



# GP Now

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Grants Pass, OR FREE

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## Doug Bradley is New Tourism Chairman

Doug Bradley was born and raised in Southern Oregon. With more than 30 years in the hospitality industry, Bradley celebrated his ninth anniversary as the general manager of Holiday Inn Express Grants Pass in December. He has served on the city's Tourism Advisory Committee for nearly eight years, and now he has been called to lead that committee into the future by a unanimous vote of his fellow committee members who elected him their chairman.

"We've had a very effective run in tourism in a number of areas, and my goals are to respect and keep those areas moving forward," said Bradley.

As the new committee chair, Bradley wants to see the committee renew its focus on applying available resources in the most effective way, he said.

"I want to make sure we are getting the most bang for our buck," said Bradley.

With that commitment comes a desire to review existing data, accumulate additional relevant data, and analyze what can be done to increase promotion of Grants Pass as a tourism destination.

"I want to make sure people outside our area are informed of our events and attractions," Bradley said.

One of the aspects of that in-



**TOURISM COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN DOUG BRADLEY.**

cludes looking at where visitors to the area are coming from by studying zip codes associated with hotel reservations and credit card transactions at local attractions, he said.

Most visitors come from Seattle, Portland, San Francisco and areas of Northern California, "but I want to expand that and extend our reach," he said.

Expanding that reach may require increasing the amount of money the city spends on tourism promotion. Bradley would like to look at the tourism investments made by communities such as Portland and Bend in order to do a comparison study.

"We want to be able to com-

pete on the same level," he said.

"We need to look at other communities and compare what they spend, and we need to make sure we are spending what we have in the right places," said Bradley.

He suggests expanding the city's tourism profile through billboards, travel magazines, banner ads on travel websites, and "places where people plan their travel."

"I see Grants Pass as the Mecca of tourism for Southern Oregon. We are uniquely Oregon," said Bradley.

He believes an essential key to accomplishing these goals involves "bringing the communi-

(See "BRADLEY" page 12)

## Growing Up In Water

"Fewer things are more important than providing water and sewer services to people," said Grants Pass Public Works Director Jason Canady.

Canady "literally grew up in" the city's aging water treatment plant on "M" Street. When he joined the city in 1995, he first spent six months working in wastewater operations before transferring to the water plant, where he spent the next 20 years.

"You take it as a job – a vocation – and it becomes an avocation," said Canady.

Admitting the plant (built in 1931) is coming to the end of its life and needs to be replaced was difficult for Canady, but a two-year evaluation in which all options were carefully studied, resulted in findings for the construction of a new plant at a new site.

"Ideally we were going to fix it, but you reach a point where the money you were going to invest is not a good investment for the community," Canady said.

In 2012, the city formed a citizen advisory committee to evaluate the structural stability and scope of work to make the facility secure and sound. Canady said the committee was formed of a number of citizen representatives and they found that it was not possible to renovate or even build a new facility at the existing location and keep

water flowing to residents at the same time.

"The older sections of concrete from the 1930s are really starting to degrade," he said.

The clear-well beneath the building lobby, which holds as much as 400,000 gallons of treated water, is suffering from crumbling concrete and rebar failure, said Canady.

"One section of the concrete wall is actually bowing out 2.5 inches. Concrete walls shouldn't bow," Canady said.

During the evaluation process the committee studied five alternatives, using a "triple bottom line analysis," including the cost to the community, benefit to the community, and potential environmental benefits of each option. Ultimately, the decision to build a new plant on a new site sparked a search of viable locations to begin construction.

"We evaluated a number of sites," said Canady.

In the end, the site at 695 SE "J" St. was determined to best suit the location criteria, while also representing the economical option (see subsequent story in this issue).

"One of our original criteria was to be within a reasonable distance of our original intake. In order to run that large diameter pipeline, the costs increase exponentially," Canady said.

Other potential sites were not viable for meeting future size

(See "CANADY" page 5)

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EMPLOYEES OF AUSLAND GROUP IN GRANTS PASS POSE IN FRONT OF THEIR NEW FACILITY ON HIGHLAND AVE.

## Design-Build Philosophy

When Craig Runyon joined the Ausland Group, he became a part of a family business founded in Grants Pass with a three-generation heritage and a “design-build” philosophy “founded and built around being streamlined and efficient,” he said.

Runyon, who serves as the company’s director of customer success is responsible for making “sure clients are happy, and we are meeting their needs,” he said.

Ausland Group’s design-build approach houses architects, engineers, and builders all under the same roof, so they are able to “go in and do the project from start to finish,” said Runyon.

The success of the company has been marked with multiple milestones in recent years. In 2013, they expanded operations to an office in Ashland and, in 2014, another new office in Eugene. In December, they celebrated the grand opening of a new facility at their original location on Highland Avenue in

Grants Pass.

“We wanted to use this building as a showcase of what we are able to do,” said Runyon.

Everything about the building is customized to the needs and specifications of the company, while also exhibiting the creative design elements the company is best known for, right down to the exquisite wood tabletop in “The Incredi-



bles” conference room.

Interesting names for spaces can be found throughout the building, including locations such as the Einstein Library, the Isaac Newton Study, and Marie Curie Bar, also known as the break kitchen. The human resources department is called the People Success office, and a collaborative workspace is

called the Jedi Room.

The names derived from employee suggestions and a sense of ownership in the process of designing and building the new facility that the employees share, Runyon said.

“People really took pride in their work and something they really got to experience from the ground up,” he said.

The new facility was three years in the making from conception to design to construction. The company outgrew its previous facility, and the team decided they wanted to design and build a functioning show-room piece.

“Part of the story of this place includes pointing to the issues we had to solve and how we did it,” said Runyon.

Scott Pigman served as the principal architect on the project. Architectural designer Kate Miller handled the interior design of the facility.

“We did it a little different than usual. We designed the outside without knowing what (See “AUSLAND” page 10)

## City Seeking Artists for Alley Beautification

The City of Grants Pass is seeking artists who wish to participate in the city’s Alley Beautification Project.

The Alley Beautification Project furthers the city’s goal of creating a vibrant commercial district by enhancing downtown activities and safe spaces. In this project, the selected artist will have the support of the city’s Committee on Public Art (CoPA) to survey key stakeholders and design site-specific art installation(s) for the selected alleyway.

The artist will be asked to create work(s) that create a sense of play and invoke interaction from the public, while also respecting placement within the city’s Historic District. The Alley Beautification Project is commissioned by the City of Grants Pass with a budget of \$20,000.

Deadline for this Call for Artists is March 6. While local creators may be given preference, there is no geographic eligibility requirement to apply.

The artist will have the support of CoPA to design and create one or more works of public art for the Osprey Alley. The project will be overseen by CoPA with final authority given to the city council.

The Osprey Alley is the first in a series of alleyways to be developed.

The Osprey Alley is located between 6th and 5th streets and parallel to H and I streets. As this site is within the city’s Historic District, no permanent changes can be made to surrounding buildings, and color palette may be limited. There is some existing landscaping in the alley, as well as one existing lamppost and temporary hang-

ing lights. Vehicles bringing supplies to adjacent businesses intermittently need access to a portion of the alley.

“Specifically, we are looking for work(s) that cause the public to pause, enter and look deeply at the space; engage and/or play in the space; and record their presence in the space with a unique image or ‘selfie,’” said Susan Seereiter, business advocate for the city.

Local artists, artist teams, as well as students are encouraged to apply. Application requirements include an email or mailed letter with the following contents:

1) Statement of Interest: In 800 words or less, introduce yourself and describe your specific interest in the project, your potential approach to the project or creating public art, and any past relevant experience.

2) Resume’ or short biography.

3) Visual Support Materials: 3-10 images depicting previous work. Visual support materials can include digital images, slides, videos, CDs, or prints.

4) Annotated List: The annotated list allows you to describe the visual support materials.

All applications must be received by 3 p.m., March 6. Applications will be reviewed by CoPA.

Please submit all required application materials by emailing [sseereiter@grantspassoregon.gov](mailto:sseereiter@grantspassoregon.gov), with the subject line Alley Beautification Application, or mail to: City of Grants Pass, C/O Susan Seereiter, Business Advocate, 101 NW A Street, Grants Pass, OR 97526.

For questions, contact Seereiter at (541) 450-6014 or [sseereiter@grantspassoregon.gov](mailto:sseereiter@grantspassoregon.gov).

## City Adjusts Scope of Land Needed for New Water Plant

The Grants Pass City Council approved a new resolution declaring a public need for acquisition of property for a new water treatment plant at their meeting Jan. 15. The new resolution supersedes a previous resolution adopted March 20, 2019, and changes the scope of the property required for building the new plant.

"It's more accurate to replace that one with this one," said City Attorney Mark Bartholomew.

The previous resolution identified a 16.94-acre tract at 695 SE "J" St. as the ideal location considering land acquisition and water treatment plant construction costs. The new resolution reduces the request to a proposed area of the property which encompasses only 9.97 acres of the property.

"The goal is to be as accommodating as possible," said Bartholomew.

The current plant is located on a parcel that is 3.3 acres. The actual "footprint" of the plant is smaller, but room is needed for ancillary processes, yard piping, parking, and other operational aspects. The majority of the current property has pipe or conduit duct bank running through it, said City Manager Aaron Cubic.

The new configuration of 9.97 acres will allow the new facility to include its own backwash handling facilities which will include a backwash and stormwater pond.

"This will likely take up over an acre alone, if not more," said Cubic.

Additional room is required to ensure that the plant can be enlarged at a future date.

"We need to ensure adequate



THE CITY'S WATER FILTRATION PLANT AND POND.

space for future growth. To acquire minimum lot size for current operations would add a lot of cost to future users," he said.

"This issue cannot be over-emphasized; if we cannot construct future plant expansions without utilizing other parcels for construction activities or have enough room to excavate next to structures without encroaching on the Parkway, we will be back in the same position that we are today, unable to expand or re-construct without impacting plant operations," Cubic said.

Security is another reason additional room is needed. The current plant is considered vulnerable due to its accessibility. The added room will allow for numerous security measures which will help to deter any future security concerns.

Another acre is required for stormwater management and plant overflow storage that the current facility does not have. An external perimeter road is something else the existing plant does not have and is needed for chemical deliveries and

solids haul off, said Cubic.

"The latest land option provides minimal impact on the landscaping business at its current location and allows this service to the community to continue," he said.

The property is owned by the Ausland family, operators of Copeland Sand and Gravel. The city has been in negotiations with the Auslands since early last year, but those negotiations have hit a stand-still.

"We have made an offer and we have not heard back," Bartholomew said.

Oregon law requires the city to declare to a public need for the property prior to commencing with any eminent domain proceedings, but Bartholomew was clear in stating that the new resolution does not prevent continued negotiations from taking place.

Councilors Joel King and Valerie Lovelace questioned Bartholomew about the process of moving forward with eminent domain should a reasonable deal fail to materialize (See "WATER" page 11)

## Canady... (from page 1)

expansion and could increase costs of the facility by as much as \$20 million, he said.

"Because of its close proximity and wide openness, the 'J' Street property became the best alternative," he said.

"It's not just building the plant today, but it's also about the expansion we need in the future. That's really the key to the amount of property we need," said Canady.

Today, the city provides an average of 5.5 million gallons of water per day to more than 12,000 connections serving more than 35,000 people. That translates to roughly 3,500 gallons per minute 24 hours per day, seven days per week to meet average demand.

Under the best possible scenario, the current plant will continue to function until a new facility is built and running. Other possible scenarios are less positive, Canady said.

A major earthquake could render the plant nonoperational, and a "worst-case scenario is that it collapses under its own weight without a major seismic event as the trigger," he said.

If that happens, at least two-fifths of current water production would immediately cease, and the city would have to function on only 2-3 days of stored water.

"Maybe longer if people rationed properly," said Canady.

Increasing cost projections add to the urgency to build the new plant. Currently estimated at \$81 million to complete, each day potentially raises the cost by as much as \$8,000, Canady said.

Based on average inflation and increased costs of materials, staff projects a four percent annual increase to the cost of construction. Canady also stays informed about other public

agencies with similar projects in the works and the effect that can have on the available labor pool when it comes time to begin construction.

"The time lag has been a challenge. You're reducing your buying power," he said.

Once the suitable property is acquired, Canady projects it will take as long as four years to complete the project.

"Eventually we will have created a plant that is going to be resilient and be there for the next 100 years," Canady said.

**"You take it as a job — a vocation — and it becomes an avocation."**

"The construction techniques in 1931 were not as advanced as they are today. The new plant will be designed to last 100 years. The original plant was not designed to last that long, and it's already at 89 years and counting," said Canady.

Still, the man who spent 20 years inside the historic building has a soft spot in his heart for the service it has provided and the recognition it deserves for that service.

"That plant is such an iconic building in this community, and we will find a way to repurpose it for a future use," said Canady.

Nonetheless, the plant's days as a functioning clean water supply source are numbered.

"The city has not taken this decision lightly," Canady said.

***"High and fine literature is wine, and mine is only water; but everybody likes water."***

***- Mark Twain***

## Council Structures Public Comment

During this year's Strategic Planning the mayor and city council discussed public comment and how it is currently managed during council business meetings.

Council members welcome public engagement in a variety of ways: over the phone, in writing, mayor and council email, and in person through conversations at meetings and public events, among others.

Topics of discussion included respecting the time of people needing to do business with the city and the ability for the public to address council on matters pertaining to city business.

Most meetings include public hearings and/or council action items where people need to do business with the city on items such as lot line adjustments, sign code appeals, façade improvement grants and others.

Often, the applicant for these items hires an architect, contractor or planning consultant to help represent their interests. Recognizing that the city is the sole place for this type of business, and it comes at an hourly cost for some, council prioritized city business to occur first on the agenda at their meetings.

Council values citizen input and is implementing a few changes to their current public comment guidelines to make for a better public experience and more efficient and effective meetings.

The following is the approved public comment process.

- Those who wish to speak at public comment must complete a public comment card and turn it in to the city recorder by 5:50 p.m., prior to the start of a business session meeting held the first and third Wednesday of each month.

- Public comment cards can be picked up and submitted during normal business hours (8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday - Friday) at City Administration, 101 NW 'A' St., Room #205, or 5:30 p.m. to 5:50 p.m. in the Council Chambers the day of the meeting.

- Public comment will be limited to no more than 30 minutes total.

- Due to time constraints, the mayor or chair may limit the time for individual public comment to accommodate everyone registered to speak.

- If more than two people are speaking on the same topic those individuals will be asked to select a spokesperson and that one individual will be provided five minutes to speak.

- The mayor or chair will call on the registered speaker during the public comment session.

- When called to speak, the speaker will approach the podium and discuss their topic of interest.

- Positions of interest are to be presented in an atmosphere free from slander, threats, or other personal attacks.

- Signs or placards, outbursts of applause, campaigning for public office, or other disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.

- Speakers shall address the entire council as one body, and shall not address specific council members individually.

- Council may consider items brought up during this time later in the agenda during Matters from Mayor, Council and Staff.

Public comment cards are not required for public hearings or council action items.

Questions regarding any government-provided service or a current city policy, can be addressed to the city manager's office in an attempt to resolve the matter.

Arrangements for a sign language interpreter, hearing assistance and other assistance can be made by calling the city manager's office at (541)450-6000.

## The GIST of Things

Members of the community are invited to take a brief survey to assist the City of Grants Pass with improving its Geographic Information System (GIS). The survey can be found at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LZRBPC5>.

GIS software and geographic databases (geodatabases) represent features on the earth, such as buildings, site addresses, utility systems, city boundaries, and roads.

GIS is a tool used by individuals and organizations, schools, governments, and businesses seeking innovative ways to solve problems.

Residents can learn more about GIS by visiting the City's website: <https://www.grants-passoregon.gov/908/What-is-GIS>.

## Storm Water Solutions

The City of Grants Pass is rethinking its stormwater system and city staff is seeking public input. The city is proposing a Stormwater Management Manual that will facilitate best practices for stormwater mitigation techniques, which help to filter out contaminants and promote natural infiltration.

Community members are asked to visit the following link to complete a brief survey to provide valuable feedback and input: <http://openhouse.jla.us.com/grants-pass-swmm>.

## Ausland... (from page 3)

the inside would look like, then we designed the needs of the inside," said Runyon.

"Kate (Miller) did a dive deep into what our needs are," he said.

Miller treated the project like the company treats its outside clients. She conducted interviews of the staff and key personnel about their needs and functions in order to assess and include the design elements required to meet those needs. She then incorporated the use of natural light where possible and adhered to a desire to have "a natural flow to the building with an open office space design," said Runyon.

**"It's something unique to Southern Oregon, if not all of Oregon."**

The goal was to initiate collaboration and coordination between team members within the space on a regular basis. It is common for team members to collaborate on project needs in the break kitchen while getting a cup of coffee, Runyon said.

Acoustical panels were added to help lessen the effect of hard surfaces and a "white noise" element was added to the open space to promote the proper atmosphere.

"There were certainly issues we had to tackle, but that was part of the mission," said Runyon. "You're putting yourself in the client's shoes and seeing what they have to go through," he said.

The most difficult challenge was working to complete the new facility, while also serving clients throughout the state, Runyon said. For two years, the staff in Grants Pass worked out of job trailers at the back of the

property.

"That made coming to this new facility that much sweeter," said Runyon.

Some of Ausland Group's more notable local projects include the AllCare Health headquarters, and renovations to the Holiday Inn Express and The Haul. Regional projects include the theatre and broadcasting studios at Southern Oregon University, the remodel of Agate Hall at University of Oregon, and the Britt Festival's Performance Garden.

Currently their team is working on a new 16,000-square-foot building and 30,000-square-foot building renovation for a major credit union in Coquille.

"It's very rewarding to bring on an innovative team that follows a newer design-build model," Runyon said.

In choosing team members, Ausland Group looks for innovative employees who can "function in an integrated environment," he said.

"Our core values are important, and when we look for a new team member, we assess whether or not they fit that," said Runyon.

"We're really trying to do something new and make a new model for success. It's something unique to Southern Oregon, if not all of Oregon," Runyon said.

**LIVE!  
ON THE AIR**

**Listen live to city council members and staff discussing local issues on KAJO (1270 AM) 9:30 a.m. the 1st and 2nd Tuesdays of every month.**

## Planning Commission Opening

Applications are still being accepted for a position on the Urban Area Planning Commission due to a resignation. The term expires Nov. 18, 2021. All City appointments to the UAPC shall be required to have their principal residence within the city limits or the Urban Growth Boundary.

The purpose of this commission is to review and render a decision on all Type III Land Use Applications, including zone changes, subdivisions, Planned Unit Developments,

and major variances, as well as all Type IV Land Use requests, including Comprehensive Plan Amendments and Development Code Text Amendments.

Apply at the City Administration Office, 101 NW "A" St., or online at [www.grants-passoregon.gov/committee-application](http://www.grants-passoregon.gov/committee-application). Applications must be received by 5 p.m., Monday, Feb. 10. The commission will review applications Feb. 12, and the city council will make appointments at the city council meeting Wednesday, Feb. 19.

## Light the Storefronts Grant Program

Encouraging downtown merchants to improve the aesthetics of their storefronts.

### Eligible Projects:

Soft lighting that spills out into the sidewalk and street improving the ambiance of downtown.

Color temperature appropriate range of 2000 K up to 3500 K (K=Kelvin).

White LED lighting that shines on window merchandise.

Lighting inside and around the storefront windows.

### Location Criteria:

Within the Grants Pass downtown area as bounded by: C Street to the north, M Street to the south, and between 4th and 8th streets.

### Conditions and Considerations:

The maximum matching grant for any one applicant will

be no greater than \$1,000.

Grant funds are intended for reimbursement of active tenant/merchant costs.

Grant funds will not be used for previously completed projects.

All applications will be reviewed and approved on a first-come, first-serve basis.

The City will not grant funds until the work is complete.

The incentive grant is available until the program funds are exhausted.

The City will review grant applications for compliance with historic guidelines and period appropriateness.

The minimum match amount required from the applicant shall be no less than 50% of the total cost of the project.

### Grant Approval Process:

The applicant must submit a

completed application and required detailed information.

The Economic Development Department's Business Advocate will provide notice of award for successful applications.

The lighting must be installed within one month from the approval date.

Money for the grant will be disbursed after the applicant has completed the project and has submitted financial information to the City.

Questions on eligibility can be directed to Business Advocate Susan Seereiter; (541)450-6014.

***"It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness."***

***- Eleanor Roosevelt***

## Water...(from page 5)

between the Auslands and the city.

Bartholomew said the city was required to wait at least 40 days after an offer was made based on a recent appraisal of the property, before moving forward with additional procedures. The city obtained a new appraisal of the identified portion of the property in December, he said.

Speaking at public comment on the item, Steve Ausland expressed his family had two different plans for the property. One plan included continuing the business operations that currently exist at the site, the other plan proposed selling the land to a large retail outlet, he said.

The city's desire to use a portion of the property would "eliminate its use for a big box outlet," said Ausland.

"You might as well ignore this (resolution) because you already have to take the whole property," Ausland said.

City councilors disagreed.

"I see this as an appropriate step. The city has determined that we do not need the entire property," said Councilor DJ Faszler.

"I see this as a good compro-

mise as far as I can see," said Councilor Dennis Roler.

"I agree that this is a great compromise," said Councilor Clint Scherf.

Bartholomew's presentation included projections of cost increases the city will incur while the process to acquire the land continues. His projection is an increase of \$267,000 per month, and Councilor Roler said city consultants have determined that moving the location could add as much as \$20 million to the price of the facility.

Councilor Valerie Lovelace spoke of the impending need to replace the current aging water plant, which she identified as the oldest existing water plant still in operation in the state of Oregon.

"It will not last forever, and it has taken us eight years to get to this point," said Lovelace.

Council President Tyler Flaming was optimistic that a deal could be reached with the Auslands for the purchase of the required property.

"I hope that through these negotiations we can reach an agreement everyone can feel good about," said Flaming.

## Lights...(from page 9)

said.

"Once they're gone, they're gone," said Crowder.

Some of her other chocolate-covered creations haven't been as famous. Explorations into chocolate-covered bacon and chocolate-dipped potato chips just didn't sell well for her. The perishable nature of those items also made it difficult to keep them fresh.

"It's not worth carrying them," she said, and thus they are "never to be seen here again."

Some of her other seasonal items are a tremendous hit with customers every year, said Crowder.

"I make a special fudge once a year for Back to the Fifties weekend," Crowder said.

The special three-layer Razz-My-Berries takes her all day to make. It is composed of layers of raspberry, lemon, and blue-

berry cheesecake fudge. Freedom Fudge is the special creation every Fourth of July, and Rogue River Bottom Fudge, which started as a creation for "Rocktober," "was such a hit, I keep it stocked all the time," she said.

"I like to play with the fudge stuff the best," said Crowder.

One of her greatest challenges as a confectioner occurred when local philanthropist, Brady Adams, commissioned her to create 30 large, individually-decorated chocolate bears to give as gifts to the artists who created the now famous Grants Pass BearFest Bears.

"I did things with a Black and Decker that never should have been done," said Crowder. "If it has my name on it, I want it to be as close to perfect as possible," she said.

One Easter season, Adams came in and wiped out her en-

tire stock of chocolate bunnies, she said.

Crowder is also a philanthropist. Each year, she supports local events and fundraisers, including Stockings for Soldiers, which she has supported for five years.

"I will do it every year until I don't have a business anymore," Crowder said.

"I love our community, and I'm involved as much as I can possibly be," she said.

Crowder calls herself a "people pleaser" who tries to please everybody, including herself.

"In my fermenting years, I realize that I can't please everybody," she said.

Nonetheless, she continues to try.

"I live in this community. I love this community. They're going to carry me out of this community feet first," said Crowder.