



## PROS Plan – Kickoff Meeting

**Date:** April 8, 2025

**Location:** Senior Center, Ashland OR 97520

**Attendees:** John Spitzley, Rebecca Jurta, David Sacks, Matt Palmer, Jim Dietz, George Lecher, Cori Frank, Abe Genack, Joanne Lescher

**Staff:** Amber Shroy, Nancy Mero, Natalie Mettler, Rachel Dials, Kirsten Came, Shannon Holt, Rocky Houston

### Summary:

A presentation was made that reviewed the planning objectives, planning process, reviewed key demographics, and assessment completed to date, and reviewed key community survey data. A question-and-answer session was held. Following is a summary of the questions and answers from the meeting.

Question	Answer
How many focus groups have there been?	There have been 4 so far for senior services, trails, natural resources and recreation. There are (3) neighborhood focus groups planned for later in April. An additional (2) are planned for youth and events.
Why did you choose trails as a focus group and not other things like pickleball?	Trails are the number one identified recreational amenity used in most national and statewide surveys. They are a distinct recreational amenity within the parks system. They were identified due to the existing trails master plan and engagement the department has had on trails.
If we wanted more exposure for pickleball, how do we do that? We need to put more focus on pickleball, and the city needs to be more aware of the need for more pickleball.	The department is aware of the interest and expressed needs of pickleball players. The PROS plan is designed to gather information on all recreational needs and assess our resources and capacity to meet those needs. This will lead to a level of service for recreational amenities, parklands, etc.
Were the comments recorded in the focus groups?	There were no video or voice recordings. Staff captured the comments, and a summary of the meeting will be used to document each focus group.
Why were the focus groups invitation only?	The department is seeking many different types of community input. This includes community surveys, focus groups, public



	meetings and public comments (written and oral testimony) throughout the planning process. The objective was to gather key partners and stakeholders to gather their perspectives on the department and our programs.
Will this presentation be on the website?	Yes, it will be.
What would more parks do for us? Are we saying we have less/more parks than we need to have? What is the focus?	The planning process will assist us in developing levels of service for parklands and park amenities. We want to have a diverse range of parks and recreational offerings. The community's input will help us determine if more or less is needed.
A lot of the goals are what the community has asked for & the question is...is parks holding up on the deal?	The strategic plan will reset the department's goals and objectives based on the updated community input.
Is the property on the east side of the freeway a parks property?	No, it is a city property managed by public works. It has been identified on the parks, trails, and open space plan (Item #3) as part of a Grizzly Peak trail corridor recreational concept. The parks department cannot plan for another department's assets.
There are still more opportunities for the public to have input.	Yes. Through the planning process (meetings, surveys, etc.) the public can provide comments formally in writing or via testimony and by being active participants in the meetings.
In the presentation, there was an increase in parklands around 2017, where is all that acreage?	The acquisitions have been related primarily to open spaces or natural areas. East Main Park and the Riverwalk are two specific examples associated with some of those acquisitions.
I live in Green Meadows – Oredson-Todd area. How many acres is that? Is it all park property?	Oredson Todd is 10 acres. Siskiyou Mountain is adjacent, and it is 271 acres. Siskiyou Mountain is a partnership with the Southern Oregon Land Trust.
Where did you get the demographic statistics from?	The United States Census.
The statistics identify 18% of Ashlanders living in poverty. The city is looking at raising utility bills for the people who are in poverty, how do they afford it?	The city has a program where utility customers can apply for a utility bill subsidy. More information on the program can be found with the utility billing department.
Will we be paying \$19 extra?	The City Council is reviewing the fees for wildfire and the fire department. They will decide at their April 15, 2025, City Council business meeting.
Why are there land acquisitions in the capital improvement plan?	Acquisitions are a category in our capital plan. There are funds (system development fees) that are dedicated to funding development and acquisitions. The department is not actively pursuing any acquisitions. There is a ditch trail easement donation under consideration.
How will this process affect the capital improvement plan moving forward?	The goals from the strategic plan and the 20 facilities plan will inform and guide future investments. Every two years we will update the 6-year capital improvement plan, reviewing the systems' needs and gathering input from the community.



<p>What are the funding sources for the capital improvement plan?</p>	<p>Parks System Development Charge (fee for new construction), Food &amp; Beverage Tax, Grants, and Donations</p>
<p>If you can't acquire parcels, can that be changed to a different acquisition?</p>	<p>If a specific acquisition is identified in the capital improvement plan, no.</p>
<p>Plans are fluid, this is fixed, is there leeway?</p>	<p>A capital project could be created, and the capital budget may need to be amended.</p>
<p>For the youth sports portion of the survey, if there is one person taking the survey with five kids, how does that come out in the data?</p>	<p>The survey only counts for one individual. Most of the individuals who completed the survey did not report having children.</p>
<p>The survey identified a 14% participation rate in Tennis and 30% in Pickleball. There are limited courts. It doesn't seem to be a focus at all on more courts. Congestion is getting worse as we add more &amp; more players. I am very nervous about the summer with more tourists and not enough court space. It seems that no one is taking this seriously. How can we get the message through?</p>	<p>The department and Park Commission are aware of the pickleball player's desire for more courts. The strategic plan will assist in developing a level of service for pickleball and other recreational amenities. This level of service will balance the community's values and the department's capacities. This meeting and the remaining strategic planning process will assist in conveying the recreational needs for the community.</p>
<p>Have you or your staff identified areas where new pickleball courts could be built?</p>	<p>The department has received ideas on potential sites for pickleball courts. We need to complete the strategic planning process to identify a level of service. Once we have done that, we can assess the park classification and specific park for pickleball or any other recreational use for which we are not meeting our level of service. That may require amending a park master plan to include the additional use.</p> <p>Currently East Main Park has identified a sport court area. In a future phase, 1-4 courts could be possible there.</p>
<p>When will the community garden be constructed at East Main Park?</p>	<p>This will be part of a future phase of development. The first phase includes the dog park, pump track, restroom, parking lot, and core trail thru the park.</p>
<p>Every meeting the pickleball players request courts. There was a promise of pickleball courts at the Oak Knoll Golf Course, where are they?</p>	<p>There is no pickleball court construction in our capital improvement plan, so no projects.</p> <p>The concept of pickleball courts at Oak Knoll was considered. It would have required the removal of the driving range. Instead, the Park Commission directed the department to put pickleball courts in Lithia Park because it was less expensive. There is no future plan, at this time, for pickleball to be at Oak Knoll Golf Course.</p>
<p>Parks is ignoring the fact that there are</p>	<p>In February 2025, the Park Commission held a study session on</p>



<p>not enough pickleball courts and the players do not hear any methodology or cooperation from the department.</p>	<p>pickleball. Data was reviewed and they provided staff direction to complete the strategic plan first. This will develop a level of service for pickleball. At that time, Hunter Park’s pickleball utilization will be reviewed. Any future development of any recreational assets will require a capital project and engagement through the capital improvement plan.</p>
<p>I see 5 soccer fields being identified in Ashland, but I only know of one at North Mountain. Where are the other 4?</p>	<p>The department has (4) fields. Three at North Mountain and one at Briscoe. The school district has the high school turf field and a couple of other fields at Lincoln Elementary and the Middle School.</p> <p>Other entities have reduced recreational fields/courts over the last 10-15 years. This is placing more strain on the limited assets remaining to meet all of the user’s needs.</p>
<p>Where can we find more information on the budget?</p>	<p>You can go to the City of Ashland’s Finance page and click the tab on the left corner labeled budget.</p>