



CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES April 28, 2026

The scheduled meeting of the Ontario City Council was called to order by Mayor Deborah Folden at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 28, 2026, in the Council Chambers of City Hall. Council members present were Deborah Folden, Susann Mills, Michael Braden, John Kirby, Adriana Contreras, Ken Hart, and Penny Bakefelt.

Staff present were Dan Cummings, Tori Barnett, Corinna Hysell, Clint Benson, Kari Ott, Andy Wood, Tatiana Burgess, Casey Mordhorst, Marshall Pierce, and Jason Cooper.

AGENDA

This Agenda was posted Friday, April 24, 2026. Copies of the Agenda are available from the City Hall Customer Service Counter and on the city's website www.ontariooregon.org.

Councilor Braden asked to amend the Agenda to add action item 7B, Apply for a 2026 Community Development Block Grant.

BRADEN moved, CONTRERAS seconded, **TO ADOPT THE AGENDA AS AMENDED**. Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-yes; Contreras-yes; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion carried 7/0/0.

CONSENT AGENDA

HART moved, MILLS seconded, **TO ADOPT THE CONSENT AGENDA, WHICH CONSISTED OF ADOPTION OF COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF APRIL 14, 2026**. Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-yes; Contreras-yes; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion carried 7/0/0.

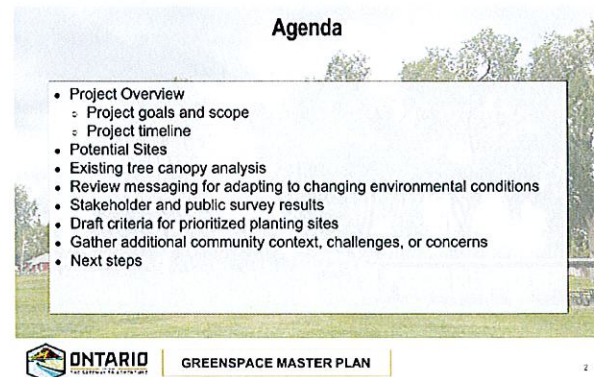
PUBLIC COMMENT

Tom Thompson, Revitalize Ontario, stated: *Mayor and Council, Tom Thompson. I live in Boise, Idaho, but I'm with Revitalize Ontario. Just wanted to give a couple updates as it kind of pertains to the Greenspace Master Plan. Susan and the great team at Andrews Seed has started planting Oregon Street. We've got all our rocks and boulders out, and then Friday starts the Friday Night Markets for the Depot group down at the Moore Park area, so it would be a great time to come down and see what they're doing, walk Oregon Street, see how we've upgraded that. They're starting at 5, and they'll have a band Burn, Burn from 6 to 8, so it should be a pretty good time. I'd like to invite everyone to come see us.*

PRESENTATION

Greenspace Master Plan: Greenworks PC

Matt Piccone, Greenworks, presented.



Project Scope and Process Summary

Project Goal

Locate 80-100 trees city-wide that will make the most positive impacts for the community. Provide guidance to maintain their health over time.

Process Summary

Tree Canopy Analysis

Understand the existing city-wide condition, and inform prioritization of planting areas. Inform future tree ordinances and private development code.

Tree Inventory

Identify maintenance issues, tree replacements, infill locations, and inform the prioritization process.

Vulnerability Assessment

Inform the selection of species planting in the implementation phase. Inform the update of preferred tree species list.

Community Engagement

Understand current conditions, challenges, obstacles for stakeholders. Understand public impressions and priorities. Opportunity for public feedback on proposed solutions.

Implementation Recommendations

Supplemental Guidance

Soil Analysis and Amendments

Work with local soil lab to test soil samples and provide recommended amendments to ensure healthy tree growth for selected species.

Tree Maintenance

Provide best practices for pruning, watering, mulching, and other basic tree care.

Installation Guidance

Provide guidelines for creating good conditions at time of tree installation to help with establishment.

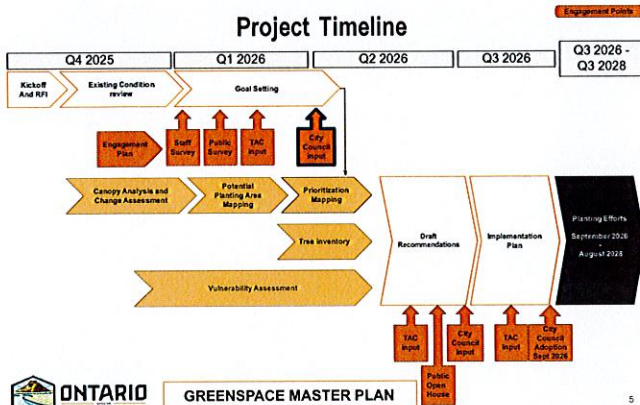


GREENSPACE MASTER PLAN



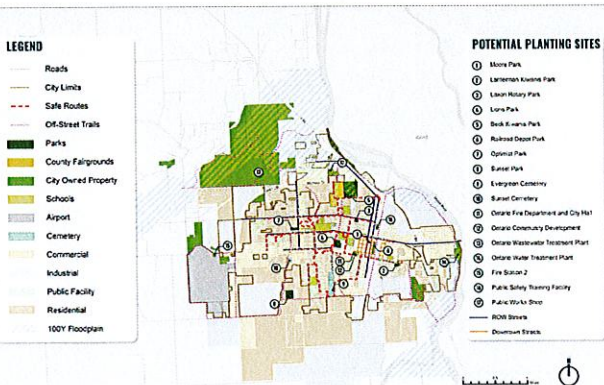
GREENSPACE MASTER PLAN

Project Timeline

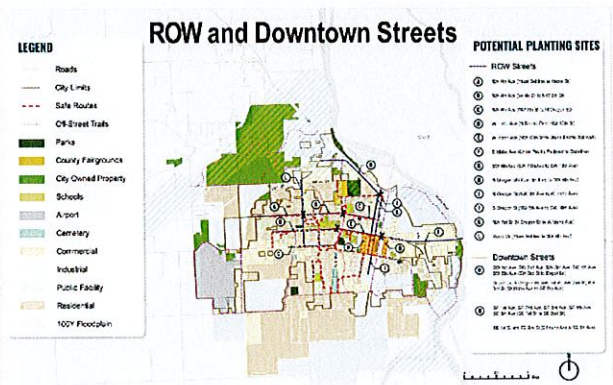


GREENSPACE MASTER PLAN

EXISTING CONDITIONS

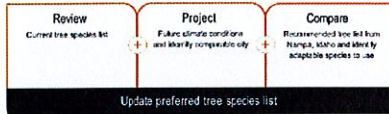


GREENSPACE MASTER PLAN



GREENSPACE MASTER PLAN

Adapting to Changing Environmental Conditions



Climate Change Vulnerability Analysis for Northwest of West River

Tree Species	Climate Resilience	Ecological	Historical
High	Medium	High	High
Medium	Low	Medium	Medium
Low	Low	Low	Low

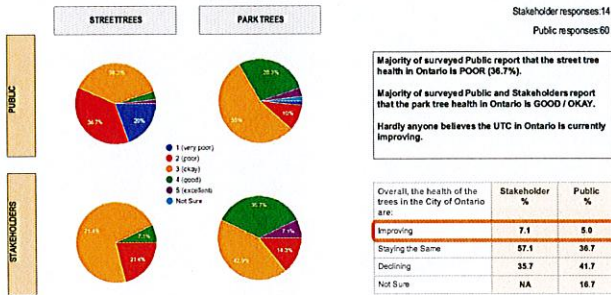
Common Name** (Plant Hardiness)	Urban Heat Island	HEAT RISK		HEAT & DROUGHT	
		Tree Suitability	Vulnerability	Consistency	Vulnerability
American Elm	4	2	3	2	3
American Sycamore	4	2	3	2	3
American Linden	4	2	3	2	3
American Oak	4	2	3	2	3
American Redstart	4	2	3	2	3
American White Birch	4	2	3	2	3



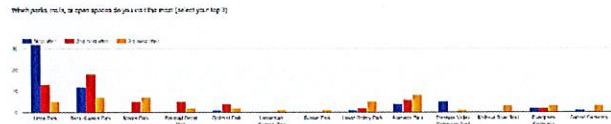
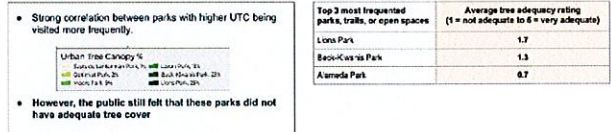
FEEDBACK



Mixed Survey Results



Public Survey Results



Survey Results

Rate the following tree qualities or benefits for Ontario to consider for planting new trees (1 being not important and 5 being very important) (Provides shade and cooling)	Stakeholder Average Score	Public Average Score
Provides shade and cooling	4.1	4.3
Native or Climate-adaptive (low water needs, pest-resistant)	4.5	4.1
Supports local wildlife	2.9	3.9
Flood and erosion control	3.1	3.6
Low debris (minimal fruit, seed pods, or messy leaves)	3.8	3.4
Beautification (fall foliage, spring flowers, fragrance)	3.5	3.4
Evergreen trees	3.1	3.2

Rate the importance of each of these ideas found in previous Ontario planning documents (1 being not important and 5 being very important)	Stakeholder Average Score	Public Average Score
Designated Safe Routes to Schools (on public sidewalks)	4.1	4.4
An off-street trail system	3.2	4.1
Downtown beautification and wayfinding	3.2	4.0

Overall, Stakeholders and Public are fairly aligned in priority of new tree qualities and which places could benefit from more tree canopy.	Stakeholder Average Score	Public Average Score
Parks: Picnic areas	4.6	4.2
Parks: Spaces near sports court/ fields for spectators or rest	4.1	4.0
Public Pathways / trails	3.6	4.0
Commercial streets and sidewalks	2.9	3.9
Public plazas	3.7	3.8
Parks: Play areas	3.4	3.8
Residential streets with low existing tree cover	3.1	3.8
Parks: Open lawn	3.3	3.5
Parking lots	2.9	3.5
Public buildings (City Hall, Fire Stations, etc.)	3.1	3.4
Cemeteries	2.9	3.3

Mixed Survey Comments

"I am not aware that the city council has been asked for funds to help. Our issue is more of a lack of vision vs. funding."

"Remove all Siberian Chinese elm from publicly owned land, remove all Tree of Heaven from city limits. Replace with long lived shade trees."

"There are a lot of small trees planted along East Idaho Ave that haven't seemed to grow in years"

"The parts of the park with tree cover don't have the play area which means in high heat they are too hot to play on. The tennis courts are too hard to use when it's hot."



ROW and Downtown Streets Summary Table

Top: More important to the community?	GOALS											Total Priority Score
	Provide additional green space or park?	Provide additional green space or park?	Provide additional green space or park?	Provide additional green space or park?	Provide additional green space or park?	Provide additional green space or park?	Provide additional green space or park?	Provide additional green space or park?	Provide additional green space or park?	Provide additional green space or park?	Provide additional green space or park?	
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
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0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11

Council Feedback

What are some community challenges or concerns that you would like us to understand and consider?



Council Feedback

What are some thoughts around the project messaging?



Council Feedback

What are some thoughts around the recommendation approach?



Councilor Kirby suggested they reach out to the OSU Experiment Station or maybe landscapers in this area, to address the high alkali in the soil.

Mr. Piccone stated they could reach out, as they were open to other partners. The current approach was to look at the priority sites, and to take a sampling to do a physical soil analysis. They were going to instruct staff and volunteers on how to follow that process. They would send the samples to a soils lab, who would give a broad sampling of areas across the city as to what the soil composition was, and what recommendations they would make to make amendments for their species list. There would be an in-depth analysis on that. He had not included it in his presentation, but some of the GIS mapping that was done, did map out the different types. The city had five or six major swathes of different types of soil, and they had that mapped out. They would be using the city-wide mapping, along with onsite soil sample testing. However, if Councilor Kirby had a name of who to reach out to at OSU, he'd be happy to reach out to them.

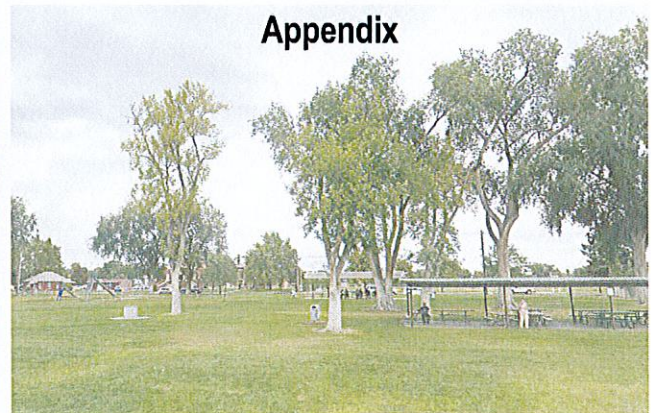
Councilor Mills stated the existing trees in the parks, once they started the planting, were those trees being moved as the new ones developed, so all the shade was not being removed? She was aware that some of them were nearing the need to be removed. Was it a process of planting new trees, waiting until they developed, and then removing the older ones?



Mr. Piccone stated many cities grappled with public perception when seeing trees, even if they were unhealthy and a hazard risk, there was always pushback on why they were being removed. They were in a phased approach, which could be adjusted. It was typically a seven-to-ten-year phase out of trees, and there was currently an individual on site flagging anything that was an immediate risk. They did not want any liability hazards, fall risks from storms, etc., to ever be an issue, so the why of removing specific trees would need to be clearly communicated. He added that trees that were healthy and not a risk, they wanted to leave them in place. They were not looking to clear-cut the parks and to start new. That would not work. To get rid of them all and start over, would be a detriment to the community and the spaces. They would work with the Arborist to make recommendations on how to appropriately phase out trees they felt should be removed. It would mostly be an infill project.

Next Steps...

- Public tree inventory (In progress)
- Vulnerability Assessment
- Draft Recommendations
- TAC meeting #2
- Public Open House



Scoring Guidelines

GOALS	Will additional trees at the site...										Total Priority Score	
	Provide shade for nearby buildings, streets, or parking areas?	Provide shade for nearby streets or parking areas?	Provide shade for nearby streets or parking areas?	Provide benefits to the surrounding community?	Provide benefits to the surrounding community?	Provide benefits to the surrounding community?	Provide benefits to the surrounding community?	Provide benefits to the surrounding community?	Provide benefits to the surrounding community?	Provide benefits to the surrounding community?		Provide benefits to the surrounding community?
6
1
2

Site name: _____ Site score by individual goal: _____ Total site score: _____

High Score: 10-15 (Green)
Medium Score: 6-9 (Yellow)
Low Score: 1-5 (Red)

Scoring Guidelines

GOALS	Will additional trees at the site...										Total Priority Score	
	Provide shade for nearby buildings, streets, or parking areas?	Provide shade for nearby streets or parking areas?	Provide shade for nearby streets or parking areas?	Provide benefits to the surrounding community?	Provide benefits to the surrounding community?	Provide benefits to the surrounding community?	Provide benefits to the surrounding community?	Provide benefits to the surrounding community?	Provide benefits to the surrounding community?	Provide benefits to the surrounding community?		Provide benefits to the surrounding community?
6
1
2

Site name: _____ Site score by individual goal: _____ Total site score: _____

High Score: 10-15 (Green)
Medium Score: 6-9 (Yellow)
Low Score: 1-5 (Red)

Scoring Source Material

1. Aerial Photo of Park Area

2. Google Street View of Park Area

3. Ontario Downtown Reutilization Plan 2009

4. Ontario Park and Recreation Master Plan Family Plan Map

5. ROW and Downtown Streets Map

6. Background Map

Scoring Source Material

7. Tree Inventory Report

8. Existing Urban Tree Canopy by Census Block Group Map

9. Urban Heat Island by Census Block Group Map

10. Demographic Vulnerability Map



PUBLIC HEARING(S)

Accept Right of Way for ADA Ramp Upgrade Project

It being the date advertised for public hearing on the matter stated above, the Hearing was declared open. There were no objections to the city's jurisdiction to hear the action, no abstentions, no ex-parte contact, and no declarations of conflict of interest.

Dan Cummings, City Manager, presented.

Cooperative Improvement Agreement No. 73000-00032942 was entered into by the City of Ontario and ODOT to upgrade existing and install new ADA ramps at all intersections within the City of Ontario that connected to the state highway system, titled the Jordan Valley/Ontario/Huntington/Adrian Curb Ramp Project. The project had been completed and ODOT was ready to turn over the right of way section within the current city right of way section for the city, so the city could maintain their portion of the project.

The City Council, the governing body for the City of Ontario, needed to accept the right of way of a portion of new areas of ADA ramps improved in a joint project with the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT).

The alternative could be to not accept the right of way; however, not accepting the right of way offered for relinquishment would violate the Cooperative Improvement Agreement signed by the city and would subject the city to paying for a portion of the ramps in the city sections, as well as paying for the right of way needed for the city sections.

The Hearing was opened for public testimony. Opponents: None. Proponents: None. There being no Proponent and no Opponent testimony, the Hearing was closed.

MILLS moved, CONTRERAS seconded, **THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVE THE RELINQUISHMENT DEED OF THE RIGHT OF WAY FOR PORTIONS OF NEW RIGHT OF WAY SECTIONS AS SHOWN IN THE EXHIBITS IN THE RELINQUISHMENT DEED AS ATTACHMENT TO THIS REPORT AND AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO SIGN THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE RELINQUISHMENT DEED.** Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-yes; Contreras-yes; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion passed 7/0/0.

Apply for a 2026 Community Development Block Grant

It being the date advertised for public hearing on the matter stated above, the Hearing was declared open. There were no objections to the city's jurisdiction to hear the action, no abstentions, no ex-parte contact, and no declarations of conflict of interest.

Clint Benson, Fire Chief, presented.

As required by law, it was necessary to read the following statement into the record: *Public Notice and Notice of Public Hearing The City of Ontario is eligible to apply for a 2026 Community Development Block Grant from Business Oregon. Community Development Block Grant funds come from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The grants can be used for public facilities and housing improvements, primarily for persons with low and moderate incomes. Approximately \$11 million will be awarded to Oregon non-metropolitan cities and counties in 2026. The maximum grant that a city or county can receive is \$1,500,000. The City of Ontario is preparing an application for a 2026 Community Development Block Grant from the Business Oregon for Ontario Firehouse 2 Addition, located at 3288 SW 4th Avenue, Ontario, Oregon; for the purpose of adding living quarters to Fire Station 2 to better serve the community and provide modern facilities for fire personnel. It is estimated that the proposed project will benefit at least 11,874 persons, of whom 58.1% will be low or moderate income. A public hearing will be held by the City Council at 6:00pm MST on Tuesday, April 28th at the City Hall, 444 SW 4th Street, Ontario, Oregon 97914. The purpose of this hearing is for the City Council to obtain citizen views and to respond to questions and comments about community development and housing needs, especially the needs of low- and moderate-income persons, as well as other needs in the community that might be assisted with a Community Development Block Grant project; and the proposed project. Written comments are also welcome and must be received by Tuesday, April 28th at City Hall, 444 SW 4th Street, Ontario, Oregon 97914. Both oral and written comments will be considered by the City Council in deciding whether to apply. The location of the hearing is accessible to persons with disabilities. Please contact Tori Barnett at 541-889-7121 if you will need any special accommodations to attend or participate in the meeting. More information about Oregon Community Development Block Grants, the proposed project, and records about the City's past use of Community*



Development Block Grant funds is available for public review at City Hall, 44SW 4th Street, Ontario, Oregon 97914 during regular office hours. Advance notice is requested. If special accommodations are needed, please notify Tori Barnett at 541-889-7121 so that appropriate assistance can be provided. Permanent involuntary displacement of persons or businesses is not anticipated as a result from the proposed project. If displacement becomes necessary, alternatives will be examined to minimize the displacement and provide required/reasonable benefits to those displaced. Any low- and moderate-income housing that is demolished or converted to another use will be replaced.

Station Two was currently in design, and the architect was under contract and working on the project. Staff was just seeking the funding, and the grant would open in July. He had been working with Tory Stinnett, who was there from Pendleton, and who was associated with GEODC. They'd been working together for several months on getting funding for this project. Staff was seeking authorization to submit an application for CDBG funding for living quarters at Station 2.

The City of Ontario was eligible to apply for a 2026 Community Development Block Grant from Business Oregon. Community Development Block Grant funds came from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The grants could be used for public facilities and housing improvements, primarily for persons with low and moderate incomes.

Approximately \$11 million would be awarded to Oregon non-metropolitan cities and counties in 2026. The maximum grant that a city or county could receive was \$1,500,000. The purpose of this hearing was for the City Council to obtain citizen views and to respond to questions and comments about community development and housing needs, especially the needs of low- and moderate-income persons, as well as other needs in the community that might be assisted with a Community Development Block Grant project and the proposed project.

Permanent involuntary displacement of persons or businesses was not anticipated as a result from the proposed project. If displacement became necessary, alternatives would be examined to minimize the displacement and provide required/reasonable benefits to those displaced. Any low- and moderate-income housing that was demolished or converted to another use would be replaced.

Councilor Mills stated she had previously been on the City Council in 2010 when Station 2 was constructed, and believed it was awesome to expand on the facility. It was definitely needed, and she was excited to see it happen.

Councilor Kirby stated the location of Station 2, for anyone in rural Ontario, this was where the coverage would come from. This would also provide faster access to SRCI.

Mr. Cummings added that no written comments had been received for this action.

The Hearing was opened for public testimony. Opponents: None. Proponents: None. There being no Proponent and no Opponent testimony, the Hearing was closed.

BAKEFELT moved, MILLS seconded, THE CITY COUNCIL AUTHORIZE STAFF TO MOVE FORWARD WITH APPLYING FOR A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE FIRE STATION 2 ADDITION TO CONSTRUCT LIVING QUARTERS. Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-yes; Contreras-yes; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion carried 7/0/0.

Mr. Cummings thanked Tory Stinnett for all the work she'd done with staff for this grant, and for attending that night's meeting.



DEPARTMENT HEAD UPDATESFinance: Monthly Update

Kari Ott, Finance Director, presented.

Councilor Hart asked, with regard to abatements, was the city down an officer? They wanted to spend the funds if needed. It was important to use the tools to ensure the city was clean.

Mr. Cummings stated there was a fund for a certain amount, and it would be expended first. If more was needed, it would be requested instead of budgeting it outright. Trish, the current Ordinance Officer, was getting compliance from a lot of people, and was doing a fantastic job. The second Ordinance Officer was not on yet, but was in background.

HAND-OUTSMinutes

County Court 04-01-2026

Check Register

March 2026


ADJOURN

MILLS moved, KIRBY seconded, the meeting be adjourned. Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-yes; Contreras-yes; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion carried 7/0/0. Meeting concluded at 6:57 pm.

ACCEPTED:

ATTEST:


Deborah K. Folden, Mayor


Tori Barnett, MMC, City Recorder

