

**Welcome to the monthly GO TEAM CITY newsletter!**

Every other week at the City Council Business Meeting, I deliver a City Manager's Report to Council and the public. The reports highlight the incredible work being done by you, the City staff. I want to share this report with you in a monthly email. It's important for all of us to stay connected on what is going on in the City organization, including the great work of your colleagues and the City Council.

**Have a great weekend everyone and "Go Team City!"**

**Best,  
Joe L.  
City Manager**

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**Wildfire Budget Questions.** Contrary to recent community comments, the Wildfire Division's budget was not reduced in the recently adopted 2023-2025 Biennium (BN) Budget. Within the Ashland Fire & Rescue Department budget, the Wildfire Division's approved budget for 2023-2025 BN was \$3,393,463. It was subsequently increased by Council by an additional \$65,000 bringing the total in the adopted budget to \$3,458,463. With that, the total Wildfire Division's budget increased 10% from the previous biennium. [Read the full news release.](#)

On June 15, 2023, we issued a Request for Proposal for a **New City Website**. This is an important step in our efforts to better engage the citizens of Ashland – [Learn more.](#)

**Our Sister Cities are in the spotlight this week.** Guanajuato, Mexico, who we've had a relationship with since 1969, is hosting our Deputy City Manager, Sabrina Cotta, and City Councilor, Bob Kaplan, this week. We have not made the trip to Guanajuato since 2019. They are making connections, sharing words of friendship and celebrating the strong and enduring relationship between the two cities. **We are better together!** Representatives from Guanajuato will be in Ashland next week and we look forward to hosting them. On June 20, 2023, the Council unanimously approved a new sister city with Sviatohirsk, Ukraine. We look forward to developing this relationship and supporting the citizens of Sviatohirsk as they rebuild their infrastructure following the devastation of the war on Ukraine.



*Deputy City Manager, Sabrina Cotta, and City Councilor, Bob Kaplan, at City Hall in Guanajuato, Mexico. They presented to the Mayor, City Council and representatives from the Guanajuato Amigos of Ashland Club, where about 50 people were in attendance. See more photos on our [Facebook page @CityofAshlandOregon](#) and use the hashtag, [#GuanajuatoSisterCity](#)*

## WHAT'S COMING UP?

The **Ashland City Band Concerts** will continue on Thursday evenings through August 10, 2023. Enjoy a free concert every Thursday from 7 to 8 p.m., at the Butler Memorial Bandshell in Lithia Park. Bring a picnic dinner, a comfy chair or blanket and don't forget family and friends! A pre-concert ensemble will take place at 6:15 p.m. each Thursday evening. A special Patriotic Concert will be offered on Tuesday, July 4 at Noon. For information on Fourth of July Festivities that are planned by the Ashland Chamber of Commerce, please visit [ashlandchamber.com](http://ashlandchamber.com).



**Ashland City Band – First performance of the year on June 15, 2023**

The popular **Lithia Park Guided Walks** are back! The walks are offered at no charge and are led by trained volunteer naturalists on an easy, interesting, 1.5-hour nature walk through Lithia Park. Topics include, trees, flowers, birds, climate, water, geology and the history of the park. Plan to meet at the front entrance of Lithia Park on Saturdays at 10 a.m.

The **4th Annual Ashland Pollinator Garden** Tour is this Sunday, June 25, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at various gardens throughout Ashland! This event is hosted by Bee City USA Ashland. The cost is \$10, and proceeds support the North Mountain Park Nature Center. More info and register at [ashland.or.us/Register](http://ashland.or.us/Register).

The Ashland Senior Center will present, **“Survival Prep for Older Adults: Beyond the Go Bag!”** This FREE event will take place on Wednesday, June 28, from 1 to 3 p.m. Registration is required. Please register at 541.488.5342. Full details at [ashland.or.us/SeniorEvents](http://ashland.or.us/SeniorEvents).

All **City offices will be closed on Tuesday, July 4**, in observance of the Fourth of July holiday. The Council meeting regularly scheduled for the first Tuesday of the month has been canceled.

Don't miss the annual **4th of July Festivities**. The theme for this year is, **"Together We Thrive!"** The fun will kick off with the **Ashland Parks & Recreation Run** at 7:45 a.m., with the **Parade** at 10 a.m., followed by family-friendly activities in Lithia Park and more! The **Ashland City Band** will offer a special Patriotic Concert at Noon at the Butler Memorial Bandshell in Lithia Park.

For information on the 2023 4th of July Festivities, visit the Ashland Chamber of Commerce website at [ashlandchamber.com](http://ashlandchamber.com).

To register for the Parks & Recreation Run visit [ashland.or.us/JulyRun](http://ashland.or.us/JulyRun). Registration for both the 2-mile fun run and the 10K is open!

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### ***Below is an update from our City Departments***

#### **CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE:**

- The **Emergency Preparedness** pages on the City website have been reorganized, bringing together valuable information for the community that is easily accessible and includes information on evacuation zones, evacuation levels and how to sign up for the new Citizen Alert System for City emergencies and advisories – The landing page can be viewed directly at [ashland.or.us/BetterPrepared](http://ashland.or.us/BetterPrepared)
- Starting in July, members of the City Council with the City Manager will be available for informal "Coffee & Conversation," at a local business. The public will be invited to drop by one of the locations listed below for a get acquainted, meet-and-greet between 8:30 and 10 a.m. on the following dates:
  - Tuesday, July 25, Pony Espresso, 175 Lithia Way
  - Tuesday, September 26, Rogue Valley Roasting Company, 917 E Main St
  - Tuesday, November 14, Case Coffee, 1255 Siskiyou Blvd

The conversations will be casual and there will not be an agenda.



- News Shorts – So far, in June, the following City items were posted on the City website, and most shared with the local media and on the City's social media platforms:
  - [Wildfire Mitigation will be Fully Funded](#)
  - [June is Emergency Preparedness Month for Wildfire and being Ready to Evacuate](#)
  - [Ashland Wildfire Mitigation Project](#)
  - [June City Newsletter](#)
  - [Resignation of Parks and Recreation Director](#)
  - [Volunteer Spirit Community Service Award](#) (Ragland Award)

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:**

- The Planning Commission, Housing and Human Services Advisory Committee and Public Arts Advisory Committee are all now operating at full membership. The Historic Preservation Advisory Committee has a single vacancy that they are seeking to fill – [Apply today on the City website](#)

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:**

- An ICS (Incident Command System) 400 training happened in coordination with the City of Talent on June 8 and 9. This training teaches employees how to perform in complicated organizational structures in major events – filling incident command roles and sections in an EOC. Sixteen employees representing a mix of both Talent and Ashland worked together. More offerings of ICS 300 and ICS 400 are on the horizon
- **Nixle to the Everbridge Citizen Alert System:** On June 1, 2023, Ashland officially joined with the Jackson County under the Citizen Alert/Everbridge emergency messaging system. This move not only saves our tax-payer's money (the cost for the system is now covered by the state of Oregon, OR-Alert program), but it joins us with our partners at Jackson County, **We are better together!** All our previous Nixle contact groups transitioned to the Everbridge (Citizen Alert) system. Sign up for alerts and learn how to be better prepared for an emergency by visiting, [ashland.or.us/BetterPrepared](https://ashland.or.us/BetterPrepared)
- Train the Trainer – At the end of June the EMC (Emergency Management Coordinator) will be attending a class known as MGT906 (L449 Train the Trainer), which if successfully completed will allow the EMC to teach ICS 300 and ICS 400 classes, as well as ICS curriculum for elected/appointed officials, and another course called G191 EOC Operations for personnel. This will increase the City's capacity to bring these trainings locally. Currently in Oregon, there are less than 20 individuals who are qualified to teach at this level

**FINANCE:**

- Budget: The Budget was adopted at the June 6, 2023, City Council meeting. We are in the process of finalizing the budget book and addressing special items from Council
- Utility Billing: Staff moved to a new location in mid-June 2023. Utility Billing has resumed delinquency processing and working hard to get accounts current. Utility Billing is also in the process of hiring a Senior Financial Clerk
- Accounting: **Cindy Hanks** is retiring July 5 and she will be missed. **Miranda Iwamoto** has been promoted to Accounting Supervisor overseeing General Billing, Accounts Payable and Payroll. **Jesse Smith** has been promoted to Audit & Budget Lead; **Lisa Winters** is transitioning to her new role as Human Resources Analyst. The Accounting Department will be hiring for three (3) open positions: Senior Accountant, Financial Analyst and Financial Clerk

**FIRE:**

- The Real Dirt of Wood Mulch Flammability: Lessons from the Alameda Fire – [Learn more](#)
- Thinning project on Toothpick Trail through June 23 – [Read more](#)
- Ashland Forest and Resiliency Stewardship Project update – [2023 Community Update for the End of Controlled Burn Season](#)

**INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY:**

- AFN (Ashland Fiber Network): On Sunday, June 11 at 5 a.m., AFN staff came into work to pull our fiber across I-5 just north of the Butler Creek Rd overpass. We coordinated with ODOT, who performed a rolling slow-down of traffic and also blocked the on ramps. It took two crossings, one to pull the strand across and the second to pull the fiber and the lasher. The lasher is the large metal contraption up on the stand in four of the pictures (See photos at the end of report). AFN field staff did an excellent job of planning and executing



**AFN pictures of pulling fiber across I-5**

- GIS: Ashland's GIS and Asset Management Division is like the superhero headquarters of maps, where a team of cartographic wizards battle evil spreadsheets and tame unruly geodata. They keep track of every transformer, fire hydrant and sewer manhole in town. It is the ultimate game for these meticulous treasure hunters who want to make sure the City's treasures (and not-so-treasured things) are well taken care of and accounted for. They are the unsung heroes who turn chaos into order, armed with ipads and a love for organizing the world one pixel at a time. GIS/Asset Management is now part of DoIT (Department of Innovation and Technology). They have moved their offices to 90 North Mountain, and you can find them at the end of the long, dark hallway of doom. **Please stop by room 100 (nearest the shop) to say hi, get a treat and pick up a revised, large format street map!**

**GIS Staff:**



*(left to right: DoIT Director, Jason Wegner; GIS Technician, Jaime Blankenship; GIS Analyst, Rickey Fite; Asset Management Specialist, Taina Glick; GIS Manager, Lea Richards)*

**PARKS & RECREATION:**

- The Ashland World Music Festival was judged a great success by staff and partners. Approximately 5,000 people attended festival events that began on Friday, May 26, and concluded with the Lithia Park Bandshell performances and a Plaza Dance on Sunday, May 28
- The Daniel Meyer Memorial Pool opened June 6 for a limited schedule of lap swim and recreational swimming, then opened for full schedule when sufficient staff coverage was available beginning June 15
- The Senior Services Division and the Ashland Police Department hosted a Cookout for Seniors and their Families on June 10 with 150 people attending. Co-sponsor Village at Valley View provided great food. The Broadway Dance for Boomers students (an APRC class) provided a fun performance midway through



**Senior Cookout on June 10**

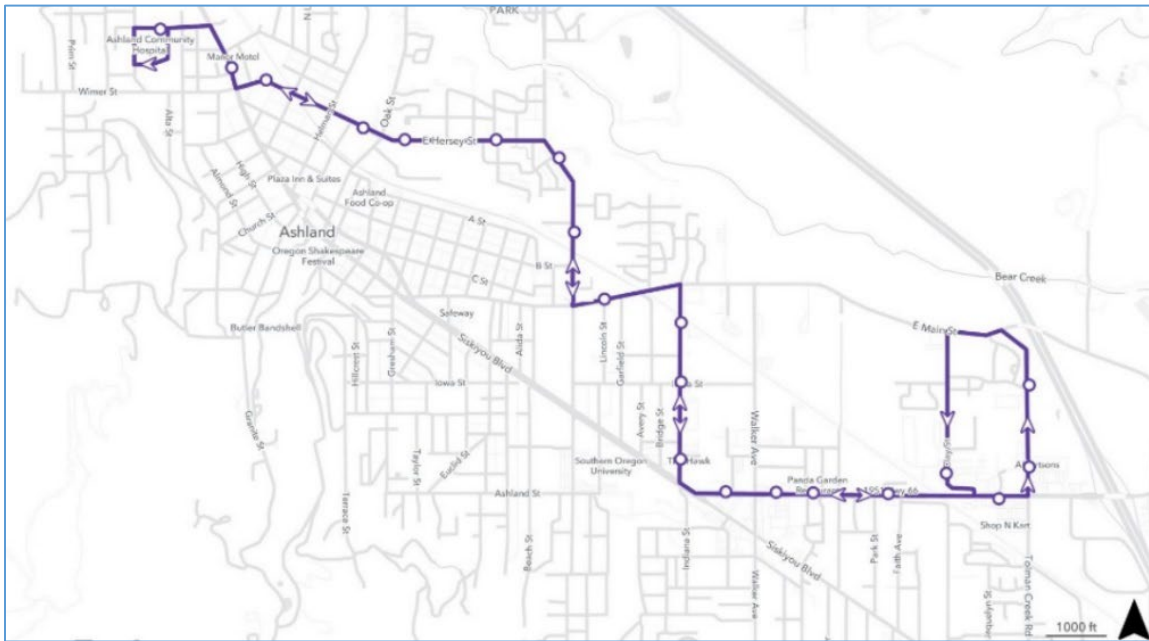


**POLICE:**

- Congratulations to **Dan Moulin** was promoted to Deputy Chief of Police and has assumed his new position immediately
- On Saturday, June 10, APD joined the APRC Senior Center and the Village at Valley View assisted living facility in hosting the annual senior cookout – It was a great success

**PUBLIC WORKS:**

- The Taxiway Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Project at the Ashland Municipal Airport is underway – Information is [posted on the City website](#)
- Slurry Seal Road Closures through June 23 – [Learn more](#)
- RVT (Rogue Valley Transportation District) will offer a new service as of June 26, 2023: Route 17. Service will be available Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The hours may be extended to Saturdays in the coming months. In early May 2023, RVT presented the new route to City Council. Since that time, they have made two changes to Route 17, which is shown in the map below. The changes remove the Helman/Nevada/Oak Streets loop, and the Abbott Avenue section as a connector street to Tolman Creek Road and Clay Street, rather East Main Street will be utilized



**New Route 17 for RVT**