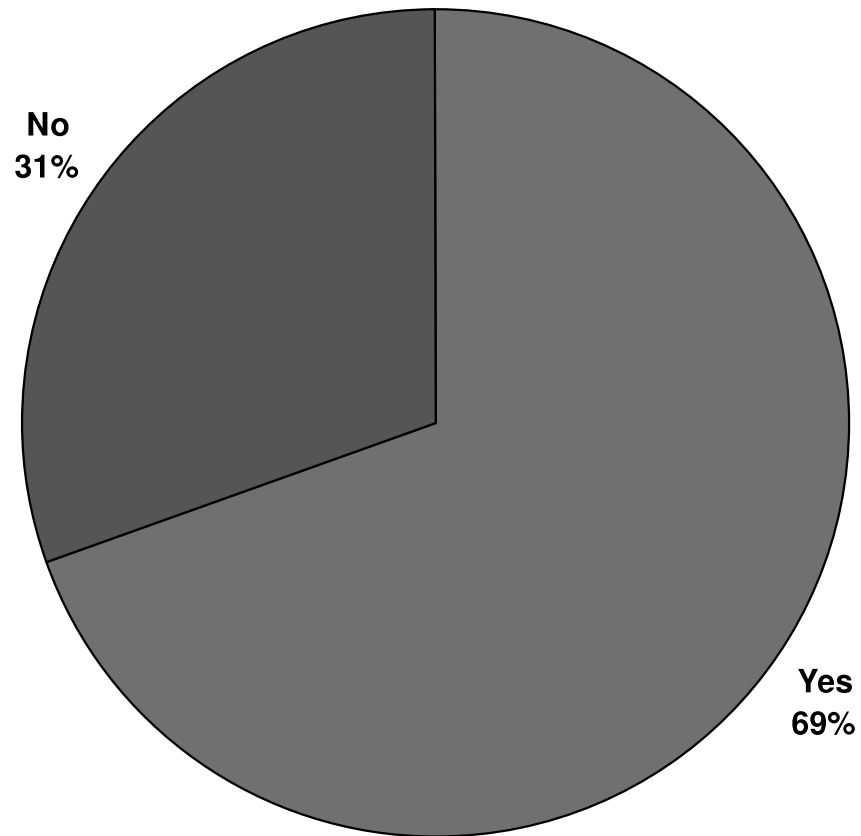
Do you understand the review process, and do you feel it is fair?



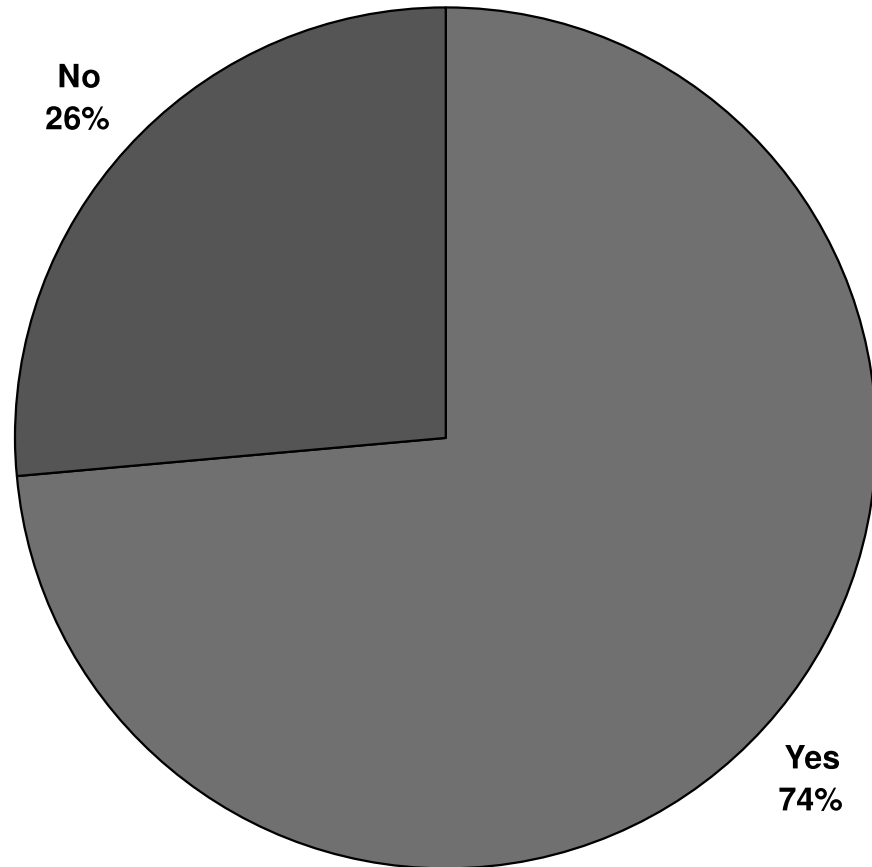
Do you think additional programs or services are necessary?



Would you be interested in receiving a regular newsletter from the City with articles about local history and proper techniques for restoration?



Do you think the City should offer grants or loans to historic property owners?



HPAC

MembershipList - Web

Commissioner Name	Term	E-Mail
Bill Emery	4/30/26	bill@ashlandhome.net
Dale Shostrom	4/30/27	shobro@jeffnet.org
Sam Whitford	4/30/27	skwhippet@charter.net
Terry Skibby	4/30/25	terriskibby@gmail.com
Eric Bonetti	4/30/26	ashlandoregon@gmail.com
Shelby Scharen	4/30/26	shelby@scharendesignstudio.com
Katy Repp	4/30/26	Kaylynnrepp@gmail.com
Mark Brouillard	4/30/26	mtbrouillard@msn.com
Lisa Verner		lisaverner815@icloud.com
Council Liaison Jeff Dahle		jeff.dahle@council.ashland.or.us
Derek Severson Staff Liaison		Derek.Severson@ashland.or.us
Regan Trapp Admin Support		regan.trapp@ashland.or.us