



## CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE:

- **Jordan Rooklyn** is our new Deputy City Manager! We are excited for the opportunity to continue working with Jordan, who has been serving as our Economic Development Specialist on a contract basis.
- Staff is partnering with Lamar Advertising to launch a yearlong **advertising campaign on RVTD (Rogue Valley Transportation District) buses**. The campaign, which will begin in December, will feature four seasonal ads displayed on two Ultra King buses. The buses operate across all routes throughout Southern Oregon, from Ashland to Eagle Point and out to Jacksonville. The primary goal is to attract tourists to Ashland, and it will be funded by Transient Lodging Taxes (TLT).
- We've launched a new webpage titled "**Your Taxes at Work.**" The page highlights the Food & Beverage Tax (F&B) and Transient Lodging Tax (TLT), providing a history of these taxes along with examples of projects that have been or will be funded. Visit it at [ashlandoregon.gov/YourTaxesAtWork](https://ashlandoregon.gov/YourTaxesAtWork).
- The **December 2024 City Newsletter** is available at [ashlandoregon.gov/CityNewsletters](https://ashlandoregon.gov/CityNewsletters).
- Mark your calendar for the annual **Town Hall gathering on January 22** at the Rogue River Room in the Stevenson Union at Southern Oregon University. Upcoming details will be posted at [ashlandoregon.gov/Townhall](https://ashlandoregon.gov/Townhall).

## ELECTRIC:

- Our Electric Department continues to receive positive feedback for their thoughtful and professional service. One Ashland resident recently expressed appreciation for the careful tree trimming done around their sweet gum tree, highlighting the crew's attention to detail and communication throughout the process. The resident wrote:  
*"Hi **Dave [Wood]**,  
I wanted to thank you for the great care you and your crew did trimming my sweet gum tree away from the electric wires last week. We were afraid it was going to be butchered, and really appreciate that you took the time to talk to us about what you were doing, it looks great. Please extend my thanks to your crew, **Jon [Frey]**, **Lonnie [Maybin]** and **Ryan [Maddin]**."*

## FINANCE:

- Finance plans on **moving all Finance Divisions to its new location at 2245 Ashland St in mid-December**. It will continue to keep its customer service hours at The Grove through December as it completes its move. More information about the Finance move in our January City Newsletter.
- **Applications for our Utility Assistance program are now available**. More information at [ashlandoregon.gov/UtilityAssistance](https://ashlandoregon.gov/UtilityAssistance).
- **Bond Counsel is preparing the documentation to finalize the RESP (Rural Energy Savings Program) Loan Agreements** with the USDA.
- The **Annual Audit is underway**.
- Applications are being accepted **to serve on the Citizens' Budget Committee**.
- Finance and Public Works will **proceed with the EPA financing of the Water Treatment Plan** after the passage of Measure 15-234.

## FIRE:

- In November, eight individuals came off their probationary status in the Fire Department with a celebration held at Fire Station No. 1 on November 7. Congratulations to Deputy Chief- Fire Marshal **Mark Shay**, Division Chief-Training/EMS Officer **Tom McGowan**, Single Role Paramedics **Lauren Fischer** and **Rob Marten**, Single Role EMTs **Kylar Tosh** and **Thomas Cermack** and Fire Fighter Paramedics **Jack McGuire** and **Gabriel Foltz**.
- Also in November, two new Single Role paramedics have also started with the Fire Department. Welcome **Daniel McLean** and **Jonathan Fabich**.
- **Fire District 5 has worked out an agreement with Fire District 3 for Chief Mike Hussey and his administrative team to assist District 5.**

## HUMAN RESOURCES:

- **Recruitment for the City Attorney** is now [live](#).
- **Congratulations to Rod LaCoste** from Fire, who is retiring on December 20, 2024, after nearly 24 years of service. His last assignment was as an Engineer on B-Shift. His pursuit for perfection, hunting and storytelling, in addition to his love of woodworking will forever be enshrined in the history of Ashland Fire & Rescue, as evidenced by the Bell Stand that he designed and built. The stand is on display in the main lobby at Fire Station No. 1.



Rod LaCoste

# City Manager's Report

- **Congratulations to Steve Burkhalter** from Electric, who is retiring after more than 36 years of service. Steve started with the City in the Street Division of the Public Works Department and quickly became one of the go-to people in the department. His unique skillset includes all the knowledge and skills necessary to maintain our city streets, and in addition to that, he has a unique gift with his ability to understand and operate technical software and equipment. That combination makes him so valuable in so many ways to the City, and on top of all that, he's a great person! He will be very missed, both for what he does for the City, and even more so just for who he is! Steve is definitely one of a kind, and we will miss him greatly!



*Steve Burkhalter, second from right with our Street Division in 2006*

## **INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY (DoIT or Department of Innovation & Technology):**

- The DoIT will be conducting a major **network switch upgrade** and will be coordinating with departments to minimize work disruptions.
- AFN (Ashland Fiber Network) has deployed a dedicated fiber line to the Goodwill building.

## **PARKS & RECREATION:**

- **Kirsten Came** is Parks' new Environmental Education Program Manager. Her first day of work will be December 9. Kirsten has an extensive background in Environmental and Interpretive Education, which utilize the skills she developed working as a park ranger and high school teacher. Her office will be in the Nature Center and her work will include creating opportunities for Environmental Education throughout the Ashland parks system. Welcome Kirsten!
- **The Parks & Rec Draft 2026-2031 CIP** has been posted on the [City website to solicit public comment](#). Staff and Commissioners will also collect public comment on the draft plan at the December 4 APRC (Ashland Parks & Recreation Commission) regular business meeting.
- **The Trails Advisory Committee (TAC)** is accepting applications for members. The application process ends December 15. Interested people can [apply via the City website](#).
- **The Ashland Rotary Ice Rink is open for the season!** [Ashlandoregon.gov/IceRink](http://Ashlandoregon.gov/IceRink).

# City Manager's Report

## PUBLIC WORKS:

- In November, our **street sweepers** cleared every street in Ashland at least once, **collected 450 cubic yards of leaves**, and emptied the City B Street Yard. Crews are revisiting areas missed due to parked cars and overgrown vegetation. (This information was shared on our social media platforms – See comments below from Nextdoor.) The street sweeping schedule and map can be viewed at [ashlandoregon.gov/Streets](http://ashlandoregon.gov/Streets), in addition to the Snowplow Route map.



*"The new street sweeper person in our neighborhood did a terrific job, very thorough and thoughtful about his work, much appreciated."*

*"Excellent job! It really makes a huge difference. We appreciate it on Beach Street. It's looking great!"*

*"I love living in a town that has street sweepers—thank you for keeping the streets clean. And thank you street sweepers for indulging my waves!"*

*"Good work! Thank you City of Ashland!"*

**– Comments from our residents on Nextdoor**

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## WHAT'S COMING UP?

- Join expert birding volunteers for **Project FeederWatch** at North Mountain Park on alternate Saturdays this winter beginning **December 7** and continuing through March 15, 2025.
- **Got Leaves?** Ashland Recology is offering a FREE leaf composting event on **December 8**. Information at [recology.com/recology-ashland](http://recology.com/recology-ashland).
- **CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) Trainings:**
  - Radio Communications on **December 11**
  - WRAP (Wildfire Risk Assessment Program) on **January 8**
- Watch for the Gala Community event, **FIRST FROST, on December 21, at the Ashland Rotary Centennial Ice Rink**. Information and schedule at [ashlandoregon.gov/IceRink](http://ashlandoregon.gov/IceRink).
- **Holiday Party for Seniors and their Families** at Ashland Senior Center on **December 20** – Information at [AshlandSeniorServices.org](http://AshlandSeniorServices.org).
- Medication Matters, What Matters to You? at Ashland Senior Center on **January 6** – Information at [AshlandSeniorServices.org](http://AshlandSeniorServices.org).
- **Town Hall 2025, on January 22**. Information at [ashlandoregon.gov/Townhall](http://ashlandoregon.gov/Townhall).