



# THE FLASH City of Talent

An update from City Administration, Planning, Public Works and Police Departments

## Talent Avenue Improvements

ODOT recently received very favorable bids for the improvement of Talent Avenue between Chuck Roberts Park and Creel Road. The apparent low bidder is D. Britton Enterprises, the same contractor who replaced the waterline in Talent Avenue last fall. ODOT is evaluating all of the bids and will be making a recommendation to award the bid this month. The contractor should start work by July and hopes to finish this fall.

The improvements include new storm drains, curb, gutter and sidewalk on the west side, bike lanes on both sides, and new paving.

This project is being performed under a Federal Highway Enhancement grant to the City. The design and construction administration for these grants is performed by the Oregon Department of Transportation. ODOT and the contractor will coordinate with the City on traffic control and other impacts to the area.

## PARKS & RECREATION

With the increasingly high cost of gasoline, City residents may want to consider a number of recreational opportunities available in their own community this summer. The events being planned are family oriented and also provide an opportunity to become more familiar with Talent.

**Summer Programs** - The City has launched its 2008 Recreation Programs with many new options including several programs for adults. Swimming lessons, provided by the YMCA in Ashland, will be offered again this year with supervision provided by the Recreation Department for transportation to and from the classes. Classes will begin at the end of June. Those interested in hiking can enroll in a Hiking Safety Course. There are also actual hiking events available. A new program this year is a three-week day camp. Parents can enroll their children in all three weeks or one week at a time. Each day there is a structured program of events and meals are included in the registration fee. With everyone looking for ways to provide healthy summer activities for their children at affordable costs, parents are encouraged to look at the local programs being offered. The complete program brochure and application forms can be found on the City's website at [www.cityoftalent.org](http://www.cityoftalent.org) or at City Hall.

**June 21<sup>st</sup> Picnic** - Chuck Roberts Park - 5:30 - 8:30 pm. - The City of Talent's Parks and Recreation Commission is planning a free "picnic in the park" on June 21<sup>st</sup> at Chuck Roberts Park. In addition to free hot dogs and hamburgers prepared by Fire District #5, there will be live entertainment provided by Cabin Fever, a live auction, and demonstrations from some of the program instructors. Bring lawn chairs and blankets and plan to spend the late afternoon, early evening at the

Park. Local businesses have helped to make this event possible and "free". Come and get to know your neighbors and see what the park has to offer!

**Open Mic** - Summer Evenings on the Commons - There is still room to step forward and share your talents with your neighbors for an evening event on the Commons this summer. The City would like to be able to offer free live entertainment on the Commons, adjacent to the new City Hall, for either Friday or Saturday evenings during the months of July and August. The City can provide a sound system but needs your help with the live entertainment. A couple of groups have stepped forward but more would be welcomed so that weekly events can be offered. June 15<sup>th</sup> is the cut-off date to apply. Contact the City Manager 535-1566 or stop by City Hall if you have an idea of something that you think others would enjoy.

## 2008/2009 CITY BUDGET

The Budget Committee adopted a budget recommendation for the City Council at their meeting on May 15<sup>th</sup>. The Committee was confronted with difficult decisions to be made on the proposed budget for the fiscal year 2008-2009. They have had to reconcile the fact that the City revenues for the coming fiscal year will be much less than in previous years' while at the same time expenditures related to salaries and building operations have increased. The loss in revenues is due to the significant drop in the economy particularly in the building industry. The City relies on the revenues from fees for permits to fund a staff sufficient to allow all offices to stay open 8 hours a day.

The General Fund must pay for administration, finance, planning & building, and the Police Department. The total General Fund is \$1,913,675 and of that amount \$1,061,666 is needed to fund the Police Department. Monies for the General Fund come primarily from the Property Tax but also include franchise fees, court fines, licenses and fees for permits and a number of other minor revenue sources. The City also relies on the carryover from the current year and this is not expected to be as high as it has been in the past.

The final decision was to leave open a vacancy in the Police Department and to reallocate the time of one person in the Planning Staff to other departments. While there was much discussion about the loss of an officer this was a new position in the department that had not been filled due to other vacancies within the department that were filled first. Other allocations of employees' time will help to reduce the expense in the General Fund and reallocate resources in the Street and Water Fund. Other cuts have been made as well but there still leaves a shortage of revenues within the General Fund. The City Council will have to deal with this and will be considering a surcharge. This is not a popular decision they take lightly and will be done only if they have not found an alternative.

The City Council will hold a public hearing on this budget on June 18, 2008 at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Center, 206 E. Main Street. The public is invited to attend this meeting. The City Council must adopt a balanced budget by June 30<sup>th</sup>. The proposed budget is reported in its entirety in this newspaper in a format that is required by State Law. If anyone is interested in a more detailed budget they can stop by City Hall and ask to look at a copy.

## PLANNING COMMISSION VACANCIES

There are currently two vacancies on the Talent Planning Commission that need to be filled as soon as possible. There are 7 members on the Planning Commission and they meet once a month on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday in the evening. Their responsibilities include long term planning for the community as well as reviewing land use applications. The review process to be applied is defined in the City Comprehensive Plan, Zoning and Land Division Codes and State law. Application forms can be found on the City's website or obtained at City Hall. If you have more questions on the role of a Commissioner you can contact the City Planner, John Adam at 388-7041.

## PLANNING DEPARTMENT NEWS

### Clearwire

#### Decision Delayed

Due to a resignation and two unexpected absences, the Planning Commission meeting scheduled for May 22 lacked a quorum and had to be cancelled. All business of that night's meeting will be taken up on June 12 at 6:30 in the Community Center. The big topic will be the proposal by Clearwire to erect a monopole tower for transmitting broadband internet service to Talent.

After the close of the initial public hearing on April 24, the Commission allowed seven additional days for the public to submit written testimony, after which the applicant was given a chance to respond. Because the hearing has been closed, there will be no public testimony taken at the June 12 meeting.

It may not be clear to some people that it is improper to attempt to discuss agenda items with individual Commissioners outside of the hearing. What one member hears, all members have to hear, and it has to happen in a public meeting. Commissioners know well enough to avoid it because it threatens the fairness and legality of the decision-making process.

### "Pacific Stage Heights" Goes to LUBA

Artner Construction has appealed the hearings officer's decision to uphold the Planning Commission's denial of 'Pacific Stage Heights,' the 143-lot residential planned unit development proposed at the southeast end of town,

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across the tracks and off Belmont Road. City staff has prepared a Record for the Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA), which has yet to schedule a hearing on the appeal.



### Think Planning & Building Permits When You Want to Build

Many people think of building permits as simply an extra burden and expense they would rather not have to deal with. The reality is that the City's planning and building permit process is integral to the livability and safety of Talent. Building inspectors make sure all plumbing, mechanical, electrical and structural work meets minimum State code requirements for the safety of you, your family and the community.

Your home is probably your biggest investment; mistakes in construction can cost you more money down the road and put your family's safety at risk. Oregon law requires home sellers to fully disclose all remodeling work and whether or not permits were obtained. Making sure you get the required permits at the time you're doing the work will make selling your house a much easier process.

If you have never needed to get a permit before you may be surprised to find out how inexpensive many common permits are. When you pay for a permit you're paying for an inspection by a State-certified inspector to make sure the work you or your contractor is doing meets the minimum code requirements.

Visit [www.ThinkPermit.com](http://www.ThinkPermit.com) for more information about building permits in Oregon. You may call the Talent Planning & Community Development office to find out when planning or building permits are required.

## Public Trees

Talent City Ordinance 8-3 deals with trees and landscaping. Trees that are within street rights-of-way are considered "public trees" by definition and therefore owned by the City. Even those that are within six feet of the right-of-way are considered "street trees" and are subject to specific City requirements under the ordinance.

The trees in the downtown area of Talent Avenue are examples of public trees. These trees were planted during street upgrade projects at significant expense to the citizens of Talent. Ordinance 8-3 is designed to recognize the importance and value of these public trees. It specifically prohibits and makes unlawful the "topping" of public trees and street trees. Topping is defined as "the severe cutting back of limbs .... within the tree's crown."

Generally the City will provide maintenance on public trees.

Recently, there has been a problem with topping a public tree. Unlawful damage to a City asset has been the result. Hopefully, the information contained in this article will help people to understand the importance of these assets and prevent damage to other public trees.

You can access all City ordinances on the Internet by going to:

<http://www.cityoftalent.org>.

## Disaster Registry Is it for You?

Disaster Registry is a program designed to identify persons that would need special assistance to evacuate their homes in times of extreme emergency, such as a flood, forest fire, or other disaster.

Is this program for you? You should register, if you or someone you care for, would:

- need outside help to safely leave home during a disaster, or
- be in jeopardy if you stayed in your home, without assistance, for three days, or
- need special notification about the need for evacuation, due to impairment.

How does it work? Citizens enroll themselves into the program by completing a registry form; their information is added to a 911 Emergency Dispatch Center database; in the event of a disaster making it necessary to evacuate the neighborhood where the citizen lives, emergency services personnel are made aware of the citizen's special needs, and coordinate to provide that assistance.

Does Registry guarantee priority assistance? There are so many needs during a disaster, that emergency responders can't help everyone at once. But if your name is in the Disaster Registry, they will know of your need for special assistance.

Will my information be kept confidential? Yes, this information is available only to those in Jackson County Emergency Management and the 911 Center, who would pass it directly to emergency responders when needed.

Where to register? The Disaster Registry forms are available at Talent City Hall, and from the Rogue Valley Council of Governments, 155 N. 1st Street, Central Point.

Questions about the program should be directed to Connie Saldana at Rogue Valley Council of Governments, (541) 664-6674.

## COP TALK

By Chief Rctor

### Fireworks: Be Safe and Be Legal

As we know every year the 4th of July holiday and festivities bring with it fire danger. At this time of year with the heat and dry weather fire danger is high.

Here is a reminder of some safety tips and what fireworks are legal to possess and use. A good rule of thumb is pretty much most items purchased at a retail fireworks stand are probably legal.

To give you an example, most cone fountains, sparklers, snakes, base fountains, and ground flowers are legal. Examples of illegal fireworks are fireworks that explode, eject balls of fire, fly into the air, or travel more than six feet on the ground or 12 inches into the air.

Explosive devices would be considered things like firecrackers, M80, M100, Cherry Bombs, and Ash Cans. These are illegal. If you are caught with illegal fireworks, the fireworks will be confiscated and you will be subject to a fine.

Some safety tips to keep in mind: Purchase your fireworks from an Oregon licensed firework stand. Don't point or throw fireworks at people, animals, or cars or buildings. Only use with adult supervision. Have a bucket or hose ready for discarded and spent fireworks or emergencies.

**Never** alter or make your own fireworks. Use only outdoors and only light one at a time. Every year emergency responders respond to many calls of misuse, illegal fireworks, injuries, and carelessly started fires. We want everyone to have a good time, but please be safe. We will be actively looking for misuse and illegal fireworks. Should an accident occur, call 911 immediately. Have a good and safe 4th of July.

## CITYWIDE GREEN-UP



The City wide Green Up/Clean Up held on May 3rd was another success thanks to the citizens who came out to help and also to the efforts of Anne and Clark Zimmerman, Chairs of the event. It is only through this effort that the City takes on a clean, fresh look each spring. Each year the amount of trash picked up seems to decrease and we hope that is because of previous successful efforts and a more aware community. Special thanks goes to the Ashland Sanitary and Disposal for providing discounted disposal of brush and yard waste. This year a special effort was given by volunteers to assist residents in need of pick up and drop off of yard waste at the transfer station, two truck loads of waste was collected. This material will be recycled for another use. We also want to thank Ron Ridgeway of TARKS market that provided the space for our booth and coffee and donuts for volunteers. Also a special thanks to all the Together For Talent Committee Volunteers who came out to assist in various ways throughout the day!

## FIRE SEASON WEED ABATEMENT PROGRAM

It is expected that by the end of June the Oregon Department of Forestry will have declared the Fire Season for 2008. Not only is this declaration a time for citizens to become more alert to the danger of fires, but it also marks the beginning of the City's Weed Abatement Program. Depending on the weather conditions for this season, this declaration could stay in effect to possibly October. The City Ordinance related to Weed Abatement is intended to prevent the risk of fire hazards due to extensive growth of weeds.

Once Fire Season is officially declared and you believe that there is a fire hazard please contact Cheryl at City Hall and she will begin the process. The City's Code Enforcement Officer will be involved in the initial complaint and the City Ordinance describes in detail the process to be followed. (See City Website-Ordinance link, then click on "W" for Weed Abatement, Ordinance #716, or contact City Hall.) If compliance is not met the City may intervene to correct the problem at the expense of the property owner.