

**ASHLAND CITY COUNCIL
STUDY SESSION MINUTES
December 4, 2023**

Mayor Graham started the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Mayor Graham, Councilor Hyatt, Bloom, Dahle, Kaplan, DuQuenne, and Hansen was present.

1. Public Input

Tam Masdon/Ashland/Noted the challenges increasing for people who were hungry and struggling to sleep. She encouraged humanity and basic kindness.

Jospeh Wise/Asland/Was staying at the dusk to dawn camping area and commented on his experience with the police while staying there.

Karen/Ashland/Was staying at the dusk to dawn camping area and explained how difficult it was to have to move their tents every day.

Rick Bevel/Ashland/Was staying at the dusk to dawn camping area and shared his experience getting tickets. He was in a wheelchair and moving tents every day was cruel.

Anamarie LeBeau/Ashland/Arrived two weeks ago and was staying at the dusk to dawn camping area and spoke against people having to move their tents twice a day.

Debbie Neisewander/Ashland/Described an incident where an individual knifed several tents at the dusk to dawn camping space. She wanted the people staying on the night lawn to have a say in who stayed there.

Austin Konzelman/Ashland/Was helping an individual in a wheelchair at the dusk to dawn camping space who had received several tickets over the past few weeks. Council was violating the City's community commitment statement and the 8th Amendment.

2. Water Utility Rates Overview

Public Works Director Scott Fleury provided a presentation on water and enterprise system utility rates (see Attached):

- Water Utility
- Water Utility Projected Rate Increase FY24/25 – 10%
- Water Treatment Plant Project
- Cost of Service – Water
- Wastewater Utility
- Wastewater Utility Projected Rate Increases FY25 – 6%
- Storm Drain Utility

- Storm Drain Utility – Projected Rate Increases FY25 – 7%
- Affordability Analysis
- Low Income Utility Assistance
- Questions

Council discussed progressive rates. Staff explained the 10% was across the meter and what customers were charged to generate the revenue to support the fund. They would capture commodity charges prior to the cost of service study to look at multiple levels of data and bring back options.

Fleury explained removing funds for the water treatment plant would cause a significant reduction in rates but cost more long term. The cost of doing nothing would put people in jeopardy through possible disasters. He provided an update on potential grants. They would have more information in the spring or summer of 2024 on what grant monies would be available.

Finance Manager Bryn Morrison explained how residents receiving SNAP benefits automatically qualified for assistance programs in the city. Council was interested in expanding the Ashland Low Income Energy Assistance Program (ALIEAP) throughout the year. Council agreed to look at progressive rates.

Fleury addressed an inquiry on reviewing income levels throughout the city to create a base structure. Staff could gather some level of income information from planning and the census. It would take four to six months to compile. Everything else should be considered in the cost-of-service study where the experts would walk council through the process.

3. Electric Master Plan Overview

Electric Utility Director Thomas McBartlett III introduced Martin Stoddard from Stoddard Power Systems LLC who provided the following presentation:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electric System Planning Study • Renewable Energy Discussion • Agenda • Introduction • Missing slides • System Model vs. City’s Elec Map • Review of Existing Profile, 2013–2022 • Review of Existing Profile, 2013–2022 • Climate & Energy Action Plan (CEAP) • CEAP – The City’s Path • CEAP Goals – Transition to clean energy • CEAP Goal – Transition to clean energy Renewable Energy Portfolio/Potentials | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solar Energy – Commercial & Residential PV • Solar Energy – “Large” PV Integration • Hydro Power • Other Resources • Electric Vehicles • Electric Vehicle • Electric Vehicle Charging Station • Electric Vehicle Challenges • Microgrid • Other Considerations • Thank you |
|---|--|

Stoddard explained net zero was an aspirational goal at this time. Being grid free on a large scale was expensive and would require back up. The city should focus on inefficiencies within the current distribution system. The biggest game changer had been lightbulb changes. In addition to PV integration, things were becoming more efficient. Alternatively, residences were not being incentivize.

4. Adjournment of Study Session

Councilor Bloom/DuQuenne m/s to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m. Voice Vote ALL AYES: YES. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.



City Recorder Alissa Kolodzinski

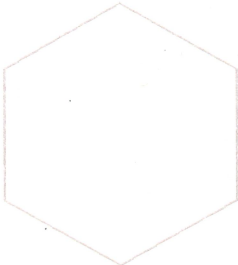
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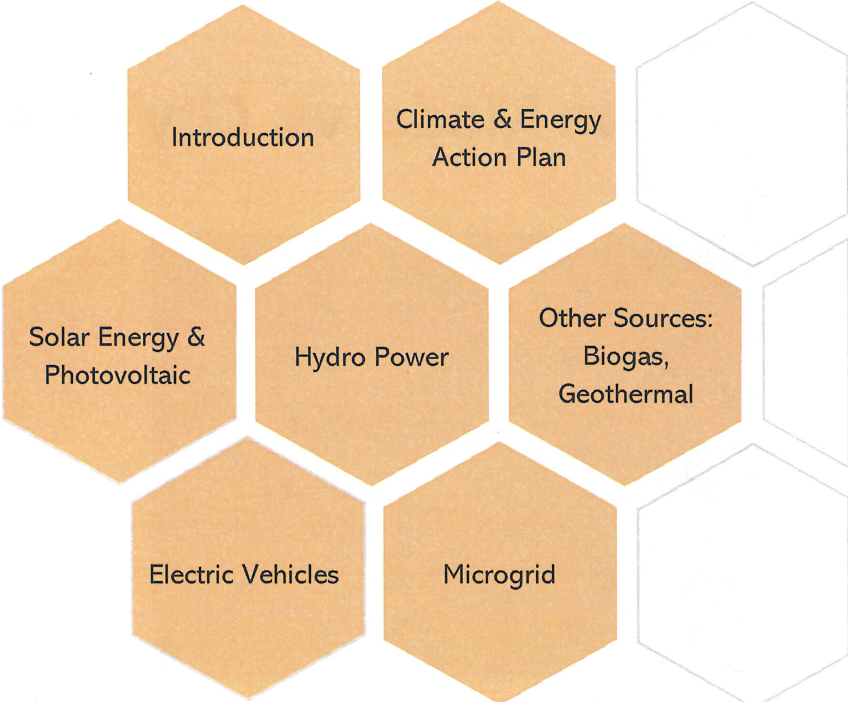
Mayor Tonya Graham

City of Ashland Electric System Planning Study Renewable Energy Discussion

Presented by:
Martin Stoddard, P.E.
Stoddard Power Systems, LLC



Agenda





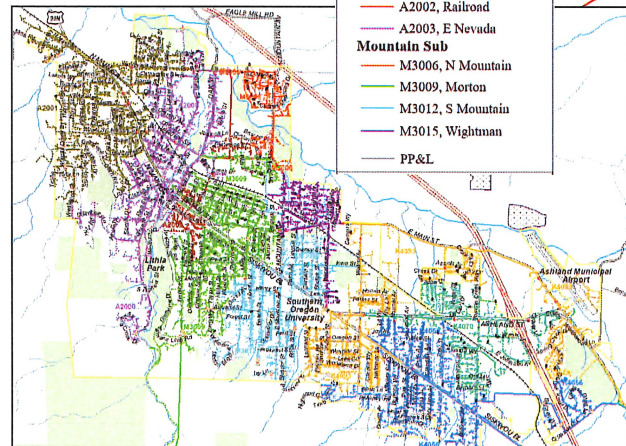
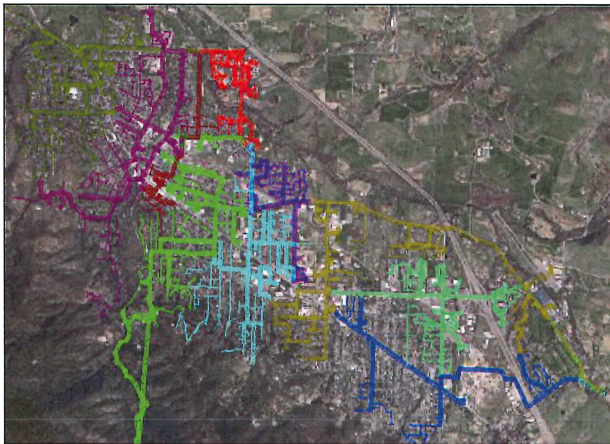
Introduction

Stoddard Power Systems, LLC, is a small, veteran-owned, Oregon-based, consulting firm with consulting engineers having many years of experience providing services to government, municipal utilities, PUD, cooperatives, etc.

Currently, SPS is performing a 10-year Electrical System Master Plan study.

- The overall project progress is about 40% completed.
- A new GIS-based electrical system model is being developed as part of this study.
- The typical study scope focuses on electrical forecast, analysis, and a system improvement plan. For this study we are also addressing:
 - Opportunities and barriers for adding renewable energy resources,
 - An assessment of the City's readiness to accommodate high adoption of Electric Vehicles (EVs) and fuel-switching (natural gas reduction)
 - Recommendations for integration of the City's Climate and Energy Action Plan (CEAP) and looking at impacts on electrical infrastructure.

System Model vs. City's Elec Map



Review of Existing Profile, 2013-2022

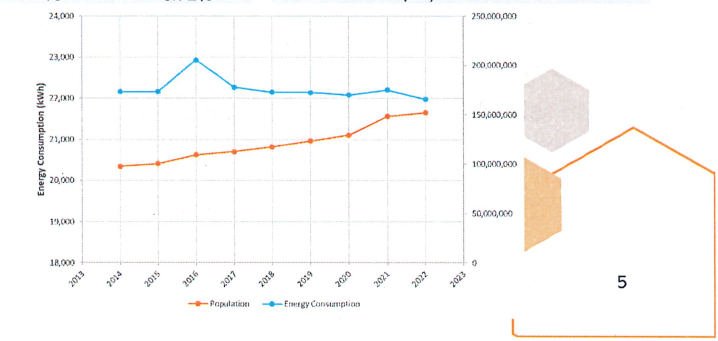
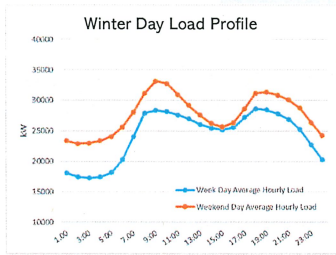
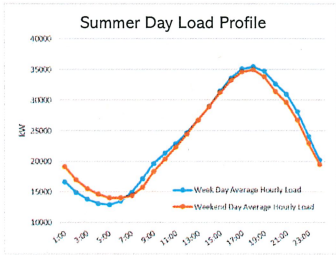
Summer Mean High Temperature	
Year	Temperature (F)
2013	92.3
2014	92.2
2015	89.0
2016	91.1
2017	90.7
2018	91.4
2019	87.8
2020	90.1
2021	93.5
2022	92.2

Winter Mean Low Temperature	
Year	Temperature (F)
2013	19.2
2014	26.7
2015	29.1
2016	26.5
2017	25.9
2018	26.7
2019	28.2
2020	26.5
2021	28.9
2022	24.4

City of Ashland Population		
Year	Population	Percent change
2013	20,295	
2014	20,340	0.22%
2015	20,405	0.32%
2016	20,620	1.05%
2017	20,700	0.39%
2018	20,815	0.56%
2019	20,960	0.70%
2020	21,105	0.69%
2021	21,554	2.13%
2022	21,642	0.41%
10		0.72%

Peak Power and Total Energy		
Year	Peak (kW)	Energy (kWh)
2013	40,650	19,636,870 (Note1)
2014	38,885	173,668,763
2015	38,940	173,668,763
2016	39,940	205,816,285
2017	38,505	178,273,030
2018	38,700	173,236,580
2019	37,605	172,884,771
2020	38,195	170,324,005
2021	45,920	175,664,178
2022	40,670	165,933,175

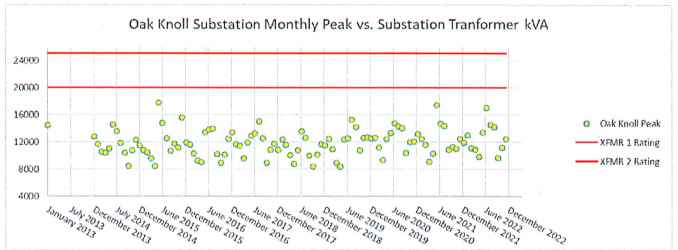
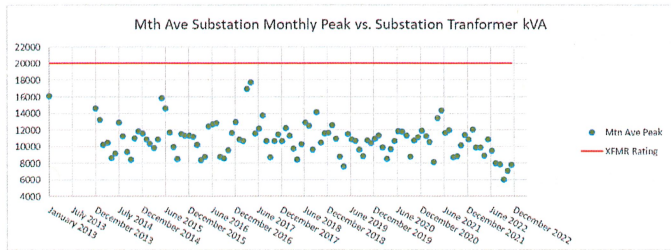
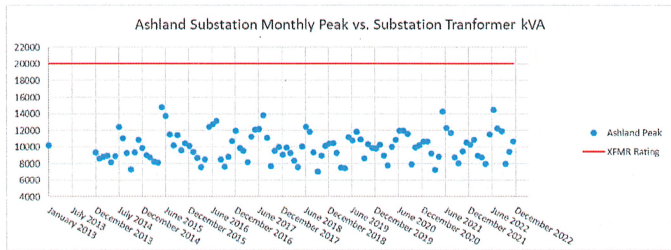
Note 1: Bad data ("0") for 11 months in 2013.



Renewable Energy Discussion

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Review of Existing Profile, 2013-2022

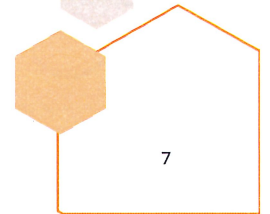


Renewable Energy Discussion

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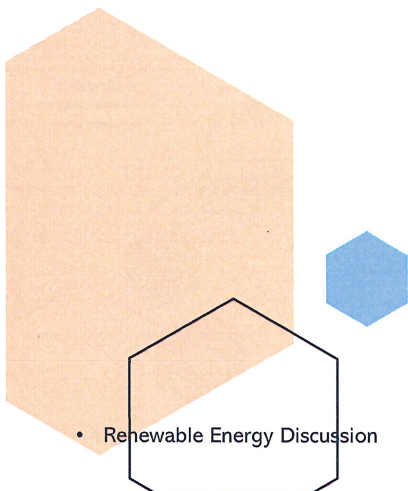
Climate & Energy Action Plan (CEAP)

- Initiated in 2011, the City's CEAP vision is to reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions and improve the resilience to the environment, infrastructure, and people from future impacts of climate change.
- Goal:
 - Reduce overall Ashland community greenhouse gas emissions by 8% on average every year to 2050
 - Attain carbon neutrality in City operations by 2030, and reduce fossil fuel consumption by 50% by 2030 and 100% by 2050
 - Be ready for projected climate changes
- The focus of the electric department planning study is to attempt to prepare the electrical infrastructure for future demands and align system planning with the City's CEAP to the extent possible.



Renewable Energy Discussion

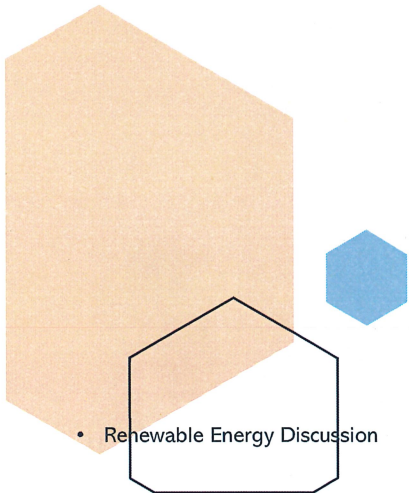
CEAP --- The City's path



- **Transition to clean energy**
 - Natural gas ban or Fuel switching policy
 - Increase renewable energy portfolio
 - Electric Vehicles
- Maximize water and energy efficiency and reuse
- Support climate-friendly land use and management
- Reduce consumption of carbon-intensive goods and services
- Inform and work with residents, organizations, and government
- Lead by example

The City's vision is a collaborative effort over a long period.

CEAP Goals - Transition to clean energy



- Ashland becomes the third Oregon city to commit to developing a policy to transition new homes off fossil fuels.
- Once passed, appliances for heating or cooking would have to be all-electric for new home construction.
- Depending on the amount and the timeline of new residential development, this policy could have a big impact on the City's electric systems.
- Ashland's electric grid capacity may need to be upgraded to support the additional loads that come from natural gas reduction and future growth in the number of electric vehicles.

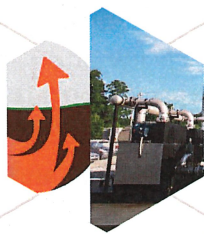
CEAP Goal --- Transition to clean energy Renewable Energy Portfolio/Potentials



**Solar Energy &
Photovoltaic**



Hydro Power



**Other Sources:
Biomass, Biogas,
Geothermal**



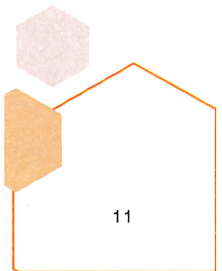
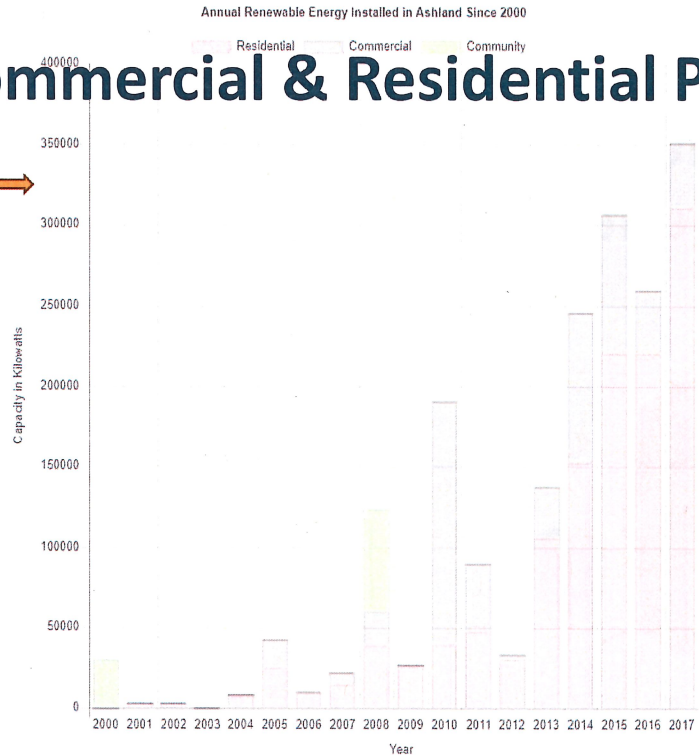
Electric Vehicles



Microgrid

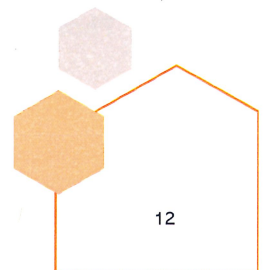
Solar Energy - Commercial & Residential PV

- Installed solar energy in Ashland since 2000. →
- According to the latest information available:
 - Total installed commercial solar is about 1.28 MW,
 - Total installed residential solar is about 3.82 MW.
- Installed total is about 5.1 MW. The expected Summer peak output is about 3.8 to 4 MW assuming fixed axis stands, modern PV panel ratings, and Ashland's solar irradiance profile.



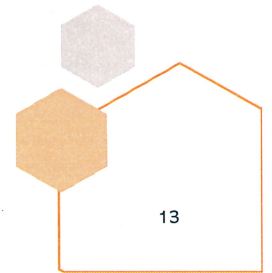
Solar Energy – Commercial & Residential PV

- For solar energy (or other renewables) ≤ 25 kW. No barriers or issues in general as long as they meet NEC and the City's metering and installation requirements.
- For solar energy (or other renewables) > 25 kW and ≤ 200 kW. Depends on the location and total installed capacity versus available capacity. This requires prior consultation and approval by the Electric Department and generally required engineering studies.
- Many potential renewable energy grants at Federal and State levels.



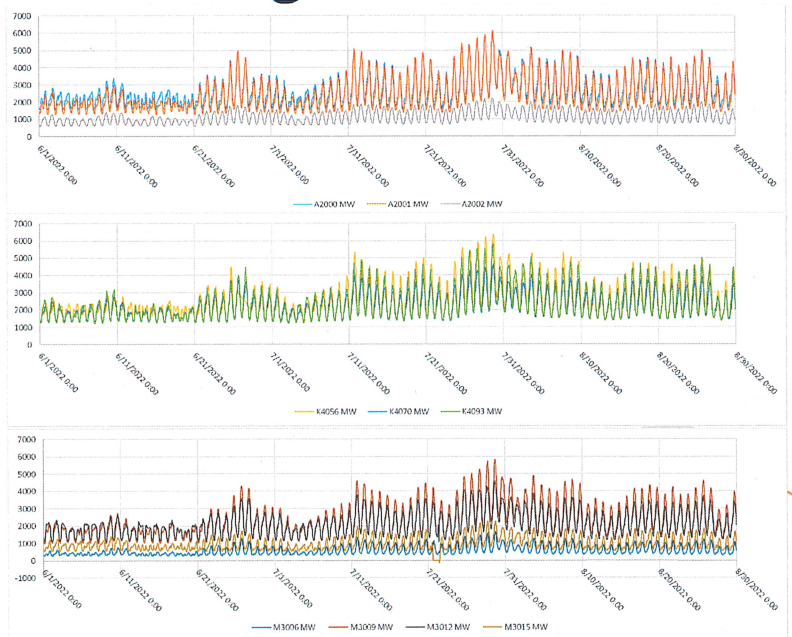
Solar Energy – “Large” PV Integration

- ‘Large’ is relative to where the generation is connected. For distribution level connections, large is >200 kW.
- BPA’s standard classifies as small generation when a single or combined generating capacity is greater than 0.2 MW and equal to or less than 20 MW. This is primarily a function of transmission connection.
- Post-2028 BPA contracts under discussion with the City would allow the City to develop single combined generation of up to 5 MW. However, the City’s electric infrastructure is distribution only. The City has no transmission resource.
- This requires Feasibility, Impact, and Facility studies on the feeder levels and substation levels.



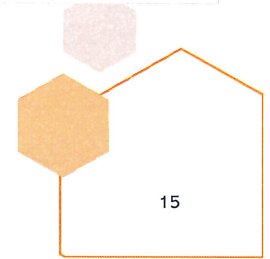
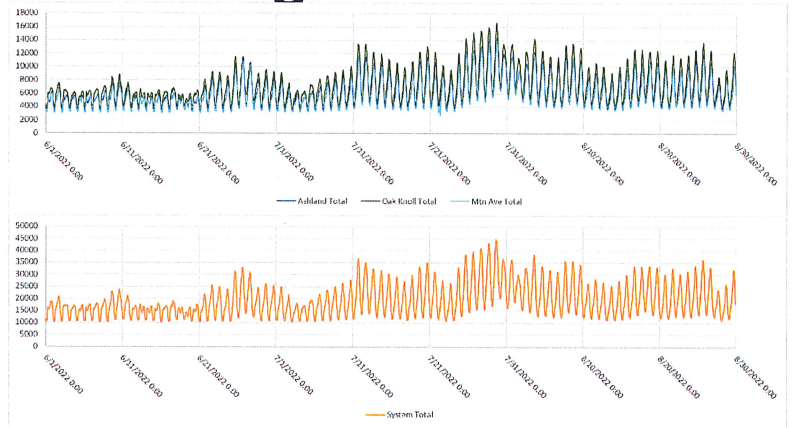
Solar Energy – “Large” PV Integration

- Example: ~2016, a 10 MW solar power generation facility on the Imperatrice property was under discussion.
- This aligns well with CEAP goals.
- Considerations:
 - Above the ‘5 MW’ limit for a single combined development which requires a special interconnection application to be approved.
 - To interconnect with existing distribution feeders, the solar plant output cannot be greater than the load, to avoid reverse power flow and protection issues.



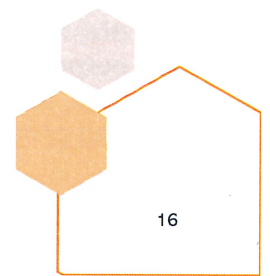
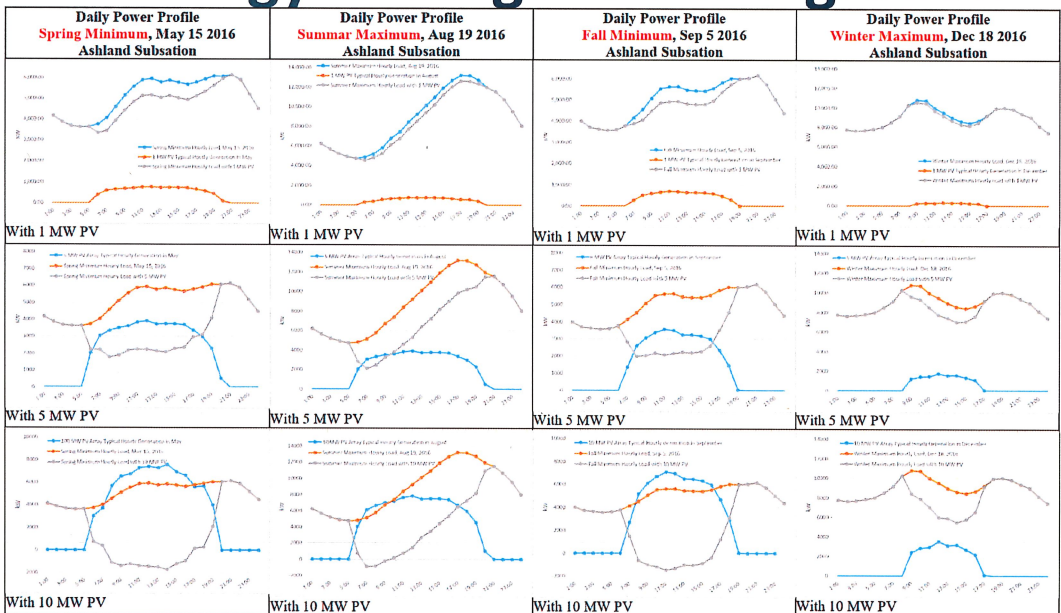
Solar Energy – “Large” PV Integration

- Considerations (Cont.):
 - Daytime peak load for feeder A2002 is around 1 MW to 2 MW.
 - Daytime peak load for M3006 is around 0.5 MW to 1.5 MW.
 - Result was a need to interconnect with multiple backbone feeder and curtailment functions reducing net production.
 - New substation or dedicated feeder could be considered but adds substantial cost.



Renewable Energy Discussion

Solar Energy – “Large” PV Integration

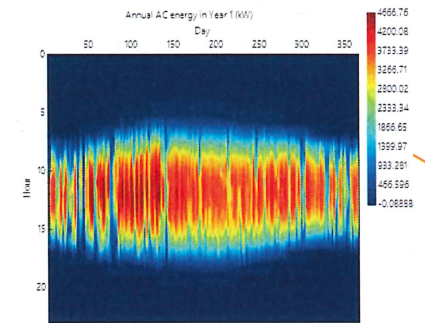
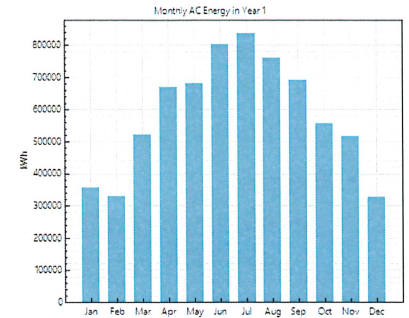


Renewable Energy Discussion

Solar Energy – “Large” PV Integration

- Using a 5 MW solar farm as an example using Ashland's weather data:
 - DC capacity 5.6 MW
 - AC capacity 4.8 MW
 - DC/AC ratio 1.17
 - Total module area 32,000 m² or 7.9 acres
 - 1st Year AC energy 7052 MWh
 - LCOE 12.03 cents/kWh nominal
 - Total installed cost ~\$11M, PV system only (cost subject to many other factors)

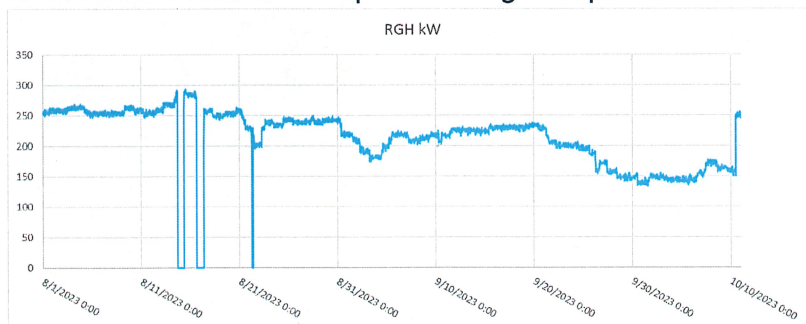
 - Acre/MW (1st Year) 1.65
 - Acre/1,000 MWh (1st Year) 1.12
 - \$/Acre \$1.56M
- Average kWh usage for 1,500 sq. ft home - 37 kWh per day, 13,500 kWh per year
=> ~66 homes per acre



Renewable Energy Discussion

Hydro Power

- Reeder Gulch Hydroelectric (RGH), Hosler Dam
- 845 kVA generator, limited by penstock and water demand
- ~250 kW power output continuously during normal conditions
- ~0.56% of the total peak consumption (~45 MW)
- ~1% to 4% of the total consumption during non-peak hours

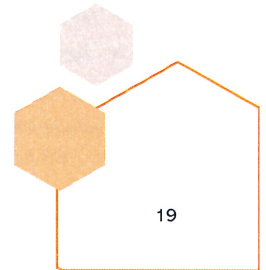


Renewable Energy Discussion

Other Resources

- Biomass:
 - Potential biomass plant expansion in the Rogue Valley
 - Potential biomass cogen plant at Southern Oregon University.
- Biogas:
 - Methane gas from food waste, yard waste and manure that can be used to generate electricity or as a vehicle fuel.
- Geothermal:
 - Geothermal for power generation (e.g., geothermal plant in OIT campus, about 2 MW)
 - Direct use for heating
- Wind:
 - County-level collaborative effort

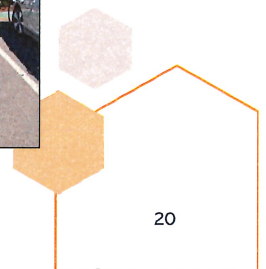
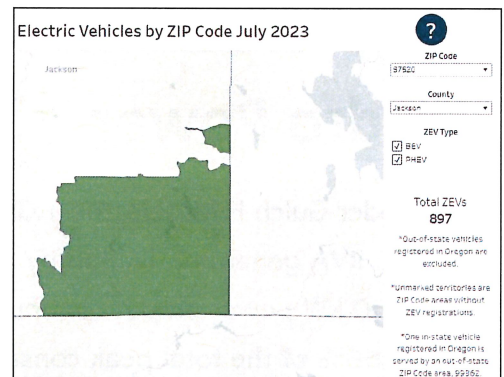
Renewable Energy Discussion



Electric Vehicles

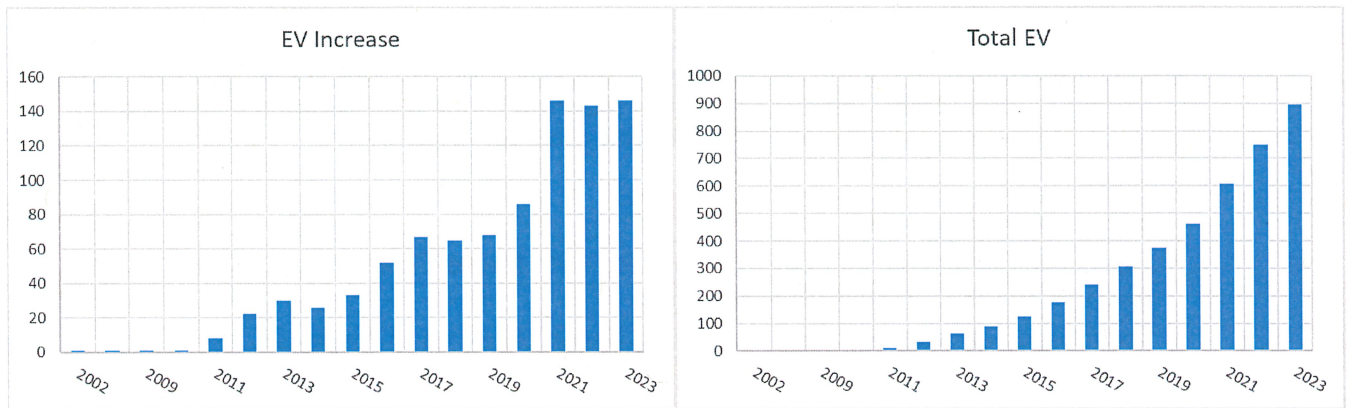
- An important part of the City's CEAP.
- Electric Vehicle Incentive Program: <https://ashlandor.org/climate-energy/find-resources/transportation/>
- According to Oregon.gov, the total number of registered electric vehicles in Oregon by July 2023 is 74,427.
- The City of Ashland (Zip Code: 97520) has about 900 by July 2023.

Renewable Energy Discussion



Electric Vehicle

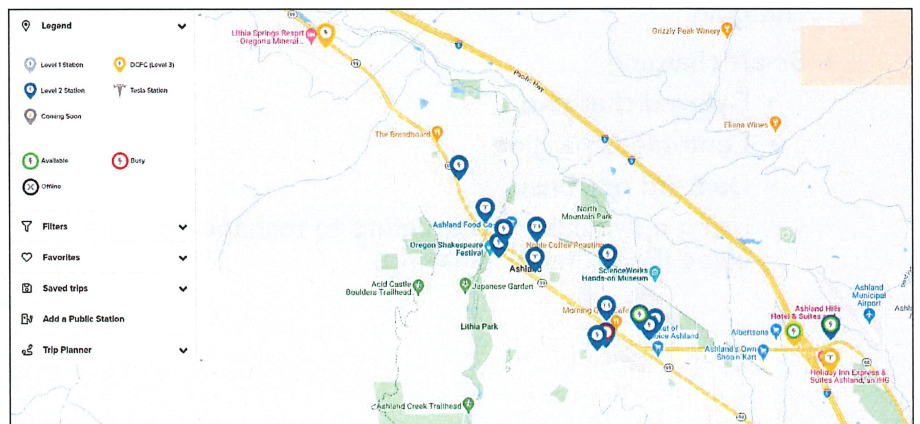
- Based on the current growth speed, expect close to 1000 EVs increase in the next 4 to 5 years in Ashland, and 3000 to 5000 EVs in the next 10 years (affected by regulating & incentive policies and supply chain).



Note: The above statistic data stops in July 2023

Electric Vehicle Charging Station

- Currently 16 City-owned, Level 2 chargers [Public]
- 24 Tesla superchargers [Public]
- 11 City-owned Level 2 chargers at the service center
- Plan to add 20 more City-owned Level 2 public chargers in 2024
- Plan to add six more Level 2 and two Level 3 chargers at the service center

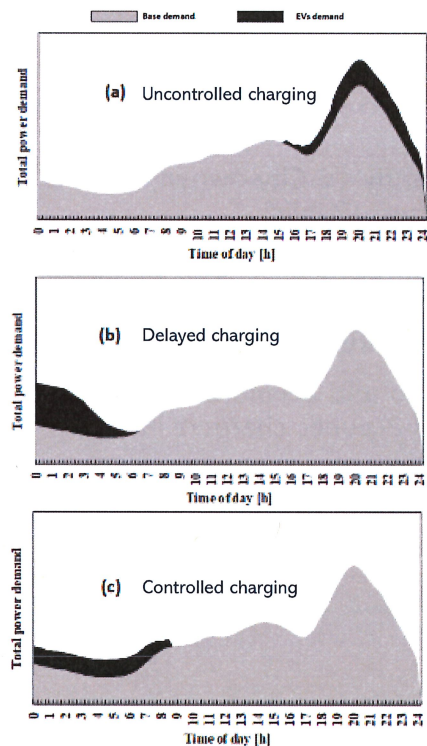


Electric Vehicle Challenges

- Increased EV brings the following challenges
 - Increase power demand. EV charging requires a significant amount of electricity, especially during peak charging periods. This increased demand can strain the existing infrastructure of the electricity system, leading to potential issues such as voltage fluctuations and load imbalances.
 - Potential equipment overload. Simultaneous charging during peak times can overload local transformers and distribution circuits, which can result in power outages or require expensive infrastructure upgrades to meet the growing demand.
 - Cost from
 - Infrastructure upgrade
 - Distribution transformers have to be sized with future EV additions. However, City has to cover the transformer no-load losses
 - Technology upgrade for smart charging based on demand response

Electric Vehicle Challenges

- It increases the system peak when using uncontrolled charging.
- Smart charging
 - Delayed charging
 - Controlled charging
 - Demand response
 - Using a dynamic rate structure to reshape the load curve (Peak Shift or Shaving)



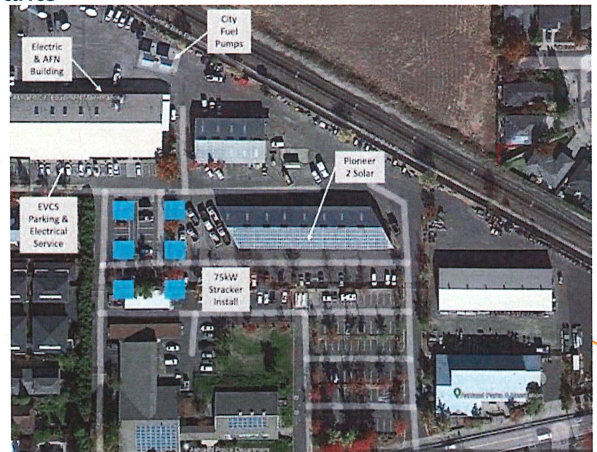
Electric Vehicle Challenges

- For 1000 EVs, assuming
 - Each has a charger
 - 70% are Level 1, ~1.5 kW
 - 30% are Level 2, ~15 kW
 - Uncontrolled charging
 - A diversity factor of 2.5 (40% of them are in use concurrently)
- The estimated total kW increase during the charging hours is about 2.2 MW
- Without diversifying the total estimated peak is about 5.5 MW

Charger Type	Typical Output Power	Estimated Charging Time (40 kWh)	Estimated Range per Hour	User Case
Level 1	1 – 1.8 kW	22 – 40 hours	3 – 7 miles/hour	Home / Backup
Level 2	3 – 22 kW	2 – 13 hours	10 – 75 miles/hour	Work / Hotel / Public chargers
Level 3	30 – 360 kW	15 mins – 1.5 hours	120 – 1400 miles/hour	Fleets / Dealer / Hwy service / Supercharger

Microgrid

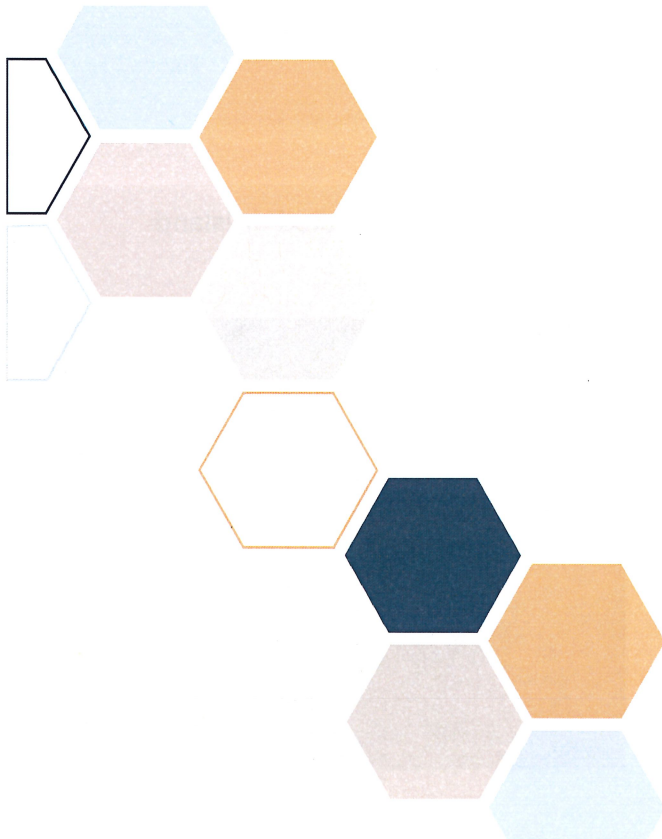
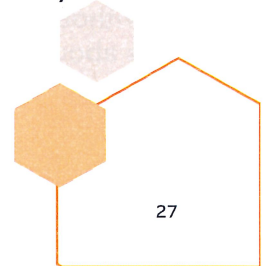
- A microgrid can connect and disconnect from the grid to operate in grid-connected or island mode. Improves reliability and resilience to grid disturbances.
- The Oregon Department of Energy Renewable Energy Grants
- **Project: City Service Center Microgrid Grant**
 - \$940,000 Grant
 - Stracker Solar System
 - 75 kW dual-axis tracking system and lithium battery
 - Expected to generate 170,000 kWh each year
 - Level 3 charging stations



Other Considerations

- Besides the benefits of greenhouse gas emission reduction, increased renewable portfolios can result in some level of instability, reduced power quality, and system operation challenges.
- Infrastructure upgrades may be needed on various levels:
 - Substation
 - Feeder
 - Distribution transformers
 - Communication and situation awareness (i.e., SCADA)
- The City may want to consider additional efforts on:
 - Public education (e.g. charging times that have most impact on electric infrastructure)
 - Dynamic rate structure

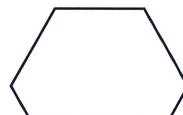
Renewable Energy Discussion

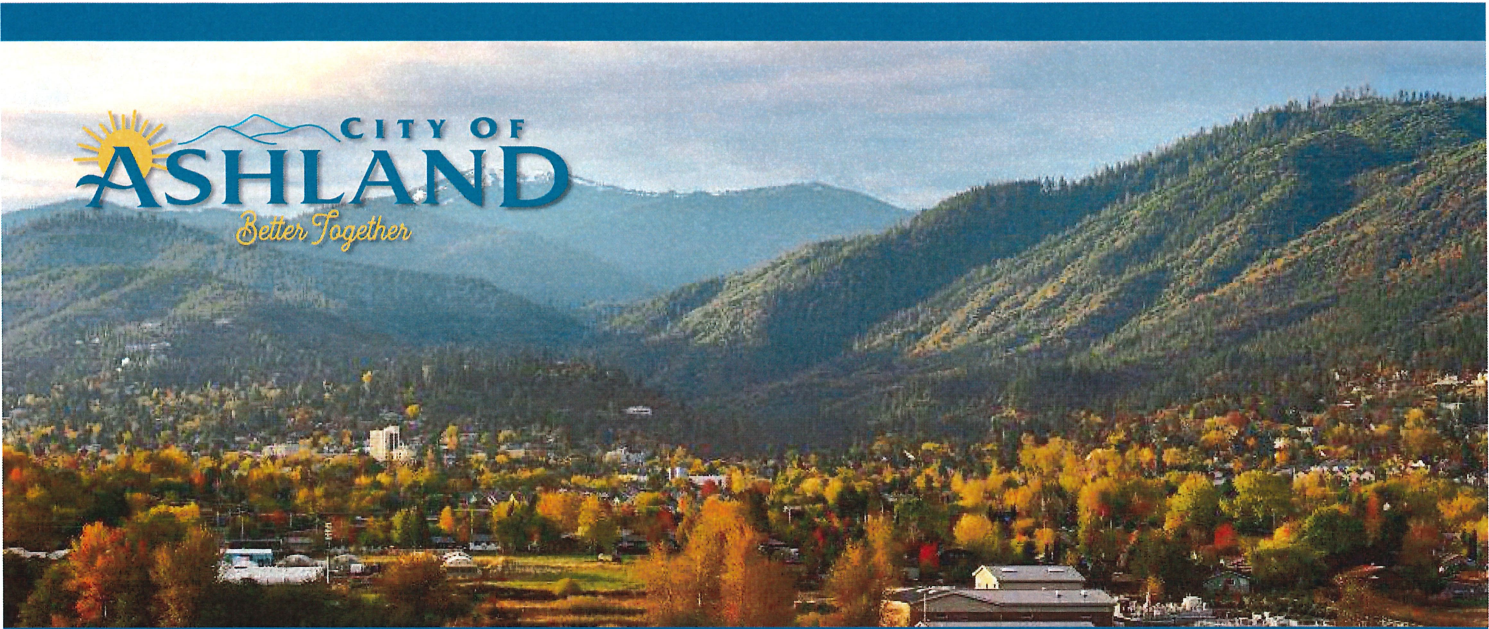


Thank You

Martin Stoddard

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Water and Enterprise System Utility Rates

December 4, 2023 Council Study Session

Water Rates

Water Utility

The [Water Division](#) consists of Supply, Treatment, Distribution and Conservation. The core of the water system includes Hosler Dam and Reeder Reservoir, a water treatment plant, over 119 miles of distribution piping, six booster pump-stations, telemetry equipment, 32 pressure relief valves, 1,281 hydrants and four potable water storage reservoirs providing 6.7 million gallons of storage

Regulatory:

- The Oregon Health Authority provides regulatory oversight for the treatment and distribution of potable water
- The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission provides regulatory oversight on Hosler Dam as the City is a generator of hydroelectric power

Water Division	
Conservation Specialist	(1 FTE)
Water Quality Supervisor	(1 FTE)
SCADA Technician	(0.5 FTE)
Water Quality Technician	(2 FTE)
Utility Technician	(3 FTE)
Senior Utility Worker	(1 FTE)
Meter Reader/Repairer	(1 FTE)
Utility Worker II	(3 FTE)
Utility Worker I	(3 FTE)
Water Plant Supervisor	(1 FTE)
Project Manager	(1 FTE)
Treatment Plant Operator II	(3 FTE)
Senior Plant Operator	(1 FTE)

19.5 FTE

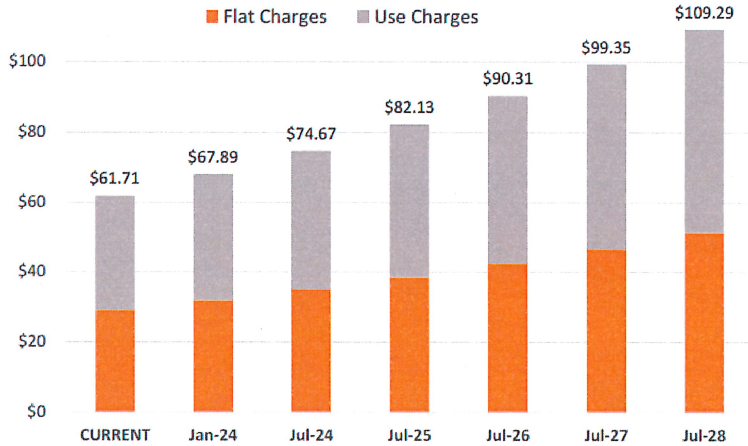




Water Utility

- Projected Rate Increase FY24/25 – 10%

Single Family Home Bill for 1,000 cubic feet



Water Treatment Plant Project

- Currently at 90% design
 - Design Complete by end of 2023
 - Bid in Winter/Spring of 2024
 - Construction Start Summer 2024
- Environmental Protection Agency – 100% funding
 - \$75 Million Maximum Award
- Next Steps
 - Update Borrowing Resolution – January 2024
 - Finalize Master Bond Declaration
 - Close Loan with EPA – April/May 2024
 - Grant Funding Opportunities

Cost Summary

Summary of Opinion of Probable Construction Cost		
High Range		Low Range
+15%	WTP Construction Costs	-10%
\$ 70,424,000	\$ 61,238,000	\$ 55,115,000
Summary of Opinion of Probable Construction Cost		
High Range		Low Range
+15%	Solar Array Construction Costs	-10%
\$ 2,458,000	\$ 2,137,000	\$ 1,924,000
Summary of Opinion of Probable Construction Cost		
High Range		Low Range
+15%	BESS Construction Costs	-10%
\$ 3,063,000	\$ 2,663,000	\$ 2,397,000

Cost of Service – Water

- Last Water Utility Cost of Service Completed in 2016
 - Creates a Defensible Rate Structure
 - Equitable over Customer Classes
- Recommend Updating
 - Equity and Progressive Structure (Commodity Charge)

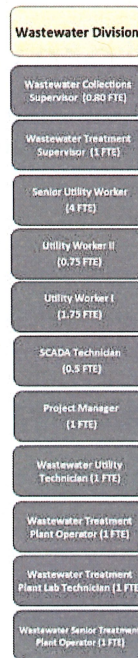


Wastewater Utility

The [Wastewater Division](#) consists of collection and treatment of wastewater. The core of the system includes 112.9 miles of collection system piping, 2,245 manholes, six (6) lift stations, telemetry equipment and a wastewater treatment plant.

Regulatory:

- The City operates under a National Pollution Discharge Permit (NPDES) that is overseen by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)



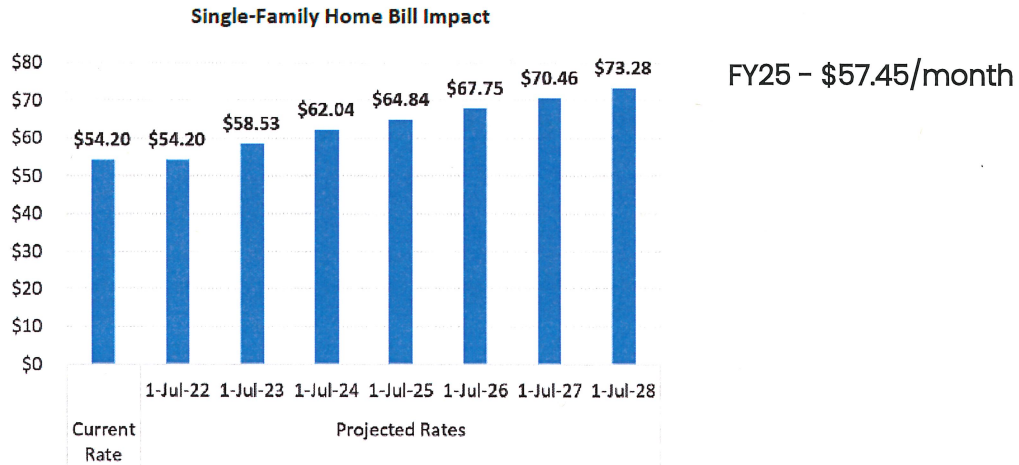
13.8 FTE





Wastewater Utility

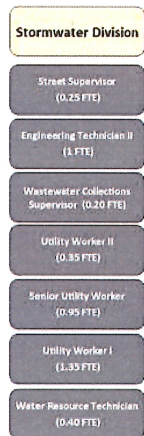
- Projected Rate Increases FY25 – 6%



Storm Drain Utility

The [Stormwater Division](#) consists of collections with staff support included with the Street and Wastewater Divisions. The core of the storm drain system includes 133.4 miles of storm drainage pipe and culverts, 4,348 inlets/catch basins, 990 manholes, and 449 outfalls.

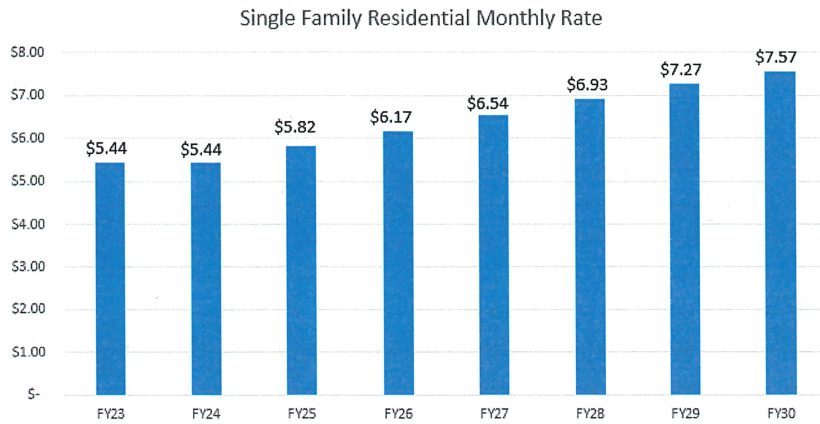
The stormwater conveyance and outfall system operate under a Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) MS4* permit, which regulates maintenance and inspection schedules in addition to public outreach and education regarding stormwater conveyance and treatment.



4.5 FTE

Storm Drain Utility

- Projected Rate Increases FY25 – 7%



Affordability Analysis

- Metrics – 6 to 10% of Monthly Median Income for utilities
- Current Comprehensive Bill ~ 6.63%

Utility Bill Affordability Analysis

2021 Median Household Income \$ 5,303.42

2% of Median Household Income Per Utility

Last Update	Utilities	Monthly Rate	% of Median Income
2019	Street Utility Fee	\$ 9.56	0.18%
2021	Storm Drain Utility Fee	\$ 5.44	0.10%
2019	Wastewater (average)	\$ 54.20	1.02%
2019	Water (average)	\$ 61.71	1.16%
2021	Electric (average)	\$ 76.88	1.45%
2021	Ashland AFN	\$ 65.00	1.23%
2022	Recology	\$ 22.67	0.43%
N/A	Natural Gas	\$ 56.00	1.06%
	Totals	\$ 351.46	6.63%



Affordability Analysis

- Metrics – 6 to 10% of Monthly Median Income for utilities
- Proposed Comprehensive Bill ~ 6.82%

Projected Update	Utilities	Monthly Rate	% of Median Income
2023 (3%)	Street Utility Fee	\$ 9.85	0.19%
2024 (7%)*	Storm Drain Utility Fee	\$ 5.82	0.11%
2024 (6%)**	Wastewater (average)	\$ 57.45	1.08%
2024 (10%***)	Water (average)	\$ 67.88	1.28%
2023	Electric (average)	\$ 76.88	1.45%
2023	Ashland AFN	\$ 65.00	1.23%
2022	Recology	\$ 22.67	0.43%
N/A	Natural Gas	\$ 56.00	1.06%
	Totals	\$ 361.55	6.82%

*Projected in the adopted Storm Drain System Master Plan (July 1, 2024)

**Projected in the adopted Collection System Master Plan (July 1, 2024)

***Projected in October 2023 Water Rate Analysis



Low Income Utility Assistance

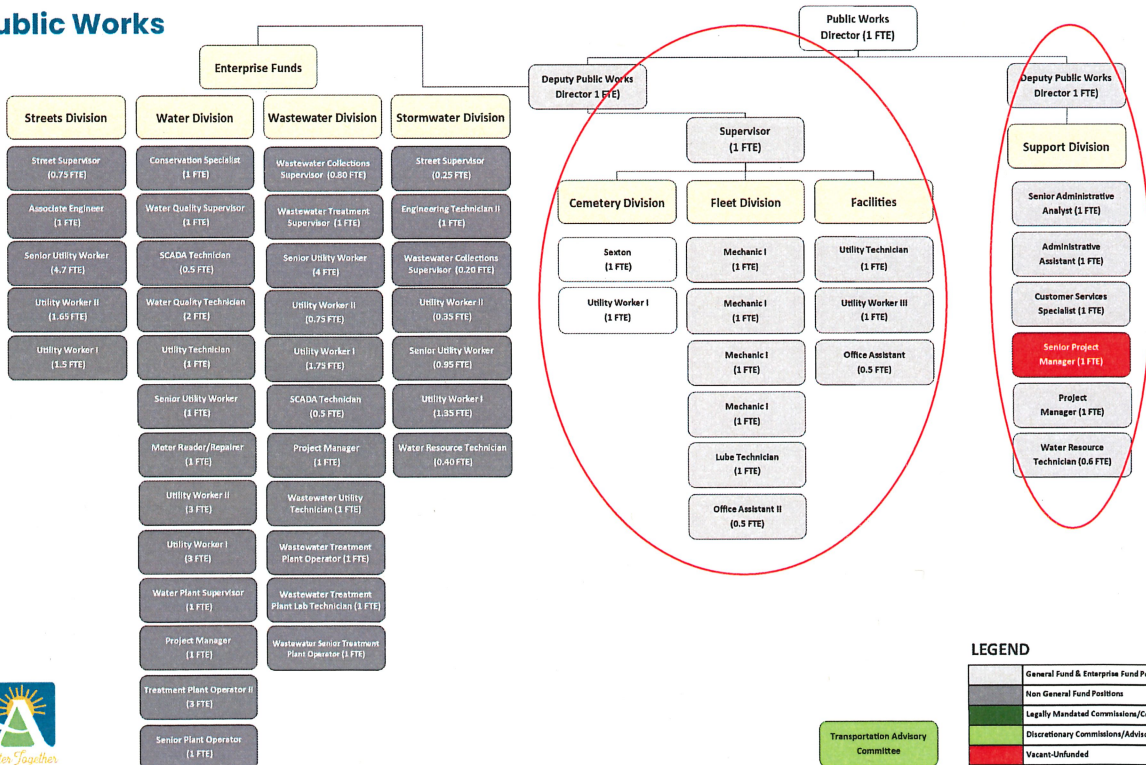
- Hansford Economic Review of the City's Senior Assistance Program
- Recommendations
 - Update/Eliminate Age Threshold
 - Change Income Level Threshold
 - New Resolution(s) To Replace 92-22
 - Update Ashland Municipal Code Section 14.02.015



QUESTIONS?



Public Works



LEGEND

	General Fund & Enterprise Fund Positions
	Non General Fund Positions
	Legally Mandated Commissions/Committees
	Discretionary Commissions/Advisory Boards
	Vacant-Unfunded

Transportation Advisory Committee



Dana Smith

From: Mariane Berry
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 3:29 PM
To: City Council
Subject: RE: City Council Contact Form Submitted

Hello Council –

I wanted to address and clarify item #5 in the below comments. As you may know, our enterprise resource planning system (ERP), Tyler Munis, is undergoing a scheduled system upgrade, one that has been planned for months. This affects utility billing, accounting, procurement, planning/building, public works and courts, and is in effect today and tomorrow. We should be live again on Wednesday. As with all technology upgrades, we anticipate meaningful improvements and are hopeful that our residents will see and experience those improvements, and that our departments will also realize additional functionality with the new upgrade.

As we move forward with the upgrade, we will continue to assess the system for reliability, accessibility, performance and other attributes that will best serve our overall operations. Any software changes, particularly at the ERP level, must take into consideration the collective needs of the city.

We are close to being fully staffed in Utility Billing but as I have indicated previously, there is a training arc that simply takes time. We have kept up with our 48-hour turnaround time for non-emergency inquiries, and quite often it is 24-hours; we have opened up at the Grove on Fridays for in-person service; and soon, we are planning on opening phone lines in the new year. We will not be publicizing that until we are certain we are able to. However, if anything comes up with your constituents, I wanted to let you know of our good efforts to this end.

If you have any questions please reach out – best,
Mariane

From: City of Ashland, Oregon <administration@ashland.or.us>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:38 PM
To: City Council <council@ashland.or.us>
Subject: City Council Contact Form Submitted

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

*** FORM FIELD DATA***

Full Name: **Jeff Sharpe**

Subject: **Electric Master Plan and 1MW CREP grant**

Message: **Greetings Counselors, Happy you will be getting an update from Stoddard on the City Master Plan this evening; I know they will be doing a great job for us. When SES considered responding to that project's RFP there were several critical items I felt missing that I would like to mention now. It is notable that the City has received a \$100,000 CREP Planning Grant to explore/plan 1MW City solar projects and the infrastructure to support them. All of the items below could potentially be addressed in that plan. Thomas related that the grant project is being given to Stoddard, and so this might be an opportunity to help direct that project to the City's best interests. Suggestions- 1) Development of a credible Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) is crucial to moving our utility into the 21st century 2)**

Exploration of our future 2025 BPA contract options and how they will affect our unique (non-IOU) position for local self-reliance? 3) Exploration of the Current BPA contract Take or Pay provisions and what the real financial effects might be, as well as rules being implemented that are not in our current contract (eg BPA's Wally Roghair's 200kW /transformer limit I negotiated in 2020) 4) Consider the cost and benefits of establishing an Ashland Electric Board to help staff and the City make wise decisions as we seek safety, sustainability and equity for our City 5) Consider the cost and benefits of upgrading the utility billing system to highlight the savings and impact of City renewable energy projects; as well as policy, incentive and possible financing services Ashland Electric could offer to help achieve City Goals 6) Quantify the vulnerabilities of the current transmission system serving Ashland, and how we can best prepare for its failure 7) Explore the specific costs and benefits of the three 1MW solar system types we presented when suggesting the 1-MW CREP Planning Grant. These include both before and behind the meter, with 3 funding options (notably we already have investors interested in building each of these systems now) So sorry to hit you all with this at the last minute (I just learned of the worksession). Happy to discuss anytime, Jeff Sharpe PE?

*** USER INFORMATION ***

SubscriberID: -1

SubscriberUserName:

SubscriberEmail:

RemoteAddress: 66.241.70.76

RemoteHost: 66.241.70.76

RemoteUser:

Dana Smith

From:
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 9:38 AM
To: City Council
Subject: Water rates proposal

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Hello Council,

Please focus more on utility rate affordability in our city. Besides high rents, we also have relatively high utility rates which make the housing crunch even more burdensome on much of our community. There are many ways that lower income individuals and families could be helped when it comes to the utility bill:

1. A more robust program of subsidies based on income.
2. Lower the rates for smaller multifamily units.
3. Raise rates for large/mega large homes.
4. Look carefully at how we might phase our WTP project. We still have a functional WTP; we need to be sure that our dam and reservoir is in good shape; we should recognize the value of water conservation and make sure we provide adequate support for wisely reducing our per capita water consumption which will result in less \$ and less greenhouse gas production from energy and materials used to treat and transport our water.

Thank you,
Larry Cooper
Ashland

--
Larry

Dana Smith

From: City of Ashland, Oregon <administration@ashland.or.us>
Sent: Sunday, December 3, 2023 6:27 PM
To: City Recorder; Dorinda Cottle
Subject: Council Public Testimony Form Submitted

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

*** FORM FIELD DATA***

Full Name: John Engelhardt

Meeting Date : Monday, Dec. 4, 2023

Type of Testimony: WRITTEN

Written Testimony: **Society of St. Vincent de Paul Utility Assistance Time Frame: Fiscal Year October 2022-September 2023 Purpose: To provide some context and insight into utility assistance we provide to residents of Ashland. Although one of our guiding principles is that no work of charity is foreign to the Society, the bulk of our work and expenditure involves helping people stay housed. This primarily means assisting people with rent or utilities. Last fiscal year 62% of our funds went to rent and 16% to utilities. Totals: We assisted 132 households with utility help, including customers of the City of Ashland, Avista, Pacific Power, Recology and City of Talent. Of those, 91 households were clients of the city of Ashland, or 69%. Financially we paid the city of Ashland \$22,143 or 65% of our utility outlay. Demographics: Of those assisted, 2/3 were adults, 1/3 children. 15% of the adults were disabled. Regarding household size, 41% were singles and 28% were 2-person. Only 15% were 3-person households. With respect to age, 19% were 65 and over. Utility Assistance Programs: When we assist people, we find that very few are on any of the city's utility assistance programs (ALIEAP, Sr./Disabled Year-Round, or One-Time). I realize these are advertised in the City Source newsletters, and it's disheartening to find so many who are eligible but not signed up. We recommend they sign up, but we don't have the means or availability to follow up on that. Utility Base Rates: When one looks at a current city utility bill, the base charges total over \$100 (see table). This is before a light switch or a faucet is turned on. That base rate is 8% of the maximum income threshold for a year-round 30% discount for a senior or disabled person ($\$14,580/12=\1215 , $\$100/\$1215=.08$). Recommendations: In March of 2020, an ad-hoc group representing the city of Ashland (Kelly Madding), the City Council (Dennis Slattery), OHRA (Ken Gudger), SVdP (myself), and the H&HS Commission (Rich Rohde) developed a set of Utility Policy Recommendations. Then COVID shut things down. I am enclosing these recommendations as many of them are still worthy of consideration. 1. Increase awareness of utility assistance programs to those in need a) Mailer included with utility bill and city source newsletter showing programs and income levels associated with each. Make it colorful and easy to read! b) When client calls Utility office for help in paying their bill, work with them to see if they are eligible for any assistance programs. c) When client calls Utility office for help and is not eligible for programs, refer them to sources of help: OHRA, SVdP, Access, Salvation Army, etc. d) Get ACCESS involved in signing people up for assistance here in town. 2. Expand awareness of ways citizens can contribute to Assistance Funding a) Expand Round Up program to allow for additional \$ contributions b) Make donation process easy for ongoing contributions as well as one-time donations. c) Make it clear that the donations are dedicated to Assistance programs d) Reach out to churches and other NGOs to spread the word about the assistance programs and donation process 3. Reorganize the utility shut-off door hanger a) Mention all 3 assistance programs on the door hanger b) Reorder the list of agencies that can provide help: OHRA, SVdP, Access, Salvation Army, AFS, JCFC 4. Track signups for assistance programs for historical data analysis and success of efforts going forward a) Provide periodic reports to Ashland's Housing and Human Service Commission in collaboration with OHRA and SVdP on success of recommendations being implemented (ex: # clients on each assistance program, # accounts participating in Round Up and other donation options, etc.) 5. Analyze the Call-Out process for efficiency, success, and response in collaboration with OHRA & SVdP to include: a) Comparison with pre-callout success rate (# responding after 1st door**

hanger) b) Exploration of why the # of door notices and disconnects increased substantially in 2019, concomitant with implementation of Call-Out process c) Send analysis to city's H&HS Commission Utility Policy Recommendations to Ashland Housing and Human Services Commission Utility Ad Hoc Group (SVdP, OHRA, H&HSComission, City Council liaison, City Manager) Utility AdHoc Committee Recommendations 6. Increase awareness of conservation and energy audit programs a) Mention energy audit and conservation programs in City Source newsletter b) Suggest helping agencies inform clients to initiate contact with city regarding energy assistance/conservation programs c) Suggest a meter check if bill seems abnormally high. 7. Consider increasing the financial benchmarks for the 3 assistance programs. a) Use the financial thresholds from Access as a starting point, but allow for increase as allowed by city ordinance b) Consider a higher income threshold for single households, as they bare a disproportionate share of the fixed costs (base rates).

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Society of St. Vincent de Paul Utility Assistance

Time Frame: Fiscal Year October 2022-September 2023

Purpose: To provide some *context and insight* into utility assistance we provide to residents of Ashland. Although one of our guiding principles is that *no work of charity is foreign to the Society*, the bulk of our work and expenditure involves helping people stay housed. This primarily means assisting people with rent or utilities. Last fiscal year 62% of our funds went to rent and 16% to utilities.

Totals: We assisted 132 households with utility help, including customers of the City of Ashland, Avista, Pacific Power, Recology and City of Talent. Of those, **91 households** were clients of the city of Ashland, **or 69%**. Financially **we paid the city of Ashland \$22,143** or **65%** of our utility outlay.

Demographics: Of those assisted, 2/3 were adults, 1/3 children. **15%** of the adults were disabled. Regarding household size, **41% were singles** and 28% were 2-person. Only 15% were 3-person households. With respect to age, **19% were 65 and over**.

Utility Assistance Programs: When we assist people, we find that very few are on any of the city's utility assistance programs (ALIEAP, Sr./Disabled Year-Round, or One-Time). I realize these are advertised in the City Source newsletters, and it's disheartening to find so many who are eligible but not signed up. We recommend they sign up, but we don't have the means or availability to follow up on that.

Utility Base Rates: When one looks at a current city utility bill, the base charges total over \$100 (see table). This is before a light switch or a faucet is turned on. That base rate is **8%** of the maximum income threshold for a year-round 30% discount for a senior or disabled person ($\$14,580/12=\1215 , $\$100/\$1215=.08$).

Recommendations: In March of 2020, an ad-hoc group representing the city of Ashland (Kelly Madding), the City Council (Dennis Slattery), OHRA (Ken Gudger), SVdP (myself), and the H&HS Commission (Rich Rohde) developed a set of Utility Policy Recommendations. Then COVID shut things down. I am enclosing these recommendations as many of them are still worthy of consideration.

Service Description	Base Charge
Electric Residential	\$16.25
Water Residential	\$15.62
Water Customer	\$13.33
Sewer Residential	\$33.94
Electric Users Tax	\$4.06
Street User Fee S.F.	\$9.56
Storm Drain S.F.	\$5.43
AFR 3/4 Inch	\$3.00
Public Safety Support	\$1.50
TOTAL BASE FEE	\$102.69

- 1. Increase awareness of utility assistance programs to those in need**
 - a) Mailer included with utility bill and city source newsletter showing programs and income levels associated with each. Make it colorful and easy to read!
 - b) When client calls Utility office for help in paying their bill, work with them to see if they are eligible for any assistance programs.
 - c) When client calls Utility office for help and is not eligible for programs, refer them to sources of help: OHRA, SVdP, Access, Salvation Army, etc.
 - d) Get ACCESS involved in signing people up for assistance here in town.
- 2. Expand awareness of ways citizens can contribute to Assistance Funding**
 - a) Expand *Round Up* program to allow for additional \$ contributions
 - b) Make donation process easy for ongoing contributions as well as one-time donations.
 - c) Make it clear that the donations are dedicated to Assistance programs
 - d) Reach out to churches and other NGOs to spread the word about the assistance programs and donation process
- 3. Reorganize the utility shut-off door hanger**
 - a) Mention all 3 assistance programs on the door hanger
 - b) Reorder the list of agencies that can provide help: OHRA, SVdP, Access, Salvation Army, AFS, JCFC
- 4. Track signups for assistance programs for historical data analysis and success of efforts going forward**
 - a) Provide periodic reports to Ashland's Housing and Human Service Commission in collaboration with OHRA and SVdP on success of recommendations being implemented (ex: # clients on each assistance program, # accounts participating in Round Up and other donation options, etc.)
- 5. Analyze the Call-Out process for efficiency, success, and response in collaboration with OHRA & SVdP to include:**
 - a) Comparison with pre-callout success rate (# responding after 1st door hanger)
 - b) Exploration of why the # of door notices and disconnects increased substantially in 2019, concomitant with implementation of Call-Out process
 - c) Send analysis to city's H&HS Commission

6. Increase awareness of conservation and energy audit programs

- a) Mention energy audit and conservation programs in City Source newsletter
- b) Suggest helping agencies inform clients to initiate contact with city regarding energy assistance/conservation programs
- c) Suggest a meter check if bill seems abnormally high.

7. Consider increasing the financial benchmarks for the 3 assistance programs.

- a) Use the financial thresholds from Access as a starting point, but allow for increase as allowed by city ordinance
- b) Consider a higher income threshold for single households, as they bare a disproportionate share of the fixed costs (base rates).