

Ashland: A City Confident of Its Future

Consistent Growth Influenced by Four Dominant Factors

By JOHN STAFFORD
Mail Tribune Staff Writer

Ashland—Ashland is a town concerned about its future and is determined to do something about it. Its 9,119 residents are fortunate in having city officials and private citizens with an eye to the future.

The city has shown a consistent growth in the last 30 years. In 1930 the population stood at 4,444. By 1950 it had jumped to 7,739 and the 1960 census listed 9,119.

Such growth creates problems. City facilities become inadequate, schools are overcrowded and expansion often is disorderly. This is not the case with Ashland. During the last five years, city facilities have been expanded, new schools have appeared and an orderly expansion plan is being devised. The growth has been met so well that the city faces the future confidently.

Ashland is influenced to a great extent by four factors. The lumber industry is important 12 months out of each year. Its payrolls total more than \$1.5 million each year paid to employees living in Ashland. Figuring all expenditures and dollar turn-over, it is estimated that the lumber generates some \$32 million in purchasing power in the community each year, according to the Ashland Chamber of Commerce.

Benefits derived from the famous Shakespearean festival each year are great. Although any figure for financial benefit the festival brings to the city is unavailable, it can be said that Shakespeare played before 42,976 people in 1960.

The festival is growing. Its attendance has more than doubled since 1956. In that year 18,476 saw performances. From a 31-day season in 1956 the festival has grown to a point where a record 42-day performance will be given in 1961.

The 25-year-old festival is an example of the spirit of the city. Its growth has increased consistently since its outdoor performance beginning in 1935. That year attendance was 500. By 1940 it had jumped to 1,800, and 1950 saw a rise to 8,850. The 1960 total of 42,976 is a credit to the community interest and festival leadership.

However, the growth was not accomplished without some difficulty. In 1958 the festival faced a crisis. The main performance stage was condemned by the state fire marshal. A new stage was needed, and cost was estimated at \$275,000. A fund drive was started, needed money raised and the carpenters were adding finishing touches when the first 1959 performance got under way July 25.

The agriculture industry also influences the economy of the city. Most farmers live outside the town so definite figures are not available as to its direct effect on the economy. One thing is for certain. Figures show that about 30 per cent of the beef cattle raised in Jackson county are in the Ashland area.

The other important community asset is Southern Oregon college. Since 1950 the college has grown from 969 students to present enrollment of 1,142. The 1960 fall term enrollment was 1,379.

College officials indicate the growth potential is great. "We are a college to serve southern Oregon, and as a state school our enrollment isn't limited," Don Lewis, business manager, says.

Expansion in facilities is already under way. Cascade Hall, a new girls' dormitory, was completed in 1960. It has space for 125 students. Long range plans call for additions to the dormitory to form what will be known as Cascade Complex. Formulation of the complex is progressing at a one building at a time rate.

Set for Construction
In 1961 a \$290,000 co-educational dormitory is scheduled for construction, housing 72 more students when completed. Lewis says that if and when the whole complex is completed it will have dormitory space for 600 students.

In addition a new \$100,000 student infirmary is scheduled for construction in the near future. Other improvements in facilities in the near future will total an additional \$25,000.

"We figure that by 1970 we will need dormitory space for 1,200 students," Lewis says. Currently the college has space for 450 dorm students. "To adequately meet 1970 dormitory needs we will have to spend about \$3,200,000," Lewis said.

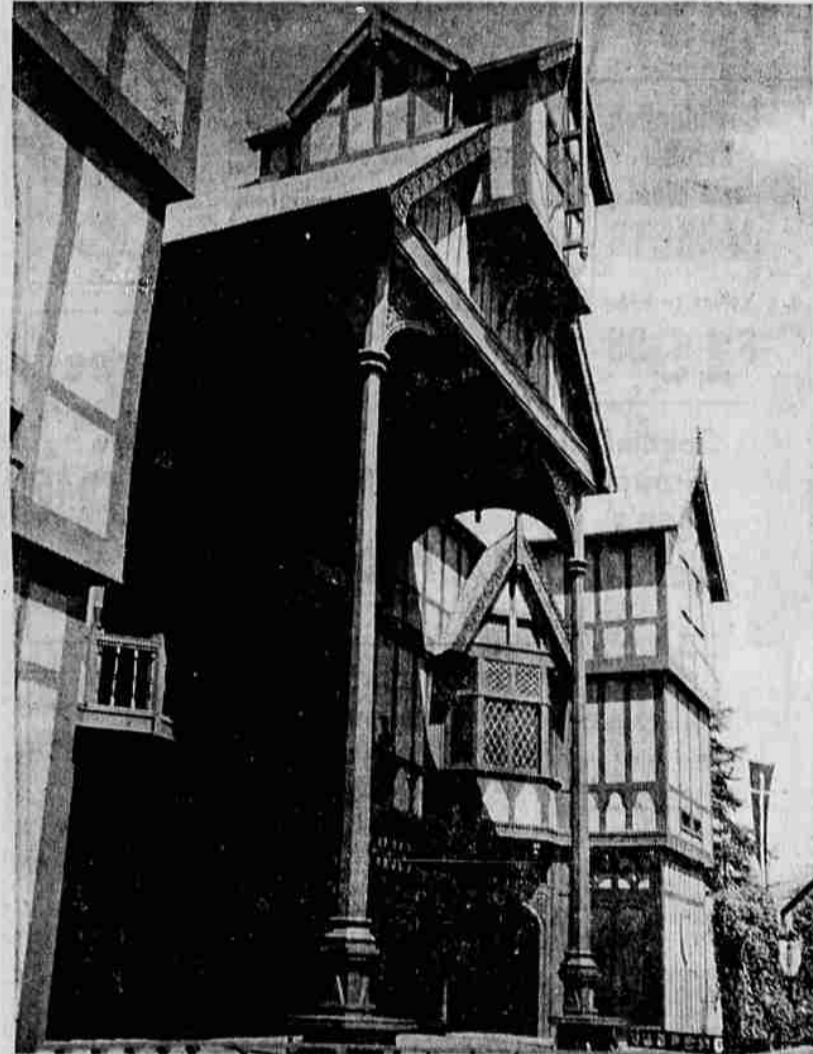
\$2 Million Per Year
Lewis said the business office handles funds totaling about \$2 million a year, most of which is spent in the immediate area. Actual payrolls run close to \$750,000, he



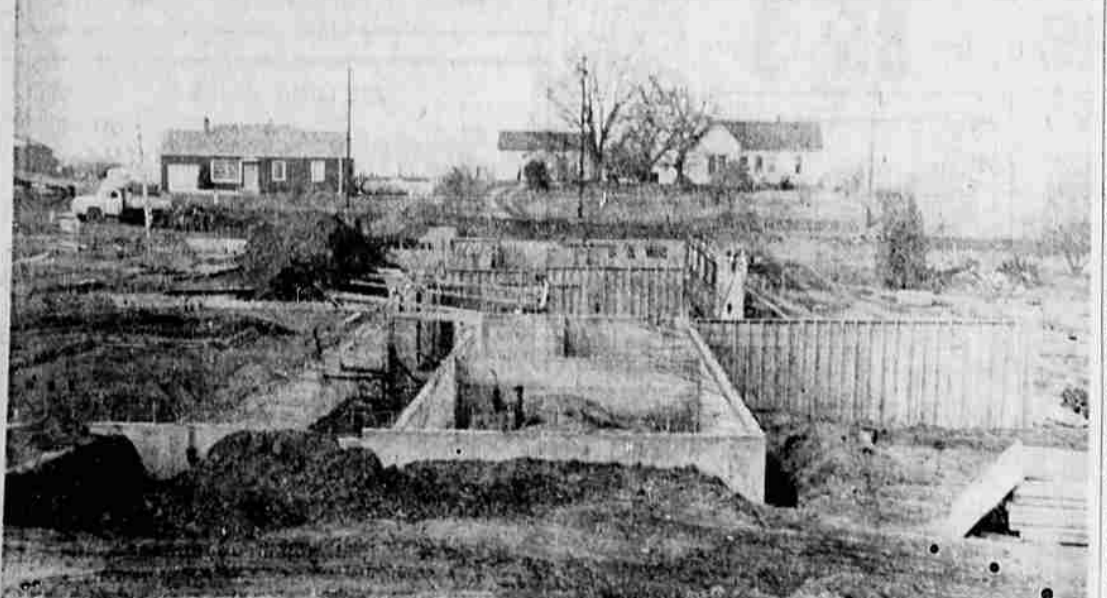
MAIN STREET—Shown above is a view of Ashland's Main st. south from the city plaza. The Ashland hotel, left, is scheduled to be torn down this year. The First National Bank of Oregon purchased the hotel recently and announced plans to construct a new Ashland branch First National bank on the site. The hotel has been a city landmark for more than 70 years.



MARK ANTONY HOTEL—The Lithia hotel changed hands in March, 1960. It was purchased by Jack Pumphrey and William Sutton and renamed The Mark Antony. It has been remodeled along English Tudor architectural lines, in keeping with the Shakespearean festival. A restaurant, coffee shop and cocktail lounge have been added, and all rooms refurbished. (Whitland Locke Photo)



SHAKESPEAREAN STAGE—The Shakespeare festival was faced with a crisis in 1958 when the old theatre stage and storage building was condemned by the state fire marshal. Theatre officials and local citizens got busy and by July 25, 1959, this new building had been constructed. It has a large performance area and gives plenty of room for storage of equipment.



NEW HOSPITAL—Construction is progressing on Ashland's new 34-bed hospital located on Maple st. As the picture shows, the foundation has been put in. The completion date has been set at sometime in November. Ashland citizens approved the project in 1960. Ground breaking ceremonies were held in October, 1960.

said. All of which highlights the importance of the college to Ashland.

Facts and figures on the city's own development of facilities are important.

Recent progress includes a Highway 99 couplet put through the town in 1957-58. The project was financed jointly by the city and state. Highways were widened all the way through the town and a new street was made around the business area.

Mercury vapor street lamps were installed along the new couplet and main business section from the junction of Highways 66 and 99 north to the city limits. A total of 259 vapor lights were installed at a cost to the city of \$23,310.

Expanding Rapidly
A new 14-inch water main was installed from the Crowder hill reservoir to the Bellview area in 1957-58. The Bellview area has been expanding rapidly.

In addition 12½ miles of paving, 26 miles of curbing and guttering and five miles of storm sewers have been installed, according to City Superintendent Elmer Biegel.

Citizens voted for a new city sewage disposal plant costing \$385,000 in 1959. Work on the new plant is progressing. It is located near Oak st. at the city limits.

Construction of a new hospital was approved in 1960. Cost of the modern 34-bed unit is \$575,000, according to Biegel.

The foundation and excavated area walls have been completed so far. The new structure is located on Maple st.

Education Stressed
Education was also stressed in recent years. A new \$1¼ million junior high school was finished in 1960. The modern structure is an educational showplace for all of southern Oregon.

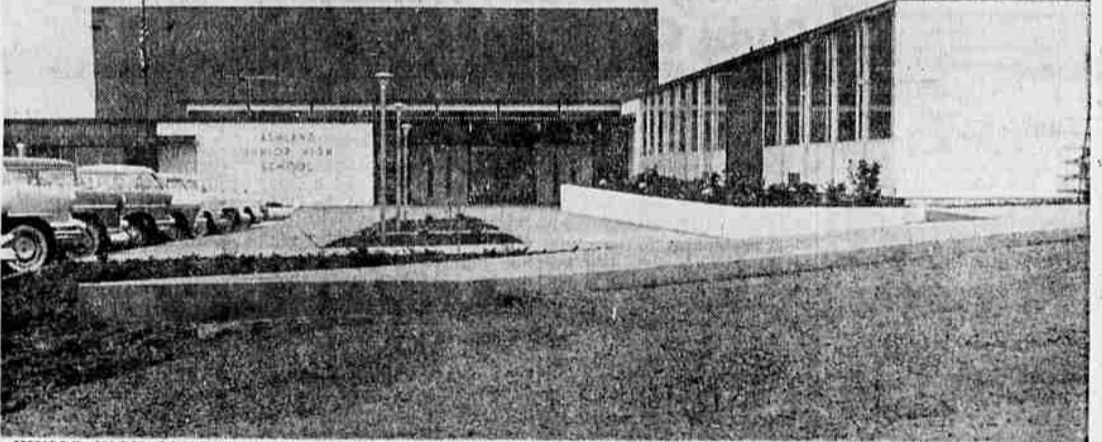
In 1960 financial totals of building permits issued within the city were \$1,533,158. Among the 149 permits issued, 49 went for new residences, 49 for residential remodeling, 34 garages, 14 new commercial buildings, nine commercial remodelings, one new hospital and seven miscellaneous projects.

Currently the assessed valuation of property in the city is \$7,818,213. The chamber of commerce estimates retail sales in 1960 totaled about \$13 million.

The public education system has been growing also in the last few years. A two-room addition was added to the Lincoln Elementary school 1955-56, seven room addition and teachers' faculty room at Walker Elementary school in 1957-58 and six classroom and cafeteria addition to Bellview school in 1958-59.

Administration Building
An administration education system building was constructed in 1957-58. These are in addition to the new junior high school.

School enrollment stands at 2,550. Since 1955 enrollment have increased 135 percent each year.



JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL—School progress in Ashland is highlighted by construction of this new junior high school. Construction and land costs of the school totaled \$1¼ million.

ments inside the city are highlighted by a vigorous remodeling program at the Mark Antony hotel. Jack Pumphrey and William Sutton purchased the hotel in March, 1960. It was known at the Lithia hotel at the time of purchase.

They renamed it the Mark Antony and have designed it along the English Tudor style of architecture, to coincide with the Shakespearean festival.

A restaurant, coffee shop and cocktail lounge have been added, in addition to refurbishing of all rooms.

In December the First National Bank of Oregon purchased the Ashland hotel and announced plans to tear down the old hotel, and construct a new Ashland branch of the First National on the site. This historic landmark has been doomed to give way to a new landmark.

Certain factors outside the city also could have an influence in its future. The Ashland Economic Development commission has been working with private investors in planning a proposed ski development on Mt. Ashland. If the \$165,000 proposed ski resort becomes a reality, it quite definitely will have an effect on Ashland and the entire Rogue valley.

Biegel outlined immediate future city plans as building a water main on the west side of town. Also a new sewage line and new pumping line will be constructed from the Bellview area to the present sewage disposal plant.

Street Lighting System
Plans also call for continuation of the mercury vapor street lighting system to the southern city limits, from the intersection of Highways 99 and 66.

What problems are facing Ashland?

Biegel says annexation is somewhat of a problem. In the last five years 135 acres have been annexed. All of the annexed areas are being developed with private

announced plans to construct a new Ashland branch First National bank on the site. The hotel has been a city landmark for more than 70 years.

tion. The structure was completed in 1960 and was officially dedicated in the fall. It is one of the most modern school buildings in Oregon.

"We also have to increase the number of city firemen we have," he said. He pointed out that Ashland's fire staff is below the national average for a city of its size. Nine men are on the staff as compared to 13 in other comparable cities.

Growth problems are presently occupying the attention of the Ashland Economic Development commission. The commission recognizes that unorganized city expansion can be disastrous.

To meet this situation the commission is working with Marvin Gloege, a professional city planner. Gloege is developing a five-phase plan for orderly development of the city. His plan includes land use study, economic factors in the community, zoning ordinances and determination of which way the city should expand. His recommendations will be considered by city officials at the conclusion of the study late this year.

come on the north and east, Biegel says. This will mean extension of sewer and water lines, he points out.

Raising money to finance all desired projects is another problem, according to Biegel. State law restricts increases of the city budget. It can increase only 6 per cent over the previous year's budget, without going to the voters for approval. "This means we can only raise our budget about \$4,000 a year," Biegel said.

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