

**ASHLAND CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING DRAFT MINUTES**

Tuesday, September 21, 2021

Held Electronically; View on Channel 9 or Channels 180 and 181 (Charter Communications) or live stream via rvtv.sou.edu select RVTV Prime.

Written and oral testimony will be accepted for public input. For written testimony, email public-testimony@ashland.or.us using the subject line: Ashland City Council Public Testimony. For oral testimony, fill out a Speaker Request Form at ashland.or.us/speakerrequest and return to the City Recorder. The deadline for submitting written testimony or speaker request forms will be on Tuesday, September 20 at 10 a.m. and must comply with Council Rules to be accepted.

Note: Items on the Agenda not considered due to time constraints are automatically continued to the next regularly scheduled Council meeting [AMC 2.04.030.E.]

5:30 PM EXECUTIVE SESSION

The City Council will hold an Executive Session to consult with your attorney regarding your legal rights and duties in regard to current litigation or litigation that is more likely than not to be filed, pursuant ORS 192.660(2)(h). Executive Sessions are closed to the public.

Mayor Akins called the Executive Session to order at 5:30 PM. Councilors' Graham, Hyatt, Moran, Seffinger, DuQuenne and Jensen were present.

The Executive Session was adjourned at 5:55 PM

6:00 PM REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Akins called the Meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilor Graham led the Council to the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. ROLL CALL

Councilors' Hyatt, Graham, Moran, Seffinger, DuQuenne and Jensen were present.

IV. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

DuQuenne read the acknowledgement into the record (*see attached*).

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Business Meeting of September 7, 2021

Hyatt/Jensen moved to approve the Minutes. Discussion: None. All Ayes. Motion passed

unanimously.

VI. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS & AWARDS

1. Annual Report by the Airport Commission

Staff Liaison Chance Metcalf introduced Commission Chair Jeff Dahle to present the Council with the annual Airport Commission update.

Mr. Dahle went over the annual report.

2. Ad Hoc Community Center & Pioneer Hall Review Report

Public Works Director gave a Staff report.

George Kramer and Gil Livni went over a PowerPoint Presentation (*see attached*).

Items discussed were:

- Least cost alternatives.
- Rolled Beam options.
- Estimated Costs.

Council discussed options.

Public Forum:

Written Public Testimony (*See attached*).

Dale Shostrom. – Mr. Shostrom read letter into the record (*see attached*).

Moran/Seffinger moved to accept the Ad-Hoc Commission report presented tonight to open the Community Center and Pioneer Hall at the earliest convenience and go forward with the recommendations outlined to fix Pioneer Hall and the Community Center Building. Discussion – Moran thanked all involved in the process and looks forward to the buildings being fixed. Seffinger spoke to the importance of the buildings being safe for the public. Jensen spoke in concern of opening the buildings immediately. He asked for clarification. Moran clarified that the buildings had no reason to be closed.

Hyatt spoke in concern of liabilities considering all the reports received. She suggested legal review.

Hyatt/Jensen moved to amend the motion pending legal review of the multiple reports to ensure that we are not moving forward in a way that increases the liability to the City.

Discussion: Hyatt spoke that the proposal was well presented but the concern she has is the multiple reports in hand that is indicating the needs of the structures and the liability to the City. Jensen spoke that there is a difference between something being up to code and something that is safe. He spoke that this needs to be determined before moving forward. Moran spoke regarding the existing issues mentioned by Councilor Hyatt. He spoke that there are not conflicting engineering reports, and he will not vote yes on the amendment. Seffinger questioned the timeframe. Interim City Attorney Katrina Brown spoke that a report can be brought back to the Council at the next Business Meeting. **Roll Call Vote: Jensen, Seffinger and Hyatt: YES. DuQuenne, Moran & Graham: NO. Tie breaking vote Mayor Akins: NO. Motion fails 3-**

4.

Primary motion discussion: Graham spoke questioning why the Council would move forward with repairs on 2 buildings which are historically significant without hearing from the Historic Commission. She also spoke in agreement with Hyatt’s legal concerns.

DuQuenne spoke in support of moving forward with opening the buildings.

Moran called the question.

Roll Call Vote to call the questions: Seffinger, DuQuenne, Jensen, Hyatt, and Moran: YES. Graham: NO. Motion passed 5-1.

Roll Call vote on main motion: Moran, Seffinger, DuQuenne: YES. Graham, Hyatt, and Jensen: NO. Tie breaking vote Mayor Akins: YES. Motion passes 4-3.

VII. MINUTES OF BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES

[Airport](#)

[Budget](#)

[Conservation & Climate Outreach](#)

[Historic](#)

[Housing and Human Svcs.](#)

[Parks & Recreation](#)

[Forest Lands](#)

[Climate Policy](#)

[Community Center & Pioneer Hall Ad Hoc](#)

[Planning](#)

[Public Arts](#)

[Social Equity & Racial Justice](#)

[Transportation](#)

[Tree](#)

[Wildfire Safety](#)

VIII. PUBLIC FORUM

Business from the audience not included on the agenda. The Mayor will set time limits to enable all people wishing to speak to complete their testimony. [15 minutes maximum]

Louise Shawkat – Ashland – Global warming (*see attached*).

IX. CITY MANAGER REPORT

Gary Milliman gave the city Manager report. Items discussed were:

- Staff shortage – temp employee to fill in for Elizabeth.
- Tina and Gray and Melissa.
- CM and Finance Director recruitment are underway.

X. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Appointment of Kathy Kali to the Housing and Human Services Commission
2. Appointment of Joy Fate to the Housing and Human Services Commission
3. Appointment of Holly Christiansen to the Transportation Commission

Hyatt/Seffinger moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Discussion: None. All Ayes. Motion passed unanimously.

XI. PUBLIC HEARINGS

Persons wishing to speak are to submit a “speaker request form” prior to the commencement of the public hearing. Public hearings conclude at 8:00 p.m. and are continued to a future date to be set by the Council, unless the Council, by a two-thirds vote of those present, extends the hearing(s) until up to 9:30 p.m. at which time the Council shall set a date for continuance and shall proceed with the balance of the agenda.

XII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

XIII. NEW AND MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

1. Social Service Grant Allocation

Housing Program Specialist Linda Reid gave a brief Staff Report and introduced Commission Chair Rich Rhode. Mr. Rhode gave an update.

DuQuenne thanked Staff and the Housing and Human Services Commission

Graham/Hyatt I move to approve the FY 2021-2023 social service grant funding allocations as recommended by the Housing and Human Service Commission at its regular meeting on August 26, 2021. Discussion: Graham thanked all for their excellent work. Hyatt thanked all for their excellent work. **Roll Call Vote: Jensen, Hyatt, DuQuenne, Graham, Moran and Seffinger: YES. Motion passed unanimously.**

2. APRC Funding Proposal

Interim City Manager Gary Milliman gave a brief Staff Report.

Public Input

Anne Bellegia - Ashland – Spoke encouraging the Council to support funding the APRC.

Elizabeth Landreth - Ashland – Spoke in support of Parks and Recreation activities.

Kristina Lefever – Ashland – Lefever T\thanked Staff and Council for their work. She read a letter into the record (*see attached*).

Council discussed Financial planning workshops.

Council discussed funding sources for Parks and Recreation.

Interim Finance Director Alison Chan explained the revenue sources for APRC.

Graham/Hyatt moved that Council direct Staff to come back to Council with an appropriate Resolution that pays the Debt Service for Streets in the 2022-23 budget from F&B; and allocates the remaining available funding in F&B to Parks and makes Parks whole by the \$445,000 by allocating an equal amount to the street debt service from the General Fund. Discussion: Graham spoke in support of the motion and spoke that by doing this for one year it will ensure that parks keep their allocation and flexibility on how we may shift the allocation going forward. Hyatt spoke in support of the motion. She spoke that this motion meets the will of the people. Council discussed funding.

Seffinger called the question. There was no second.

Council discussed restricted funding.

Roll Call Vote: Jensen, Hyatt, Graham, DuQuenne, Seffinger and Moran: YES. Motion passed unanimously.

Hyatt/Graham moved to postpone the balance of the APRC Funding proposal to a future agenda. Discussion: None. Voice Vote: All Ayes motion passed unanimously.

3. Council Manager Plan Workshop Agreement

McMillian gave a brief Staff report.

Graham/Seffinger moved to authorize the City Manager Pro Tem to work with representatives of Portland State University, Center for Public Service, to develop and execute an intergovernmental agreement for conducting two workshops concerning the Council-Manager form of government as outlined in the proposal from Portland State University, with a cost not to exceed \$8,109.00. Discussion: Graham spoke that she is glad to move forward with this. Seffinger spoke in agreement with Graham. Voice Vote: All Ayes. Motion passed unanimously.

XIV. ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS AND CONTRACTS

XV. OTHER BUSINESS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS/REPORTS FROM COUNCIL LIAISONS

Graham reminded all that the City is looking for citizens to apply to have their name drawn for public panel the City Manager description. The Interim Finance Director Alison Chan name association was clarified.

XVI. ADJOURNMENT OF BUSINESS MEETING

Seffinger/Hyatt moved to adjourn the meeting. All Ayes. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:26 PM

Respectfully submitted by:

City Recorder Melissa Huhtala

Attest:

Mayor Akins

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Manager's office at (541) 488-6002 (TTY phone number 1-800-735-2900). Notification 72 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to the meeting (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title I).

Written Public Testimony 09/21/21

Subject: Ashland City Council General Funds and Parks and Recreation

Message: I understand the difficulties of balancing a budget. I have lived and raised a family in Ashland for 50years. I want to speak for the importance of our city parks for quality of life, tourism and community. Can we be creative in budgeting? I always remember when we had a water crisis a few years ago California set a limit on water use. And the citizens met that goal. We can pull together and deal with shortages. We also stepped up when the Ashland ski area was failing and donated money to allow the city to purchase it. I was disappointed when Ashland spent huge amounts to tie into the Medford water system rather than ask our community to reduce use and waste when shortages occurred. In looking at budget cuts can we look at ways to ask for community support and look for places we can reduce costs by creatively looking for cost savings, and surveying for ways we can reduce. Thanks for all your work. I know you have many challenges. But I urge you to please be mindful that as things get hard, parks are very important for quality of life, physical and mental health and especially for lower income folks. Sincerely Alison Laughlin

Dear Council Members,

I'm asking that you not further reduce by approximately 10% the Ashland Parks & Recs budget and not consider selling off park land.

It is my understanding that other general fund departments have not taken such a hit, how about balancing the scales a bit.

Our parks are a wonderful part of the city and should continue to be used and cherished in the same manner as we can now. Personally, my mother, in her 90s, loved our walks with her in N.Mountain Park until she died at age 98. She enjoyed watching the kids playing sports as well as the wildlife and flora along Bear Creek. I play pickleball at the courts several times a week - it offers the best combination of sport, social ambiance and natural beauty in the valley.

Kind regards,

Jack Methot
President,
Southern Oregon Pickleball Association
and Foundation

I'm a long time Ashland resident and have spent many wonderful hours in Lithia Park. One of the reasons I moved to Ashland was because of the beautiful park and surrounding areas. Having been to Golden Gate Park in California I was very impressed with the way Lithia is laid out and patterned after Golden Gate. I call Lithia Park "the heart of Ashland" because it pulses with life in the form of the fauna, trees and water. I realize that there's only so much funds to go around for Ashland to work with and there are many projects that need attention. I would hope that the city planners realize the short and long term value of maintaining the park the way it is. Why is it that on any nice day there are no parking spaces along the park? Where are all those people? Sure, some park there and walk into town to shop but the majority are "in" the party enjoying themselves. It is not a financially sound idea to want to curtail the park or shrink it's size to save money. Think long, long term here - ;please. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Philippe Sprague

I just wanted to weigh in about our parks in Ashland.

When I moved here 17 years ago, one of the things I loved most was all of the parks and support for outdoor recreation. And that is still what keeps me here today.

We spend time in the parks regularly. Love watching people play in the parks, the wildlife, etc. The plethora of space for social gathering and physical exercise is important for our community and our town. Without the parks and activities that they offer, our town is far less desirable. We are seeing people leaving the area due to fires and water issues. Losing any part of our parks and the activities they encourage will, in my opinion, decrease the desirability of our homes as well as decrease tourism here.

This is an outdoor vivacious town...please don't give up on that.
~Ren Kolar

Dear Mayor Atkins and Ashland Councilmembers,

I just watched the Ashland City Council/Parks Study Session from August 23, 2021, and, first, I would like to say thank you for running a well-organized meeting that kept civility on what is likely to be an increasingly difficult topic to address.

I am a citizen of Ashland and extremely frequent user of parks. My family uses Ashland park properties literally daily, and usually more than twice daily, despite smoke or pandemic. We walk our dog at Oredson-Todd, the Ashland ponds, and literally everywhere it's possible to walk a dog, twice per day, and we make judicious use of the provided doggie bags. When there's no air quality alert, my son plays soccer three times weekly at North Mountain Park with the Ashland Soccer Club. My husband swims three times per week, year-round (yes, even in winter) at the Daniel Meyer Pool through the Masters Swim Program. We use the BMX track, even with popped tires due to the thistle. We frequently attend weekend birthday parties at Garfield or Ashland Creek Park, and we use the ice skating rink in winter. It is not an exaggeration to say that our lives revolve around our park activities, and I believe that is the case for the majority of families in Ashland, especially as COVID-19 has forced activities outdoors. The parks are an enormous part of why we live here.

Additionally, Lithia Park and the trails in Siskiyou Mountain Park and other city lands bring many tourists to the region, adding an important boost to Ashland's economy.

For the incredible services that the Ashland Parks provide us, at \$1.89 per \$1,000 assessed home value, our family pays about \$672, less than \$2 per day. We would be willing to pay double or even triple that to be sure that the parks department could operate at a reasonable service level.

While property taxes are higher in Ashland than our neighboring towns, people like ourselves have chosen to live here even though it is more expensive because the schools, parks, and services make the quality of life so wonderful.

What I noticed and was bothered by in the special session is that there was a singular focus on

the need to cut \$1 million-\$4 million from the budget in the long-term. I get that we obviously need a balanced budget. But there was no mention of the other side of the equation—revenue. There was very little discussion about any options the City could take to raise revenue or any steps being taken to avoid slashing funds.

While the revenue might not be put in place in time to pass the next budget, at the very least, there should be a subcommittee studying all the innovative ways that might be possible to raise revenue. It just makes no sense to me to say in one breath, “Ashland Parks are the crown jewels responsible for Ashland’s quality of life and tourism economy,” and then to say in the next breath, “but we’re slashing your already lean budget with no future plans to reinstate it.”

Imagine how much better it would feel to be saying, “We need to cut the budget in the short- to mid-term, but we’re figuring out a way to get back on track with new revenue streams.”

According to city-data.com, about 40% of the population in Ashland has a household income of \$75,000 or above, and 31% of the voters in the May 19, 2020 voted for the \$8.2 million bond to finance City Hall, Pioneer Hall, and the Community Center. I’m sure many of them would be willing to pay their fair share for use of parks. How can the City tap into the 30-40% of Ashland residents that are willing and eager to help fund Parks capital improvement projects, programs, and services?

Could we do a parks bond measure only for home valuations that are above a certain threshold? The Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority recently passed a ballot measure that includes a low-income senior exemption—could we do something similar?

Could we put pay parking in place in the parking spots that line Lithia Park? Could a Friends of Ashland Parks group be formed to raise money for capital improvement projects or develop a Parks membership pass that costs, say, \$99/year?

Are there any matching grants available at the state or federal level that include climate change resiliency, wildfire prevention, and watershed protection that could help cover some of the upkeep at Lithia Park, Oredson-Todd, Ashland Ponds, and Hald Strawberry? Could there be some jointly funded positions that make sense across the forest resiliency team, the water department (for watershed protection), and Parks?

How much revenue could be generated if Pioneer Hall, the Community Center, an upgraded pool, and a BMX park all charged a higher (but still reasonable) rate for use? Have all options truly been explored?

I am urging the City Council to keep the existing 2021-2023 Biennium Budget so that Parks can operate in a dependable, planned manner based on what they expected and were promised by the last elected City Council. I also would like the Council to focus on ways to keep the Parks budget resilient, dependable, and intact over the long term, whether this is through an allocation of 98% of the Food and Beverage Tax, an increase in property taxes, a bond measure, or some other measure.

Thank you for your time and service,
Pam Kuhn
Ashland Resident

To the Ashland City Council:

Ashland DEVO is a local non-profit with the mission of building grit, resilience, and camaraderie in our youth through mountain biking. Ashland DEVO was formed in 2019 and this year has put 200 local youth through mountain bike programs ranging from kindergarten to 12th grade.

The positive effects of this program are widespread, and Ashland DEVO continues to become a larger part of the cultural fabric that makes up the community of Ashland.

Ashland DEVO is reliant on the use of parks maintained by the Ashland Parks and Recreation Department (APR) for its programs. Without these venues and public spaces to rent from APR, our programs would not be able to operate at the current capacity. Anticipating growth in our programs (we had 30 riders on a waitlist this Spring), venues are the biggest need. Projects such as the East Main Park pump track and skills area will serve as an important training ground, building self confidence and stewardship lessons in our youngest riders. Utilizing open spaces such as Siskiyou Mt. Park, Riverwalk Park, and city-managed trails is paramount to our program's success. A cut in the APR budget could hinder our ability to keep up with demand, grow our non-profit, and serve more children in the community. This would have a devastating ripple effect on our programming.

Ashland DEVO is strongly in support of keeping APR fully funded. This will ensure programs like ours can use clean, well kept facilities and amenities that continue to make Ashland a great place to live, ride bicycles, and play.

Sincerely,

Ashland DEVO Board of Directors

Hello On page 4 of the printed information put out for the Business meeting on 09/21/21 there is a paragraph that says something about passing a Council Resolution that would adopt an opinion that you could approve an end run around the requirement to have the voters approve the spending of the F&B funds. Having The VOTERS approve all spending of the F&B themselves was the agreement and wording in the ordinance and one of the biggest reasons Ashlanders passed the F&B. No one has ever proposed going around it before. Do not pass such a resolutionever!!!

I realize the Business meeting has an extremely dense agenda, and I am trying to follow it all. We really have accomplished some goals and need to reorganize so much. It is an opportunity as well as a necessity. I want good, informed people with different viewpoints who honor the spirit and letter of the law and true public involvement...of, by and for the people...involved in this overhaul of our City and how it works. This is truly an opportunity!!!

I have said before, make no changes to APRC funding now. It is premature. They can do just fine on the 1.89 they were allowed a few years ago....it goes up a few percentage points each year anyway. I actually would have supported a 4 to 6% cut to their budget along with all other City Departments, excluding the Fire and Ambulance services because of our drought and emergency issues. I say NO CHANGES to APRC FUNDING SOURCES.... for the foreseeable future. There are too many unanswered questions about the handling of finances in this City which will take months to sort it all out.

My opinion is that APRC wants unchecked, unfettered, total control of more and more money when cuts and updating of the entire department is required. I believe we need to consider Charter changes that bring the APRC in line with the other departments and not give them more independence. I also hope we will have many new Commissioners in the next two years and new management as well. Time for new people who can see us through major adaptations to our new conditions in town....financial, environmental, and political. Time for transparency, accountability, and a course correction that embodies democracy much more authentically.

I want to officially thank Councillor Moran for his comments during the previous meeting in which he read parts of an email exchange between Councillor Graham and Mr Milliman. I appreciated so much hearing Mr Milliman's and Ms Chan's current assessment of what they are discovering about our budget and the way it has been organized. I hope to hear a lot more about the organization of the Central Services and its numerous transfers of funds every which way....and how to more professionally organize that. I am grateful for the gradual restoration of information to our City website. I want it to equal or surpass the transparency of the Portland and Medford public information and be as easily presented as possible for the general public. I appreciated hearing Mr. Milliman's advice and comments on what we need to work toward to put our house in order. I thank Councillor Moran for his personal comments too. They were spot on!

I want to see meetings about Administration and Finance be put on study sessions too...not just what you have earmarked for the chopping block. Certainly Administration needs a thorough review....and of course staff compensation packages, perks of all kinds etc. Letting that fly under the radar leaves many problems unsolved....swept under the rug!

Finally I want to thank our Mayor for running a tight ship during the meeting. It was never legal or appropriate to high jack meetings and throw topics on the agenda at the end of meetings, nor to try to have votes too, which were not properly noticed. I hope we get a good permanent attorney soon, conversant with the law and the rules that guide public meetings, who will strongly enforce them. I hope we are fast tracking the search for a permanent attorney who is experienced, strong, unbiased, and independent. I prefer someone experienced in Oregon. HOWEVER I am glad to witness the Mayor holding the line. Our Mayor has a different role than before but still has influence, power, responsibilities, and stature. I expect all Councillors to act respectfully.

thank you for reading this. Gwen C Davies

Dear Council Members,

I understand there is some consideration of cutting funds or even selling some of our lovely parks. Of all the wonderful features of our city, none are more treasured than our recreational spaces. Please preserve our beauty and vitality.

Thank you,
Daniel Baker

I would like to express my strong objections to any proposal that does not begin to control APR costs. In the absence of a strong Mayor in Council Ashland is unable to hold anyone accountable for excessive and wasteful spending.

Until we can be organized to draw up a petition for a change in the current Council structure giving the Mayor more power than the current limited power to break a tie in Council we must do everything we can to oppose any proposal that funds the current levels of spending at APR.

Ideally the Council would have the power to remove an APR Director who refused the Mayor's directives to reduce spending, but this cannot be done today given the public's returns of a divided Council.

Harry David

Dear Madame Mayor and Members of the Ashland City Council,

You are being asked to consider revisions to the funding mechanism for the Ashland Parks and Recreation Department. I urge you to say no to the reallocation of Food & Beverage taxes and the department's apparent belief that it, and it alone, deserve to be protected from the impacts of our current financial situation.

APRD will attempt to make this a referendum of sorts on the value of parks. Nobody is questioning that parks are a public good.

The question is how many parks a town of 21,000 people needs, how much it should cost to maintain them, and most importantly, who and how it should be paid for.

We are facing a future where tourism income, through both TOT and F&B are likely to at best remain stable and more likely to decline. The city government is already facing structural deficits in its spending/revenue equation. No department, not even parks, can expect nor deserves, guaranteed funding. It is completely tone deaf, if not surprising, that these questions are even being asked at this moment. Parks should be thrilled they haven't taken a hit.

Asking for more is inappropriate. Entirely inappropriate. Council should tell APRD so in no uncertain terms

Respectfully submitted,

George Kramer

To the Ashland City Council:

On behalf of the Rogue Valley Mountain Bike Association (RVMB), we would like to show our support for

Ashland Parks and Recreation (APR). A major draw for the mountain biking community (and to the greater community) is our access to trails and the parks that provide our members and their families with a plethora of recreational opportunities. We believe the APRC provides services that make Ashland such a great place to live. Studies have shown that outdoor recreation attracts employers and active workforces, helping ensure communities thrive economically and socially [1].

These facilities provide everyone a breath of fresh air, but are especially important for the youth in our community. Studies have shown that youth aged 11-14 spend about 12 hours per day in front of a screen [2], and youth aged 10-16 spend just 13 minutes per day in outdoor activities [3]. This severe lack of time spent outdoors is linked to adverse outcomes such as anxiety, childhood obesity, academic under-performance and bullying [4]. Outdoor recreation has been shown to significantly improve educational outcomes for elementary, secondary and post-secondary students, and lower long-term individual and public health care costs by reducing stress and obesity rates, improving physical fitness and strengthening social bonds with family and friends [5]. I urge the City Council to consider these outcomes when making their decision. The APR has already undergone budget cuts, which the community witnessed in the form of reduction in care to the basic needs of our parks and recreation areas.

Numerous studies have shown that more and more people are traveling for mountain biking and mountain

bike tourism is a significant contributor to local economies. Well maintained bike trails and facilities not only attract visitors from elsewhere, but are a key component to a strong local community, strengthening the local economy, and bringing some new ideas with them.

To keep this community thriving, we are in full support of the APR and their mission to provide and promote recreational opportunities and to preserve and maintain public lands.

Sincerely,

- members of the RVMBA Board

Sources:

- 1) Outdoor Industry Association, 2017. *The Outdoor Recreation Economy*
- 2) Timothy Egan and Casey Egan (National Geographic Magazine), 2016. *Can the Selfie Generation Unplug and Get Into Parks?*
- 3) Seattle Children's Research Institute, 2017. *Archives of Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine*
- 4) Richard Louv (Children & Nature Network), 2015. *THE RIGHT TO A WALK IN THE WOODS: Children's connection to the natural world should be considered a human right*
- 5) Metro, 2017. *Hiking, mountain biking and equestrian use in natural areas: A recreation ecology literature review*

It is difficult to parse out funding for Parks and Rec, but as a resident of Ashland for almost 20 years now, I believe that there are enough parks in the city of Ashland for all existing neighborhoods. As geographically, Ashland cannot extend its boundaries very far I see no need for new parks. Keep the status quo and improve upon those existing facilities as revenues allow.

The mention of the 1903 charter or statute not approving of a golf course as a park is a mute issue. Apparently, the golf course was approved ca. 7 years later which renders its exclusion mute.

The golf course, I believe is the only revenue earning "park" in the entire system. I see no reason to change that. The recent pandemic and drought issues have hurt all of the parks. Hopefully, we can weather this current situation and keep all of what we have generated since 1903.

Sydney Embry

Dear Mayor Atkins and Ashland Council members, We are truly proud to be residents of this wonderful small town. Many of us came originally through our exposure to Shakespeare. It brought us here for a week or less each year. What naturally occurred after repeat visits was our expanded view of what Ashland has to offer. It is so much more than a tourist town. People do not move to small towns, buy property, raise their children and continue to live in a small town without the basic necessities of community life. Those necessities include parks and recreation, at the top of the list. The hallmark of what is considered the ideal small town for families and retirees has been shown across this country to be gathering places, recreation facilities, programs, and neighborhood parks. Like all small towns, our coffers have taken a hit. This is where a town decides what is truly important. Where indeed are our ideals and commitment to our residents? Does our mission as a healthy small town include the vitality of our gathering places, recreation facilities, programs and neighborhood parks? Who are the first priorities of our town? It is of course our children's well-being, our families, our aging community and yes, our small town businesses. Small business can thrive through our local community, when the local community is thriving. We already know that our vision of the future must look beyond tourism. Smoke and travel has forced us to reconsider everything. Now is our opportunity to use the budget we have to re-enforce the foundation of what makes a small town great. It has shown time and again that a small town can be sustained through the very practices that nurture their residents. We already know just how much Lithia Park means to us. We see everyone, young and old out enjoying the park, the trails, the new Pickle ball courts. Even through the smoke. Sometimes, perhaps we are less aware of what else Parks and Recreation brings to our tax paying, voting residents. **The short list: Community Gardens** Needed now more than ever, in these trying times. **Senior Center** The lifeblood of the greater aging community of Ashland. **Daniel Meyer Pool** An outdoor pool for all residents and guests alike from May through August. Another small town feature that our town can be proud of. **North Mountain Park** An educational gem that not all small towns can toot their horn about. **Classes and Activities** Just spend a moment looking through the quarterly Parks and Recreation Play guide. Every one of these classes and activities are filled to capacity each quarter. Great leadership comes from thinking outside the box and with long term vision in mind. The short sighted version looks at this year's budget and sees only the low hanging fruit of cuts. The 2021-2023 Biennium Budget sustains the health of our residents. We know each of you have chosen to serve on this Council and at the helm of mayorship for the betterment of our town and residents. We know you will do the right thing. Thank you for your time and consideration, Judy Blue

Re: Parks and Recreation Budget

1) First off, a question: If budget is so tight, why are we creating a new park on E Main St when we can't afford the personnel to maintain what we have?

2) Use more volunteers. The Ashland Creek Park Community Garden has been able to operate well this last year with personal time and funds donated by garden members. We've taken care of a serious ground squirrel infestation, which cost us hundreds of dollars and many hours of work. We improved the greenhouse for full spring use. We built a gazebo in the Pollinator Garden and bought plants and fertilizers for the Pollinator and Children's gardens. We also send our volunteers outside the garden fence to weed the fence line, the circle rain garden and prune the lavender bushes.

3) Keep Park costs minimal: At the Community Garden, Parks pays for irrigation water and spigot repair, green debris removal 2-3 times/yr, vandalism repair (recently a gate lock was damaged), and the staff at N Mtn Park who administer garden wait lists, contracts, fees and overall management.

4) Maybe this model of volunteers could be applied to other areas. One thought is to ask the Ashland Garden Club or Master Gardeners to plant and maintain a perennial flower garden at the triangle between Lithia Way and N Main at the entrance to the Plaza. In Pt Townsend WA, where I am at the moment, the Master Gardeners maintain a beautiful perennial flower garden at the entrance to town and it is stunning.

Thanks for your consideration of these thoughts for minimizing costs,

Carol Carlson

Ashland Creek Park Community Garden Co-Manager

Dear Council: I support whatever funding can be found to continue the invaluable work of the Parks & Recreation Department. I have been a volunteer at North Mountain Park for over 15 years. Without such an outstanding facility, I don't see how the City could consider itself to have a Parks & Recreation Department.

I know there is some ordinance or regulation that states there is to be a park within so many miles of every neighborhood in Ashland. I think it's more important to support what we already have than to continue to build new parks that can't be supported financially.

Please consider funding/supporting our parks, and especially North Mountain Park. Thank you in advance for your consideration. Viki Ashford

Dear City Council,

I understand that you will be reviewing and making decisions on APR and I would like to add my input.

After living many places in California & Hawai'i, I've made beautiful Ashland my home for 16 years now . I love Ashland because it has all the ingredients I love in a small town, particularly the recreational aspects.

I have taken part or continue to take part in the following:

hiking all the Ashland trails (the exercise, beauty and natural surroundings have been so helpful to my well-being especially in these Covid times!)

classes/events at N. Mountain Nature Park

concerts/events at Lithia Park's Band Shell and at the Pioneer Community Center

dance classes at the Grove

But the most satisfying and fulfilling recreational aspect has been being a member of the Ashland Creek Community Garden for the last 15 years. Working with the soil to grow your own food, harvesting it and having stored food available all winter really helps with my food budget! Sharing with other gardeners in the maintenance and upkeep of our community garden creates long lasting ties & bonds with fellow gardeners.

I appreciate all the time and energy you are putting in to creating a thriving, financially sound Ashland and I hope that my input helps in that process.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Cramer

Dear Mayor and City Councilors:

I am very concerned about the future health of all the divisions within Ashland Parks and Recreation (APRC). I understand that their budget has been approved for the first year of the biennium, but not for the second year. I also understand that there seems to be an effort to cut back on the funding of this important group.

I believe that cutting the funding would have a major negative impact on the livability in the City of Ashland. I co-chair the Livable Ashland: An All Age Friendly City initiative that was approved by the City Council and APRC. All the areas that APRC has are essential to the livability of our city. One of the areas that is important to our group is intergenerational activities. Where better to have these than in the parks. Grandparents take their grandchildren on walks and to the play equipment. These areas need a budget to keep them looking nice and safe for all.

The Ashland Senior Center is a vital link to the large population of Ashland that is over 65. During the Covid-19 time the Center has reached out to especially vulnerable people to make sure they are well. Now the Center staff have enacted the Phone Buddy program (of which I am a volunteer) to continue to address the important problem of loneliness in our community.

All the recreation activities that the division oversees (especially in a non-Covid time) are important to young and old. It would be a shame to have to curtail these because of budget costs. This would make our city less livable.

I would like to see the APRC budget increase, as it has been decreased over the last several years. They have made do, but that will not work forever. Please consider seriously how you fund APRC for the future.

Thank you for reading my input.

Sandy Theis

RE Agenda Item: Winburn Way, Ad Hoc Committee, Final Report
Honorable Mayor and City Council Members,

My name is Dale Shostrom. I am currently a member of the Ashland Historic Commission and have served the City as a commissioner for over 22 years, where I help carry out the Commissions' charge to preserve the integrity of our historic

structures and resources. I am speaking to express some thoughts and concerns regarding the proposal submitted by the Winburn Way ad hoc Committee. Because the Historic Commission has not met since the proposal was submitted, I am speaking on behalf of myself and not the Commission as a whole.

I have worked as a designer/builder in Ashland since moving here in 1974 and have collaborated with many structural engineers during my career. In the early spring of this year, by previous order of the City Council, I was invited by the Public Works Dept. to provide technical expertise and community representation in the evaluation of Engineering and Architectural firms that had submitted proposals to provide comprehensive evaluations of Pioneer Hall and the Community Center. During this process I developed a robust understanding of the condition of these structures via on-site visits with architects and engineers and I thoroughly reviewed all the documents, architectural drawings, engineering reports that pertain to these buildings.

In my opinion these buildings have some serious structural deficiencies and deferred maintenance issues. Pioneer Hall has been well investigated in recent years, whereas the Community Center has had only a preliminary report on the structural deficiencies of the roof and north wall of the main hall auditorium. I think the ad hoc Committees' proposal can safely re-open these buildings. I whole heartedly agree with the need to get these buildings open for public uses and to find cost effective solutions. But the ad hoc charge to 'develop least-cost recommendations' falls short aesthetically and impedes the opportunity for historic restoration.

Page 2 of 2

My major concern is with the Community Center auditorium ceiling and the proposed fix, by the installation of a **steel moment frame**. The existing curved vaulted ceiling covers an open floor area of 30 feet by 40 feet. The ad hoc Committees' structural solution is comprised of a series of asymmetrically spaced steel beams, headers, and post (wrapped in drywall) that will completely overpower and interrupt the historic openness, simplicity, and detailing of this beautifully vaulted auditorium.

Further, this utilitarian retrofit support system will complicate or permanently eliminate future opportunities to restore the north wall and roof systems, without the additional wasteful expenditure that will be needed to remove the steel moment frame. Specifically, the Committees' recommendation would severely restrict or preclude future repair of the sagging floor and compromised foundation, the outward leaning windows and wall, and the 15-inch-deep belly in the exterior roof plane. The consensus engineering solution, to remedy all these

problems, has been to remove the existing roof structure and rebuild with new wood trusses. I believe the proposed **steel moment frame** is a totally unacceptable solution, both aesthetically and historically.

As a next step, we need to develop cost-effective design solutions that address safety concerns, longevity of the structure, and preservation of key historic design features, as previously directed by Council. By incorporating the ad hoc Committees' findings, we can simplify a new 'preliminary design and engineering phase'. Because the City may need to re-open a competitive solicitation process for engineering services regardless of the path forward, a more economical opportunity to better assess the long-term needs of these buildings is not likely to occur again soon. This phase should facilitate public input, needs analysis, and budgets. The resulting "menu" and price list of repairs, improvements, and restorations will enable Council and the community to better prioritize which actions should be performed over time.

These buildings are nearly a century old. It is time for a detailed evaluation that will guide decisions to ensure our historic public resources will serve the Ashland community for another 100 years.

Respectfully,
Dale Shostrom

Thanks for considering this.

Marc Heller

Dear City Councilors, Ashland

Chicken Little, the sky is falling!

Or is it?

I know that all of Ashland is struggling. Challenges include the smoke season, the shutdown of OSF and other live theatre, and decrease in tourists from pandemic and smoke. If the parks department is cut going forward, we will gradually lose much of what makes Ashland special.

I am writing to urge you to fund APRC, Ashland Park and Rec Dept. Beth and I have lived here in Ashland for 41 years, and we really appreciate what APRC adds to Ashland, both parks and recreation components.

We use the outdoor pool. We take APRC sponsored classes. We appreciate the pickleball and tennis courts. We love Lithia Park. We love the neighborhood parks. We walk in Oredson Todd, and the other Ashland trails. So much of what makes Ashland special, is in our outdoor parks and recreation, which has been so important during the pandemic. When I visit other towns, I always appreciate the ones that properly fund and support their Parks and Rec Departments.

I know you face pressure from a vocal minority who are saying, cut the budget, cut services. I know that PERS is an 800 pound gorilla that stresses public budgets. But is cutting parks the right answer? I think not.

Please keep the existing 2021-2023 Biennium Budget so that Parks can operate in a dependable, planned manner based on what they expected and were promised by the last elected City Council. I get that the Council needs to focus on ways to keep the Parks budget intact and sustainable over the long term. I'm not a financial advisor, I don't know the best way to do this, whether it is raising taxes and

fees, vs dedicating Food and Beverage Tax to Parks, or some other mechanism. But find a way. I don't want to live in a town, where the parks are dying.

Dear Councilors and Mayor,

Thank you for your service.

Per item VIII, 2 on the agenda of the Sept. 21 Council Business Meeting, I implore you to reject APRC's requests:

- for 98 per cent the City's FBT
- for enactment of an ordinance requiring that the total amount of City funds allocated to the APRC be equal to the amount of funds that would be produced through the application of a \$1.89/\$1,000 property tax
- for a contract with the City to provide APRC with central services
- designation of APRC as a Local Contract Review Board

Thank you for your consideration.

Elin Silveous

COMMENTS by Vince Zauskey for Tuesday's City of Ashland Council Meeting, 9/21/21

I am commenting on this Tuesday's City Council meeting and specifically about the Parks & Recreation agenda item discussing current and future funding for Parks & Recreation.

While I believe it is important for the City of Ashland to continue maintaining Ashland's parks, the facilities associated with parks and other necessary work that falls under the park's umbrella, I am especially focused on North Mountain Park and the Nature Center.

I have been a volunteer at NMP for 20 years. I attended meetings when NMP was going through planning stages, passed along input and celebrated with all involved when NMP was approved as a 'nature park' affording educational opportunities for young and old. A few years later, the Nature Center building was approved for a remodel and, though it has been closed to the public for a couple of years due to Covid-19, it is a tremendous resource for exploration and learning. I hope it can reopen soon.

Past staff and the two remaining staff members--Libby VanWyhe and Jennifer Aguayo--have done a stellar job during non-Covid years by making the Nature Center a hub for volunteers, K-12 students and adults who teach classes or volunteer their time to maintain the park's grounds. The volunteers' time and energy is reflected in the beauty our community and out-of-town guests enjoy throughout the summer, the fall and once again in the spring at the NMP entrance or while touring the park. North Mountain Park is unique and Ashland has no other park like it.

I firmly believe the Parks and Recreation Department and especially NMP needs to be supported now and in the future so young people can learn the importance of how Climate Change and the natural world plays a vital role in their life today and how it will play an even more important role in the years ahead. Classes held at NMP with many supported by K-12 community teachers, local SOU students and volunteers were the catalyst for successful nature-related classes in the past (pre Covid-19). Many classes served adults as well and are again being offered this fall.

The City of Ashland needs to find a way so learning can continue to be funded and ongoing at NMP as soon as it is safe to do so.

Councilors, Mayor, City Manager Pro Tem,

At a recent City Council Meeting, the suggestion was made that much emphasis has been made about the Climate and Energy Action Plan(CEAP) and not enough discussion of other priorities that are to be discussed and acted on.

Our community **should have** an ultimate concern for the goals that have been established by the CEAP. Every aspect of the decisions you make regarding land use, our transportation network, housing, water and wastewater treatment, are inherently embedded with our ability to adapt and mitigate emissions and their consequences.

Ashland has instituted policies that help our citizens with concrete steps to help us be resilient. Our Climate Page, <https://ashlandor.org/climate-energy/> has information to **Prepare, Rethink, Switch and Renew**. I know that this has helped me understand what things I can start doing to help us meet CEAP's goals. Promoting these ideas to citizens while tackling the decisions you will make that will affect generations is essential.

Thank you for your dedicated service to our community.

Linda Peterson Adams

Councilors:

I am bringing this letter to you wearing several hats.

First, I am a relatively new resident of Ashland - since 2014. A primary reason for moving here is because we were willing to pay the taxes to enjoy - and ensure - that Ashland is a livable and sustainable community for all.

Personally, I believe that the North Mountain Nature Center is key to that phrase - "livable and sustainable". With this letter, I am bringing to you my concerns about the future of Ashland. In all of the writings I have seen about the budget, our wonderful parks were put forward as the reason to continue APRC funding. But I have not seen or heard enough about other services that also need to be supported. I understand the value of all of our parks and I want them to continue.

And there needs to be some way to make sure that we find the funding to continue the operation of the North Mountain Park Nature Center.

I am also part of the Bee City USA Ashland subcommittee under Parks and Rec. I feel that our town is better and stronger because of our Bee City USA Ashland status and I can say personally with feeling that Libby Van Whye is a critical part of our team, and the reason we now have over 75 Bee City USA Ashland designated pollinator gardens, and several pollinator gardens on park property.

I, along with many many others, value the North Mountain Park Nature Center in many ways. Either personally because of the classes taken or taught, or because we know how many lives are touched through their amazing educational programs with schools throughout the Valley, or because we want to make sure other organizations can continue using the grounds to teach about fish, acorns, birds and more, or just because we love the place for walking and experiencing the natural world, a world that is fast disappearing, even in Ashland. Both Ashland and the Rogue Valley need this place.

What will happen if the Nature Center goes away? What will happen to the visitors who come here to visit the Nature Center and stop to shop and eat? What about our air quality and the quality of our Bear Creek and other waterways? What will happen to the Center's amazing gardens and open spaces? What about all the volunteers who are tending the grounds, not to mention Libby and Jen?

We need amazing and inspiring places to teach our residents about the wonders of birds, skunks, fish, crevice nesting bees, beavers, and more, not to mention our native trees, shrubs, and flowering plants that are so fast disappearing everywhere. of the natural world. This is a place to learn about the keystone oak tree and all it provides, our native grasses, camas, and tarweed, the practices of the indigenous tribes, how and why salmon spawn in Bear Creek, and --- well, I could all go on.

So I will just end with my statement that The Nature Center is a critical component to ensure our city, both now and in the future, continues to be a liveable and sustainable Ashland. And I hope you will insure that the budget reflects this asset to our City.

Thank you for your support.

*Kristina Lefever
Ashland*

RE: Parks and Recreation budget.

I am an Ashland resident and strongly support continuing a strong Parks and Recreation department and expanding recreational opportunities for residents. I do not support reducing parks and recreation budget and opportunities. I believe the City Council needs to think more fully, broadly, and critically at both sides of the budget equation. Budget is a balance of income and expenses, but some Council members appear to have a singular focus on only the expenses side of the equation. This problem demands looking at both sides of the budget equation and not assume that cutting expenses is the only option. It clearly isn't and Council members need to expand their thinking around this.

I and my family use Ashland parks daily, sometimes twice per day. And we need more parks and more amenities at parks, not less. We need to ask why Ashland residents choose to live here, knowing that housing costs are more expensive, property taxes are higher, and utility costs are higher than elsewhere in the Rogue valley and the region. Residents have chosen to live in a more expensive place because they think it's worth it. And expense is relative. Some who would oppose a small increase in fees through utilities or property taxes are already spending thousands per month on other expenses.

Please think more fully about this problem and increase parks budget and find a way to make that happen.

--

Bill Kuhn

To the Mayor, Councilors and Mr. Milliman

I would like to address the issue of the proposal to redefine how the F&B Tax is to be used.

The F&B Tax was established for purposes of acquisition, planning, development, repair and rehabilitation of City parks by APRC.

To now claim that the term rehabilitation is subject to interpretation and would include maintenance is simply not convincing. Mowing lawns, garbage collection, irrigation, cleaning bathrooms, etc. cannot, in any way, be included in a definition of "repair and rehabilitation." Including it would mean a total elimination of the accounting differentiation between capital and operating costs.

F&B tax was never meant to be an ongoing revenue stream, but only a one time tax to address long term debt and CIP – with a sunset date.

Redefining the purpose of F&B tax, appears to be an attempt to skirt the issue of having this change come before the electorate, which is clearly required.

APRC had been funded historically with a portion of the property taxes from the General Fund. But in the 2021-2023 biennial budget process, this funding through the General Fund left a projected \$2M "structural deficit." Instead of finding appropriate places to cut, the solution was to fund APRC from a source other than the General Fund - with the F&B taxes. Thus, between this switcheroo and the injection of Federal COVID Funds, the \$2M deficit that was mentioned miraculously disappeared... and the necessary cuts were never addressed!

Years of refusing to make any budget cuts, allowing salaries and benefits to get bloated and the APRC to continue to acquire more parks land with the corresponding increased operating costs (even though acquisition had not been considered essential), lead to the aforementioned deficit. Cuts, especially in higher salaried management, were off the table.

It also cannot be ignored that soon after the budget was passed with this dubious change in funding, COLA raises were also passed, increasing the budget by an estimated \$135K. We can assume that next years budget will also include raises. I've looked but details about this are nowhere to be found so it is impossible to state anything definitively.

Instead, to regain trust and address the issues at hand, I would like to suggest cuts outlined below to immediately address underlying issues:

1. Place a temporary freeze on all non union salaries / benefits (est. \$145K). Renegotiate other salaries / benefits asap
2. Immediately cut auto allowances (\$70K)
3. Review and cut other discretionary allocations (for instance: \$500K to Chamber of Commerce)
4. In addition to the above, require all departments (excluding the Police Department and Fire & Rescue) to cut 5% of their budget, **WITHOUT CUTTING SERVICES.**

And in March, we could take a vote to have a temporary re-assignment of the F&B tax code back to the General Fund. Given that this has been discussed much throughout the budget process, as well as current study sessions and Council meetings, 6 months for the education of the voters would be sufficient. These steps are a good start to proving to the voters that the City / Council is now taking this budget seriously.

I recognize that due to all the years of not making these cuts makes it now a very painful and difficult task, but one which must be done.

I beg you to consider both excluding the Police Department and Fire & Rescue from budget cuts as well as any attempt to outsource them, unless expressly recommended by the Department Chiefs. We cannot afford to cut these essential services.

Thank you all for your hard work.

Leda Shapiro

Madame Mayor and Esteemed Councilors:

The Ashland Parks and Recreation Committee has previously made several “demands”, later downgraded to “requests”, regarding their funding. Our City Manager Pro Tem, Gary Milliman, has made his recommendations to the Council, and on the whole, they are solid and sensible.

He says **NO** to the idea of allowing APRC to act as its own Contract Review Board.

He says **NO WAY** to the idea of allowing APRC to contract directly with third parties, circumventing Council oversight.

Both of those should be obvious to anyone who has the best interests of the city in mind. But it’s APRC’s funding mechanism that garners the most discussion, and raises the greatest concerns.

The current biennial budget was recommended by the Citizens Budget Committee as written with only one amendment: to reduce expenditures or raise revenues by \$1M. This was the wholly inadequate response to the news that the budget has an overall structural deficiency, and will be in deficit by the end of this budget period. The shortfall was estimated at \$3.5M. It is a legal requirement that the city budget be balanced.

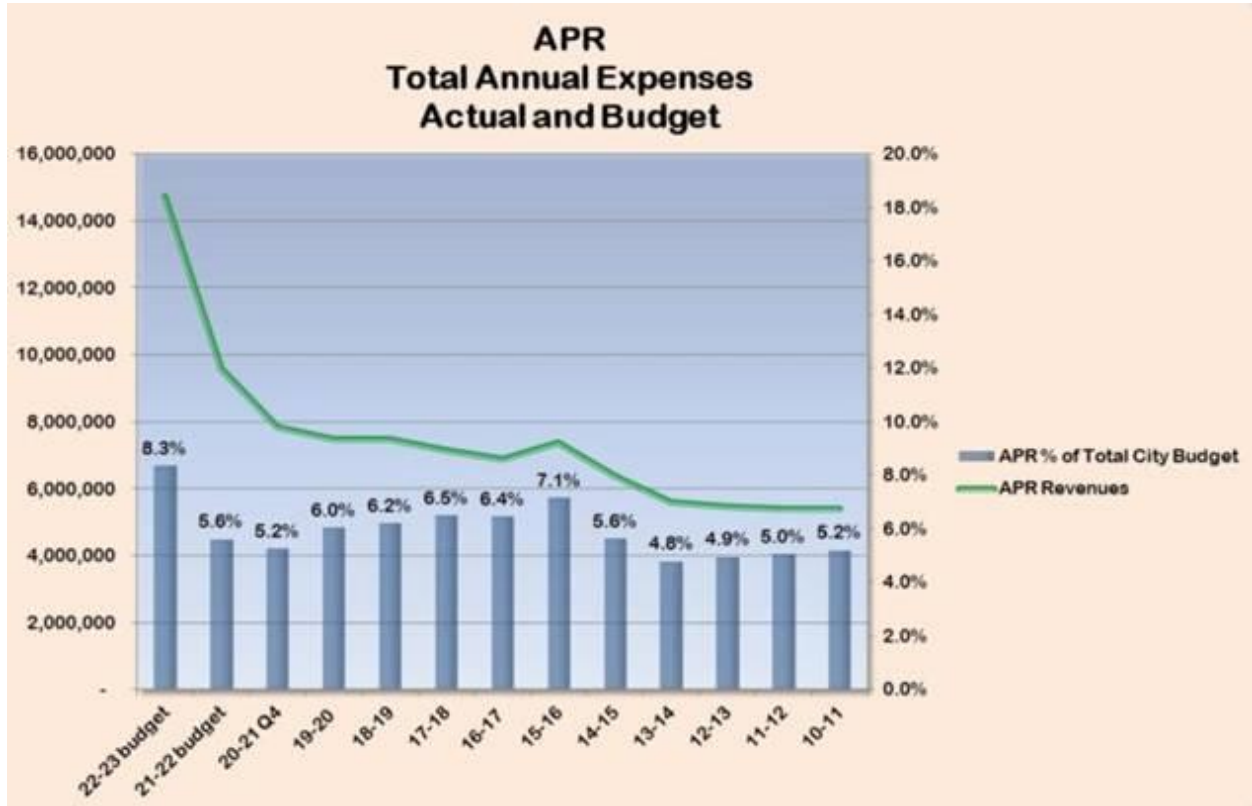
The obvious answer is to cut expenses... EVERYWHERE POSSIBLE, IN EVERY DEPARTMENT. This is the task facing the council. If they can’t cut expenses, they’ll have to raise fees and find other funding mechanisms, since our tax rate is maxed out.

MEANWHILE, APRC is whining about their budget being cut AT ALL. Instead of thinking of the overall welfare of the city and its residents, it can only think of funding its own projects. ***No wonder people appropriately accuse APRC of empire building!***

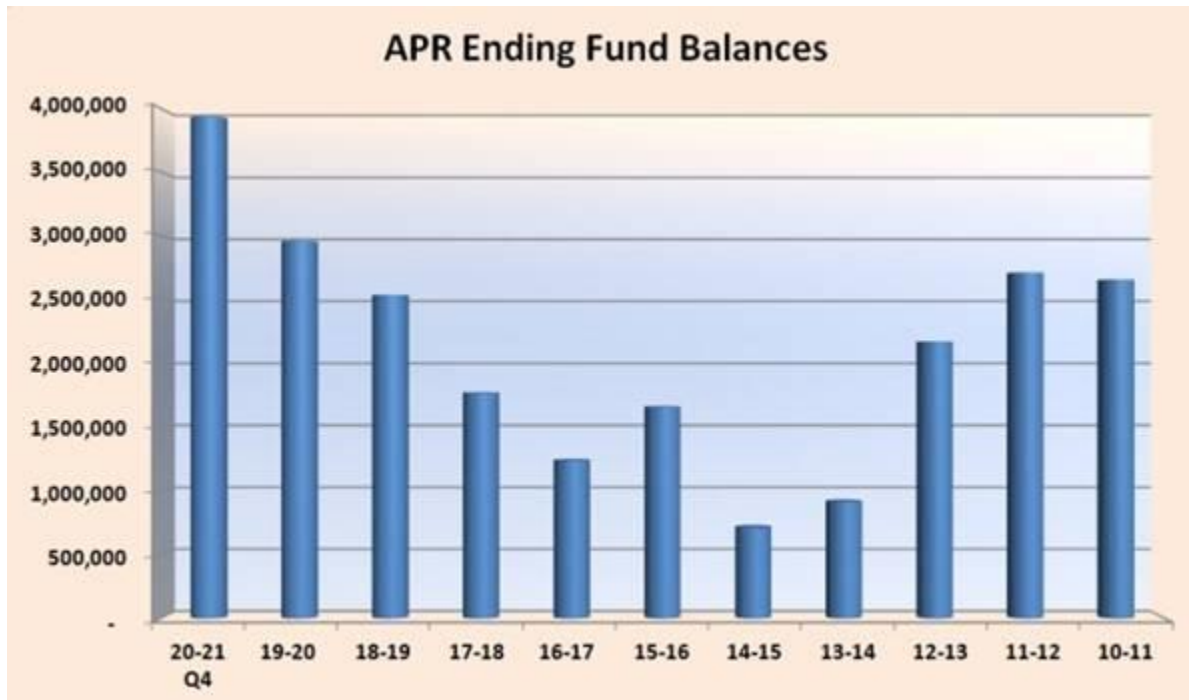
APRC has thrown around a lot of misleading figures to try to justify its insatiable appetite for funding. But here are the facts: APRC’s budgeted funding for 21-22 is 22.2% greater than it actually spent for 20-21, and its budgeted funding for 22-23 is a whopping 53.6% greater than budgeted for 21-22. To put it another way, APRC’s budgeted funding for 22-23 is 87.6% greater than their actual expenditures for 20-21.

[All data is sourced from the 2020 Ashland Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, the 2021 Ashland Fourth Quarter Financial Report, and the 2021-23 Budget.]

HOW DARE APRC COMPLAIN ABOUT THEIR FUNDING? Still, they persist. They demand a guaranteed level of funding, when the rest of the city is in need of cutting back.



APR also has very healthy ending fund balances. The graph below shows the growth of the total of the ending fund balances of the three funds that under which APR operates: APR General Fund, APR Capital Improvements Fund, and APR Equipment Fund. As of the last quarterly report, that total stood at \$3,934,047.



But all of this is not enough! APRC has got their sights on the Food & Beverage Taxes. Somehow, they talked the previous Finance Director and City Manager Pro Tem into including a change in the current budget. They currently get 25% of it, but they want it ALL: 98%, that's 100% less 2% for the City administering the taxes. They would take tax money that has been specifically dedicated to Streets funding by an ordinance approved by a vote of the citizens about five years ago. This ordinance was worded specifically to prevent the use of the FBT for any uses not specified without a confirming vote of the electorate.

So therein lies the rub. The City Manager wants the Council to consider the level of funding for APRC. His recommended option is to place the question of dedicating 98% of FBT before the voters next spring. HOWEVER, he leaves open the option of Council attempting to OVERRIDE the FBT Ordinance with a resolution designed to twist the intent of the FBT Ordinance right now.

THIS MUST NOT BE ALLOWED TO HAPPEN!

Ordinance 3133 is unambiguous:

C. The taxes collected by the City under this chapter shall be used as follows:

*5.d. Except as provided in subsection 4. 020.34. D, any remaining amounts shall be appropriated for purposes consistent with this chapter **unless other purposes are approved by a Council-adopted ordinance enacted by a vote of the Ashland electorate.***

D. The council may decrease the rate of the tax or eliminate the tax described in subsection 4. 020.34. A and B after a public hearing. Notice of the hearing shall be given by publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the City at least 10 days prior to the date of the public hearing.

THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO JUSTIFICATION FOR INCREASING APRC FUNDING OR FOR VIOLATING THE TERMS OF ORDINANCE 3133 AT THIS TIME.

Thank you for your consideration.

Dean Silver

Hello City Council,

As a citizen of Ashland for over 13 years, **I am writing in support of adequate program funding for North Mountain Park Nature Center staff and programs.** Did you know that the nature center trains, supports, and **connects hundreds of Ashland citizens** with meaningful civic engagement and community building? Did you know that these volunteers and staff **educate thousands (literally) of young school children** every single year? Yes, these are the young people that are our current and future water and climate protectors. Clearly, engaging them in activities to learn about the natural world and develop a sense of place is critical. Do you agree that this is important? Thank you for your future transparency, integrity, and trust in continuing what works - educating young people! **Restore and maintain programming and funding at North Mountain Park Nature Center.**

Thank you for making budgetary decisions that make sense and reflect care for our whole community,

Mary Ann Perry

Dear Council Members,

I am concerned about Ashland parks because I have heard various friends discussing the possibility that The Ashland City Council may vote to defund some of the branches of this organization, namely the "rec" branch. There appears to be a limited understanding of what "rec" refers to in this organization. It isn't just the golf course, the pool, the tennis courts, the golf course, the ice rink. It also includes North Mountain Park and The Senior Center.

I want to speak about North Mountain Park.

I have been going to North Mountain Park for over 10 years and almost every day for the past 4 years since I currently live across the street. I couldn't believe the increase in walkers and parents with kids

once we were in lockdown last year. People love the place and it has given them respite during the extremely troubled times we are living in.

This park offers so much diversity to the community. The bird watching there is rich, the gardens (cared for by volunteers) are stunning, the delightful children's play area, a recent addition, is a huge draw for laughing children and parents. Walkers and runners abound at all times of the day. Bear Creek is magical with many birds and other wildlife. There are many places to have picnics all around the park. There are the athletic fields which are heavily used. In the past (pre-Covid) there have been many educational programs for students at the rate of over 1000 a month being served. There have also been many classes at The Nature Center, an amazing resource. Unfortunately because of Covid the center is closed.

North Mountain Park is vital to Ashland, a town which is losing many things which once made it an extra special community. Let's keep our parks vibrant and funded as they should be. Covid has made life very stressful for most of us. One of the best cures for stress is being outside. Being in the fresh air to run and play is so necessary for children, the most damaged population due to the many Covid restrictions.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Gwen Oaks (North Mountain Park Volunteer and Concerned Ashland Citizen)

To City Council, Mayor, MR. Milliman:

I just recently read an email sent to you by Leda Shapiro on budget issues and the handling of F&B and APRC funding requests. It is an excellent letter. She identifies many key issues and dynamics.

I support her recommendations for immediate cuts. She has good approaches she recommends. For instance cuts of 5% to every department excluding police and fire and also excluding service cuts. I always say fully fund Fire and Rescue but am agreeing with adding Police to the list. Our town is changing; our valley is changing. I also support her other suggestions. Some address cutting perks and imbalances that have been identified for 4 or 5 years now by others who have studied our budget. I second what she says.

I want also to mention that there was an article in the Sunday paper about the extreme stresses Mercy Flights is currently under with the huge burden of our covid surge. They are having trouble keeping up with the workload.

The workload is not likely to decrease any time soon...there will be a winter surge in our region that will continue to stress our first responders and hospitals all over the NOrthwest. Flu season is expected to be intense this year as well....rebounding and being above normal. So the ambulance companies and hospitals could be in for a hard winter.

Now is not the time to make any changes to our Ambulance Services. Other companies will also be stressed with the covid surge....and this will likely go on for months. Do not merge with anyone now or turn over our ambulance services to anyone. As a member of Fire Med with Mercy Flights added on, I have no idea if I needed Mercy Flights they will be able to respond. Covid may keep take up all their capacity.

I believe strongly in keeping our Fire and Rescue department as is. We have an excellent department with cross training and superb training standards. We also have a great response time. I do not want the County to assume getting us contracts or setting standards for us.....there are more issues with the way the County handles things than I can enumerate....very different standards and values than we have. I do not want them in charge of our ambulance services or anything else actually. I also noted questions about how outsourcing our ambulance services to other companies would affect our ability to finance our fire department. Every budget letter I have written for 5 years or so now says protect our Fire Department...usuallly right before the City did the most insane thing they could....cut right at the beginning of fire season. It is time to reverse that trend and restore the Departmentand protect it as our fire seasons will get worse. With 4 times the fires we have now predicted for our future, this will remain the highest priority for decades. I fully believe that the connections between our ambulance service and our fire department bolster both....they are inextricably intertwined. Keep them both robust and connected and an Ashland department. Maybe at some point there is something we can do with District 5 and the questions our Mayor articulated tonight....but only if our Department is fully protected or enhanced. The County will absolutely not give us the quality services we have always had.

I missed the first part of the meeting and will catch up soon. Until then..thanks for reading this.

~Gwen Davies

Madame Mayor and Esteemed Councilors:

No one can understand why APRC wants the entirety of the FBT. APRC keeps saying they want and need a dedicated, reliable revenue stream, but everyone knows FBT is neither of those.

It's all about the new pool.

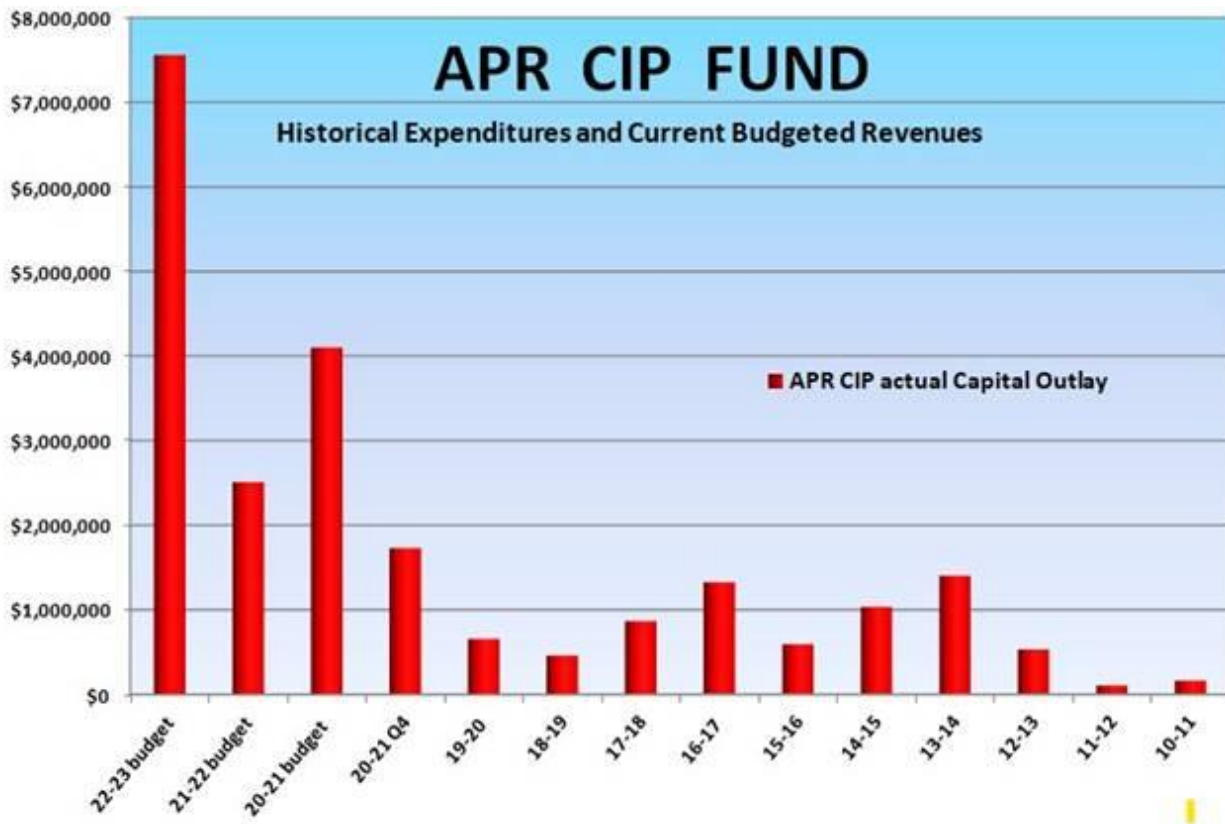
APRC knows that the electorate will never approve a \$5.5M GO bond for a new pool, but they are determined to build it, come hell or high water.

The only way they can do it is to find a way to fund a revenue bond for that purpose, a bond that won't need approval by the voters.

That explains why they are so desperate to get their hands on 98% of FBT. That entire 98% will be available for servicing the debt on whatever size bond they wind up needing. They want that money to be used "at their discretion".

Regardless of what APRC tries to make you believe, it has an ending fund balance in the Parks CIP fund as of 7/31/21 of \$1,708,410. That money, along with the proceeds of a \$4-5M bond might pay for the new pool. And the unrestricted FBT revenue will pay for that debt service.

THAT is why you see \$7.5M in the budget for next year for the Parks CIP fund. They are counting on the FBT and a big revenue bond.



They talked Melanie and Adam into this scheme, and staff rammed the budget through the CBC with no hope of understanding what was going on, since it was a total subterfuge.

Don't fall for it, Councilors. Reject their demands. Focus on the ENTIRE budget.

Thank you for your consideration.

Dean Silver

The latest intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change indicates that if we wish to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees C (2.7 degrees F) above the 1850-1900 level, we need to reach net zero emissions by no later than 2030 - and that's just for a 50% chance. If we want a better chance, the deadline is sooner. While Governor Brown's Executive Order 20-04 from March last year charges state agencies with reducing emissions to at least 45% below the 1990 level by 2035, and at least 80% below the 1990 level by 2050. The critical phrase 'at least' gave the agencies the opportunity to impose emissions

reduction trajectories that are steep. Unfortunately, the program developed by DEQ to target fuel suppliers and stationary (industrial) sources is simply not enough to meet the urgency of the moment. Please contact DEQ during the 60-day comment period ending October 4th to urge the program be strengthened commensurate with this urgency. I will circulate the address for submitting comments and for a page where more information is available on the shortcomings of the DEQ proposal in the chat."

[The address for submitting comments is GHGCR2021@deq.state.or.us while more information on the program and its shortcomings is available at <https://socan.eco/cpp-comments/>]

louise40208@gmail.com

Dear City Council:

Oak Knoll Golf Course is a true treasure. I have enjoyed it independently as well as a member of the OK Women's Golf Association the many years I have been in retirement. It has been a safe location for all ages during the pandemic -- for exercising as well as socializing, a boon to body and spirit. Furthermore, it offers a large open space for birds and other animals. The whole course is beautiful, peaceful and, thus, healthful. The course manager, Patrick Oropallo, has done a fantastic job in creating community.

In short, Oak Knoll Golf Course is an asset to humans and animals and should be maintained in perpetuity.

Amy Lepon

Dear City Council,

Like many other letters of support you've received, I am absolutely in favor of continued funding for our Oak Knoll golf course. Since moving to this valley in the early 1980's, I have enjoyed and immensely valued OK course for many reasons.

It has preserved a breathtaking place of beauty for not only folks in this area, but also for our vital tourist population. It is a well-maintained and affordable golf course that I have enjoyed as well as many others. Patrick Oropallo has done an excellent job in running the course, including other Rogue Valley golf club in activities and adding community/athletic events to extend the gift of this treasure to our community at large. During the pandemic when many venues were closed, Oak Knoll golf course provided an important place of refuge and reprieve when the Covid standards allowed its use.

In closing, I feel that supporting Oak Knoll golf course now and in the future is one of the most tangible and uplifting uses of city funding.

Sincerely,
Barb Street

I wish to support the Oak Knoll golf course. Patrick Oropallo has increased the number of events at Oak Knoll and new opportunities to learn the game. Golf has been my refuge during the pandemic - a safe way to get exercise and be outdoors. It is also an activity that seniors can continue to enjoy as we age. Please continue to support this wonderful community asset!

Phyllis Fernlund

My name is Bruce Boyd. I've been an Ashland resident and homeowner in the oak knoll neighborhood for the last five years. This is my written testimony as I am unable to attend the council meeting. I support keeping funding for the Oak Knoll golf course. Two reasons:

(1) some residents and some elected officials would like to eliminate the golf course because it is financially not self-supporting. If that is part of the litmus test for parks and recreation facilities and programs, then very few if any parks and recreation programs fully fund themselves. I encourage you to use that litmus test when looking at the other facilities and programs, not just the golf course. For example Lithia Park does not generate direct revenue. Why is that park more priority for receiving funding than the golf course that actually partially funds itself ?

(2) it was noted by the interim city manager that our forefathers who created the parks commission in the early 1900s probably did not envision a golf course as part of the parks program. He is likely correct. Again if this is a litmus test then I doubt that our forefathers who founded the parks commission envisioned a swimming pool or a senior center or many other programs than need outside funding. Again I encourage you to use the same litmus test against other parks and programs that would receive funding, not just single out the golf course.

Finally, I would like to commend Patrick Oropallo who has done an excellent job managing and upgrading Oak Knoll Golf Course.

Bruce Boyd

I have volunteered at the NMP Nature Center since the first month that I arrived in Ashland, September 2018. The existence of this Nature Center was a big draw for me, as it's existence testifies to the foresight of the Ashland Community. There are only 23 nature centers in all of Oregon, 4 in Southern Oregon, many operated by Federal and County agencies, and yet the programming in our city -operated Ashland center is top shelf.

I have been involved in Environmental Education since the 1980's as a teacher who believed that it was essential to bring children outdoors to start understanding the marvelous web of nature that surrounds and supports us. I have led teams to create outdoor learning natural areas in schools and been involved in the writing of much curriculum for those spaces. Coming in to volunteer at North Mountain Park Nature Center, I was very impressed by the knowledge and professionalism of the staff, and by the curriculum which has been written, tested, and improved over the years at the Nature Center.. This curriculum is specific to this time and place, developed by it's own staff, not just a generic off-the-shelf set of generic activities.

Having both a highly skilled staff and an up-to date-curriculum, and an excellent training program for it's volunteer teachers, and the ability to organize the comings and goings of 100 busloads of children from the area... this is a community asset which is truly priceless. It is a living asset... if the staff and programs are allowed to fade away, it will not simply be a matter of dusting off the old curriculum and starting over. Programs of this quality are very rare, and the greatest asset they have are their trained staff. I'm guessing that this is the finest nature center and program run by any city in the state of Oregon, and comparable to top programs in the country. .

Ashland clearly has a daunting fiscal crisis this year. And, we need to consider the values of our community assets with the long term in mind. Given the environmental challenges we face, especially with climate, we need to push ahead with educating ourselves and our children about how humans can play a positive role in nature. Kids today more than ever need to be outdoors in settings that make sense, to understand it, so that when they as adults are faced with the environmental problems that will inevitably crop up, they will have a foundation of understanding to build upon.

Jonathan Pope

Council,

The Oak Knoll course is a valuable asset for the city of Ashland. With the new management it is getting better and better and becoming more and more popular with both tourists and locals. A golf course and tennis facilities were both requirements for a city, when we were looking for a place to retire to. Both are still a necessity for us. They are both keystones of a good parks and recreation department and must receive adequate funding.

Please give them the support they deserve.

Thank you, Bill and Nancy Walz

September 21, 2021

My name is Liz Landreth and my husband and I have lived in Ashland for 8 years. I'm a long-time school program activities instructor at North Mountain Park Nature Center, and I speak tonight to voice my support for this valuable community resource.

We moved here from California and chose to live in Ashland, even with it's higher prices because we felt that the city offered an exceptional quality of life.

In this current difficult time for the city, I understand that the lack revenues have put a severe strain on our budget and that changes have to be made that affect the APARC.

There is a reason that "recreation" is tied with parks, parks without recreation are just empty spaces, void of enrichment. We do things in parks.

So, when considering recreation activities and programs, I respectfully request that you evaluate their impact on the community, which is definitely quantifiable.

For example, here are some stats (averages) from the North Mountain Park Nature Center the last four years:

- **2276 students per year** participating in over **100 K-5** inquiry-based, standards-aligned outdoor education classes
- **1035 people of all ages** attending other classes and events per year
- **369 volunteers of all ages donating 3736 hours** to support NMP programs per year

North Mountain Park Nature Center deserves its top ranking in the APRC recreation budget. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely, Liz Landreth

Dear Mayor and City Council

I wish to express how very important North Mountain Park is to me and my family. We walk through and enjoy North Mountain Park several days a week. We see the joy it brings to so many families and individuals, and we see how it sustains many species of birds and plants as well.

For us it is an important place for exercise and for being in a natural setting.

Without the park and its programs, our quality of life in Ashland would be effected negatively.

Please support the long term continuance of staff and programs at North Mountain Park.

Thank you very much.

Miriam Sundheim

Land Acknowledgement (shorter version)

We acknowledge and honor the aboriginal people on whose ancestral homelands we work—the Ikirakutsum Band of the Shasta Nation, as well as the diverse and vibrant Native communities who make their home here today. We honor the first stewards in the Rogue Valley and the lands we love and depend on: Tribes with ancestral lands in and surrounding the geography of the Ashland Watershed include the original past, present and future indigenous inhabitants of the Shasta, Takelma, and Athabaskan people. We also recognize and acknowledge the Shasta village of K'wakhakha—"Where the Crow lights"—that is now the Ashland City Plaza.

Winburn Way Community Center and Pioneer Log Cabin



Womens Civic Club - Richland Oregon

AD Hoc Committee Report
21-September-2021

Chris Brown – George Kramer – Gil Livni
Councilors Seffinger & Moran







ASHLAND COMMUNITY CENTER

59 WINDBURN WAY

59 WINDBURN WAY

LOADING ZONE

NO PARKING

QUALITY

QUALITY

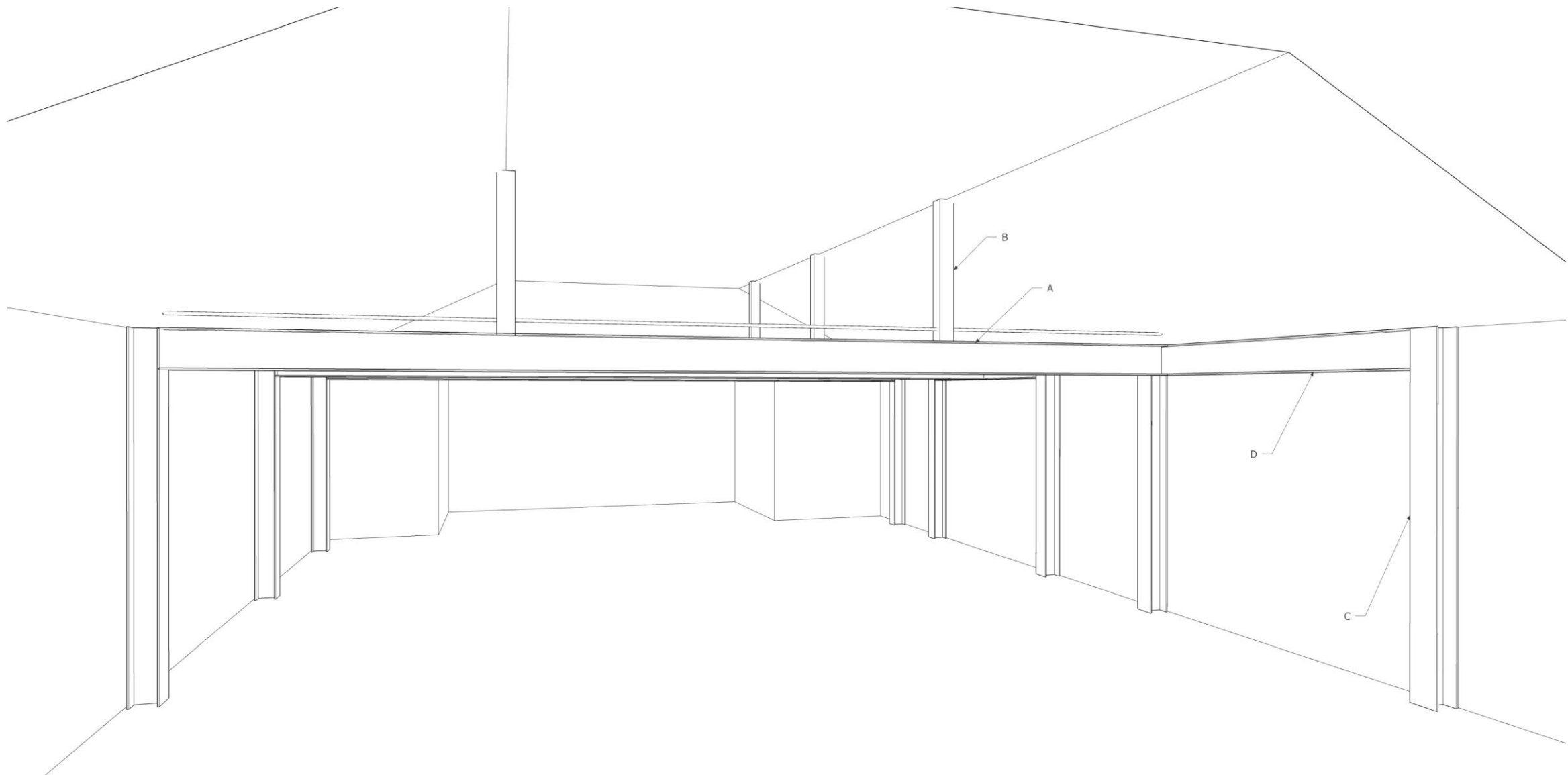


LEAST-COST ALTERNATIVES

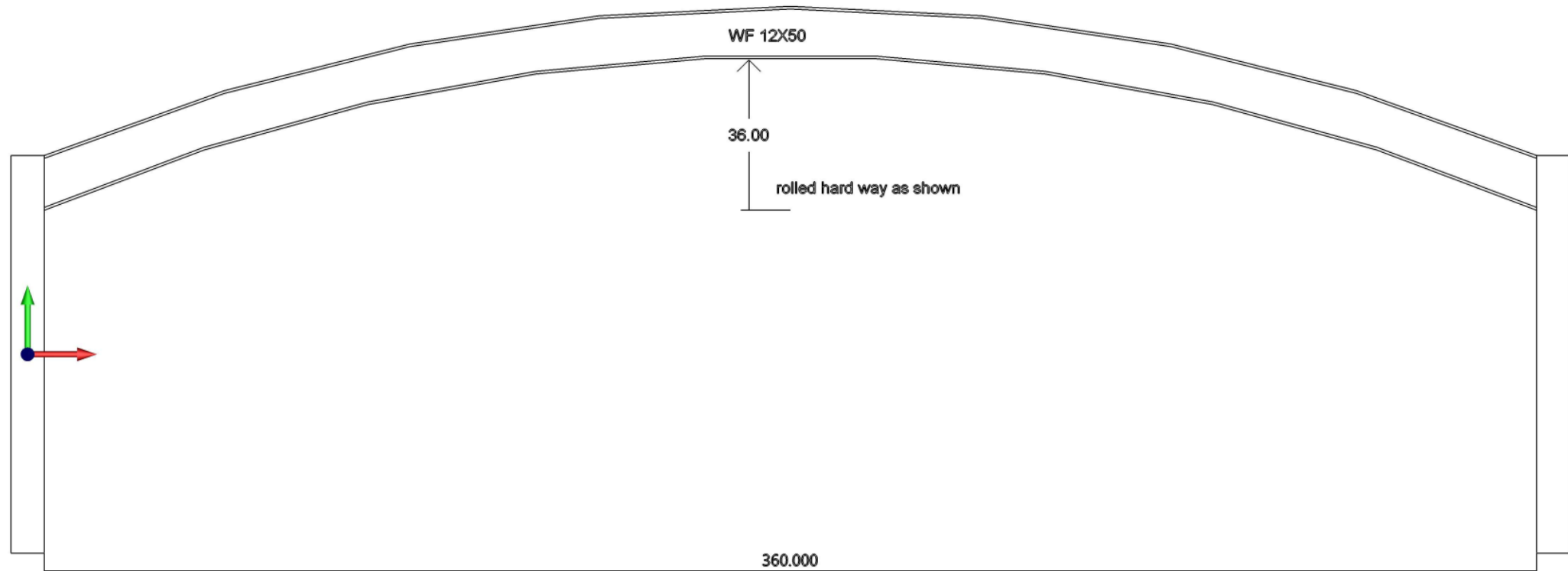
25 psf snow load

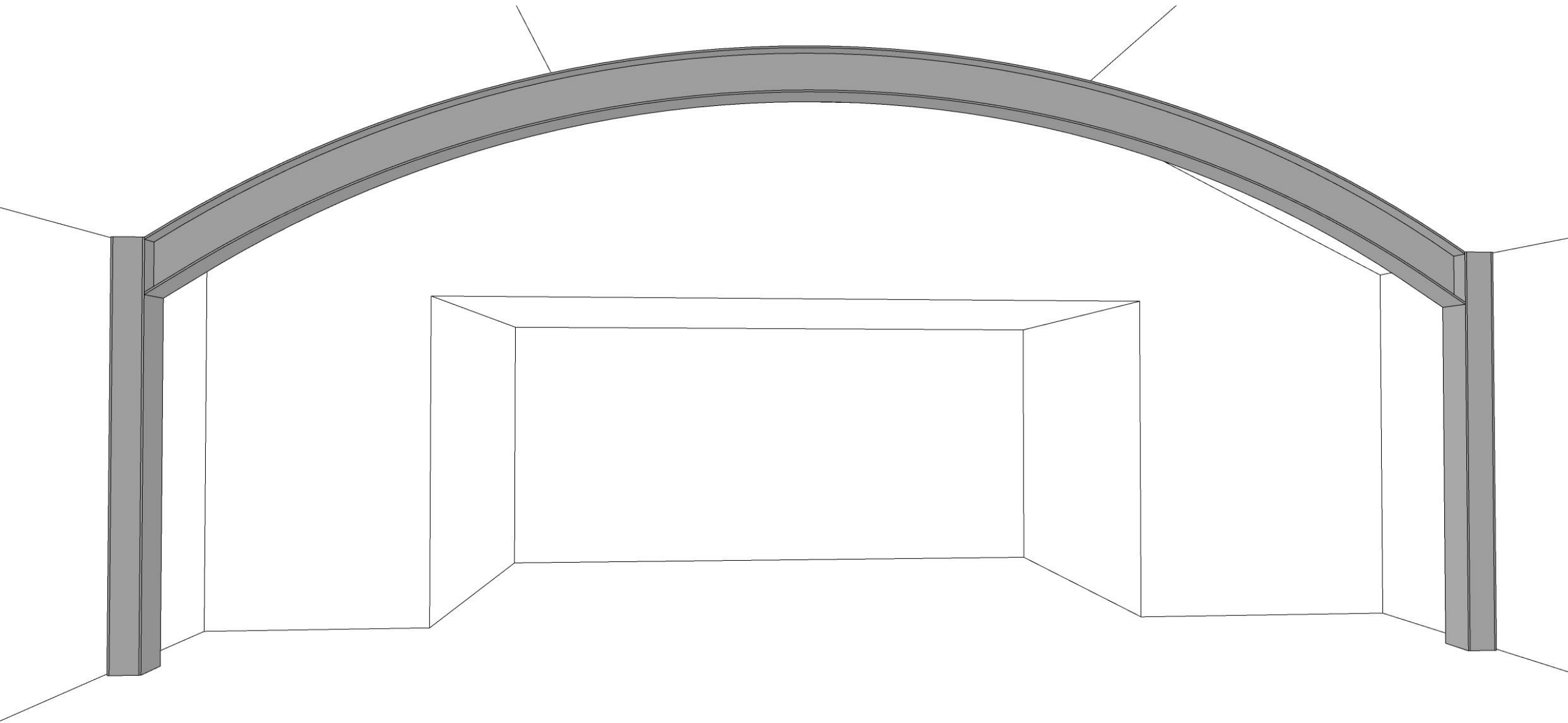
Weight of Snow		
Snow Depth	Design Weight	Estimated Actual Weight
6 inches	7.5 psf	6-9 psf
12 inches	16.1 psf	12-18 psf
18 inches	26.1 psf	18-24 psf
24 inches	37.8 psf	24-36 psf
30 inches	51.8 psf	30-45 psf
36 inches	69 psf	36-54 psf
42 inches	90 psf	42-63 psf
48 inches	117 psf	48-72 psf

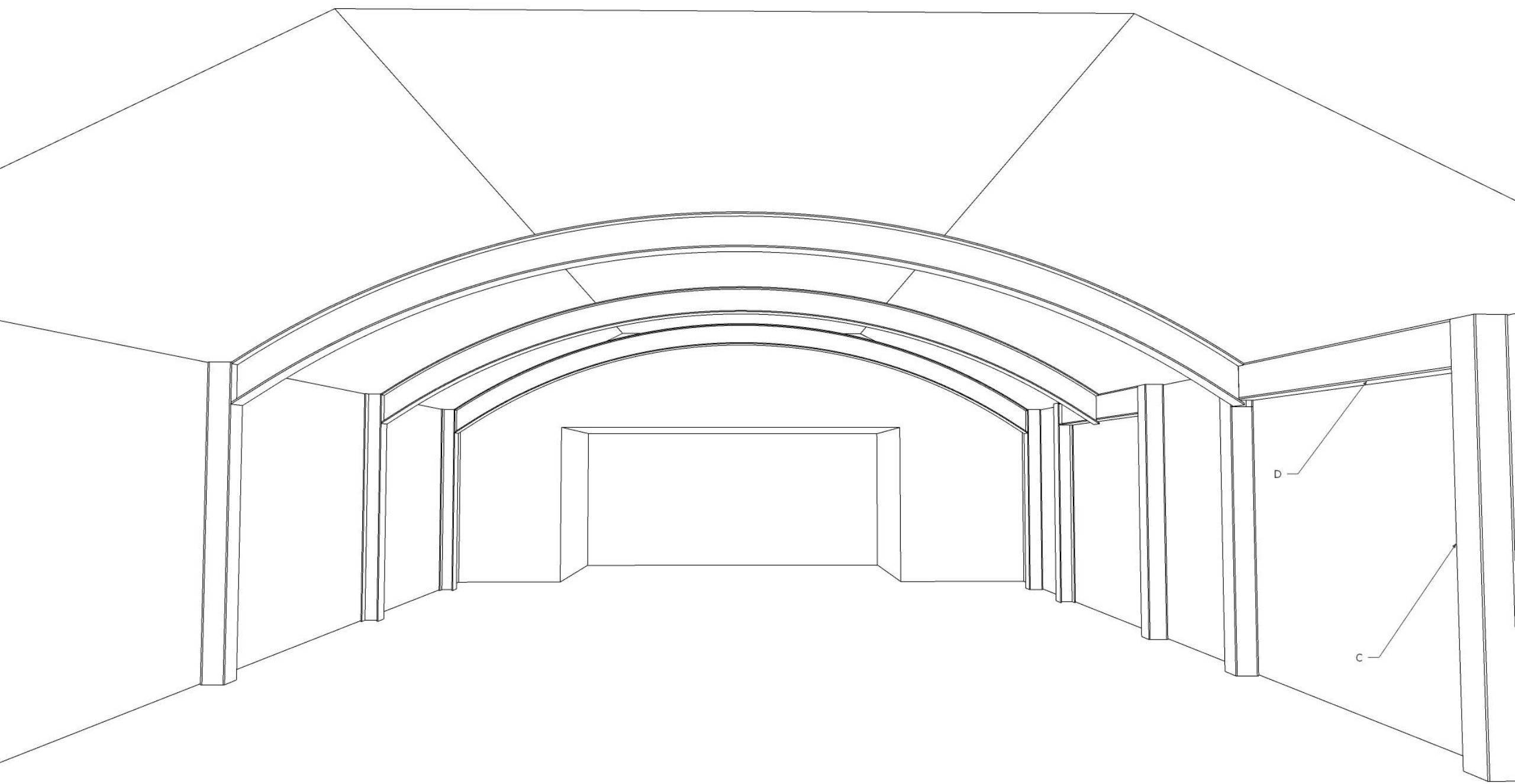
Snow design loads are based on figures published by the ASCE; estimates for the actual weight of snow range from 1 to 1.5 psf per inch of depth. Note that the density of snow increases as depth increases. In a 6-inch snowfall, an inch of snow has a design density of 1.25 psf per inch, and a real-world density closer to 1 psf per inch; in 48-inch-deep snow, the design density is more than 2.4 psf per inch while the actual density is probably 1.5 psf per inch or more.



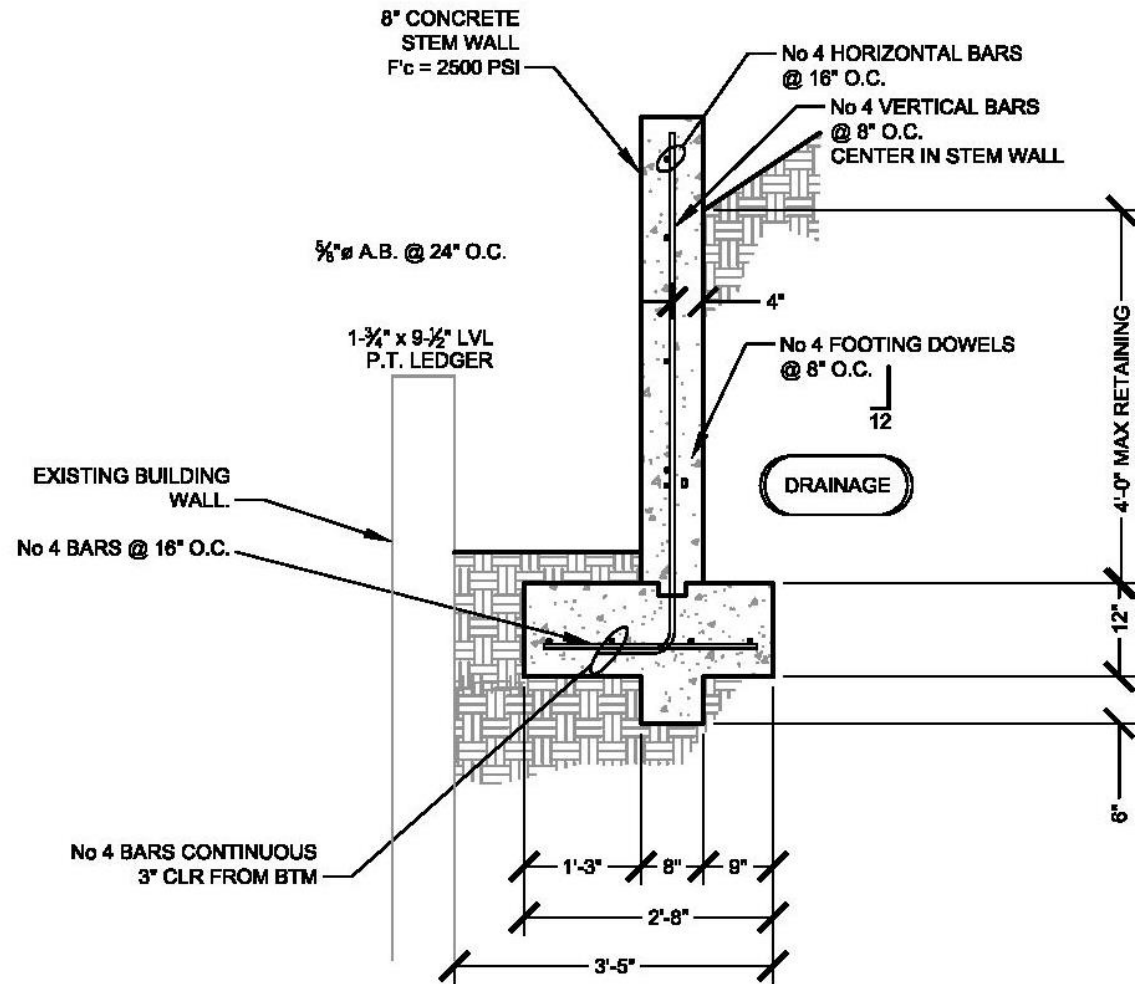
Rolled Beam at Proscenium Arch











DETAIL - Property Wall

SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"



ESTIMATED COSTS

The following cost estimates reflect current costs for materials and labor (2021), including BOLI and related soft costs. Actual costs may vary, depending on the status of the construction sector at the time of contracting.

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	LOW	HIGH
Winburn Way Community Center			
1	Install wood and steel moment frame/roof repair over auditorium, including drywall as needed, footings, etc.	\$ 65,000	\$ 80,000
2	Unisex ADA Restroom in former storage	\$ 20,000	\$ 25,000
3	Rebuild Hall, remove stairs, install fold-down access, repaint and repair trim, etc.	\$ 8,000	\$ 12,000
4	Replace rear entry steps (may be combined with retaining wall work if concrete	\$ 2,500	\$ 3,500
5	Basement StrongTies/sill clips, re-shim/replace footings, add x-bracing and strapping for lateral shear as needed	\$ 20,000	\$ 25,000
Pioneer Log Cabin			
1	Install StrongTies at plate connections, enhance roof framing with collar ties and gussets	\$ 15,000	\$ 20,000
2	Reinforce south wall window opening	\$ 5,000	\$ 8,000
Engineering/Soft Costs (includes retaining wall)		\$ 15,000	\$ 25,000
TOTAL STRUCTURAL/Functional Upgrades to reopen		\$ 150,500	\$ 198,500
RECOMMENDED UPGRADE TO REDUCE FIRE HAZARD			
Excavate & install rear retaining wall behind both buildings, including concrete pad at WWCC basement entry, fencing and gates to reduce access		\$ 65,000	\$ 80,000
TOTAL RECOMMENDED PROJECT COSTS		\$ 215,500	\$ 278,500

September 19, 2021

RE Agenda Item: Winburn Way, Ad Hoc Committee, Final Report

Honorable Mayor and City Council Members,

My name is Dale Shostrom. I am currently a member of the Ashland Historic Commission and have served the City as a commissioner for over 22 years, where I help carry out the Commissions' charge to preserve the integrity of our historic structures and resources. I am speaking to express some thoughts and concerns regarding the proposal submitted by the Winburn Way ad hoc Committee. Because the Historic Commission has not met since the proposal was submitted, I am speaking on behalf of myself and not the Commission as a whole.

I have worked as a designer/builder in Ashland since moving here in 1974 and have collaborated with many structural engineers during my career. In the early spring of this year, by previous order of the City Council, I was invited by the Public Works Dept. to provide technical expertise and community representation in the evaluation of Engineering and Architectural firms that had submitted proposals to provide comprehensive evaluations of Pioneer Hall and the Community Center. During this process I developed a robust understanding of the condition of these structures via on-site visits with architects and engineers and I thoroughly reviewed all the documents, architectural drawings, engineering reports that pertain to these buildings.

In my opinion these buildings have some serious structural deficiencies and deferred maintenance issues. Pioneer Hall has been well investigated in recent years, whereas the Community Center has had only a preliminary report on the structural deficiencies of the roof and north wall of the main hall auditorium.

I think the ad hoc Committees' proposal can safely re-open these buildings. I whole heartedly agree with the need to get these buildings open for public uses and to find cost effective solutions. But the ad hoc charge to 'develop least-cost recommendations' falls short aesthetically and impedes the opportunity for historic restoration.

My major concern is with the Community Center auditorium ceiling and the proposed fix, by the installation of a **steel moment frame**. The existing curved vaulted ceiling covers an open floor area of 30 feet by 40 feet. The ad hoc Committees' structural solution is comprised of a series of asymmetrically spaced steel beams, headers, and post (wrapped in drywall) that will completely overpower and interrupt the historic openness, simplicity, and detailing of this beautifully vaulted auditorium.

Further, this utilitarian retrofit support system will complicate or permanently eliminate future opportunities to restore the north wall and roof systems, without the additional wasteful expenditure that will be needed to remove the steel moment frame. Specifically, the Committees' recommendation would severely restrict or preclude future repair of the sagging floor and compromised foundation, the outward leaning windows and wall, and the 15-inch-deep belly in the exterior roof plane. The consensus engineering solution, to remedy all these problems, has been to remove the existing roof structure and rebuild with new wood trusses. I believe the proposed **steel moment frame** is a totally unacceptable solution, both aesthetically and historically.

As a next step, we need to develop cost-effective design solutions that address safety concerns, longevity of the structure, and preservation of key historic design features, as previously directed by Council. By incorporating the ad hoc Committees' findings, we can simplify a new 'preliminary design and engineering phase'. Because the City may need to re-open a competitive solicitation process for engineering services regardless of the path forward, a more economical opportunity to better assess the long-term needs of these buildings is not likely to occur again soon. This phase should facilitate public input, needs analysis, and budgets. The resulting "menu" and price list of repairs, improvements, and restorations will enable Council and the community to better prioritize which actions should be performed over time.

These buildings are nearly a century old. It is time for a detailed evaluation that will guide decisions to ensure our historic public resources will serve the Ashland community for another 100 years.

Respectfully,
Dale Shostrom

Councilors:

I am bringing this letter to you wearing several hats.

First, I am a relatively new resident of Ashland - since 2014. A primary reason for moving here is because we were willing to pay the taxes to enjoy - and ensure - that Ashland is a livable and sustainable community for all.

Personally, I believe that the North Mountain Nature Center is key to that phrase - "livable and sustainable". With this letter, I am bringing to you my concerns about the future of Ashland. In all of the writings I have seen about the budget, our wonderful parks were put forward as the reason to continue APRC funding. But I have not seen or heard enough about other services that also need to be supported. I understand the value of all of our parks and I want them to continue.

And there needs to be some way to make sure that we find the funding to continue the operation of the North Mountain Park Nature Center.

I am also part of the Bee City USA Ashland subcommittee under Parks and Rec. I feel that our town is better and stronger because of our Bee City USA Ashland status and I can say personally with feeling that Libby Van Whye is a critical part of our team, and the reason we now have over 75 Bee City USA Ashland designated pollinator gardens, and several pollinator gardens on park property.

I, along with many many others, value the North Mountain Park Nature Center in many ways. Either personally because of the classes taken or taught, or because we know how many lives are touched through their amazing educational programs with schools throughout the Valley, or because we want to make sure other organizations can continue using the grounds to teach about fish, acorns, birds and more, or just because we love the place for walking and experiencing the natural world, a world that is fast disappearing, even in Ashland. Both Ashland and the Rogue Valley need this place.

What will happen if the Nature Center goes away? What will happen to the visitors who come here to visit the Nature Center and stop to shop and eat? What about our air quality and the quality of our Bear Creek and other waterways? What will happen to the Center's amazing gardens and open spaces? What about all the volunteers who are tending the grounds, not to mention Libby and Jen?

We need amazing and inspiring places to teach our residents about the wonders of birds, skunks, fish, crevice nesting bees, beavers, and more, not to mention our native trees, shrubs, and flowering plants that are so fast disappearing everywhere. of the natural world. This is a place to learn about the keystone oak tree and all it provides, our native grasses, camas, and tarweed, the practices of the indigenous tribes, how and why salmon spawn in Bear Creek, and --- well, I could all go on.

So I will just end with my statement that The Nature Center is a critical component to ensure our city, both now and in the future, continues to be a liveable and sustainable Ashland. And I hope you will insure that the budget reflects this asset to our City.

Thank you for your support.

Kristina Lefever
Ashland