

Public Testimony #1

It is winter. It is cold outside. It is usually rainy and wet during this time of year. Houseless people need shelter and at this time of year especially this is an emergency that requires the council to take immediate action. We need long-term solutions and we need to continue working on long-term permanent solutions. But this is also an emergency situation that requires emergency action immediately.

The City has an obligation to make sure that houseless people have shelter and have a place to sleep comfortably. This obligation must be fulfilled immediately.

Proposals have been made and they need to be acted on immediately. One such proposal is to use the Hagarine Garage. I cannot think of a single reason for Council to not approve this immediately.

And I also urge Council to speed-up other actions to meet this need in our community.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Ben-Baruch

Public Testimony #2

Although this subject is fraught with complications (funding, volunteers and shelter buildings) I believe that this issue needs attention as soon as possible. I believe I represent many in Ashland who feel that emergency shelters should be open when the thermometer reads 35 degrees. Eric Navickas' recommendations for enacting a luxury tax on homes over 2,500 square feet to fund homeless services should be considered. Citations for camping should never involve a financial citation. If campers have nowhere to sleep, they obviously don't have money and to have this on their record is really a punitive action. I know Covid 19 really complicates everything. However, if we have one death due to exposure, that will be one too many. Sleeping is a human need. In naiveté,

Wendy Eppinger

Public Testimony #3

Attached please find the request to speak at the council meeting on January 19, 2021. I would greatly appreciate an acknowledgment that this form has been received in a timely fashion and that I will be able to speak. I would also appreciate this email being made part of the public record in support of my testimony.

On behalf of lawyers for justice, On this day after Martin Luther King day, I would like to be heard on issues relating to racial equity, and The council's efforts to address the systemic racism that exists in Ashland. I see that the agenda includes an update to resolution 2020-15 declaring the city of Ashland's commitment to social equity and racial justice. At Council's meeting on December 15, 2020 In addressing Our racial issues in the context of Aidan Ellison's murder, I requested that as Resolution 2020-15 had a regularly reoccurring date on the agenda, and that the citizens of Ashland needed to hear from the City Council as to what the City was doing on an ongoing basis to specifically address Aidan's murder and the systemic racism that fostered it, that this issue be appended to the existing resolution to assure that it was addressed by the new council as quickly in the new year as possible.

This concern seemed to be addressed when at the last meeting, The Council unanimously passed an ordinance authorizing the racial and social equity commission. I am Hopeful that an update on the status of the commission will soon be on the agenda.

At this point, I am not sure if the Resolution and the commission will be considered separately by council, or merged into one agenda item. The important thing is that the racial issues in Ashland are addressed in a cohesive, and meaningful way.

As indicated above, it does not matter to me, what the procedural mechanism is by which this issue is raised, be it a commission or a resolution, as long as this issue does not go away. The citizens of Ashland need to hear from the city Council on a regular and periodic basis the results and progress of this community's deeply needed work and reparations on racial issues.

I am glad to testify during either the public forum or the discussion regarding the resolution which ever you feel is more appropriate

Thank you again for considering my testimony and please do not hesitate to contact me at the phone number below if there are any aspects of these issues that you would like to discuss in advance of the meeting.

I broke my right wrist, so this email was dictated. Therefore, please forgive any errors.

Emily Simon

Public Testimony #4

Southern Oregon Climate Action Now

SOCAN

Confronting Climate Change

To: Ashland City Council
From: SOCAN-Ashland Climate Action Project
Date: January 19, 2021
Re: Requests for Council Action and to Work Together in 2021 for Climate Action Progress

The [Ashland Climate Action Project of Southern Oregon Climate Action Now](#) is a community-based organization of local residents engaged in advocacy, education, and community organizing to support the full and timely implementation of Ashland's Climate and Energy Action Plan (CEAP) in city operations and in the community at large. As you know, the plan was approved unanimously by the City Council in 2017, and city Ordinance 9.40 states that "Achievement of the Climate Recovery Goals for city Operations...shall be part of the goals for city Operations."

We wish to communicate several items to the City Council. Three items are requests for Council action, and two items are advisory only.

- I. **Council Action Requested: Formally Recognize February 4, 2021, as Transit Equity Day**
Held annually on Rosa Parks' birthday, Transit Equity Day highlights the rights of all people to high-quality public transportation run on clean renewable energy. We urge the City Council to adopt a resolution recognizing Transit Equity Day. Recommended language for the resolution:
 - Whereas:** February 4, 2021, is the fourth annual Transit Equity Day; and
 - Whereas:** Transit Equity Day is celebrated on February 4 because it marks the 108th birthday of Rosa Parks; and
 - Whereas:** Rosa Parks helped to lead a movement to oppose injustice in the Montgomery bus system; and
 - Whereas:** Work continues today to ensure that public transportation is accessible and affordable to all; and
 - Whereas:** Transit Equity Day calls attention to disparities in transit access and air quality; and
 - Whereas:** Transit Equity Day in Ashland is hosted by the Ashland Climate Action Project of Southern Oregon Climate Action Now;**—NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED—** That the Mayor and City Council do hereby recognize February 4, 2021, as Transit Equity Day in the City of Ashland.

II. Council Action Requested: Include climate plan development and implementation as a required qualifications for Ashland City Manager

As we look out to the next decade, scientists and policymakers have advised that climate action work must intensify as we approach critical goals and thresholds that must be attained by 2030 to avert irreversible catastrophic conditions. ([This Union of Concerned Scientists blog from April 2020 explains, in understandable terms, why 2030 targets are so significant.](#)) Ashland's new City Manager will be responsible for providing leadership for a wide range of issues, including reducing our city's greenhouse gas emissions, adapting to climate change, building community resilience, and positioning Ashland to be at the leading edge of economic development spurred on by innovations in climate mitigation and adaptation. It is critically important that we recruit candidates for City Manager who have had significant participation in the development and implementation of climate action plans.

III. Council Action Requested: Take Steps to Ensure Ongoing Engagement of Public Commissions in Climate Action

The CEAP provides important guidance for every sector of our city operations and our community, including every Ashland public commission. We ask the City Council to consider the following recommendations designed to increase the level of awareness of and accountability to the CEAP and the integration of climate action into the work of all Ashland public commissions:

1. **Build Climate Awareness.** Commissions shall fully acquaint themselves with the CEAP, and review of the CEAP shall be incorporated into the orientation process for new commission appointees. Consider developing a standardized orientation presentation for all commissions (and city staff, if appropriate) on the CEAP and how to think about climate impact.
2. **Commit to Action and Accountability.** Review the CEAP to identify the specific strategies of the plan that are relevant to the work of the commission. Determine how the commission can support achievement of these strategies. Incorporate these steps into commission projects, processes, and planning. Incorporate CEAP goals and relevant strategies into the official charter of the commission. Include an update on CEAP efforts, considerations and climate impact in every report of the commission to the city council.
3. **Coordinate and Collaborate.** Create a mechanism for communicating, collaborating, and tracking CEAP-related work of the commissions and others into a common resource that supports this work and that residents can follow. Encourage commissions to report progress and future plans in coordination with the planned Fall 2021 update of the CEAP, which will be guided by the Climate Policy Commission.

IV. FYI Only: Update on our 2021 programs

We welcome the opportunity to work together to advance local climate action. **Here are some specific projects that might be of interest to the Council.**

- **2021 Community Survey.** You may be familiar with our Summer 2020 survey, “Lessons Learned from Recent COVID Restrictions: Imagining the Future of Ashland.” [Here is a link to the final report on our findings.](#) We will be conducting another community survey in 2021 in partnership with SOU’s Office of Sustainability, and will be forming an expert panel and sending out an invitation to submit proposed topics and suggestions in the coming weeks. Our goals for this year are to increase community engagement and enhance our survey methodology and its strategic value to Ashland’s climate work.
- **Spotlight in the *Ashland Tidings*.** We now have a biweekly column on local climate action in the *Ashland Tidings* called “Spotlight.” As a sample, check out “[City staff connect the dots on climate action](#),” from January 4, 2021. If you know of people and programs focused on climate that you feel may be newsworthy, or a climate education topic of high importance, please contact us at ACAPSpotlight@gmail.com.
- **Zoom Spotlight Conversations.** In 2021, we are hosting a series of Zoom Conversations to spotlight local climate issues and spark ongoing dialogue and community-based action. Our January program was “Spotlight on Local Food: A Zoom Conversation,” focused on issues and challenges facing local growers and how we can further strengthen our locally grown food network. The recorded program will be available in the coming days. Upcoming Programs:
 - **Thursday, January 28, 7-8:30pm via zoom. “Other Side of the Hill”: Bridging Oregon’s Rural-Urban Divide.** Living in a deeply divided country, we are all feeling the wounds and grief of bitter partisanship. These divisions have led us to fear and dehumanize each other and close off communications. How can we write a new chapter to this story--right here in Oregon? To help us along this journey, we are hosting a repeat screening of “[Other Side of the Hill](#),” a 2020 film spotlighting Eastern Oregon communities that have embraced renewable energy projects, defying stereotypes about climate change attitudes in conservative rural Oregon. Following the 30-minute film, community leaders featured in the film will join us for a discussion facilitated by [Titus Tomlinson, Program Director of the Resource Assistance for Rural Environments \(RARE\) program at the University of Oregon’s Institute for Policy Research and Engagement.](#) [Watch the trailer](#), or [click here to register](#).
 - **Thursday February 4, 7-8:30pm via zoom. Transit Equity Day 2021: State of Transit Equity in Oregon and the Rogue Valley.** The program will be moderated by Tonia Moro, Chair of the Rogue Valley Transportation District Board. Panelists include RVTD rider Stacy Matern; Linda Peterson Adams, Chair, City of Ashland Transportation Commission; Sara Wright, Transportation Program Director for Oregon Environmental Council; Paige West, Associate Planner, RVTD; Karyn C. Criswell, ODOT Public Transportation Division Administrator; and Amanda Peitz, Manager, ODOT Climate Office. [Click here to register!](#)

V. FYI Only: Our 2021 strategic plan

- **Goal 1: ADVOCACY.** We will work with the city to increase climate funding and climate action progress in Ashland's 2021-2023 biennial budget, city master plans, updates to the climate plan, and matters coming before the City Council.
- **Goal 2: EDUCATION.** Through Spotlight in the *Ashland Tidings*, Zoom Spotlight Conversations, and a community survey on local climate action and attitudes, we will provide education and information on local climate issues and opportunities for action. When appropriate, we will provide education, information, and advocacy to complement the climate priorities of the city, the Climate Policy Commission, and the Conservation and Climate Outreach Commission, and others.
- **Goal 3: ORGANIZATION.** We will support development of local working groups focused on important local climate issues. We will form an Action Team of those interested in participating in local climate advocacy opportunities.

Please feel free to contact ACAP Chair Lorrie Kaplan at lorrie@socan.eco or 240-676-0040 to discuss how we can best work together to achieve the goals and strategies for city operations, public commissions, and the community at large, as laid out in the Ashland Climate and Energy Action Plan.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to continued climate progress in 2021.

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