

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 week everyone and **"Go Team City!"**

**Best,
Joe L.
City Manager**

WHAT'S COMING UP?

- Solar Eclipse on October 14 at approximately 9:18 a.m. – [Learn more](#)
- Open House at the Emergency Homeless Shelter on October 18, 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. – [Learn more](#)
- The Ashland Mystery Festival the weekend of October 20-22, hosted by the Ashland Chamber of Commerce – [Learn more](#)
- The Ashland Chamber's 2023 Children's Halloween Parade will begin at 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 31, at the Ashland Library – [Learn more](#)

Below is an update from our City Departments**CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE:**

- **Emergency Shelter:** Information about the Emergency Homeless Shelter at 2200 Ashland St, can be found at ashland.or.us/EmergencyShelter. The community may submit comments or questions, and view Q&As.
- **October News:** The October 2023 newsletter is available online at ashland.or.us/Communications, and will be mailed out in City Utility Bills during the month of October. The newsletter contains November happenings.
- **Coffee & Conversation with Council and the City Manager:** The third Coffee & Conversation gathering will take place on Tuesday, November 14, 2023, 8:30-10 a.m., at SOU (Southern Oregon University; exact location TBD). **Councilors, Bob Kaplan** and **Eric Hansen**, along with **Mayor, Tonya Graham**, will attend.
- **Emergency Preparedness:**
 - A joint EOC (Emergency Operations Center) meeting was held on September 19, 2023. Representatives from the City, ASD (Ashland School District), SOU (Southern Oregon University), and the City of Talent attended. The group will meet regularly to discuss emergency operations, planning and training.
 - Promotion of the Everbridge Citizen Alert system is ongoing.

- The Ashland School District (ASD) will send out the Citizen Alert message to ASD families from site newsletters. They are also putting a link to Citizen Alert on the School Safety page on the ASD website.
- SOU will send out the Citizen Alert message in their next all-campus email.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

- **Ashland Housing Production Strategy:** DLCDC (Department of Land Conservation and Development) has approved Ashland's Housing Production strategy, the first in the state to receive approval. See news release on City website, ashland.or.us.

ELECTRIC:

- The **Climate and Environment Policy Advisory Committee** will hold two meetings in October to discuss a possible ordinance that could affect natural gas usage in new residential buildings. The meetings will take place on October 18, from 6 to 7:30 p.m., or October 26, Noon to 1:30 p.m. Both meetings will take place in Council Chambers at 1175 E Main St. Comments may also be made [online](#). See news release on City website, ashland.or.us. Information on CEPAC at ashland.or.us/climate.

FINANCE:

- **Staffing:** Brought on an Audit/Budget Lead and two Utility Billing clerks. UB still has one position open, and it will take some time to get staff completely trained and fully operational, thus we are very appreciative of the Community's continued patience and understanding.
- **Process improvements** underway with implementation of Lockbox Processing in Utility Billing, which will aid in check processing and receipting, relieving 25 hours a week of staff time.
- **Reviewing the AMC (Ashland Municipal Code) Chapter 2.50, Procurements & Contracts**, and proposing updates to align with State thresholds and best practices – will present to Council in November 2023.
- **Annual Financial Audit** underway – September through November 2023.
- Will open **Utility Billing to in-person service** on Fridays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., at The Grove starting October 20, 2023. The Grove is located at 1195 E Main St.
- Approved by USDA for the **Rural Electric Service Program/On-bill Financing**, which will provide low-cost loans to Ashland residents to improve electric efficiency in their homes. Will start work on loan agreement in October 2023.

FIRE:

- Effective September 27, 2023, the fire danger had decreased to LOW. More information at ashland.or.us/FireSeason.
- Ashland Fire & Resue had a successful hiring process for the Training Officer and Fire Marshal positions. Both candidates have accepted the confidential job offers and are in background checks.
- The department's new fire engine should go into service in early October.

INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY:

- The Geographic Information Systems (GIS) division along with the Ashland Fire & Rescue Department, Wildfire Division, received a prestigious **Special Achievement in GIS (SAG)** award this summer for their collaborative work using GIS technology to understand Ashland’s wildfire risk. More information will be shared later this month, including a special presentation to Council at the October 17, 2023, City Council Regular Business meeting.

LEGAL:

- **Cheryl Artrip** has brought the City Recorder’s Office up to date on scanning agreements into the City’s digital repository. Council packets, ordinances and resolutions still need work; however, Cheryl’s completion of the agreements is greatly appreciated!

PARKS & RECREATION:

- **Senior Services Division** will be hosting flu and COVID-19 vaccination clinics for seniors on October 13 and 27 at Ashland Senior Center. The October 13 and 27 senior vaccination clinics at Ashland Senior Center are almost full now. Senior Services Superintendent **Isleen Glatt** is seeking additional funding to be able to offer more slots.
- **Recreation** – Summer 2023 final program numbers for the Daniel Meyer Memorial Pool:
 - 8,950 Admissions (1,722 Lap Swim, 674 Senior Swim, 147 Water Aerobics, 6,322 Rec Swim, 85 Water Polo)
 - 279 SAI (Starfish Aquatic Institute) Group Lesson Registrations
 - 39 Private Swim Lessons
- **Parks** – The cool, wet weather has allowed Parks to reduce water-usage throughout the City. Parks has already installed “smart” irrigation systems in Lithia Park (including Ashland Japanese Garden) and North Mountain Park. This year, automated irrigation will be installed in Garfield Park, Triangle Park, Glenwood Park and Railroad Park.

“We are better together!”