

# A G E N D A



## Joint Meeting of the City of Salem Budget Committee and the Salem Urban Renewal Agency Budget Committee

DATE: Wednesday, April 17, 2024

TIME: 6:00 PM

CHAIRPERSON: Dr. Irvin Brown

PLACE: Hybrid Meeting  
Chambers and Youtube

STAFF LIAISON:

Josh Eggleston, Chief Financial Officer

503•588•6130

[jeggleston@cityofsalem.net](mailto:jeggleston@cityofsalem.net)

Kali Leinenbach, Budget Manager

503•588•6231

[kleinenbach@cityofsalem.net](mailto:kleinenbach@cityofsalem.net)

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### 1. OPENING EXERCISES – Chairperson Dr. Irvin Brown

### 2. PUBLIC TESTIMONY

- a. Correspondence from Alexis Tingey regarding the Salem Public Library
- b. Correspondence from Jordan Tingey regarding the Salem Public Library
- c. Correspondence from Dawson Hughes regarding the Salem Public Library
- d. Correspondence from Esther Friedman regarding the Salem Public Library
- e. Correspondence from Ripu Briar regarding the Salem Public Library
- f. Correspondence from Tina Blacksmith regarding the Salem Public Library
- g. Correspondence from Paige Stone regarding the Salem Public Library
- h. Correspondence from Sakura Rohleder regarding the Salem Public Library
- i. Correspondence from Sarah Currin regarding the Salem Public Library
- j. Correspondence from Jonathan Jones regarding the Salem Public Library
- k. Correspondence from Keegan Gormally regarding the Salem Public Library
- l. Correspondence from Jacqueline Schindele regarding the Salem Public Library
- m. Correspondence from Julie Hall regarding the Salem Public Library
- n. Correspondence from V. McKay regarding the Salem Public Library
- o. Correspondence from Joan Lloyd regarding the Salem Public Library
- p. Correspondence from Holly Hartman regarding the Salem Public Library
- q. Correspondence from Cheyanne Bobb regarding the Salem Public Library
- r. Correspondence from Susan Graves regarding the Salem Public Library
- s. Correspondence from Shelby Kruger regarding the Salem Public Library
- t. Correspondence from Andrew Evans regarding the Salem Public Library
- u. Correspondence from Amber Padilla regarding the Salem Public Library
- v. Correspondence from Evan West regarding ambulance services and the Salem Public Library
- w. Correspondence from Mary Beth Hustoles regarding the Salem Public Library
- x. Correspondence from Alicia Van De Kop regarding the Salem Public Library
- y. Additional correspondence from Julie Hall regarding the Salem Public Library
- z. Correspondence from Kate Patty regarding the Salem Public Library
- aa. Additional correspondence from Alicia Van De Kop regarding the Salem Public Library
- ab. Correspondence from Elizabeth Allwein regarding the Salem Public Library
- ac. Correspondence from Rey Thomas regarding the Salem Public Library
- ad. Correspondence from Mason Thomas regarding the Salem Public Library
- ae. Correspondence from Rachel De Jager regarding the Salem Public Library

- af. Correspondence from Allie Reilly regarding the Salem Public Library
- ag. Correspondence from Alex Brown regarding the Salem Public Library
- ah. Correspondence from Abbey Gaterud regarding the Salem Public Library
- ai. Correspondence from Alma Plasencia regarding the Salem Public Library
- aj. Correspondence from Arlene Weible regarding the Salem Public Library
- ak. Correspondence from Beth Armstrong regarding the Salem Public Library
- al. Correspondence from Brandon Gitchel regarding the Salem Public Library
- am. Correspondence from Brady Rogers regarding the Salem Public Library, Parks, the Youth program, and the neighborhoods program
- an. Correspondence from Caroline Brown regarding the Salem Public Library
- ao. Correspondence from Claudia McAnelly regarding the Salem Public Library
- ap. Correspondence from Cesar Plasencia regarding the Salem Public Library
- aq. Correspondence from Carol Voeller regarding the Salem Public Library
- ar. Correspondence from David Gutterman regarding the Salem Public Library
- as. Correspondence from Evelyn Estrada regarding the Salem Public Library
- at. Correspondence from Emily Heldt regarding the Salem Public Library
- au. Correspondence from Greta Bergquist regarding the Salem Public Library
- av. Correspondence from Janine Horst regarding the Salem Public Library
- aw. Correspondence from Jillian Lowery regarding the Salem Public Library
- ax. Correspondence from Jen Mauer regarding the Salem Public Library
- ay. Correspondence from Jacob McDonald regarding the Salem Public Library
- az. Correspondence from Katie McBeth regarding the Salem Public Library
- ba. Correspondence from Lauren Griffin regarding the Salem Public Library
- bb. Correspondence from Lisa Hardey regarding the Salem Public Library
- bc. Correspondence from Lee Ogle regarding the Salem Public Library
- bd. Correspondence from Matthew Mischke regarding the Salem Public Library
- be. Correspondence from Madeline Newcomer regarding the Salem Public Library
- bf. Correspondence from Nayeli Cruz regarding the Salem Public Library
- bg. Correspondence from Sarah Bishop regarding the Salem Public Library
- bh. Additional Correspondence from Sarah Currin regarding the Salem Public Library
- bi. Correspondence from Shauna Garcia regarding the Salem Public Library
- bj. Correspondence from Sydnie Ihne regarding the Salem Public Library
- bk. Correspondence from Sadie Verville regarding the Salem Public Library
- bl. Correspondence from Kate Von Ummersen regarding the Salem Public Library
- bm. Correspondence from Tasha Preston regarding the Salem Public Library
- bn. Correspondence from Valorie Freeman regarding the Salem Public Library
- bo. Correspondence from Wendy Conelisen regarding the Salem Public Library
- bp. Correspondence from Patrick Wheeler regarding the Salem Public Library
- bq. Correspondence from Briana Bowler regarding the Salem Public Library
- br. Correspondence from Gloria Lee regarding the Salem Public Library
- bs. Correspondence from Hannah Simpson regarding the Salem Public Library
- bt. Correspondence from Alex West regarding the Salem Public Library
- bu. Correspondence from Robert Hollenhors regarding the Salem Public Library
- bv. Correspondence from Tyra Peebles regarding the Salem Public Library
- bw. Correspondence from Larry Sipe regarding the Salem Public Library
- bx. Correspondence from Deborah Emeny regarding the Salem Public Library

3. MINUTES
  - a. Minutes from March 21, 2024 City of Salem and Urban Renewal Agency Budget Committee Meeting
4. ACTION ITEMS
  - None
5. INFORMATION ITEMS
  - a. FY 2025 Proposed Budget – provided to members in advance of the meeting
    - Presentation of Proposed FY 2025 Budget Message, City Manager Keith Stahley
6. PUBLIC HEARINGS
  - a. None
7. SPECIAL ORDERS OF BUSINESS
  - a. Opening Comments – City Manager Keith Stahley
  - b. Result Area Budget Review – Welcoming and Livable Community, pages 175 – 201
    - Overview by Chief Financial Officer Josh Eggleston
    - Questions of staff and committee discussion
  - c. Result Area Budget Review – Natural Environment Stewardship, pages 89 – 106
    - Overview by Budget Manager Kali Leinenbach
    - Questions of staff and committee discussion
  - d. Committee Discussion
    - Opportunity for the Budget Committee to discuss any issues or concerns regarding agenda items or items not on the agenda
8. PUBLIC TESTIMONY FOR FUTURE BUDGET ISSUES
 

The Budget Committee has set aside time for public comment to address items not on the agenda. Each individual testifying will be limited to no more than three (3) minutes.
9. ADJOURNMENT

*The next virtual Budget Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 24, 2024 at 6:00 pm. The following budgets are scheduled to be reviewed:*

*Result Area: Safe, Reliable and Efficient Infrastructure, pages 135 – 157*

*Result Area: Strong and Diverse Economy, pages 159 - 173*

*Urban Renewal Agency, book 2*

*CIP Public Hearing*

*Budget staff are available for your convenience to discuss the budget document and process. Please call the staff listed above if you have questions.*

The City of Salem budget information can be accessed on the internet at: [www.cityofsalem.net/budget](http://www.cityofsalem.net/budget)

NOTE: Disability-related accommodations, including auxiliary aids or services, in order to participate in this meeting, are available upon request. Sign language and interpreters for languages other than English are also available upon request. To request such an accommodation or interpretation, contact Kali Leinenbach, (503) 588-6231 or [kleinenbach@cityofsalem.net](mailto:kleinenbach@cityofsalem.net) at least 2 business days before this meeting. TTD/TTY telephone (503) 588-6439 is also available 24/7.

The City of Salem values all persons without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, domestic partnership, disability, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity and source of income.



**From:** [Lex & Jordan Tingey](#)  
**To:** [Virginia Stapleton](#); [Linda Nishioka](#); [Trevor Phillips](#); [Deanna Gwyn](#); [Jose Gonzalez](#); [Julie Hoy](#); [Vanessa Nordyke](#); [Micki Varney](#); [Chris Hoy](#); [budgetoffice](#)  
**Subject:** Commenting on the City's budget proposal to close the library  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 1:21:42 PM

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Hello Mayor, Budget Committee, City Councilors,

I'm emailing as a concerned citizen after seeing the Salem Budget Committee's March 21st meeting that covered potential proposals to remain within budget for fiscal years 2025-2028. The first proposal offered in September of 2023 was concerning enough with advocating for cutting another 8 FTE from the library (in addition to the roles that were cut in January 2024), but I was appalled to see that several options now include closing the main Salem City Library, as well as cutting funding to several social services (such as homeless shelters and the 50+ center) that are needed.

It seems ironic that many City Councilors talk about supporting the most vulnerable communities and making it more equitable to reach public services such as the library and yet are not batting an eye at the fact that these new budget proposals seek to close the library and important social services entirely. Public libraries are one of the last remaining places where a person does not have to pay to exist (I'd highly recommend you look up the lack of "third places" to research), where they can access services at no charge, all while potentially expanding their education and opening their mind to new ideas.

I'd like you to consider who exactly this would impact, as it is a wide range of people within the community. Nearly 15% of Salem's population is beneath the average poverty line, with many more hovering just at or above. As mentioned before, there are barely any free places for families to take their children, let alone places that also offer hours of entertainment within the books, services, and educational opportunities they provide. But those children and adults and families are only one small portion of who the Salem library serves; public libraries are one of the few safe places that homeless people can exist and take advantage of free services without being policed or criminalized for simply being. The amount of groups and organizations that also use the public library to continue building community and organizing around the things that matter most to them cannot be forgotten. In addition, many citizens from cities outlying Salem (such as Keizer) do not have access to robust public libraries and thus use Salem's public library, showing that this impact would resonate even further than just the limits of the city.

Per definition, city governments are not businesses as their aim is not to make money, but to uphold and improve the welfare of their citizens. If we truly cannot find money in the city budget for basic community needs like the library, homeless services, and elderly citizen support, then this is a bigger issue and needs to be addressed as such. The only four options given should not all be so similar that it's only changing one or two things; as member Dixon and others suggested during the March 21st meeting, there has got to be another way.

While I understand the focus on "public safety", it is concerning that such a sentiment is taking precedence over meeting the basic needs of the city's citizens itself. Oftentimes, public safety is a curtain put up to hide a mass amount of budget given to policing and militarizing that does nothing but further agitate issues within the city. The fact that there is a position focused on "graffiti abatement" alone is ridiculous, as it clearly shows that the city is more interested in being seen as "pretty" than willing to serve its most vulnerable communities. If

any one department is going to escape the knife of budget cuts, it should be the department focused on human services and basic rights, not one policing homeless communities and criminalizing those simply trying to survive.

Those feelings aside, destroying a city's public library is indicative of a pathway that leads to fascism. I know this word is thrown around a lot (often not correctly), but there are 14 characteristics of fascism and these budget proposals seem to encourage a few of them, including but not limited to:

- Supremacy of military policing/obsession with crime and punishment: again, putting those departments over all others in ranking budget decisions.
- Corporate power is protected above all else: as member Dixon called out on the 21st, it seems more reasonable to take away subsidies from businesses and land owners that are prospering in these terrible times instead of taking free services from those struggling.
- Disrespect for intellectuals and the arts: what is more disrespectful than closing some children and adults only ability to interact with the arts and education opportunities outside the traditional classroom?

With the state of the world, closing the library should be the LAST thing on any of our cities' agendas. I urge the City Council and its Budget Committee to consider different proposals and even a complete rework of what is being offered, to stay true to its commitment of serving ALL within its city bounds, not just the privileged few. At the least, do not consider the options that include cutting entire operations of library, homeless, and elderly services.

I will be speaking with many groups throughout Salem and encouraging them to spread the word about the potential closures, and look forward to visiting during meetings to publicly comment on the matter and further move this matter forward. I am hopeful that you and the other members involved with the City Council and the Budget Committee are able to find another solution instead of attacking the last remaining vestiges of true public services.

Thank you for your time,  
Alexis Tingey  
801-941-2167

**From:** [Jordan T](#)  
**To:** [Virginia Stapleton](#); [Linda Nishioka](#); [Trevor Phillips](#); [Deanna Gwyn](#); [Jose Gonzalez](#); [Julie Hoy](#); [Vanessa Nordyke](#); [Micki Varney](#); [Chris Hoy](#); [budgetoffice](#)  
**Subject:** Commenting on the City's budget proposal to close the library  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 1:31:52 PM

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Hello Mayor, Budget Committee, City Councilors,

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Thank you for your time,  
Jordan Tingey  
801-649-9788



**From:** [Dawson Hughes](#)  
**To:** [Deanna Gwyn](#)  
**Cc:** [budgetoffice](#)  
**Subject:** Save Salem's Library!  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 1:56:34 PM

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Representative Deanna Gwyn of Ward 4,

Hello, my name is Dawson Hughes. I am a city of Salem resident, a registered voter, and local high school teacher. I am writing regarding the library in the city of Salem. I am disheartened to hear about the library budget discussion which could result in the full closure of the Salem Library. I find this option truly unacceptable and abhorrent to be a consideration at this time. The library is a central place of community, a repository of knowledge and resources, and a safe haven for those in need. I personally use the library. This past summer I used the free computers at the main library branch to research my family's ancestry, something I would not have done on my own. Additionally, I regularly check out books for my own pleasure. Whenever I am at the library I see a lot of people there, and those same people would be burdened by the library's closing. From small children just learning to read, to homeless folks creating a resume or learning a new skill, the library is a place that our society cannot afford to lose. I implore you to fight for the full funding of Salem's library and its branches.

Feel free to use my testimony as you see fit. You may use it at the council meeting as public comment or share it with your colleagues, but no matter what you do, keep our library open!

Thank you,

Dawson

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Dawson Hughes (he/him)  
Silverton High School  
World History, U.S. History, & Government Teacher

**From:** [ESTHER FRIEDMAN](#)  
**To:** [budgetoffice](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony to be read for March 25 meeting regarding library cuts  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 1:57:48 PM

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Please offer the following as testimony in the March 25th 2024 meeting regarding the proposed cuts to the Salem Library:

Hello,

I am in utter dismay regarding the current proposals by the Citizen Budget Committee to further decimate our library services. The library is a vital part of our city. The library is a place where citizens can find community resources, look for and gain employment, make online contacts, find information on myriad subjects, and expose their children to a range of literature, building a life-long enjoyment of reading which is absolutely crucial to literacy development and the growth of an informed and engaged citizenry. The library is already one of the most underfunded libraries in our state - most libraries serving a community of our size have much bigger budgets and more staff positions. The library should not be losing even more funds and it certainly should not close. I want to live in a city with a vibrant library that serves all its community members.

The proposal to further drop service levels at the library, which has already been curtailed by the February 2024 cuts to the point that people who work a full time job have little access during the week and making parking more difficult as people try to come in during the already limited open hours, is unacceptable. The proposal to eliminate the library entirely is simply heinous. In 2023, the library had 315,067 library visits. The library hosted 4,448 community meetings. Library staff helped people who had questions 29,370 times. Salem Public Library is a community hub and an essential city service.

It is important to note that Salem Public Library provides these services while being understaffed and underfunded. The library already does so much with so little. Further cuts would be devastating. The budget committee's proposed options for addressing Salem's budget shortfall include cuts to library staff positions, which were already cut in February. The reality is that library staff will not be able to provide the level of service our city expects with these proposed cuts.

The proposed option #3 that includes closing the library altogether as of July 1st, is ridiculous. It is shocking the city would see the library as unnecessary to the vibrant, healthy city we want to live in. The proposed options are a shortsighted solution.

Please request the budget committee bring alternative options for addressing the budget shortfall. Do not cut library services.

For families, the only way some may be able to afford to expose their children to a range of literature is via the library. The library is a vital resource for children who may not have internet at home to be able to complete school assignments and develop computer skills that are now vital in the job market. The library is a vital resource socially for parents of young children to gather and support their children and socialize while also allowing their children to build friendships and social skills.

Similarly, it offers a resource for materials, meetings and social connections for children who are home schooled. The library offers creative outlets and social support via workshops and the teen center for older children and teens who may have few if any ways to connect or be creative. The library is vital, therefore, in supporting our

children and allowing them to grow into literate, engaged, and knowledgeable citizens.

For adults, the library is also a source of social connections, access to literature, access to job searches and applications and therefore employment, access to computers and internet resources, access to community resources, and a hub for information on civic matters such as tax filing and voting. For people who have limited resources this is a vital resource. For those of us who are more financially privileged, the library remains a key source of literature and information as well as a useful place for other resources such as tool or art lending.

The library is fundamental to our identity as a city - it speaks to Salem being a place that values access, values literacy for our children, values engagement from its citizens, and values opportunity for everyone. It speaks to Salem being a place that views its citizens as valued participants in the community. THAT is the Salem I want to live in.

Adding to the already sizeable police budget by decimating services that support and enrich people's lives, and act as a PREVENTATIVE force against crime and poverty by supporting community, literacy, education and employment, and access to resources, is short sighted at best.

In this age of book banning and deep social division, cutting a resource that brings people together and preserves information and knowledge is absolutely unacceptable. I would frankly be ashamed to live in a city that tells its citizens that the core of access for everyone to knowledge, literature, social contact, resources, and computer access is not valued by the leaders we elected.

I am begging you to prevent the loss or curtailment of one of the core, central resources in our city. Please do NOT allow the library services to be cut or the library to be closed.

Thank you.

A VERY concerned citizen,  
Esther Friedman

**From:** [Rupinderjit Briar](#)  
**To:** [Deanna Gwyn](#)  
**Cc:** [budgetoffice](#)  
**Subject:** Save the Library  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 2:04:42 PM

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Dear Representative of Ward 4,

My name is Ripu Briar and I am a South Salem resident. The closure of the Salem Public Library would be detrimental to our community as many of us rely on the library as a safe, public space with important resources for all. I strongly urge you to prioritize saving the library when making budget decisions for the city.

Thank you,

Ripu Briar

**From:** [Tina Blacksmith](#)  
**To:** [budgetoffice](#)  
**Subject:** Please don't close the library!  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 4:17:27 PM

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Hello,

I heard that it could be possible that the library will close. We need libraries! Apparently, a lot of people don't agree but they are important to so many people in Salem. Libraries are places of knowledge. It is shocking to think that the library could close. We cannot allow this to happen.

For the Budget Committee Meeting of: April 17, 2024  
Agenda Item No.: 2.g.

**From:** [Paige Stone](#)  
**To:** [budgetoffice](#); [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** City Council Meeting Testimony: March 25, 2024  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 6:56:40 PM  
**Attachments:** [Preserving Salem's Public Library - March 25, 2024 - Paige Stone.pdf](#)

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Greetings,

I am unable to attend the Council Chambers or online for comment for the **March 25 City Council meeting** but would like to provide testimony. Please accept this email with my regrets for not being able to present it in person or remotely as well as the below (also attached as a PDF) as my testimony concerning the **Salem Public Library's potential budget cuts via the Citizen's Budget Committee**.

**TESTIMONY:**

**PRESERVING SALEM'S PUBLIC LIBRARY - A Vital Investment for Community Well-being**

Testimony by: Paige Stone, March 25, 2024

**Introduction**

In recent discussions surrounding the budget allocation for Salem, Oregon, the fate of the public library hangs in the balance. The striking down of the Safe Salem payroll tax has left a void in funding for essential services, casting a shadow over the future of the library. However, closing or severely cutting funding to the Salem Public Library would have far-reaching consequences beyond just the loss of a community resource. This argument aims to shed light on the imperative of keeping the Salem Public Library open, drawing upon evidentiary studies and case studies to underscore its significance.

**The Imperative of Maintaining Public Libraries**

Public libraries serve as more than just repositories for books; they are vibrant community hubs that foster education, literacy, and social cohesion. According to a study by Vukovic and Breen (2019), public libraries play a crucial role in reducing crime rates by providing safe spaces for youth engagement and educational programs. The presence of libraries in neighborhoods has been correlated with lower crime rates, indicating their preventive role in community safety (Vukovic & Breen, 2019).

Furthermore, public libraries have a tangible economic impact on their communities. A study by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (2017) found that for every dollar invested in public libraries, communities see a return of \$4.64 in economic development through increased employment, entrepreneurship, and local business support. This underscores the value of public libraries not just as cultural institutions but also as drivers of economic growth.

**The Impact of the Salem Public Library on Tourism and Revenue**

The Salem Public Library plays a pivotal role in maintaining Salem's position as a top family-friendly travel destination, thus contributing significantly to tourism revenue. Yelp's ranking of Salem as a top 10 family-friendly travel destination underscores the importance of attractions such as the public library in drawing visitors to the city (Yelp, 2024). Tourists often seek out family-friendly amenities, including libraries, during their travels, thereby boosting local businesses and generating revenue for the city.

**The Return on Investment from Recent Renovations**

The recent \$18.6 million investment in renovating the Salem Public Library is projected to yield significant returns for the community. Renovations aimed at modernizing facilities, expanding resources, and enhancing accessibility are critical steps towards ensuring the longevity and relevance of the library in the digital age. Studies have shown that investments in library infrastructure and resources lead to increased patronage, improved educational outcomes, and greater community engagement (Urban Libraries Council, 2023).

**The Negative Impacts of Diverting Funds from Public Services to Police**

Diverting funds from essential public services like libraries to bolster police budgets can have detrimental effects on community well-being. Studies have shown that over-reliance on policing as a solution to social issues can exacerbate existing inequalities and lead to adverse outcomes, particularly for marginalized communities. The Vera Institute of Justice (2020) conducted a comprehensive study that found increased police presence and funding often result in the criminalization of poverty and mental illness, rather than addressing underlying social determinants of crime. Furthermore, the American Library Association (ALA) (2020) highlights the importance of maintaining adequate funding for libraries, stating that cuts to library budgets not only limit access to information and resources but also contribute to social inequities by disproportionately affecting underserved populations.

The reallocation of funds from public services like libraries to police departments also perpetuates the cycle of over-policing and criminalization, particularly in communities of color. A report by the Center for American Progress (2018) emphasizes that investing in community-based services and resources, such as libraries, is a more effective approach to promoting public safety and addressing root causes of crime. By divesting from libraries and other essential services, communities risk further entrenching systemic inequalities and exacerbating social tensions, rather than fostering genuine safety and well-being for all residents.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, maintaining the Salem Public Library is not just a matter of preserving a cultural institution; it is an investment in the well-being, safety, and economic prosperity of the community. Closing or drastically cutting funding to the library would not only deprive residents of essential resources but also undermine Salem's position as a top family-friendly travel destination and hinder its economic growth. As policymakers weigh budgetary decisions, it is imperative to recognize the invaluable role that public libraries play in shaping vibrant and thriving communities.

**References**

1. American Library Association. (2020). "State of America's Libraries Report 2020." Retrieved from <https://www.ala.org/news/sites/ala.org/news/files/content/State-of-Americas-Libraries-2020-web.pdf>
2. Center for American Progress. (2018). "Safety for All: A Public Health Approach to Violence Prevention." Retrieved from <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/guns-crime/reports/2018/03/14/447051/safety-for-all/>
3. Texas State Library and Archives Commission. (2017). "Texas Public Libraries: Economic Benefits and Return on Investment." Retrieved from <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/roi#:~:text=Collectively%2C%20in%20FY2015%2C%20Texas%20public.to%20quantify%20these%20economic%20benefits.>
4. Urban Libraries Council. (2023). "Libraries and Economic Opportunity." Retrieved from [https://www.urbanlibraries.org/files/ULC\\_White-Papers\\_LIBRARIES-AND-ECONOMIC-OPPORTUNITY.pdf#asset:11214](https://www.urbanlibraries.org/files/ULC_White-Papers_LIBRARIES-AND-ECONOMIC-OPPORTUNITY.pdf#asset:11214)
5. Vukovic, J., & Breen, J. (2019). "The Impact of Public Libraries on Crime Prevention: An Exploratory Study." Library Quarterly, 89(3), 252-269.
6. Vera Institute of Justice. (2020). "Redefining Public Safety Initiative." Retrieved from <https://www.vera.org/ending-mass-incarceration/criminalization-racial-disparities/public-safety/redefining-public-safety-initiative>

7. Yelp. (2024). "Top 10 Family-Friendly Travel Destinations." Retrieved from <https://www.yelp.com/article/top-family-destinations-in-the-us>

With thanks, sincerely,  
Paige Stone, Ward 2

**PRESERVING SALEM'S PUBLIC LIBRARY:  
A Vital Investment for Community Well-being**  
Testimony by: Paige Stone, March 25, 2024

**Introduction**

In recent discussions surrounding the budget allocation for Salem, Oregon, the fate of the public library hangs in the balance. The striking down of the Safe Salem payroll tax has left a void in funding for essential services, casting a shadow over the future of the library. However, closing or severely cutting funding to the Salem Public Library would have far-reaching consequences beyond just the loss of a community resource. This argument aims to shed light on the imperative of keeping the Salem Public Library open, drawing upon evidentiary studies and case studies to underscore its significance.

**The Imperative of Maintaining Public Libraries**

Public libraries serve as more than just repositories for books; they are vibrant community hubs that foster education, literacy, and social cohesion. According to a study by Vukovic and Breen (2019), public libraries play a crucial role in reducing crime rates by providing safe spaces for youth engagement and educational programs. The presence of libraries in neighborhoods has been correlated with lower crime rates, indicating their preventive role in community safety (Vukovic & Breen, 2019).

Furthermore, public libraries have a tangible economic impact on their communities. A study by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (2017) found that for every dollar invested in public libraries, communities see a return of \$4.64 in economic development through increased employment, entrepreneurship, and local business support. This underscores the value of public libraries not just as cultural institutions but also as drivers of economic growth.

**The Impact of the Salem Public Library on Tourism and Revenue**

The Salem Public Library plays a pivotal role in maintaining Salem's position as a top family-friendly travel destination, thus contributing significantly to tourism revenue. Yelp's ranking of Salem as a top 10 family-friendly travel destination underscores the importance of attractions such as the public library in drawing visitors to the city (Yelp, 2024). Tourists often seek out family-friendly amenities, including libraries, during their travels, thereby boosting local businesses and generating revenue for the city.

**The Return on Investment from Recent Renovations**

The recent \$18.6 million investment in renovating the Salem Public Library is projected to yield significant returns for the community. Renovations aimed at modernizing facilities, expanding resources, and enhancing accessibility are critical steps towards ensuring the longevity and relevance of the library in the digital age. Studies have shown that investments in library infrastructure and resources lead to increased patronage, improved educational outcomes, and greater community engagement (Urban Libraries Council, 2023).

**The Negative Impacts of Diverting Funds from Public Services to Police**

Diverting funds from essential public services like libraries to bolster police budgets can have detrimental effects on community well-being. Studies have shown that over-reliance on policing as a solution to social issues can exacerbate existing inequalities and lead to adverse outcomes, particularly for marginalized communities. The Vera Institute of Justice (2020) conducted a comprehensive study that



found increased police presence and funding often result in the criminalization of poverty and mental illness, rather than addressing underlying social determinants of crime. Furthermore, the American Library Association (ALA) (2020) highlights the importance of maintaining adequate funding for libraries, stating that cuts to library budgets not only limit access to information and resources but also contribute to social inequities by disproportionately affecting underserved populations.

The reallocation of funds from public services like libraries to police departments also perpetuates the cycle of over-policing and criminalization, particularly in communities of color. A report by the Center for American Progress (2018) emphasizes that investing in community-based services and resources, such as libraries, is a more effective approach to promoting public safety and addressing root causes of crime. By divesting from libraries and other essential services, communities risk further entrenching systemic inequalities and exacerbating social tensions, rather than fostering genuine safety and well-being for all residents.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, maintaining the Salem Public Library is not just a matter of preserving a cultural institution; it is an investment in the well-being, safety, and economic prosperity of the community. Closing or drastically cutting funding to the library would not only deprive residents of essential resources but also undermine Salem's position as a top family-friendly travel destination and hinder its economic growth. As policymakers weigh budgetary decisions, it is imperative to recognize the invaluable role that public libraries play in shaping vibrant and thriving communities.

## **References**

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**From:** [noreply@cityofsalem.net](mailto:noreply@cityofsalem.net) on behalf of [s.s.rohleder@gmail.com](mailto:s.s.rohleder@gmail.com)  
**To:** [budgetoffice](#)  
**Subject:** Contact Budget Office  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 8:30:29 PM  
**Attachments:** [ATT00001.bin](#)

Your Name	Sakura Rohleder
Your Email	s.s.rohleder@gmail.com
Your Phone	7204724880
Street	1550 Madison St. NE
City	Salem
State	OR
Zip	97301
Message	<p>My name is Sakura Rohleder and I'm a resident of Ward 1 (17th and Madison St.) with a young son. We recently relocated to Salem because of its reputation for being a safe and vibrant community, and the library system was a major factor in our decision. I am writing to express my deep concern about the proposed budget cuts discussed at the March 21st meeting. The options to significantly reduce the library's funding or even close it entirely are simply unacceptable. I understand that there are Revenue Task Force Meeting as well as Budget hearing. Which do you recommend citizens to participate to express the concerns for the possible closure of Library? Local businesses and various communities will be encouraging the citizens to show up and express the concerns, so would like to know the best venue for voicing concerns. Thank you,</p>

This email was generated by the dynamic web forms contact us form on 3/24/2024.

**From:** [Sarah Currin](#)  
**To:** [budgetoffice](#)  
**Subject:** Proposed City of Salem Budget  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 12:37:58 AM

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Hello,

My name is Sarah Currin and I am a born-and-raised Salem resident. I am writing to urge you as strongly as possible to reject any budget proposal that reduces library services or closes the library all together. We are living in a time and place with rapidly dwindling "third space" options, and the library is one of the last free public places for people to go for resources, knowledge, entertainment, and most importantly, community. Depriving Salem citizens of that space will only lead to cultural devastation, isolation, and community breakdown. We don't need as much policing if people are getting their needs met and have places to go. People WILL leave Salem and others will NOT want to come here if we can't even care about our community enough to keep our library open. What kind of message does that send? What kind of city do we want to be? Please do right by your constituents and fight to invest in our precious shared public institutions like the library, which enriches all of our lives.

Thank you,  
Sarah Currin

**From:** [Epilogue KITCHEN](#)  
**To:** [Virginia Stapleton](#); [Linda Nishioka](#); [Chris Hoy](#); [citycouncil](#); [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** What makes a city?  
**Date:** Saturday, March 23, 2024 12:36:42 PM

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Councilors and Mayor,

I am writing to you today to address the proposed budget fixes that utilize, amongst other things, the closure of the library as a tool. To be blunt, this is an unthinkable avenue. What is a city without culture? What is a city without a center of learning? How can you possibly sleep at night knowing that you are actually contemplating shuttering our library?

You have populated your chambers with capitalists, and I mean that in the worst possible way. Society is not a business. Our government is not a business. You cannot just pull and plug the society away from the people and expect the people to be happy or healthy. There is no balance sheet that quantifies human experience and needs. If you close the library, it will be a singularly cruel decision and you will forever be remembered as the people who stripped us of our culture, in order to preserve an inflated police budget.

Within that proposal is a line item of 91K for a single graffiti abatement officer. Allowing for looking at this problem like a business, does that seem fiscally sound to any of you? Does it make sense that a single cop on the houseless task force or whatever you're calling it is making 208K? What are these numbers, and how do they have any space in a budget that needs to be slashed?

You have already alienated most of your city by attempting to pass a payroll tax that, by design, disproportionately affected the lowest earners and did not in any way impact those in our community who are not on payroll. Do you have any grasp of the scope of residents receiving PERS? Income derived from real estate?

I am just forever shocked at just how regressive you have shown your policies to be, regardless of your individual political stances.

The library is not a bargaining chip, and it is not some extra thing. It is integral, and we are not a city without it.

Jonathan Jones  
business owner and resident

**From:** [Keegan Gormally](#)  
**To:** [citycouncil](#)  
**Subject:** Public Library  
**Date:** Saturday, March 23, 2024 10:34:50 AM

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This morning I heard about plans to close the public library. As a resident of Salem living blocks away, not only am I appalled and outraged by this news, but I am saddened to realize that city leadership might care more about money than promoting education and basic literacy as a public good. If I were in your shoes, I'd defend the library to the bitter end.

I have never heard of another town closing their public library, because it is unheard of. This would be directly equivalent to closing the fire department, public works, or any other basic service a city is supposed to provide. I strongly urge you all to discard this "proposal" immediately, and perhaps visit the library to see all the good that is done there, and maybe pick up a book for free on your way out.

-Keegan

**From:** [jacqueline schindele](#)  
**To:** [citycouncil](#); [City MANAGER](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: The Salem Public Library needs your help  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 9:08:39 AM

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It IS critical that we continue to fund the Library for the well-being of the citizens of Salem. Most people never need other services the City provides, but, the Libraries are used by all. The public has greatly supported the Libraries. If you want a bond to pass, include a crumb for the Library, and voila!  
It passes. If you want to continue in office, think about the ramifications that could result from a vote for further closures.

Please read the attached email.  
Thank you.

Jacqueline Schindele

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **jacqueline schindele** <[jacquelineandtazio@gmail.com](mailto:jacquelineandtazio@gmail.com)>  
Date: Mon, Mar 25, 2024, 9:00 AM  
Subject: Re: The Salem Public Library needs your help  
To: Michele Ballantyne <[micheleballantynedesigns@gmail.com](mailto:micheleballantynedesigns@gmail.com)>

The email went out to many people, the majority has Councilors emails on speed dial. You can send a message to the whole council:  
City [council@cityofsalem.net](mailto:council@cityofsalem.net)

Thanks! Arts funding will be cut after the Library.

Jacqueline

On Mon, Mar 25, 2024, 7:49 AM Michele Ballantyne  
<[micheleballantynedesigns@gmail.com](mailto:micheleballantynedesigns@gmail.com)> wrote:

Something that could help with this post is to tell people how to sign up and where to send a letter. There is none of that information in here that I can see.

On Sun, Mar 24, 2024 at 10:38 PM jacqueline schindele <[jacquelineandtazio@gmail.com](mailto:jacquelineandtazio@gmail.com)> wrote:

The Salem Public Library is fighting to stay open amid the next round of budget cuts. These cuts would affect both the West Salem and Main Libraries.

PLEASE sign up to testify or email your councilor and the Mayor and the City Manager. Your immediate action is necessary as Council meets this Monday at 6 p.m.

Also, email or testify in front of the Budget Committee on April 17th at 6 p.m.

The Library is one of the most democratic institutions in Salem for all ages and genders, religious, racial, and socio- economic groups. Our Libraries are more than simply collections of books, although for many, being a repository of books and knowledge is the prime reason for a library's existence. Amongst many other things, Libraries provide a safe haven for women and disenfranchised youth; they are warming and cooling centers. In addition to books, DVDs, and CDs, our libraries provide programs for pre-school, elementary and teenage children. They provide a social outlet for families and adults. There are materials (books, DVDs, CDs etc.) available in several languages, seasonal pamphlets (e.g. tax preparation materials) and in the Library of Things, laptops, household tools and useful implements one can check out. There are Computer Labs that are open to everyone, giving free access to the internet.

Some other benefits of our Libraries: There are large print materials for those who are visually impaired. One can receive free assistance in genealogical research. The Library augments the Salem Keizer School District in literacy enhancement, for children and adults and ESL (English as a Second Language) students. 'Read to a Dog' is a highly successful program for children who make tremendous progress relaxing and learning to enjoy reading.

Recently I heard a criticism of the Library; it was stated that there were too many books and programs! What most people may not be aware of is that many of the materials in the Library and much of the programming in the Library is not provided by the City via tax dollars, but is gifted and subsidized by 2 of the 3 Library Boards, The Foundation Board and The Friends of the Salem Public Library. These groups, made up of volunteers work diligently to raise funds to augment what the General Fund supplies. For instance, The Friends operate the Bookstore and hold Booksales to raise funds for materials, programs and miscellaneous requests the Library needs.

Please help everyone in the greater Salem area by simply writing a letter of support for the Library and help do your part to keep the Salem Public Library's doors (main branch and West Salem branch) open to all.

If you care about the Libraries of Salem, or, if you care about the future of our society, please simply write an email in support.

Thank you for your kind assistance!

Jacqueline Schindele  
Bibliophile

**From:** [Julie Hall](#)  
**To:** [citycouncil](#)  
**Subject:** Preserve Funding for Salem Public Library  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 8:47:19 AM

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Dear City Councilors,

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to urgently express my deep concern regarding the proposed budget cuts that could potentially lead to the closure of the Salem Public Library. Such a prospect is inconceivable to me, and I believe it would be a grave disservice to our community.

The Salem Public Library holds a special place in the hearts of many residents, including myself and my family. It is not just a building filled with books; it is a hub of learning, imagination, and community engagement. Every week, my daughter and I eagerly anticipate our visits to the library. For her, it's a sanctuary where she can explore both fiction and non-fiction realms, fostering her curiosity and growth.

Moreover, the library plays a crucial role in supporting individuals with diverse needs, including those who are neurodivergent like my daughter. It provides a safe and inclusive environment where they can learn, socialize, and develop essential skills. My daughter, for instance, is currently practicing appropriate interactions with library staff, an invaluable learning experience that contributes to her personal development.

As a resident of Salem, I strongly believe that our city should be expanding library services to reach every corner of our community. It's disheartening to see areas like East Salem and deep South Salem lacking access to such a vital resource. Rather than considering cuts, we should be exploring ways to enhance library services and accessibility for all residents.

I implore you to reconsider any proposals to reduce funding for the Salem Public Library. While I understand the complexities of budgeting, I firmly believe that there are alternative areas where cuts can be made without jeopardizing the well-being and educational opportunities of our children and families.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my perspective on this matter. Your commitment to serving our community is greatly appreciated.

Warm regards,

Julie Hall



**From:** [V McKay](#)  
**To:** [citycouncil](#)  
**Subject:** Salem Public Library Closure  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 8:21:47 AM

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Hello,

I'm a Salem citizen, and I'd like to express that I DO NOT support any closure of the Salem public libraries! This would be a huge disservice to our community.

**From:** [Joan Lloyd](#)  
**To:** [citycouncil](#)  
**Subject:** testimony supporting libraries  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 8:07:23 AM

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I am writing in support of funding for our libraries which are all-inclusive. The materials enhance education and also provide entertainment.  
Please keep the libraries open.

Joan Lloyd, Salem resident and library user

**From:** [NoReply](#) on behalf of [holly.hartman4@gmail.com](mailto:holly.hartman4@gmail.com)  
**To:** [citycouncil](#)  
**Subject:** Contact City Council  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 7:25:52 AM  
**Attachments:** [ATT00001.bin](#)

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Your Name	Holly Hartman
Your Email	holly.hartman4@gmail.com
Your Phone	6026351616
Street	3756 SUNNYVIEW RD NE, #55
City	Salem
State	OR
Zip	97305
Message	I do not support any option that ends in the closure of the salem public library. Thank you.

This email was generated by the dynamic web forms contact us form on 3/25/2024.

**From:** [NoReply](#) on behalf of [cheykier@gmail.com](mailto:cheykier@gmail.com)  
**To:** [citycouncil](#)  
**Subject:** Contact City Council  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 10:04:03 PM  
**Attachments:** [ATT00001.bin](#)

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Your Name	Cheyanne Bobb
Your Email	cheykier@gmail.com
Your Phone	5038778480
Street	1385 Waller St SE
City	Salem
State	OR
Zip	97302
Message	Dear City Counsel of Salem, Hello, my name is Cheyanne Bobb and I am writing to you in regards to the voting of whether the Salem Public Library closes or not. Our library is a space where the community can come together and share a safe quiet and learning environment, and is highly important for our future generation and the generations beyond them, as it was for our generation and the generation before us. Please highly consider keeping OUR library open and voting NO to closing City of Salem Public Library. Thank you for your time, Cheyanne Bobb

This email was generated by the dynamic web forms contact us form on 3/24/2024.

**From:** [Susan Graves / Lloyd Chapman](#)  
**To:** [citycouncil](#)  
**Subject:** Library closure  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 5:20:48 PM

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Dear Mayor Hoy and City Councilors,

I urge you to save the funding for the library and the Center 50+.

I understand that the revenue shortfalls are serious and real. Please consider closing some Urban Renewal Districts, and refraining from opening a new one, as a way to generate more tax income for the crucial services provided by the library and Center 50+. The General Fund is losing a lot of tax revenue to these districts, much more than other Oregon cities of similar sizes. When prioritizing needs, those developments served by Urban Renewal funds need to be put up against the value of the library and Center 50+.

Thank you,

Susan Graves  
1240 Hillendale SE  
Salem, Or. 97302

**From:** [Shelby Kruger](#)  
**To:** [citycouncil](#)  
**Subject:** Protect Salem Public Library  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 4:28:53 PM

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Dear Salem Councilors,

I'm writing as a Salem community member and public library employee within the Chemeketa Cooperative Regional Library Service who is deeply concerned and frightened for the future of the Salem Public Library.

On Thursday, March 21st, the Salem Budget Committee proposed addressing the city's budget shortfalls by significantly reducing public library staff, or closing the public library altogether. **These proposals are unacceptable.**

I urge you to consider what the public library means to our city, our community. In 2023, the library had 315,067 library visits. The library hosted 4,448 community meetings. Library staff answered patron questions at least 29,370 times. Salem Public Library provides vital early literacy education to our youth, job search support for the unemployed, Internet access to those without it, and a safe community environment for education, play, and exploration.

The library provides all of these services, and more, with an already understaffed and underfunded team at reduced hours. Further cuts would be devastating. The library is an essential resource in our community, without which Salem would greatly suffer.

We know that public library closures lead to major losses in information and resource access, social infrastructure, and significantly reduce trust in local government. Any suggestion to defund or close the library ignores the fundamental role it plays in our city and the thousands of citizens who regularly rely on its services.

**Please request that the budget committee bring alternative solutions for addressing the city's budget shortfall. Do not consider these shortsided and dangerous proposals that threaten our community. Do not cut library services.**

Sincerely,  
Shelby Kruger  
*Stayton Public Library Aide*  
*Macalester College '22 - English Literature, French & Francophone Studies*

**From:** [Andrew Evans](#)  
**To:** [citycouncil](#)  
**Subject:** City budget proposal  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 3:26:52 PM

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Dear Salem Councilors,

I'm writing to ask that you consider how much the Salem Public Library means to our city.

In 2023, the library had 315, 067 library visits. The library hosted 4,448 community meetings. Library staff helped people who had questions 29,370 times. People come to the library every week to help with job searches, get books for their classroom, to have a safe place for their kids to play, to use the Internet. Salem Public Library is a community hub and an essential city service.

It is important to note that Salem Public Library provides these services while being understaffed and underfunded. The library already does so much with so little. Further cuts would be devastating.

The budget committee's proposed options for addressing Salem's budget shortfall include cuts to library staff positions, which were already cut in February. The reality is that library staff will not be able to provide the level of service our city expects with these proposed cuts.

The proposed option #3 that includes closing the library altogether as of July 1st, is ridiculous. It is shocking the city would see the library as unnecessary to the vibrant, healthy city we want to live in. The proposed options are a shortsighted solution. Please request the budget committee bring alternative options for addressing the budget shortfall. Do not cut library services.

Sincerely, Andrew Evans

**From:** [Amber Padilla](#)  
**To:** [Micki Varney](#); [citycouncil](#)  
**Subject:** Library support  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 2:11:56 PM

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Hi Micki,

I never thought I'd actually have to write about this topic but here we are. The proposal to close the library is absolutely ridiculous. Libraries play a pivotal role in communities, providing education, innovation, self development and a trusted research source. As a child growing up in Salem, the library played a critical role in my childhood. It shaped who I am today, like it did and continues to do for so many others. Threatening to close the library in the second largest city in Salem is completely embarrassing and short sighted and really goes to show the mayor's office really doesn't seem to have the best interest of Salemites in mind. Please don't support this measure.

Sincerely,

Amber Padilla  
670 Burley Hill Loop NW  
Salem, OR 97304



**From:** [evanwest714@gmail.com](mailto:evanwest714@gmail.com)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#); [citycouncil](#); [Chris Hoy](#)  
**Subject:** Comment re: cuts to library and parks funding, and change of ambulance provider  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 12:55:38 PM

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Dear Mayor Hoy and members of the City Council,

It's widely circulating in the rumor mill that at your next meeting you will begin to consider budget cuts including the complete elimination of the public library, and most parks and recreation services. I'm writing to join many concerned citizens who will urge you to not defund the library and parks and recreation in order to maintain police staffing and budgeting. If our community has no places of public education, learning, and enjoyment, we might as well not have a police force at all. Crime isn't reduced by militarization of our community. Quite the opposite, a healthy community depends on the access to welcoming civic services such as libraries. This is particularly essential at this moment as we discuss ways to prevent young persons from turning to gangs.

Regarding public safety, I hope that the City Council will demand that our fire chief commit to re-evaluating his response model before he is awarded exclusive responsibility for emergency medical response. Chief Niblock has previously refused to give any consideration to altering the model of 1 fire engine and 1 ambulance responding to all emergencies. If this costly and ineffective model is not re-evaluated, any promise that city operation of EMS will be cost saving is likely disingenuous.

Thank you very much for your service.

Sincerely,

Evan West

--

Evan West, M.A.

He/Him/His

970-980-1445

[evanwest714@gmail.com](mailto:evanwest714@gmail.com)

**From:** [NoReply](#) on behalf of [mbhustoles@gmail.com](mailto:mbhustoles@gmail.com)  
**To:** [citycouncil](#)  
**Subject:** Contact City Council  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 11:39:11 AM  
**Attachments:** [ATT00001.bin](#)

Your Name	Mary Beth Hustoles
Your Email	mbhustoles@gmail.com
Your Phone	503-580-3348
Street	1644 Capitol St SE
City	Salem
State	OR
Zip	97302
Message	<p>Re: Possibility of July 1 Salem Public Library closure My name is Mary Beth Hustoles. I have been a Salem Ward 2 resident for 40 years. I am also a retired employee of the Salem Public Library, working in Circulation Services, as lead staff/manager at the West Salem Branch Library for 20 years, and (after the decimating budget cuts of 2012 severely curtailed branch services) working in Children's Services at the main branch library. During all that time, it was an unusual budget year when library cuts weren't an automatic assumption (with the branch library being an especially popular target), but never has total library closure even been a possibility. Over my career, I have had the privilege of interacting with our city's residents on a daily basis. If you are not at the library on a daily basis, it is easy to picture the library as a little, non-essential extra that a privileged, cultured city can provide its residents. The proposition that libraries are necessary because an informed electorate is essential to a healthy democracy becomes more tenuous as information is provided from so many different (albeit sometimes questionable) sources. However, my own experience is that libraries provide vital social services to the city they serve. As our community joins the rest of current society in becoming more and more self-isolating according to economic status, color, political association, age, etc., the library is the one remaining meeting place where all of these groups are invited in. Our homeless residents, in addition to being helped to find necessary social services, are welcomed into the building and treated with respect. Our elderly do not have to buy something to engage with other members of their community in the essential business of maintaining social contact. They are welcomed and treated with respect. Our young families aren't limited by their household income as to whether they can bring their children to enrichment activities. They have no threshold to meet, of either wealth or lack of wealth, to be welcomed and treated with respect. Children of monied families sit next to children with housing instability. And all of these children see the vibrancy that senior life can include, as well as the whole variety of residents the city includes. All of these groups are in the same space together, learning together that we are all in this, together. As the American Library Association lists in its guiding principles, "Diversity, Equity of Access, Education and Continuous Learning, Intellectual Freedom, and 21st Century Literacy," are in daily practice.</p>

The library is a safe space, where non-custodial parents can have arranged meetings with their children, where teens can belong in all their uniqueness, connecting through books and programming with others in their struggles, where latch-key kids can read or play computer games after school, where our unhoused can use the internet and simply sit indoors. In addition the library provides a space where local artists can display or perform their work, groups can meet, speakers can address important local issues, tutoring can take place, and the absolute wonderfulness that is the written word can be celebrated and shared. Salem is in the unfortunate position of having funding for its library come out of the same pot as funding for its police and firefighting services. The library always loses in such an artificial competition. But the library does provide absolutely essential long-term social services, especially in our post-COVID world with its exploding mental health issues. When I worked at the branch library, the long-time staff knew our patrons by name, which included the large senior population looking for someone who actually saw them, the guys who slept down by the river, and the Walker Middle School kids needing someplace to go after school. In the children's department, we provided storytimes and Discovery Room visits for school groups, homeschooling families, and families enrolled in Headstart, making children and their parents aware of the services available for them to thrive as city residents. International programs and story times in Spanish invite all residents into the community. A positive experience at the library can open up the world. Finally, I mentioned that over the years the library was almost always up for budget cuts. Library staff do their work because they love, not only books and the information they provide, but also the community that they work for. It's wearying to constantly be put up as the threat in these budget discussions. It grinds on morale and staff retention becomes a problem. When I was hired, Salem Public Library was in the top ten in the country for a city our size. We had two bookmobiles, a regionally famous children's summer reading club and a first of its kind Discovery Room with thousands of young children learning about their world through hands-on exploration. Those days are gone, but don't we need to exhibit the dedication and foresight to acknowledge the value and importance of our library and work like hell to retain it? Thank you for your attention.

**From:** [NoReply](#) on behalf of [avandekop@gmail.com](mailto:avandekop@gmail.com)  
**To:** [citycouncil](#)  
**Subject:** Contact City Council  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 9:52:45 AM  
**Attachments:** [ATT00001.bin](#)

Your Name	Alicia Van De Kop
Your Email	avandekop@gmail.com
Your Phone	(503) 935-3626
Street	4422 Weathers St Ne
City	Salem
State	OR
Zip	97301
Message	<p>Good morning, I have been informed of the council's proposal to close the main library in Salem as a cost-cutting measure. I find this decision to be unacceptable and unjustifiable. Perhaps consider redirecting these cost-saving efforts towards areas such as the police department or the fireworks committee. The public library plays a crucial role in our community, offering resources that are essential for everyone, particularly for vulnerable populations such as the homeless, disabled, elderly, and low-income individuals. While I acknowledge the need to address budget constraints, I urge you to explore alternative solutions. The closure of the library would demonstrate a lack of concern for the marginalized members of our community. Thank you for your time.</p>

This email was generated by the dynamic web forms contact us form on 3/24/2024.

**From:** [Julie Hall](#)  
**To:** [SALEM Manager](#)  
**Subject:** Preserve Funding for Salem Public Library  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 8:47:33 AM

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To the City Manager

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to urgently express my deep concern regarding the proposed budget cuts that could potentially lead to the closure of the Salem Public Library. Such a prospect is inconceivable to me, and I believe it would be a grave disservice to our community.

The Salem Public Library holds a special place in the hearts of many residents, including myself and my family. It is not just a building filled with books; it is a hub of learning, imagination, and community engagement. Every week, my daughter and I eagerly anticipate our visits to the library. For her, it's a sanctuary where she can explore both fiction and non-fiction realms, fostering her curiosity and growth.

Moreover, the library plays a crucial role in supporting individuals with diverse needs, including those who are neurodivergent like my daughter. It provides a safe and inclusive environment where they can learn, socialize, and develop essential skills. My daughter, for instance, is currently practicing appropriate interactions with library staff, an invaluable learning experience that contributes to her personal development.

As a resident of Salem, I strongly believe that our city should be expanding library services to reach every corner of our community. It's disheartening to see areas like East Salem and deep South Salem lacking access to such a vital resource. Rather than considering cuts, we should be exploring ways to enhance library services and accessibility for all residents.

I implore you to reconsider any proposals to reduce funding for the Salem Public Library. While I understand the complexities of budgeting, I firmly believe that there are alternative areas where cuts can be made without jeopardizing the well-being and educational opportunities of our children and families.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my perspective on this matter. Your commitment to serving our community is greatly appreciated.

Warm regards,

Julie Hall

**From:** [Catherine Patty](#)  
**To:** [SALEM Manager](#)  
**Subject:** Don't ruin Salem  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 7:22:05 PM

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Dear Mr. Stahley,

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the proposed budget cuts that may lead to the closure of our library and Center 50+. As a resident of Salem, I am alarmed by the prospect of losing vital public services that greatly benefit our community.

Upon reviewing your work history on the city website, I noted your experience as the assistant manager in Olympia. This prompts me to inquire: what initiatives or practices from Olympia could be implemented here in Salem to enhance our city services? It is perplexing to consider why essential public services are being targeted for cuts when they play a crucial role in improving residents' quality of life.

Many of us feel that imposing additional taxes, particularly on hourly employees who already make just above minimum wage, is unfair and unsustainable. Instead of burdening our residents, I urge the city to explore alternative revenue sources, such as enforcing fines for sidewalk maintenance violations (i.e. ice/snow removal) and optimizing city parking permit systems. Can we charge more for parking downtown? There are gaping places that the city could be getting extra funding. There is a lot of funds that seems to be more effectively allocated (i.e. more police funding). Why aren't we charging non city resident workers more? Charging more for teleworking or electric vehicles? Involve retired citizens not just hard working class people. Eugene collects a portion of state tax. Why are we not doing that?

In conclusion, I implore you to reconsider the proposed budget cuts and explore alternative solutions that uphold our commitment to serving the needs of Salem residents.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Kate Patty  
West Salem resident

Message ChatGPT...

ChatGPT can make mistakes. Consider checking importa

**From:** [NoReply](#) on behalf of [avandekop@gmail.com](mailto:avandekop@gmail.com)  
**To:** [SALEM Manager](#)  
**Subject:** Contact City Manager's Office  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 9:49:43 AM  
**Attachments:** [ATT00001.bin](#)

Your Name	Alicia Van De Kop
Your Email	avandekop@gmail.com
Your Phone	(503) 935-3626
Street	4422 Weathers St Ne
City	Salem
State	OR
Zip	97301
Message	<p>Good morning, I am writing to express my concern regarding the recent proposal to close the main library in Salem as a cost-cutting measure. I believe that this decision is unacceptable and cannot be justified. Instead of targeting the library, I would urge the council to consider alternative areas for budget reductions, such as the police department or other committees. The public library plays a crucial role in our community, providing essential resources to all residents, particularly those who may be less fortunate or marginalized. Closing the library would have a significant impact on individuals such as the unhoused, disabled, elderly, and low-income members of our community. While I understand the need to find savings, I would strongly encourage exploring other options that do not involve closing such a vital community resource. I believe that closing the library would send a message that the well-being of marginalized residents is not a priority for the council. Thank you for considering my perspective on this matter.</p>

This email was generated by the dynamic web forms contact us form on 3/24/2024.

**From:** [bethchris.allwein](#)  
**To:** [budgetoffice](#)  
**Subject:** Library funding  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 11:20:42 AM

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Hello,

I am writing to urge the city of Salem not to cut the library funding! The current options under discussion, which include possibly closing the libraries, are unacceptable. The library is vital to all members of our community and has already suffered significant cuts to their budget.

Under no circumstances should the libraries be closed!! This would be a huge blow to our community.

Thank you.  
Elisabeth Allwein



**From:** [Rey Thomas](#)  
**To:** [budgetoffice](#)  
**Subject:** Save the Salem Library  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 1:58:34 PM

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To whom this may concern:

**Closing the Salem Library will cause devastating negative consequences.**

Libraries offer much more than books. Not to suggest books are unimportant. For some who cannot afford Internet Access, the Library offers free Internet access and help with navigating online resources and using social media. Not everyone is comfortable with our online world, and the library is a place where free access and help is available.

Libraries are a great resource for students. For patrons who ask for help, we are a great resource. Libraries offer free programming from story times and children's programming to programs for adults and computer classes. With search engines, it's easy to believe we can just do away with libraries. Librarians offer the benefit of their experience in finding websites and resources that you may not know of. Librarians may know of books that are relevant to your research topic or area of interest because they may have ordered the books in the collection or might have read a book to recommend to you. There is a lot of information out there..on the Internet, and in books. A skilled Librarian can filter through vast information to point you to what is relevant for the assignment you need to do.

Many libraries offer free Notary Public services. This may be during evening hours too.

The local library is valued as a community center for those who use it. It does not cost anything to visit. For some regulars, the library staff members often become an important point of contact. For example, the elderly, disabled, get to know us well. Librarians often have an opportunity to help at a critical point in someone's life, such as helping a homeless update a resume and look for a job.

In addition to books, libraries now offer eBooks and digital magazines, access to streaming services for music, videos, and audiobooks. With these services, the Libraries now have a meaningful online presence. Now you can take advantage of library resources without visiting the building.

Some libraries even loan out tools and video games and host maker spaces, including offering 3D printers.

Also, consider that Libraries offer all of this while protecting your privacy. Online, you access search engines, social media, email for free. However, to some extent, information about you is collected in exchange. Libraries are committed to the principles of intellectual freedom, protecting borrowing records, and more.

For all this, the cost to the individual taxpayer is relatively low. Libraries also pool resources to make the most of their budgets. Did you know that if your local library does not own a book, you can request an Inter-Library Loan. Your library will borrow it from another library on your behalf if at all possible. (Exceptions are current college textbooks since libraries are unlikely to loan them).

Libraries by offering access to information pledge of protect intellectual freedom serve an

important purpose in a democracy. Personally, I believe libraries embody democratic principles and serve an important purpose that way, it's a place where everyone is welcome.

Salem needs this resource!!! Please help save the library.

Rey Thomas

**From:** [Mason Thomas](#)  
**To:** [budgetoffice](#)  
**Subject:** PLEASE KEEP ALL SALEM PUBLIC LIBRARIES OPEN  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 2:07:31 PM

---

Mason Thomas  
4762 Liberty Rd S APT 226  
Salem, OR 97302  
(971)372-4303

Salem City Council & Budget Committee

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing to express my strong support for keeping the public libraries in our community open and operational. As a resident of Salem, I believe that our public libraries play a crucial role in providing access to information, education, and resources for all members of our community. The closure of the Salem Public Libraries will affect children and those in low income the most.

Public libraries serve as vital community hubs that offer a wide range of services and programs for residents of all ages. They provide access to books, digital resources, computers, and educational programs that are essential for learning and personal development. Public libraries also serve as safe spaces for individuals to gather, study, and engage in community events.

In addition to their educational and social benefits, public libraries also contribute to the economic development of our community. They support local businesses, provide resources for job seekers, and help bridge the digital divide by offering free internet access to those who may not have it at home.

I strongly believe that investing in our public libraries is an investment in the future of our community. By keeping our libraries open and accessible to all residents, we are ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed. By closing our libraries this will further decrease your chances of success and revenue within our community taking away such a vital piece from within. Please listen to the people and their voices regarding this very important matter.

I urge you to prioritize the funding and support needed to keep our public libraries open and thriving. Our community relies on these valuable resources, and their continued operation is essential for the well-being of ALL residents. All Salem residents and especially our under privileged communities deserve access to the library with all the resources available to them.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I look forward to your support in preserving our public libraries for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Mr. Mason Thomas  
(he/they)

**From:** [Info](#)  
**To:** [Rachel De Jager](#); [Info](#)  
**Cc:** [budgetoffice](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Don't shut down the library!! Please!!  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 26, 2024 12:20:46 PM

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Hello Rachel,

Thank you for your inquiry. I have included the Budget Office so that they can capture the information you have provided below.

Thank you,  
Bethany

**Bethany Nazario**

*Customer Service Center Supervisor*

City of Salem | Enterprise Services Department

555 Liberty St SE, Suite 230, Salem OR 97301-3515

[bnazario@cityofsalem.net](mailto:bnazario@cityofsalem.net) Office: 503-763-3494 | Cell: 503-385-7540

[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [YouTube](#) | [CityofSalem.net](#)

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**From:** Rachel De Jager <[rachdejag@gmail.com](mailto:rachdejag@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Monday, March 25, 2024 12:33 PM

**To:** Info <[info@cityofsalem.net](mailto:info@cityofsalem.net)>

**Subject:** Don't shut down the library!! Please!!

Dear Salem Councilors,

I'm writing to ask that you consider how much the Salem Public Library means to our city.

In 2023, the library had 315, 067 library visits. The library hosted 4,448 community meetings.

Library staff helped people who had questions 29,370 times. People come to the library every week to help with job searches, get books for their classroom, to have a safe place for their kids to play, to use the Internet. Salem Public Library is a community hub and an essential city service.

It is important to note that Salem Public Library provides these services while being understaffed and underfunded. The library already does so much with so little. Further cuts would be devastating.

The budget committee's proposed options for addressing Salem's budget shortfall include cuts to library staff positions, which were already cut in February. The reality is that library staff will not be able to provide the level of service our city expects with these proposed cuts.

The proposed option #3 that includes closing the library altogether as of July 1st, is ridiculous. It is shocking the city would see the library as unnecessary to the vibrant, healthy city we want to live in. The proposed options are a shortsighted solution. Please request the budget committee bring alternative options for addressing the budget shortfall. Do not cut library services.

Sincerely,

Rachel De Jager

**From:** [Allison Reilly](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** KEEP LIBRARY OPEN PLEASE  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 27, 2024 8:45:42 AM

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Please keep the library open! Public information and knowledge is so important. People especially children deserve access to books. Libraries are safe havens for people with home situations that aren't ideal. Libraries are so important. Please do your job in protecting your community. Your community needs this library. All communities deserve libraries. KEEP THIS AND ALL LIBRARIES OPEN PLEASE

Allie Reilly  
They/Them

**From:** [Alex Brown](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** City council comment - Against library closure option  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 8:57:04 AM

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Hello,

I already sent this to my city councilor and the mayor but wanted to include these comments for the city council meeting tonight.

I live in Ward 5 and saw that one of the options being considered for the budget crisis includes closing the library. I am writing to say I am strongly against this option. I know tough choices have to be made, but Salem has few places left where you can go and just exist without having to spend money. I visit every week and see all sorts of people benefiting from the resources. The library provides so much good information, learning, space, entertainment, and resources to the community, please do not support its closure. I even support cuts to public safety before closing the library.

Thank you  
Alex Brown

**From:** [Abbey Gaterud](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Public comment for March 25, 2024 City Council Meeting on Salem Public Library and Parks funding  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 11:52:10 AM

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I am writing to express my frustration and concern at the proposed cuts in funding to the Salem Public Library and Parks programs. It's disheartening that our city council prioritizes more money for public safety when public programs and spaces like the Library and Parks provide free, open spaces and services to folks most likely to come into contact with the public safety system. The city council has already stressed the library's services through one round of budget cuts, and it would be irrational and irresponsible to do so again.

Imagining a state capital without a functioning, high-quality public library is ridiculous and embarrassing. The library provides an essential city service, including public meeting space, information assistance, employment assistance, and access to the Internet. The library was visited more than 300,000 times last year—more than two dozen times by my son and me. Each library patron relies on the open doors and freedom to discover new information in their daily lives and lifelong learning journeys. It is insulting and irresponsible to propose closing the library entirely or slashing its budget to the point of ineptitude at a time when freedom of information and democracy are under attack from forces seeking to keep us in the dark.

In the strongest terms, I am writing to oppose these proposals and encourage you to request the budget committee bring alternative options for addressing the budget shortfall. Do not cut library and park services.

Abbey Gaterud  
Salem resident and taxpayer

**From:** [aylopez26@gmail.com](mailto:aylopez26@gmail.com)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Cc:** [Vanessa Nordyke](#)  
**Subject:** City Council Meeting Comments for March 25th  
**Date:** Saturday, March 23, 2024 7:56:34 PM

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Dear Council -

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed closure of the Salem Public Library (SPL). SPL is not solely a repository of books and information; it is a community hub that fosters learning, provides a safe environment for teens, aids in early literacy interventions, and a vital warming and cooling shelter for our community.

Salem voters demonstrated their support and understanding of SPL's value by approving a \$18.6 million bond seven years ago for library renovations. The council's current decision to close SPL, not even three years after the renovation opening, undermines this investment and demonstrates apathy towards the voters' will, jeopardizing future bond support.

Before any closure is considered, I urge the council to conduct a comprehensive community impact assessment. The assessment can evaluate the potential repercussions, including, but not limited to, the economic impacts of reduced rental and parking spaces, the diminishment of a city attraction, the loss of an emergency shelter, and the loss of digital access.

Sincerely,  
Alma Plasencia  
Ward 7



**From:** [Arlene Weible](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment to the Salem City Council on item not on the agenda of March 25, 2024 City Council meeting  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 4:11:11 PM

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Dear Mayor and City Councilors:

My name is Arlene Weible and I am a resident of Ward 7 in Salem. I am here to express my deep concern about the budget reduction scenarios presented to the Salem Budget Committee on March 21, 2024 by city management. All scenarios present options to decimate library services, either through further staff reductions or complete closure. The information shared with the Budget Committee by city management does not adequately communicate the impact these reductions would have on the community. I would ask all members of the city council to demand more rigorous analysis and data as you discuss the FY2025 budget proposals in the budget committee and city council meetings in the coming months.

In all the budget scenarios presented, the undervaluing of library services on community well-being is shocking. How can a community tackle the difficult issues of affordable housing, gang violence, and public safety if there is not attention given to services that support low income families in our community? Please ask questions about how library services impact issues like safety and livability in our community. Libraries are not a luxury to low income members of our community ... they are a lifeline to access the services needed to navigate life in our increasingly digital world. Salem will lose more than just a place to check out books if it devastates the city's library services.

If children do not have a place to explore and develop literacy skills, if those on the wrong side of the digital divide do not have a place to access needed services, and if those without shelter have no place to go to just feel warm and safe, the quality of life for low income Salem residents will continue to deteriorate, and no amount of police funding will be able to fix this lack of investment in Salem's future well being.

Please continue to ask city management for rigorous studies that give a full picture of the impact of their budget scenarios on residents of Salem. Ask them to spend some real time with library staff to get a better understanding of how the services they provide are connected to the city's work. And please, ask for information that will help you gain a fuller picture of the value of public libraries. It is my firm belief that if you do so, you will understand that curtailing library services as proposed will only perpetuate the problems you are working so hard to address in our community.

Thank you!

Arlene Weible

3893 Crestview Dr S

Salem OR 97302

[aweible@gmail.com](mailto:aweible@gmail.com)

**From:** [Brian Armstrong](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** 03/25/2024 City Of Salem Council Meeting  
**Date:** Saturday, March 23, 2024 7:11:44 PM

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Good Evening Mayor Hoy and Esteemed City Councilors,

I am writing this email because I have heard that the council may be considering closing the Salem Public Library. I am reaching out as a 26 year Salem resident to ask you to please preserve and save our public library from closure.

My husband Brian and I have lived in Salem, Oregon, since August 1998 when we got married. Brian has lived in Salem his entire life. He attended Candalaria Elementary School, Leslie Middle School, and South Salem High School. Brian has served in Salem Keizer School District for the past 25 years as a teacher, Coach, behavior specialist, and administrator. He is currently the SSHS Athletic Director where he has been since the birth and adoption of our daughter in 2014.

My background is also in public education. I worked 19 years with SKSD as a school counselor and behavior specialist. Last June I resigned from SKSD to become a mental health therapist at Salem Pastoral Counseling Center.

Our 4th grade daughter attends Schirle Elementary. We love being in Salem and raising our daughter here. Ever since she was a baby we have been taking her to the Salem Public Library for read-aloud time, community events, and to foster her love of literacy.

The Salem Public Library is a haven, a refuge of calm, learning, and engagement. I utilize the online reservation system on a weekly if not more frequent basis through the app. It's a true joy to request books and pick them up when they come in. It's bolstered my love and enjoyment of reading as an adult and I have been able to model this love of books for our daughter.

Whenever we go to the Salem Public Library, I notice many diverse community members reading, researching on the computers, relaxing, or connecting with others. It's a TRUE GEM in our Salem community. I'd go as far to say as it's the heart of our downtown. The very thought of losing this precious resource due to funding or budget cuts would be detrimental for our community. This valuable resource provides books, connection, free toiletries and resources, and inspirational community events for so many individuals and families. Where else can you see babies all the way up to senior citizens gathered on a regular basis?

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration in reading my email. The Salem Public Library means so much to me, to our family, and to this community. I urge you to consider alternative ways to balance the budget or other areas that might be better suited for financial reductions. To lose the Salem Public Library from our Salem community feels like the heart of Salem would be gone. This is so important to me that I am encouraging others to reach out as well to express their concerns and to advocate for our Salem Public Library. Thank you again for listening.

Sincerely,

Beth Armstrong  
Salem, Oregon  
503-580-4362  
bb98@comcast.net  
Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Brandon Gitchel](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#); [Virginia Stapleton](#); [Linda Nishioka](#); [Trevor Phillips](#); [Deanna Gwyn](#); [Jose Gonzalez](#); [Julie Hoy](#); [Vanessa Nordyke](#); [Micki Varney](#); [Chris Hoy](#)  
**Cc:** [letters@statesmanjournal.com](mailto:letters@statesmanjournal.com); [les@salemreporter.com](mailto:les@salemreporter.com)  
**Subject:** Comment on proposal for Salem Public Library  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 11:09:01 AM

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Dear Salem City Council,

I am writing regarding proposed plans to reduce staffing at the Salem Public Library and/or to close the library entirely.

I have lived in Salem almost my entire life. My family has always been low income and has struggled to make ends meet. Growing up, this often meant that I could not enjoy several opportunities other children had simply because my family could not afford them. However, my parents sought out other options to keep me occupied and to grow my education. Namely, we frequently visited the Salem Public Library.

Some of my earliest memories are visiting the Discovery Room and learning about physics with their displays. I remember excitedly running to the small wooden phone booths in the middle of the children's section, my mother or father squeezing into the other booth a few feet away, and we would talk to one another. I remember checking out my favorite books and movies over and over again. I remember using the computers to play educational games. And I remember excitedly participating in the summer reading program.

The library was always a source of joy for my family. It was one of the few places that we could just exist without needing to empty our wallets. And it was a place to learn and grow. Some of my happiest memories are from the library.

Now that I am grown and have a 3-year-old daughter, I hope that she can have similar experiences at our library. I hope that she can find the same enjoyment and wonder that I did. I hope that she can dive into the stories held on those shelves. I hope that she can find a place of comfort.

But with the current proposals, I fear that may never be possible.

While I understand that the city is facing tough budget choices, the library cannot be cut. We have already seen massive reductions in service this year that makes it so incredibly difficult to visit. Any more reductions will do irrevocable damage to this community. Closing the library would impact thousands of our neighbors. Low-income families will lose a place of refuge and education. The homeless will lose shelter during the daytime. Those without access to the internet will lose services for our modern world. Our entire community will lose part of its soul.

The Salem Public Library is a crown jewel of Salem. We should all be proud to have it in our community and we should protect it.

I am begging please do not close the Salem Public Library.

Sincerely,  
Brandon Gitchel

**From:** [Brady Rogers](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Budget Decisions  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 11:32:59 AM

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Mr. Mayor, City Councilors,

My name is Brady Rogers. I am your former Neighborhood Enhancement Division Administrator, and have spent 32 years serving the City of Salem. It is more than the City I worked for, it is the City I raised my children in, the City where I live.

I write today in support of the Salem Public Library. I know there are budget problems, and no good choices that can be made, but I wanted to say that the national embarrassment of Salem, the Oregon State Capitol, having to close its library, would be just too much to bear. What would the country think of Oregon? What would we think of ourselves?

Most cities our size have good police, fire, and public works departments. Thankfully, we do too already.

What makes cities different is everything else that happens there. Please do what you can to support our library; and our programs for neighborhoods, youth, and parks as well. These are the things that make Salem unique, and a desirable place to live and work.

Remember, you don't have to move to live in a better neighborhood.

Thank You,  
Brady Rogers  
Former NED Administrator

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

**From:** [Caroline Brown](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Cc:** [citycouncil](#)  
**Subject:** City Budget concerns - Ward 1  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 9:57:09 AM

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Hello,

I'm writing to you all today to express my deep concerns over the proposals of city spending cutbacks presented at the most recent Budget Committee meeting. I don't anticipate that I will say anything more compelling than anyone else already has, but please consider me one extra Salem citizen who is disturbed at the prioritization of funding a militarized police force, rather than public services that would then minimize the need and utilization of said police.

Surely, you are all aware enough to recognize that the solutions to "crime" in this city are meeting people's needs. Their needs for food, shelter, clothing, support etc. Prioritizing public safety should not be conflated with arrests and police interventions, especially when police aren't adequately trained or compassionate enough to assist those in mental health crisis, or even the social crisis of being unhoused, or socio-economically depressed.

Cutting services to houseless will only increase crime, and reinforce the narrative that police are the only solution, although this is the more costly option of band aid solutions. Again, this is obvious enough that I'm sure I don't need to explain to y'all.

On the subject of the public library funding. Please don't cut this. Like. PLEASE. There is so much value to our city supporting this service. It indicates that we value common spaces, where folks are welcome to learn and exist without needing to pay. I really don't even know what else to say beyond this, because it's so appalling to think of the loss of something so vital to building community.

I know that at least one of you will respond with some hollow explanation of the payroll tax. It's being held against us that we didn't allow it, and it shows. It hurts. As someone who has lived in Salem for 17 years, and doesn't plan on moving, I can assure you that the payroll tax was something that I wouldn't have been able to afford. Yes, the economy is that bleak. Finding solutions to our budget that aren't detrimental to civilians, and maybe just asking a fairshare of some of the mega-stores and companies that utilize our roads and services would aid in this funding deficit.

Please make choices that actually benefit our city and stop holding us hostage to your payroll tax failure.

- Caroline Brown  
Ward 1  
Highland Neighborhood

**From:** [Michael McAnelly](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#); [m.mcanelly@att.net](mailto:m.mcanelly@att.net)  
**Subject:** COUNCIL AGENDA FOR MARCH 25 COMMENTS  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 8:40:12 AM

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I would like to address the council in public comments regarding proposed closing of the Salem Public Library and the 50 Plus Center. These closures would be devastating to the community!

There must be options to raise revenue which the council must consider:

Downtown merchant association annual dues  
Increase city fees  
Add a City Sales Tax

This is the Capital City of Oregon. The state of finances is a disgrace. Our democracy is on the line in the coming election. WE CANNOT CLOSE the Public Library!!!!

Claudia McAnelly  
469-964-9412  
[m.mcanelly@att.net](mailto:m.mcanelly@att.net)

**From:** [Caesar Plasencia](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Cc:** [Vanessa Nordyke](#)  
**Subject:** City Council Meeting Comments 3/25  
**Date:** Saturday, March 23, 2024 8:15:17 PM

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Dear Council Members,

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the proposed shutdown of the Salem Public Library (SPL). It's essential to remember that the community has already shown strong support for SPL. They demonstrated this by approving a significant bond amounting to \$18.6 million for upgrades to the library just seven years ago. The council's current proposal to close SPL, notably shortly after these renovations were completed, clearly opposes the expressed desires of the voters.

I urge you to give this matter your immediate attention. Overlooking the preferences of our community members poses a grave error that might negatively impact the trust and cohesion within our community, as well as our collective confidence in the local government's decisions.

Kind regards,

Caesar Plasencia

Ward 7



**From:** [Carol Voeller](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Written Testimony re the Library for 3/25 City Council meeting  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 3:52:05 PM  
**Attachments:** [Testimony to Salem City Council re the Library25 March 24.pdf](#)

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Please see attached

## **Testimony to Salem City Council regarding the Library**

### **25 March 2014**

My name is Carol Voeller. I reside in NE Salem. While I am here speaking only for myself, I am presently employed by the Friends of the Salem Public Library as the Friends Store manager. Before that I was an active volunteer, as well as a member and past-president of the Board of the Friends for over 10 years.

I have a Ph.D. I wrote the first thing that might reasonably be considered a paper in our then new Library in 1974-75.

Now, as then, our Library is a place of respite and exploration, a place to meet and make friends, a place to stay warm or cool if one's home is not up to the task or even if it is. I'm in the library most days it is open and often arrive shortly before opening. Rain or shine there are *always* people waiting for the door to open. You will doubtless hear from others how many people's only computer access for job hunting, research, or just staying in touch is at the Library.

In 2017 the people of Salem passed an \$18.6 million bond measure to ensure the safety of the Library building in the case of earthquake and its fitness for the people of Salem's use ongoing. Salem, through the generosity of its people, by way of the Salem Public Library Foundation, put in another .62 million dollars for further functional and aesthetic improvements. No one I have met coming into the Library for the first time since that work was completed has failed to express delight at and gratitude for the results.

In 2022 the Library staff, its support boards, and a great many members of the community put tremendous work into creating a Strategic Plan for the library going forward. It focused on sustaining and creating greater equity, inclusion, access, and community building in Salem. That same year Salem passed a \$300 million bond measure that contemplated \$7.5 million for land to build branch libraries in conjunction with affordable housing.

Salem values its Library, the space, the services, the beauty. It would be a travesty for Salem, the capitol of Oregon, to lose its Library, arguably its heart. And let's be clear, whether by a thousand cuts or the guillotine, if the Library is killed, there is virtually no possibility that it will ever be resurrected. Closing the Library would mean losing the staff, the volunteers, the support boards, the building itself to the ravages of moth-balling and time. It would mean losing the institutional memory and culture. The amount of money and will required to *attempt* to recreate it are unimaginable. This cannot be papered-over by any declaration of its "being temporary".

Don't do it.

Sincerely,  
Carol W. Voeller  
Resident and Voter of Salem Oregon

**From:** [David Gutterman](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on Salem Public Library  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 12:26:08 PM

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I am writing with regard to the budgetary challenges the City of Salem faces and in particular the future of the Salem Public Library.

I recognize the severity of the financial challenges. I have attended public meetings regarding the budget both in person and online. And so, I do understand that there is no “good” option before the City Council — only bad, and worse, and much worse — and choices need to be made.

As you make these difficult decisions, I want to add my voice to those who are advocating for preserving the Salem Public Library. Of course, ideally we would be adding significantly to the Library budget, but we are in a state of emergency right now.

The Public Library cannot be considered a luxury in a healthy city; it is a necessity.

As you know, libraries open up worlds for people. For young children who can discover the joy and wonder found in books. For older children who can begin to test their independence choosing their own books and reading for themselves. For teens who can find safety and camaraderie and connection in the vibrant designated space of SPL. For young parents who can make connections with other young parents when they bring their children to the creative programs for kids. For adults, for whom the library serves as a warm, welcoming place free from entry fees (perhaps the only indoor public space that serves this role in the community). For older adults who find ongoing sources of learning, connection, and purpose in the library.

I don’t think there is any place in Salem that is as inclusive across generations, backgrounds, ethnicities, social class, education, ability — except perhaps the Emergency Room of the hospital. And, of course, while a hospital provides crucial resources in times of dire need, the library offers hope and possibility and wonder and discovery and connection. In a world plagued by loneliness and isolation, the library serves as a beacon that something better is possible.

A city without a public library is a failed city. And a state without a public library in its capital city is a failed state.

I understand that in times of crisis, the city needs to prioritize resources that “save lives” and “change lives.” I believe that the Salem Public Library does both and I implore you to please support an option that sustains the future of this vital institution in our community.

Thank you,  
David Gutterman  
390 Candalaria Blvd S  
Salem, OR 97302

**From:** [Evenlastin](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Cc:** [Julie Hoy](#)  
**Subject:** Comments for Public Library  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 4:29:43 PM

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Members of the city council,

I'm reaching out in regards to budget cuts to FY25, as I understand from watching the recording of the meeting on 3/21/24 there are several proposals on the table for reductions. I don't believe any of the proposals should include cutting public library resources but I especially do not think option 2, and specially options 3 or 4 should even be considered. One of the reasons given is that this is to fund "public safety" in order to fund the police department, this is disappointing because it goes against what constituents have voted for in the past. I could go on and on about why funding police departments is not the solution for community safety but that's not the main point of my statement.

I am honestly very disappointed in hearing that the proposed scenarios talk about cutting resources for the public library and even mentions closing the main branch. There should be no scenario where community services are cut but police and "public safety" is fully kept. Cutting one of the only services that aids folks of all ages in access to resources and ability to rent not only books but use computers and participate in various programs is unacceptable. I'm mentioning that I did read the comments on the newspaper and the naming of misinformation but the council members cannot seriously be gaslighting their constituents after clearly sharing the scenarios and even having comments around what scenarios council members are leaning towards. It's obvious community members will have something to say and of course we will advocate around not closing a library. You all should know better and listen to what folks voted for and the voices that are continuously reaching out that this is not what the community wants or needs. I frankly think that if you all as council members are okay with closing down public libraries it means you are disengaged from the reality of what most of your constituents face, the poverty and life circumstances in their everyday lives and if you are not valuing these spaces it probably means you need to be in them more because you lack the lived experience to understand why they should not even be considered to be cut.

Sincerely,  
Evelyn Estrada  
Ward 6, 97305

**From:** [Emily Heldt](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Salem Public Library Comments  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 9:59:30 AM

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Good morning,

I want to submit my comments for the upcoming SPL agenda topic for the Salem City Council meeting.

We have utilized the SPL for nearly 40 years. First, myself, as a young person and teenager who was a voracious reader. I spent countless hours reading books, listening to audiobooks, listening to music, and watching movies. The library provided a vital resource while in high school and college when working on projects and then into adulthood. I used the computers there before my family had our own. I even remember researching careers at a library computer. We now use the library as much as we possibly can. I have over 10 books sitting on my coffee table right now that came from the library, and we frequently use e-books. My husband listens to audiobooks from the library on a daily basis. As a local business owner, I have attended meetings at the library and rented space at the library to teach classes as well.

When my daughter was born, we started taking her to story time as often as we could. We spent time in the discovery room sometimes multiple times a week for years. She participated in the summer reading programs, and we went to shows offered during the summertime - CET summer shows, the reptile man, jugglers, music, plays. We were at the library all the time. It was an important place to make connections with other families of similarly aged children. Storytime songs are some of our fondest memories when she was a toddler. I remember her needing to stand up on the footstool when checking out her books and how proud she was to scan the books herself that we would go home to read at bedtime. The library fostered her love for anime and graphic novels.

I am begging that you do not close or reduce the library budget and staff. This is an absolutely vital resource for our area for people in all walks of life in our community. It would be absolutely shameful for our capital city to not have a library. It is unacceptable.

Sincerely,

Emily Heldt

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**From:** [Greta B](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment for March 25th City Council Meeting, for Public Comment Other Than Agenda Items  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 9:52:44 PM

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Dear Salem Councilors,

I'm writing to ask that you consider how much the Salem Public Library means to our city.

In 2023, the library had 315, 067 library visits. The library hosted 4,448 community meetings. Library staff helped people who had questions 29,370 times. People come to the library every week to help with job searches, get books for their classroom, to have a safe place for their kids to play, to use the Internet. Salem Public Library is a community hub and an essential city service.

It is important to note that Salem Public Library provides these services while being understaffed and underfunded. The library already does so much with so little. Further cuts would be devastating.

At last Thursday's budget committee meeting, the three proposed options for addressing Salem's budget shortfall include cuts to library staff positions, which were already cut in February. The reality is that library staff will not be able to provide the level of service our city expects with these proposed cuts.

The proposed option #3 that includes closing the library altogether as of July 1st, is ridiculous. It is shocking the city would see the library as unnecessary to the vibrant, healthy city we want to live in. The proposed options are a shortsighted solution. Please request the budget committee bring alternative options for addressing the budget shortfall. Do not cut library services.

Sincerely,

Greta Bergquist  
Ward 1

**From:** [Janine Martinhorst](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Do not close the library!  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 4:16:36 PM

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Dear members of the city council,

I am incredibly concerned to hear that the city council is considering closing the main branch library. The library provides a vital service and community space. Closing it would be an incredible detriment to our city. I am writing to express my support for keeping the library open so that it can continue to provide a safe place for our community and to foster a love of books and literacy.

Sincerely,  
Janine Martin Horst  
Salem Resident

**From:** [Jillian Lowery](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Please fund the Library  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 11:29:23 PM

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Please do everything possible to keep the main public library open. It has been and needs to continue being a source of education, community strength, health, empowerment, and connection for all people of Salem. Honestly, it's a diamond of our city. The renovation has made it a source of pride and the programming for children is exceptional. My kindergartener utilizes the early reader Bookclub and feels empowered to research all the questions that pass through his mind. He builds confidence asking librarians for help and learns self-sufficiency in solving his own problems through research. My two year old attends storytime, explores the discovery room, develops confidence, and learns social skills.

There is no substitution for the library. Its availability to all of Salem's citizens makes its continuation paramount. There are so many challenges our city faces. Taking away something that is working and strengthens the community is not the answer and will only cause more issues. Please do everything in your power to preserve and let this invaluable institution thrive.

All the best,  
Jillian Lowery

Jillian Lowery, MA, MT-BC  
Board Certified Music Therapist



**From:** [Jen M.](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Written Public Comment for 3/25/24 City Council Meeting  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 12:24:27 PM  
**Attachments:** [SalemCityCouncil.BudgetCuts.Library.25March2024.JMaurer.pdf](#)

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Hi,

I am unable to attend tonight's city council meeting in person and online, so I would like to submit a written comment as part of "public comment on items not on the agenda." Please see attached.

Thanks,  
Jen

March 25, 2024

To Salem City Council Members:

At the March 21st meeting of the budget committee, several options were proposed to help the city overcome the large revenue shortfall. The first two include major cuts to Salem Public Library, on top of the large reduction in staff FTE made in February, and option three proposes closing the library as of July 1st. Those are unacceptable.

Coincidentally, the day I heard about the proposed budget cuts was also the day I was notified that a library hold on a popular nonfiction ebook was ready, and I could now check it out. The budget options brought back a couple of library-related memories, as well. A few months ago during a hair appointment, my stylist mentioned that after work she was taking her daughters to an activity at the library's Teen Scene; we talked about that, and she said how happy she was that her daughters had that safe and appealing opportunity to interact with peers outside of school. And, a few months before that when I was downtown, I helped direct an older teen and his dad to the library. Why did they need the library? Because the father needed a computer and printer, which they did not have at home, to finalize paperwork for a job application.

That speaks to the fact that Salem Public Library provides services that are vital to a healthy and vibrant community. Another example of that is how the library supports early literacy efforts through storytimes and with books and other materials – such as [Totes for Toddlers](#) – for parents, caregivers, and teachers to check out. Those activities may seem simple, but children's librarians are trained in how to build early literacy skills, and they model that during storytimes. Additionally, Salem Public Library offers engaging programming to help keep youth reading and learning during the summer. Early literacy and summer learning are key initiatives of Governor Kotek. For example, summer learning legislation that just passed includes seeking community partners to help with summer learning efforts, and libraries were specifically mentioned as an example. Now is not the time to close the library or to shrink FTE to the point where staff could not provide early literacy support, summer activities, and other programming and services that many in our community depend on.

Also of note is that according to a [snapshot of statistics](#) provided by the State Library of Oregon, Salem Public Library is well used. That is even though the library's revenue and FTE are well below the statewide median, which likely means that staff are stretched to capacity. The FTE reductions made in February will already limit the programming and services that library staff will be able to provide. Additional severe cuts would likely mean the library would need to cut some of the services that are important to our community, and that may disproportionately impact those who struggle financially.

Another concern about the option that includes closing the library is that there are no specific details to indicate that potential consequences were considered. The slide that appears at [2:36:05 in the recording](#) of the March 21st budget committee meeting includes this: "Close Library (main branch)." Does that mean that the West Salem branch would remain open? That branch is currently open five hours a day, two days a week. Is there an expectation that limited hours and the small footprint could accommodate the increased demand on the facility? (If yes, that is not

realistic.) Or, in actuality, would both branches of the library be closed? The West Salem branch may need to close anyway because of the cuts proposed in budget option one. The slide at [2:31:28 in the recording](#) of the same budget meeting shows potential major budget cuts through FY2028. Does that mean that, as proposed, the earliest the library could re-open is FY2029? Or, what is the proposed timeline to re-open the library, if it were to be closed? Entirely shutting down a program or service and then resurrecting it one or more years later will have ramifications for several years beyond the re-opening. For example, library patrons will want to read the latest popular titles, but the library collections budget will likely not include funds to "catch up," so the collection could lag for a few years still. Have other cities of our size closed libraries for a span, and how long did it take those libraries' services to bounce back after re-opening? I know that nobody can see into the future to answer every question, but if questions such as these are not being discussed, can you truly make an informed decision about the budget options?

I realize that our city budget situation is grave, but there must be a better option than to put a disproportionate burden on one program or service. Please seek alternatives that balance the burden and make it more likely that each affected service will survive.

On a related note, I commend recent efforts by Mayor Hoy and others to seek payment from the state as revenue compensation for the tax-exempt state-owned property in Salem. May the next attempt be successful!

Thank you for your work on these difficult issues.

Sincerely,

*Jen Maurer*

Jen Maurer  
Resident of West Salem, Ward 8

**From:** [Jacob McDonald](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Save the library!  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 4:36:21 PM

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If we need to make budget cuts, start with the police, not the library! The library is so important for so many people, you can't shut it down! Anyone who votes to close the library will forever lose my vote.

Jacob

**From:** [Katie McBeth](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Regarding City Council 3/25/2024  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 7:04:29 PM

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Recorder,

I would like to submit a public comment at Monday, March 25th's City Council meeting. Here is my comment:

The budget options presented at the March 21st budget committee meeting are unacceptable options for the Salem Public Library. All three options would severely impact our community, especially those in our community already struggling with poverty and access to essential resources for their children and families. The fact that the City Council is even considering the decision to decimate the library is not only morally reprehensible, but is also a blatant attempt to punish poor people for the fact that your payroll tax bill did not pass. There are other ways to find room in the budget to make adjustments, and the library has already suffered enough this year from continued attacks on their budget. So please, listen to your constituents and protect Salem Public Library and the community that relies on it.

Thank you,  
Katie McBeth

**From:** [Lauren Griffin](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** City Council Public Comment  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 4:24:37 PM

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Hello,

I tried to sign up to speak remotely but didn't receive a confirmation. So I'm submitting written testimony for the public record. Please see below:

My name is Lauren Griffin and I have lived in Salem for the past 17 years. Having moved here when I was eleven, I consider Salem where I grew up. As an adult, parent, and educator, I am horrified that closing the library was ever considered. I'm disheartened that there have already been funding cuts and that there's likely to be more.

The library is essential to me and so many others. I volunteered in the Discovery Room as a middle schooler, was on the Teen Advisory Board as a high schooler, tutored students there during college, and brought my six week old son to get his first library card during the pandemic. I now bring my children there regularly, have strengthened my relationship with my mom by going to library events with her, and have checked out many items from the Library of Things.

I cannot imagine raising my children in a city that does not have a library and I imagine many others feel the same. You will lose residents and therefore revenue (which is what you truly care about) if you go forward with these cuts and potential shutdown.

Now, I come from a privileged background and I am able to provide books and engagement for myself and my children outside of the library. For many though, the library is their only option. You should be ashamed to have even considered getting rid of the lifeline of our community.

Thank you,

Lauren Griffin

**From:** [Lisa Hardev](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Salem Public Library  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 1:14:19 PM

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Councilors,

I am writing as an advocate for the Salem Public Library. It has been an important and vital part of the Salem Community for at least 50 years to my knowledge. I visited the library regularly as a child and especially as a teenager. I was an avid reader, and I enjoyed the summer reading programs, educational programming, and as a safe space to read and study. I would check out Large Print books and take them to my grandmother in the nursing home. She would read the books and share them with others until it was time to check them in and check out a new batch. In my 20s, I took my nieces to the library all the time. Today, I take my grand nieces and nephews. We check out books, attend programs, enjoy the Summer Reading programs, and more. I also regularly took my two sons to the library. As adults, they still checkout books and love checking out audio books through the Libby App.

As an adult, I cannot imagine a city of our size not having a library. I regularly check out books, ebooks, and audiobooks. I love the Salem Reads program each February. I am also one of the seven Teacher Teacher Librarians left in the Salem Keizer Public Schools after all the elementary and middle school TLs were part of the massive Reduction in Force in 2010-11. I have witnessed the devastating impact on reading skills as a result. As the TL at Sprague high school, I know the importance of the library. It is a safe place to study, read, research, access technology, and meet in small groups to socialize. I regularly share books and work in classrooms with teachers to teach research, internet safety, and a wide variety of projects. The students need a lot of guidance. Many of them struggle with reading and are below grade level. I work to provide them with books and materials at their reading levels and keep a very diverse selection of books.

I am sharing this because I have witnessed what happens to our children who are growing up without strong library programs. They are not learning to love reading as well as the many skills valuable to their future success in elementary, middle, and high schools. So many students are hard to reach at the high school level. Many go to the public library to read, socialize,

meet friends, and participate in the teen programs. As the Salem Keizer Schools face another 30 million in budget cuts and another Reduction in Force, the future of the high school libraries are always on the line. Without school libraries, the Salem Public Library becomes the last stronghold. If we loose the Salem Public Library, it would devistate our community. Our students as well as the adults use and depend on the public library not only for traditional books but also the space, programs, and vital services.

I appreciate your full support for the Salem Public Library.

Sincerely,

Lisa Hardey  
2366 Mosswood Ct S  
Salem, OR 97306  
503-409-1828



**From:** [Lee Ogle](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment No. 8, City Council Meeting 3/25/24  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 4:50:48 PM

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Hello,

I am a Salem city resident, and I comment here today in support of our public library. The Thursday, March 21st budget meeting included options to severely cut the library's budget or close it completely. Any budget option that ends with the library being defunded or closed down is completely unacceptable to me. Our libraries are vital for our community health and safety; they provide a variety of essential services, including helping people apply to jobs, hosting community events and fundraisers, and of course, providing free books, audiobooks, dvds, and other materials to people in our city and beyond. These services are truly irreplaceable; and I want to make absolutely sure that they are fully funded in next year's budget.

Thank you,

Lee

**From:** [Matthew Mischke](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#); [citycouncil](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment for Meeting 03/25/2024  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 3:48:15 PM

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My name is Matthew Mischke, I am a resident living in Ward 4.

I am unable to attend today's council meeting as I work full time and during all hours of the meeting held today. I would like, therefore, to submit the following message as public comment.

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I recently became aware of the City's budget proposals for FY 2025-2028 as presented at the last budget meeting on 3/21/2024.

The fact that all of these current proposals completely decimate public services for our most vulnerable populations is ridiculous and immoral. But budget Options 3 and 4 completely closing the library is unacceptable.

Libraries are the last free space that exists in our community. Every other building in the city expects or requires the people who enter to spend money. The services the library provides are invaluable and irreplaceable.

Free access to books, movies, video games, computers, community spaces, seeds, the Library of Things, and more are all critical to allow our community members to live full and authentic lives.

This applies most especially to our poorest and houseless community members. You are already committed to take away their homes (microshelters), all assistance with transition (HRAP), shutting down the navigation center, and all warming services: the only things that make life remotely livable (and indeed survivable) during our harshest weather events. But now, to take away the only place in the city where our neighbors are afforded any dignity in an indoor space? Virtually the only place they are allowed some kind of recreation or comfort that doesn't demand money from them? Money so few of us, even those who live in stable housing, often don't have? And to add even further insult by insisting on *increasing* the budget for the police that so often harass our neighbors?

The proposed budgets are nothing short of shameful and cruel.

I demand that our City Council come forward with some acceptable budget proposals that don't involve destruction of our last true public good, The Public Library. And proposals that certainly do not *increase* the already bloated police budget. I would rather have 100 more librarians in this city than even 1 more cop.

Do better.

**From:** [Madeline Newcomer](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Library Funding  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 4:55:59 PM

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Please do not cut funding for our beloved city library. As a mom, a book lover, and a community member, I believe keeping the library open normal business hours is so important. Every time I go in there, I see people printing, reading, studying, and using the library as a safe haven. I myself have done all of this, as well as taken my toddler there for play time, story times, and to teach her the love of books.

Teenagers use the space as a legal, safe place to meet up. I have seen firsthand what happens when a city cuts funding for free community spaces. People get bored and turn to more illegal and dangerous activities. Our town already has enough of these problems. It's important we keep the access to these spaces available to all.

Thank you for your time.

**From:** [Nayeli Cruz](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Public comment  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 2:50:57 PM

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All of the budget options presented at the March 21st budget committee meeting are unacceptable options for the Salem Public Library. The library is already one of the most underfunded libraries in our state - most libraries serving a community of our size have much bigger budgets and more staff positions. The library should not be losing even more funds and it certainly should not close. I want to live in a city with a vibrant library that serves all its community members. I urge you to find different options to address the budget shortfall.

I spent a few summers homeless as a teenager, and the only place I felt safe was at the library. I could charge my devices, read, and even play video games with my friends. It's refreshing and there's water and there really isn't any place for youth to hang out. The best help you could provide police to lower crime is by allowing spaces for young people to just hang out and use of resources.

**From:** [Sarah Clovis Bishop](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Public comment for today's city council meeting  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 2:08:35 PM

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I was dismayed to see that all the budget scenarios propose drastic cuts to or even outright closure of the Salem Public Library. The library is an essential resource for our community. It not only provides open access to countless books, magazines, dvds, and electronic resources, but also offers an inclusive space for all Salem residents (and visitors) to come together, learn, work, study, and relax safely and comfortably. It serves all members of our community--from toddlers who can enjoy storytime and cultivate a lifelong love of reading to seniors who can learn new computer tech skills; from immigrants who can improve their English skills to lifelong locals who can learn about the diversity of the community and the broader world through programming like the recent Russian language storytime and the presentation "Uncovering Oregon's Black History." The teen program provides an inviting space for Salem youth to gather and connect; the Teen Advisory Board, recently recognized with a Mayor's Youth Achievement Award, actively promotes the well-being of Salem through the Take What You Need program. The library is not a luxury. Without it, our community members would lose access to technology, information, and safe spaces that are essential to their daily lives. While I understand that Salem must make painful decisions in this budgetary moment, closing the library would likely increase costs related to policing and serving the unhoused. This option should be taken off the table.

Sarah Clovis Bishop  
[sclovisbishop@gmail.com](mailto:sclovisbishop@gmail.com)

**From:** [noreply@cityofsalem.net](mailto:noreply@cityofsalem.net) on behalf of [sarahcurrinmoles@gmail.com](mailto:sarahcurrinmoles@gmail.com)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Submission  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 1:10:34 AM  
**Attachments:** [ATT00001.bin](#)

Your Name	Sarah Currin
Your Email	sarahcurrinmoles@gmail.com
Your Phone	5038713709
Street	1775 Lee Street Southeast
City	Salem
State	OR
Zip	97302
Message	<p>Hello, My name is Sarah Currin and I am a born-and-raised Salem resident. I am writing to urge the council as strongly as possible to REJECT any budget proposal that reduces library services or closes the library all together. We are living in a time and place with rapidly dwindling "third space" options, and the library is one of the last free public places for people to go for resources, knowledge, entertainment, and most importantly, community. Depriving Salem citizens of that space will only lead to cultural devastation, isolation, and community breakdown. We don't need as much policing if people are getting their needs met and have places to go and it is cruel and punitive to take money from a source of community hope and positivity in order to put it towards a wildly contentious and often ineffective police force with an already enormous budget. People WILL leave Salem and others will NOT want to come here if we can't even care about our community members enough to keep our library open. What kind of message does that send? What kind of city do we want to be? Please do right by your constituents and fight to invest in our precious shared public institutions like the library, which enriches all of our lives and genuinely makes Salem a better place every day.</p> <p>Sincerely, Sarah Currin</p>

This email was generated by the dynamic web forms contact us form on 3/24/2024.

**From:** [Shauna Garcia](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Meeting comment on agenda item  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 4:10:50 PM

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This is a comment on the changes being considered for Salem Public Library.

I have lived in Salem my whole life. I have used our library as  
a child, for both entertainment and education,  
as a teen for researching and pleasure reading,  
as an adult for craft sessions and reading,  
as a mother for resources and family friendly activities.

The library is an important gathering place for all ages, social statuses, races, genders, and religions. It's a place where everyone can come together and share a common ground. We can seek refuge from the rains of winter curled up with a book, we can find an escape from the harsh realities of life as we explore an endless storylines and universes. Many people, myself included, would not be able to buy all the books we want to read. With a library, this is not a problem.

Our library is a place of history, nostalgia, and hope for a bright tomorrow. It needs and deserves to be continually fully funded.

Thank you for keeping these things in mind as you work so hard to balance both budget and priorities.

Sincerely and book lover and library patron, Shauna Garcia

**From:** [Sydney ihne](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** SAVE THE LIBRARY!  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 4:34:41 PM

---

To whom it may concern,

The library is important and needed for so many people. It's a safe place for children and teenagers. It's often a crucial place for low income folks to use the internet and have access to computers. It's a warm home of knowledge for anyone. Cut the police budget, not the library budget!

- Sydney



**From:** [Sadie Verville](#)  
**To:** [Chris Hoy](#); [Vanessa Nordyke](#); [CityRecorder](#); [Deanna Gwyn](#); [Jose Gonzalez](#); [Julie Hoy](#); [Linda Nishioka](#); [Micki Varney](#); [Trevor Phillips](#); [Virginia Stapleton](#)  
**Subject:** Concerns about recent budget meeting  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 8:25:00 AM

---

Dear Council and Mayor,

I watched the portion of the recent budget meeting regarding options for our city's future, and I am extremely concerned about the considerations for our library. While all of the options are detrimental to services provided there, the one I am most concerned about is option 3. As pointed out in the meeting, Mayor Hoy had asked for these options in addition to number 1 that had been presented last fall, and he expressed that he wants to go with the options that do not remove public safety whatsoever, which was option 3. You can see why I and many other constituents are concerned. Library staff are terrified, and I don't believe their fears are unfounded after watching that meeting.

I also caught the part of the meeting where Councilor Stapleton had asked if option 3 would be a long term fix, and the answer was no, it would only get us through 2028. To think that we would shut down such a vital service and cultural center in our community merely as a three year bandaid is horrifying. We need a better, long-term solution.

To explain just how vital the library is to Salem, let me give you some statistics: In 2023, the library had over 315,000 visitors, 4,448 community meetings, and almost 30,000 questions that library staff assisted with, all while being vastly understaffed because of cuts already made. I ask you to go in on a Saturday and see how well loved and used the library is. There's barely any parking, and you'll have to navigate crowds and dozens of children. I shouldn't have to explain how valuable the children's literacy programs are there, especially for low income families, ESPECIALLY for families who have children in a district where preschool is too expensive and budget cuts are impacting education daily. And the teen services area is a safe haven for those with no where else to go.

While all the options on the budget presentation are horrible for the library, option 3 shouldn't even be up for consideration. I ask that it is removed completely from the table. I cannot fathom the capitol of Oregon being without a public library. That doesn't represent the values of our state, and I intend to email our governor and legislators regarding these concerns.

Thank you,  
Sadie Verville, constituent of ward 6

**From:** [SPLF Foundation](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Comment for March 25, Council Meeting  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 1:43:47 PM

---

Please submit the message below at public comment for the Council Meeting tonight March 25.

I am Kate Van Ummersen, Executive Director of the Salem Public Library Foundation. The Foundation's mission is to fund enhancements to the Library. The Foundation does not have the resources to sustainably fund library operations. The residents of Salem need the City to maintain the library, a vital community resource.

Libraries are important institutions in a community. They are not obsolete, or just nice to have. They provide essential services in the areas of education, employment, entrepreneurship, engagement, empowerment, and equity. Libraries change lives!

Each month our talented and professional library staff serve thousands of visitors. These are the February 2024 numbers:

26,900 visitors to both Main and West Salem

51 Library programs for children, teens, and adults

527 Meeting room reservations for students and community members

nearly 7000 reference/directional interactions with the public

32,600 Digital items checked out (audio books, electronic books)

98,000 physical items checked out (books, movies, things)

Salem values, uses, and needs its Library. I implore you to keep Salem Public Library open and in service to our community.

--

Kate Van Ummersen, (she, her, hers)  
Executive Director  
Salem Public Library Foundation  
P.O. Box 325  
Salem OR 97308-0325  
[SalemLibraryFoundation@gmail.com](mailto:SalemLibraryFoundation@gmail.com)  
[www.splfoundation.org](http://www.splfoundation.org)

*Salem Public Library Foundation's mission supports enhancement projects, programs and services for Salem Public Library.*

Please consider including the Salem Public Library Foundation in your will or estate plan. Our Federal Tax ID is 93-0799658.

**From:** [tas bud](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Please don't close the library main branch  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 4:27:38 PM

---

I'm not sure when this will come before the city council, but please express my wishes that they keep the library main branch open. How many more volunteers do they need to keep it open?

My sewer bill and property taxes are already so high. Please find a way without jacking those up.

Thank you,  
Tasha Preston  
865 Boxwood Ln SE

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

March 25, 2024

I am a downtown resident, former board member of the Salem Public Library Foundation and library volunteer. I have firsthand knowledge of the state of our downtown related to houseless individuals and of the positive value of library services to children, teens, families and seniors, and that of police and other prevention and outreach activities to ensure a safe community for all.

I cannot express to the Council how discouraged I am with the state of our budget and revenue position. I am not sharing anything you are not struggling with. Volunteer citizen councilors wish to see the City of Salem and those living on the margins succeed and our businesses provided with the services and livability that support health economic enterprise.

We need library and safety services to make that a reality. The livability of Salem is at risk without them.

I am concerned that the options posed for a balanced budget disproportionately affect library services in the continuum of City services. The specter of what service reductions will be required with an additional 8FTE reduction to the library and the possibility of actually closing the library in Option III is appalling. Please do not take these measures. Lean into revenue generation options and preserve our community services.

Valorie Freeman  
295 Church St. SE #301  
Salem, OR 97301  
Vafree09@gmail.com  
503-510-6463

**From:** [CORNELISEN Wendy \\* SLO](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Comments for Salem City Council Meeting 3/25  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 4:04:08 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[\[2024-03-25\] Salem PL cuts, city council testimony \(1\).pdf](#)

---

Attached please find public comments for tonight's City Council meeting.

Thanks,

Wendy

## Wendy Cornelisen (she, her, hers)

State Librarian

State Library of Oregon

[wendy.cornelisen@slo.oregon.gov](mailto:wendy.cornelisen@slo.oregon.gov)

Office: 503-378-4367 | Mobile 971-375-3992

[www.oregon.gov/library](http://www.oregon.gov/library)

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**State Library**  
*of Oregon*



# Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor



**State Library  
of Oregon**

250 Winter St. NE

Salem, OR 97301

503-378-4243

[www.oregon.gov/library](http://www.oregon.gov/library)

March 25, 2024

City of Salem Mayor and Councilors:

The State Library of Oregon was disappointed to hear that, during a recent Budget Committee meeting, the city of Salem is considering further cuts, and even potentially closing, the Salem Public Library (SPL). We hope that the Council will consider the enormous and often hidden benefits that public libraries provide to their communities.

Public libraries are essential to serving the many diverse people in their communities. There are several immediate benefits to libraries that can be seen easily: children attending literacy programming, people accessing a wide variety of information, folks on the wrong side of the digital divide applying for services and jobs, nonprofits and other groups having free or low-cost meeting space, etc.

However, many benefits of libraries do not become apparent for months or even years. Babies and toddlers are better prepared for entering school when they regularly attend early library literacy activities like storytime. Youth who participate in library summer programming have less summer learning loss when they return to school in the fall. People who are unemployed find jobs when they have access to the library's WiFi and computers. Burgeoning business owners start new enterprises thanks to free resources provided by the library. Nonprofit and community organizations often are born out of libraries that provide free meeting space to people with ideas on improving their communities. Older adults keep their minds active thanks to the books and other resources provided by the library. These are but a few of libraries' long-term benefits.

Libraries also benefit specific populations within their communities. We appreciate the Council's focus on ensuring that people experiencing homelessness have access to strong support services. Public libraries, including SPL, are a critical part of the ecosystem addressing homelessness. Library buildings provide spaces for people to escape adverse weather, whether it be heat, cold, or storms. Many people experiencing homelessness rely on the library's free WiFi and public computers to access support services and benefits, look for jobs, and stay connected with their families.

People experiencing homelessness also find that the library may be one of the few places that welcomes and accepts them. By nature, public libraries serve everyone, no matter their background. Library staff may be the only people who, during the day of a person experiencing homelessness, treat them respectfully, talk to them, and express that they care. That human connection is invaluable, and it is something that benefits not only people experiencing homelessness but also older adults who live alone, teenagers who are bullied at school, or anyone who just needs a friendly face. Libraries require adequate staffing to be able to make these human connections. Currently, SPL has the 7th lowest per capita staffing among public libraries in Oregon.

*The State Library of Oregon cultivates, preserves, and delivers library and information services to foster lifelong learning and community engagement.*

The short- and long-term benefits of libraries are felt not only by their wider communities but also by the other departments within their cities or counties. When libraries act as safe spaces for people experiencing homelessness, it takes pressure off busy police and fire departments. The well-documented connection between illiteracy and youth and adults in custody demonstrates the long-term benefit of libraries to a community's public safety. And as public surveys have consistently shown, people value public libraries and consider them when deciding to move to a new community. That additional investment from new residents increases the local tax base, benefiting all government departments, in addition to the economic benefits from supporting people who are starting businesses or attending college. Disproportionately cutting library funding to avoid reductions to other city or county departments ultimately harms the very departments that were being saved.

We would also be remiss if we did not directly address the grave suggestion that the library be eliminated. Should that happen, Salem would be the largest city in Oregon without a tax-supported public library. Because of how deeply library closures impact communities, [ORS 357.621](#) requires that any government intending to abolish or withdraw funding from a public library hold two dedicated public hearings, at least 90 days apart, with proper notice. We hope that the city is attentive to this requirement as it continues its budget discussions.

Salemites have already shown that they, like people throughout Oregon and the United States, value their libraries. In November 2017, 63% of residents voted in favor of upgrading the main library, which was completed only 2 years ago. That investment helped rejuvenate the library. We hope that the Council will recognize that continuing to invest in your library, not cutting it, will bring back manyfold benefits to the city, its residents, and its other departments. We are happy to discuss any of these issues further, including supporting you in efforts to possibly pursue a special library district to secure more stable funding. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if you would like more information about forming library districts in Oregon or other data that will help as you make this important budget decision in the coming months.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Wendy Cornelisen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Wendy Cornelisen  
State Librarian

**From:** [Info](#)  
**To:** [budgetoffice](#)  
**Subject:** FW: why are you closing the library's?  
**Date:** Monday, April 8, 2024 7:30:50 AM

---

Please see the email below.

**Bethany Nazario** | 503-763-3494

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**From:** patrick wheeler <patrickreginaldwheeler@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 5, 2024 4:05 PM  
**To:** Info <info@cityofsalem.net>  
**Subject:** why are you closing the library's?

i can't be bothered to come up with a funny and witty insult so [add insult here] is wrong with you? and yeah it cost money, so sexual relations what. are you going to tell the little kids....'sorry we closed down a place where you can learn stuff and make friends'? what the fornication is wrong with you? When I was younger, my mum took me and my sister out for something to do. she would take us swimming, then to the library to get a few books. The ones that stuck out for me were 'roderick the red pirate' and 'patrick's workshop' then get some food and go home to hear me and my sister read [poorly, i was three i think. get off of my back]. but if you close down the libraries for whatever reason.....you are robbing those little kids at making some awesome memories. i've got my awesome memories going back almost forty years.



**From:** [Briana Bowler](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#); [budgetoffice](#)  
**Subject:** Budget Testimony from Ward 6  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 9, 2024 8:37:02 AM

---

No response so I am forwarding to get my testimony in before next budget meeting. Thank you.

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Briana B." <brianabowler94@gmail.com>  
**Date:** April 4, 2024 at 2:44:23 PM PDT  
**To:** jhoy@cityofsalem.net  
**Subject:** Budget Testimony from Ward 6

Dear Councilor Hoy,

I'm contacting you because the Thursday, March 21 Budget Meeting included options to decimate the library's budget or to completely close it. These options are unacceptable. Libraries are critically necessary for community health and safety. They provide essential services and I want to make sure they are fully funded in next year's budget. All of the budget options presented at the March 21 budget committee meeting are unacceptable options. The library is already one of the most underfunded libraries in our state - most libraries serving a community of our size have much bigger budgets and more staff positions. The library should not be losing even more funds and it certainly should not close. I want to live in a city with a vibrant library that serves all its community members equitably.

As a community member in Ward 6, Salem Public Library has literally recently saved my life. Today I am also speaking on behalf of the countless other lives saved by Salem Public Library, and all the lives bettered, too, whom are unable.

I am a Certified Medical Technologist (BS AMT) who worked in microbiology labs across the country from 2017-2023, obviously during and throughout the pandemic. I also struggled with alcoholism in my youth and was victim to countless sexual assaults and trauma during this time. I continue to live with PTSD, depression, and anxiety, which recently were triggered by personal and worldly events outside of my control. In October I lost my car in a traumatic accident, and since have been unable to work and provide for myself for the first time.

In the depths of my darkness, I found refuge in the Salem Public Library.

Physically - a sheltered, safe, inviting place to go, free of charge, where I could and did meet new friends and acquaintances, explore my interests, practice social skills, rent books for free!!!!

Mentally - priceless learning and knowledge, increased my sense of self-empowerment exponentially

Spiritually - gained ageless wisdom, sense of purpose and belonging to the human race

Any town, let alone the State Capitol of Oregon, without a flourishingly staffed public library is sincerely depressing and frightening to me.

I propose cutting the very large police department budget, because I know that police do not keep us safe, We do. Safety to me is access to information with assistance, housing, healthcare, food, and love - those are what equals freedom to me as well.

May I suggest some reading to you as my public servant:  
Freedom is a Constant Struggle - Angela Y. Davis  
Thank you and have a blessed day.

Sincerely,

Briana Bowler  
Ward 6

**From:** [GLORIA LEE](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Keep the library open  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 8:15:48 PM

---

samnglo77@msn.com

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**From:** [Hannah Simpson](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Good morning,  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 26, 2024 7:31:38 AM

---

It's with great concern that I reach out to express how sad it would be for our community to lose the Salem public library. I understand this is one of the three options and I hope you consider removing this as a potential choice. I grew up going to the library and now my children look forward to our trips to the library along with many others in the neighborhood.

Thank you,  
Hannah

**From:** [bigalwest](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Please keep Salem Library open!  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 26, 2024 11:34:19 AM

---

Please keep the Salem library open. It's an incredible resource to the city. And it would be alarming and sad if it were to close.

Thank you,

Alex West  
Property owner within Salem city limits

**From:** [noreply@cityofsalem.net](mailto:noreply@cityofsalem.net) on behalf of [sabrecomics@gmail.com](mailto:sabrecomics@gmail.com)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Contact City Recorder  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 27, 2024 5:47:20 PM  
**Attachments:** [ATT00001.bin](#)

---

Your Name	Robert Hollenhors
Your Email	sabrecomics@gmail.com
Your Phone	5039893322
Street	Po Box 2580
City	Waldport
State	OR
Zip	97394
Message	<p>I lived in Salem from the ages of 7-21 and again in my thirties. The Salem Public Library is a sanctuary to the people...a place where scholarship, public service, community work, education, child care and development, entertainment (a fundamentally important vocation for humans), and frankly relief happens there. To take this away from the people is a wicked sin and those responsible should feel shame but probably lack the capacity.. I don't live in Salem anymore and never will again but the place has affected me to the point where in this case I want to be heard. In a hard world that old library gives people a reason to go out, engage in the world and live. The city needs it.</p>

This email was generated by the dynamic web forms contact us form on 3/27/2024.

**From:** [Tyra Peebles](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Save Salem Library  
**Date:** Monday, April 8, 2024 1:00:22 PM

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Dear Councilors,

Your city carries the name of one of the most inhumane events in American History. No matter how many states away you are from the site of such atrocities, that is the name you carry. The decision to defund your city library, when it is already one of the most underfunded libraries in your state, fuels the dark history of which the word "Salem" is known for. Ignorance and fear lead to the deaths of 19 innocent people during the Salem Witch Trials. To defund your public library is to willfully kill the public's right to knowledge and information. 19 innocent people died due to ignorance and fear. Far more will die if you choose to do nothing for the sake of knowledge and information.

Support the Salem Public Library. It is refuge to not only readers like me, but to those whose access to a public library is what determines if they pick up a pitchfork or a book.

I urge you to find different options to address the budget shortfall.

Sincerely,

Tyra Peebles

**From:** [Larry Sipe](#)  
**To:** [budgetoffice](#)  
**Subject:** Library  
**Date:** Thursday, April 11, 2024 5:51:03 PM

---

Dear Citizen Budget Committee:

I respectfully ask that you NOT approve “Option 1” cuts to our library. You implemented a hiring freeze that resulted in our libraries being open only 48 hours per week, the lowest in decades. In addition, you eliminated 7.35 FTE staff which is the lowest in many years. An “Option 1” cut of an additional 8 FTE would reduce staff to approximately 28.5 FTE, a 35% slash to this year’s adopted budget. At this staffing level, the West Salem Branch would close and the main library open only 25-30 hours per week beginning in July. This is unthinkable. What other city department has suffered as much as our library under your leadership? Enough is enough. The city of Salem deserves better. The citizens of Salem demand it. I implore you to listen to them. NO MORE CUTS to our library!

I respectfully entreat you to NOT approve “Option 1” cuts to our library.

With gratitude,  
Larry Sipe, Ward 8

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**From:** [Deborah Emeny](#)  
**To:** [budgetoffice](#)  
**Subject:** FY 2025 City budget  
**Date:** Friday, April 12, 2024 7:39:46 AM

---

**Please,** DO NOT approve 'Option 1' when you vote on the City Budget next Wednesday, April 17th. Passing that would devastate our community. SO many of our citizens use the library...on a daily basis. It is vital to the health of this city.

Thank you,  
Deborah Emeny



# MINUTES



## Joint Meeting of the City of Salem Budget Committee and the Salem Urban Renewal Agency Budget Committee

DATE: Thursday March 21, 2024  
TIME: 6:00 PM  
CHAIRPERSON: Dr. Irvin Brown  
PLACE: Council Chambers /Youtube

STAFF LIAISON:  
Josh Eggleston, Chief Finance Officer  
503-588-6130  
[jeggleston@cityofsalem.net](mailto:jeggleston@cityofsalem.net)  
Kali Leinenbach, Budget Manager  
503-588-6231  
[kleinenbach@cityofsalem.net](mailto:kleinenbach@cityofsalem.net)

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1. OPENING EXERCISES – Vice-chair Nishioka called the meeting to order at 6:00pm

Members present: Cohen, Stapleton, Phillips, Gwyn, J. Hoy, Nordyke, Varney, Manvel, Allen, Curtis, Beleiciks, Gier, Dixon, Vice-chair Nishioka.

Pledge of Allegiance

Vice-chair Nishioka informed the Committee about the additions agenda submitted which included one staff report and one piece of written testimony.

**Motion:** Move to approve the additions agenda of March 21, 2024 for the City of Salem Budget Committee and Urban Renewal Agency Budget Committee Meeting.

Motion by: Member Varney  
Seconded by: Member Gwyn

**Action:** Motion passes  
**Vote:**  
Aye: Unanimous  
Nay:  
Abstentions:

2. PUBLIC TESTIMONY  
a. None.

3. MINUTES

- a. Minutes from March 14, 2024 City of Salem Budget Committee Meeting and Urban Renewal Agency Budget Committee Meeting.

**Motion:** Move to approve the meeting minutes from the March 14, 2024 City of Salem Budget Committee Meeting and Urban Renewal Agency Budget Committee Meeting.

Motion by: Member Varney  
Seconded by: Member Phillips

**Action:** Motion passes  
Vote:  
Aye: Unanimous  
Nay:  
Abstentions:

4. ACTION ITEMS  
a. None

5. INFORMATION ITEMS  
a. Staff Report: Responses to Committee Member Questions

Josh Eggleston, Chief Financial Officer briefly went through the information items.

Questions or comments by: Members Dixon, Manvel, Allen, Vice-chair Nishioka, J.Hoy.

Answers & explanations by: Josh Eggleston, CFO, Mike Niblock, Fire Chief

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS  
a. None

7. SPECIAL ORDERS OF BUSINESS  
a. Presentations by Departments (*continuation*)

- Enterprise Services – Krishna Namburi, Deputy City Manager

Questions or comments by: Members Curtis, Dixon, Cohen

Answers & explanations by: Krishna Namburi, Deputy City Manager, Josh Eggleston, CFO

- Community Planning and Development – Kristin Retherford, Director

Questions or comments by: Members Cohen, Nordyke, Stapleton, Curtis, J. Hoy, Manvel, Vice-chair Nishioka

Answers & explanations by: Kristin Retherford, Director, Josh Eggleston, CFO

- City Manager's Office, Legal, Mayor & Council, Finance, Non-Departmental - Josh Eggleston, Chief Financial Officer

Questions or comments by: Members Manvel, Allen, Dixon, Vice-chair Nishioka, Gwyn, J. Hoy, Nordyke, Stapleton, Phillips

Answers & explanations by: Josh Eggleston, CFO, Marc Weinstein, Deputy City Attorney, Krishna Namburi, Deputy City Manager

Vice-chair Nishioka called for a recess at 7:46PM.

Meeting reconvened at 7:53PM. Member Varney rejoined the meeting at 7:55PM.

- Public Works – Brian Martin, P.E., Director

Questions or comments by: Members Gwyn, Vice-chair Nishioka, Allen, Phillips, Nordyke, Beleiciks, Manvel, Stapleton

Answers & explanations by: Brian Martin, P.E., Director, Josh Eggleston, CFO, Keith Stahley, City Manager, Mark Becktel, Assistant Public Works Director, Kristin Retherford, Community Planning and Development Director.

b. Reduction Scenario Reviews

Josh Eggleston, Chief Financial Officer went through four budget reduction scenarios including ones presented at City Council Work Sessions on September 18, 2023 & October 25, 2023.

Questions or comments by: Members Stapleton, Dixon, Curtis,

Answers & explanations by: Brian Martin, P.E., Director, Josh Eggleston, CFO, Keith Stahley, City Manager, Mark Becktel, Assistant Public Works Director, Kristin Retherford, Community Planning and Development Director.

Member Nordyke left at 8:59PM.

c. Revenue Task Force Status Update – Courtney Knox Busch, Chief Strategy Officer

Questions or comments by: Members Manvel & Beleiciks

Answers & explanations by: Courtney Knox Busch, Chief Strategy Officer.

8. PUBLIC TESTIMONY FOR FUTURE BUDGET ISSUES

The Budget Committee has set aside time for public comment to address items not on the agenda. Each individual testifying will be limited to no more than three (3) minutes.

- a. Correspondence from David Patterson regarding Salem ambulance services.

9. COMMITTEE DISCUSSION ON FUTURE INFORMATION ITEMS

- a. None

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:23 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelli Blechschmidt  
Minutes Recorder

*The next Budget Committee meeting will be held Wednesday April 17, 2024 at 6:00 pm in Council Chambers for the presentation of the City Manager's proposed FY 2025 budget.*

*Budget staff is available for your convenience to discuss the budget document and process. Please call the staff listed above or 503-588-6040 if you have any questions.*

The City of Salem budget information can be accessed on the internet at: [www.cityofsalem.net/budget](http://www.cityofsalem.net/budget)

NOTE: Disability-related accommodations, including auxiliary aids or services, in order to participate in this meeting, are available upon request. Sign language and interpreters for languages other than English are also available upon request. To request such an accommodation or interpretation, contact Kali Leinenbach, (503) 588-6040 or [budgetoffice@cityofsalem.net](mailto:budgetoffice@cityofsalem.net) at least 2 business days before this meeting. TTD/TTY telephone (503) 588-6439 is also available 24/7.

The City of Salem values all persons without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, domestic partnership, disability, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity and source of income.

For the Budget Committee Meeting of: April 17, 2024  
Agenda Item No.: 5.a.

**TO:** Budget Committee Members

**THROUGH:** Keith Stahley, City Manager

**FROM:** Josh Eggleston, Chief Financial Officer

**SUBJECT:** Responses to Committee Member Questions

**SUMMARY:**

Committee members have reached out to City departments with excellent questions. In the interest of sharing information and increasing understanding, the questions and responses are compiled in this document.

**ISSUE:**

Responses to member questions through April 11, 2024.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Information only.

**BACKGROUND:**

1. Can we have an analysis of the self-insurance fund to see if it would be more cost effective to switch to external insurance rather than being self-insured?

The City of Salem is self insured for risk (worker's compensation and liability). In working with our independent insurance broker to compare the City of Salem profile with the general private market, there is approximately a \$4M savings risk fund by being self insured.

2. What is the typical timeline for permitting process in Salem?
  - a. Type I (Tree Removal Permits, Class I Site Plan Review (interior work only), Class II Site Plan Review (meets all standards), and Land Use Compatibility Statement).

A Type I application is required to be reviewed for completeness within 30-days (Planning Service Goal is five-ten days depending on complexity). A letter of 'incomplete' is sent to the applicant and staff waits for a response. Once a response is provided, either another letter of incomplete is sent if items are still outstanding or the application is deemed complete. Once an application is deemed complete, a decision is issued by the Planning Administrator within 10-20 days (depending on complexity). The State Mandated deadline for the decision is 120-days. There is no local appeal.

Page 2

b. Type II (Partitions, Subdivisions, Class III Site Plan Review, and Zoning Adjustments)

A Type II application is required to be reviewed for completeness within 30-days of submittal (Planning Service Goal is 20-days). A letter of 'incomplete' is sent to the applicant and staff waits for a response. Once a response is provided, either another letter of incomplete is sent if items are still outstanding or the application is deemed complete. There is a required Public Notice for comment to be sent out for a total of 14 days. Once the comment period is complete, the application is analyzed and a decision is issued by the Planning Administrator. The State Mandated deadline for the FINAL decision is 120-days which includes all local appeals. If appealed, the comment period and a public hearing is scheduled and the final decision has to be issued within 120-days, unless the applicant grants an extension.

Attachment 1 is a flowchart that displays the LUR Type II Timeline.

c. Type III (Conditional Use Permits, Variances and Zone Changes).

A Type III application is required to be reviewed for completeness within 30-days (Planning Service Goal is 20-days). A letter of 'incomplete' is sent to the applicant and staff waits for a response. Once a response is provided, either another letter of incomplete is sent if items are still outstanding or the application is deemed complete and Public Hearing is scheduled. Depending on the application type, the hearing is heard by the Hearings Officer, the Planning Commission or the Historic Landmarks Commission. There is required Public Notice of the Hearing, which is sent out 20 days prior to the hearing. A Staff Report is issued seven days before the public hearing. At the Public Hearing, staff and the applicant present, testimony is taken from citizens and agencies. The Hearing can be continued, left open, or a decision made (all which is not within the control of Staff). Staff strives for a decision within 66 days of completeness to allow for an appeal or 'call up' to City Council. The State Mandated deadline for the FINAL decision is 120-days which includes all local appeals. If appealed, the comment period and a public hearing is scheduled and the final decision has to be issued within 120-days, unless the applicant grants an extension.

d. Here are some recent statistics on our timelines:

- i. In the last six months, 81% of all application types met the service goal of 20-day completeness (average days is 11) with 100% of those applications being reviewed within 30-days.



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- ii. In the last six months, 96% of Type I applications have been issued decisions within 25 days with an average of being issued on day five from being deemed complete.
- iii. In the last six months, 76% of the Type II applications have been issued decisions within 45 days from being deemed complete. The average number of days is 39 days (which includes the 14-day comment period).
- iv. In the last six months, 100% of the Type III applications with Public Hearing scheduled within 35 days from being deemed complete. The average number of days is 12 days.

3. Where are city consultant costs listed in the budget?

There is not a specific line item for consultants in the budget. Most consultants are included under the "Other Professional Services" line item of 52670, but not always and consultants are not the only thing included in that line item.

4. What has been the travel budget for the Mayor and Council? What is the food budget? What is the order of magnitude of these items on the General Fund?

Most travel for the Mayor and City Councilors involves training. Please see Attachment 2 for a list of travel for FY 2022 – FY 2024 YTD.

The FY 2025 budget includes \$10,000 for food / meals for various committee groups and pre council meeting dinners and \$17,700 for travel / training.

The proposed FY 2025 General Fund expenditure budget for all departments is \$188,340,010. The combination of meals plus the training / travel for the proposed budget in the General Fund is \$27,700 or 0.015%.

5. Do most cities with airports subsidize them? If so, for how long?

The Federal Aviation Administration requires that airports use landing fees, fuel flowage fees, hangar leases, parking fees, and other fees to be self-sustaining for their general airport operations. Cities are not intended to subsidize basic airport operations. However, in the circumstance of commercial passenger air service, this is an operation over and above general airport operations, and the City of Salem is transferring General Funds to initiate this higher level of service. The airport needs to become self-sustaining at this higher service level as quickly as possible. The best avenue for Salem to do so is to encourage growth in paid parking fees, rental car commissions, fuel flowage fees, ground equipment usage fees, hangar leases, industrial development, and other landing/parking fees. This is best accomplished through increased commercial passenger flights in both frequency and destinations,

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as well as increased economic development recruitment for undeveloped airport properties. We are in the process of contacting the five other municipal airports in Oregon to see how they initiated commercial passenger air service. Those cities include: Eugene, Medford, Redmond, Coos Bay, and Pendleton. Portland International Airport is not a municipal airport, but is part of the Port of Portland.

6. How much are Salemites subsidizing flights?

The City's General Fund has a budgeted transfer of \$652,290 in current FY 2024 budget to augment services needed for commercial passenger air operations. This funding is primarily to fund the additional 5 FTE positions needed to support commercial air service operations and is not given to the airlines as any type of incentive payment. The City has waived landing fees, office space fees, and discounted some other fees for two years as an incentive to have Avelo Airlines begin commercial air service.

13,000 passengers per quarter for a total of 52,000 estimated passengers per year. Total passengers include all those boarding and alighting the Avelo planes. \$652,290 divided by 52,000 is \$12.54 in General Funds per passenger.

Hypothetically, if a family of four, driving in from Wilsonville, flew out of Salem Airport and then returned to Salem Airport and did not spend any money other than to park their car for the time they were gone, they would be subsidized by the General Fund \$100.32 less \$40 for 4 days of parking.

7. What are the ancillary benefits to having the airport financially?

The Salem Airport serves as an economic engine to the larger community.

Employment: The Salem Airport employs 9 FTE. Other employers at the airport include: Salem Aviation Center, Avis/budget Rental Agency, Oregon Department of Aviation, Oregon Military Department (National Guard), Garmin Enterprises, Flight Deck Restaurant, Lifeflight Air Ambulance Service, Salem-Keizer School District CTEC Aviation Education Center, Federal Aviation Administration, FedEx Delivery, Transportation Security Administration, Salem Fire Department, and a number of private pilots and hanger-based enterprises. Coming soon to the airport will be Metal Innovations Aircraft servicing and avionics.

Lease and Property Tax revenue: The numerous hangers and industrial/commercial properties located on airport property generate both lease revenue for the Airport Fund and the structure improvements pay property taxes to the City's General

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Fund. As many as 9 new hangers may be constructed on airport property within the next 12-24 months.

Community Transportation Benefit: The overall Mid-Willamette Valley benefits from having an operating airport the size and capability of Salem Airport. Private aircraft provide transportation links for local businesses and allow air access to legislators and state agencies. The airport provides a vital emergency response link in a post-disaster response to the Mid-Willamette Valley and Central coast. Vital health transportation links are supported through LifeFlight Ambulance and Salem Health.

Commercial Passenger Air Service: There have been a total of 25 new positions created at the airport to just support commercial air service: 5 new FTE at Salem Airport; 12 new positions at Salem Aviation Center; and up to 8 new TSA positions are in the process of being created to support air service.

8. Are there examples of municipal airports that were able to be non General Fund reliant from the start of commercial flights?

The answer to this question is very airport specific. Most of the municipal airports in Oregon have had commercial passenger air service for a number of years or even decades. We have requested this information from each of the municipal airports (Eugene, Redmond, Pendleton, Coos Bay, Medford) to get their histories. Portland International Airport (PDX) is under the Port of Portland and is funded through a number of different means not necessarily available to cities. We will try to get information from as many of these cities as soon as possible.

9. How much money is left to fund the sheltering services based on our current State grant? How much has been awarded in this last short session?

The City received five grants from the State of Oregon directly related to sheltering services. Of the \$5 million grant for Navigation Center operations, \$2.3 million has been spent or committed. Just over \$1 million of the Navigation Center construction grant of \$1.9 million has been spent or committed. The State also granted \$2.5 million for sheltering and all of that has been committed. Oregon Housing and Community Services granted \$1.3 million for renovations of the Navigation Center and behavioral health services. The City was able to spend \$1.3 million prior to the grant term ending on December 31, 2023. Of the largest grant of \$10.5 million for sheltering services, \$8.1 million has been spent or committed. A portion of these grants were passed through to the Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency (MWVCAA) for operating of the Navigation Center as well as to Church at the Park to operate four micro shelters. Funds were also used to pay for the Salem Outreach and Livability (SOS) Team including the Homeless Services Team in Police as well as towing and destruction of uninhabitable RVs. The funding for the micro shelters is projected to be fully expended by the end of this fiscal year. Remaining grant funds

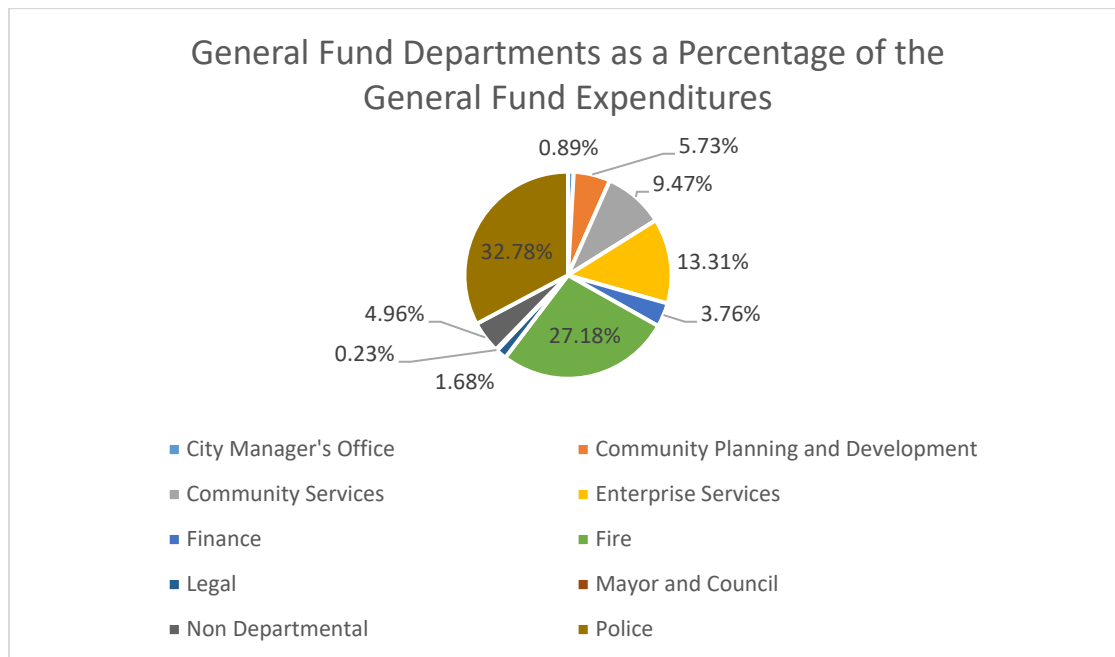
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are planned to continue City programs to minimize the impacts of the unsheltered population on the community and operate the Navigation Center.

The City still has not been able to confirm with the State yet on how much from this last legislative session has been allocated to Salem. Although some funding was set aside in the most recent session for the Salem micro shelters, it is not clear how much funding or how many sites it would service. It is also unclear if the grants would come to the City to pass through, or be paid directly to those performing the services.

10. Can we see a chart of GF level of support for each division/workgroup?

Here is the General Fund proposed FY 2025 by department.



11. How are projections from Operations Fee increase comparing to actuals?

The City Operations Fee is a steady and consistent revenue for the General Fund. In the most completed fiscal year (2023) actuals came in \$20,564 over budget, a variance of 0.26%. The FY 2024 actuals are on track to meet the budgeted amount. We have received just over \$9 million through March.

12. Can we have an up or down vote on the General Fund budget only, in its entirety?

The City of Salem budget is adopted by result area. Prior to being adopted by result area, it was adopted in full. The Budget Committee has full authority to make motions to recommend the budget differently.

13. Can we get information to help with scale of cuts? (eg. \$2m is what percent of overall library budget)?

For the General Fund, page 276 includes a table of expenditures that includes the departments and their expenses as a percentage of the proposed General Fund budget. The proposed Library reductions for FY 2025 represent an approximate 19.4% reduction from the FY 2024 Fiscal Budget (after City Council adoption of the February Supplemental Budget).

14. Has the city started negotiations with Roth's about the WS library?

The City has had preliminary communication with Roth's regarding our lease agreement for the West Salem Library. The City intends to continue this discussion to determine a best path forward should the City decide to close West Salem. This may include exploring the possibility of amending the terms of the agreement.

15. What is the total GF amount of the climate action plan and how many FTE support?

There is no money included as part of the General Fund for the Climate Action Plan. The General Fund and the Utility Fund have both previously shared costs associated with Climate Action. In the proposed FY 2025 budget, the Climate Action Plan includes 1.0 FTE, and the total program cost is \$274,190 in the Utility Fund.

16. What are the taxing environments like for those comparable library service providers?

Please see Attachment 3

17. What is the best way to combat graffiti in the city? Is it legal to position video cameras in graffiti prone areas to catch people in the act?

The best way to prevent future graffiti is to remove graffiti as soon as it appears. Doing so sends a message to those who participate in illegal graffiti tagging that it will not be left and will be removed – defeating the purpose of the graffiti.

Additional ways to avoid graffiti tagging is to think about if there are places at that property site that would make it appealing for someone who wants to tag, like poor lighting or behind vegetation where someone tagging may not be able to be seen. There is the practice of CPTED (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design) which is a multidisciplinary approach to deterring criminal behavior that focuses on changing how a property's landscaping is laid out and how it looks and feels. Neighborhood watch groups are also beneficial.

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While it is legal to position a camera so long as the area being recorded is in a public place where someone wouldn't have an expectation of privacy, it may not be helpful. While it may be a deterrent for some, there would be a need to be someone available to watch footage and / or go out and stop the behavior. It is also likely that once a camera is up, people who want to do illegal graffiti will just go to a new location without cameras.

18. What are the outstanding commitments and contracts that require Urban Renewal Areas to remain open?

Please see Attachment 4

19. After the changes made through the supplemental budget in February, how many staff positions remain in the budget that have been unfilled for six or more months, and what is the cost of those positions?

Please see Attachment 5

20. What is the cost of SFD / SPD to respond to SKPS and Oregon State facilities?

From my understanding the City of Salem is not charging for response to these two entities.

Between 2017 and 2022 Salem Fire Department and the Salem Police Department responded to state facilities 2,964 times between the two groups. For the Police Department calls during that period, the total expense incurred was \$74,942.46 with a yearly average response of \$12,490.41. For the Fire Department calls during that period, the total expense incurred was \$760,234.46 with a yearly average cost of \$126,705.74.

In 2023, the most recently completed calendar year, the Police Department responded to 1,147 calls for service related to schools. 824 of those calls were during school time. The number of hours spent by Police Department on those calls were 1,720.5 hours. Assuming the burdened rate of a step 6 police officer, with benefits and an average response of 1.5 officers, the average expense is \$113.09 per call for service related to schools. Also in 2023, the Fire Department responded to 335 calls for service related to schools. Of the calls for service, approximately 74% are related to medical incidents or fire alarms.

21. How does Salem compare to other cities in terms of response time? Are there policies for standard response times?

The Police Department has a goal of a response time of 5 minutes, however the average time at over 48% of calls is 7.4 minutes due to both staffing levels and call

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volume. There is no known statewide or national standard for law enforcement response times.

The Fire Department has a City Council response time measure of 5.5 minutes. The average response time is 7.51 minutes. Salem The Fire Department adheres to a City Council benchmark for response times, set at 5.5 minutes. The National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA), through NFPA 1710, recommends specific response time standards for fire services, considering factors such as the nature of the call, population density, the community's characteristics, and the deployment strategy of the fire department. For instance, the guideline for responding to emergency medical calls is to achieve a response time of 5 minutes or less in 90% of cases. The target for fire-related and special operations incidents is 5 minutes and 20 seconds, also 90% of the time. According to data from the 2023 National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS), the median response time for emergency medical services was 6 minutes and 19 seconds, with a 90th percentile time of 11 minutes and 33 seconds. For medical emergencies, specifically in 2023, the median response time recorded was 5 minutes and 1 second and 8 minutes and 1 second at the 90th percentile. It's critical to understand that these national statistics don't distinguish between different types of agencies or demographic factors, such as whether an area is rural, suburban, or urban or whether the responding entity is volunteer-based or a career organization.

22. What are the number of drug overdose calls responded to by Police and Fire?

Between 2019 and April 10, 2024, the Salem Fire Department responded to a total of 5,966 overdose calls. The yearly distribution of these incidents is as follows:

- 2019: 892 incidents
- 2020: 1,003 incidents
- 2021: 1,133 incidents
- 2022: 1,086 incidents
- 2023: 1,463 incidents
- 2024 (up to April 10): 389 incidents

In the same period, in Salem (Marion County only) reported the following numbers of accidental confirmed fatal overdoses:

- 2019: 18 deaths
- 2020: 24 deaths
- 2021: 43 deaths
- 2022: 36 deaths
- 2023: 49 deaths
- 2024: 1 death

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23. How much would it cost (positions and S&S) to increase hours at the Central Library? The increase that I believe the community would want is resumption of Sunday and extending evening hours to 8pm.

To resume the hours and service levels from FY 2023, an additional \$805,000 would be needed in addition to restoring the proposed FY 2025 reductions of \$1,168,000.

24. Is there an updated report regarding the use of red light and speed on green cameras?

See Attachment 6.

25. Moss Adams completed a study on homeless spending in Salem. Where is that report?

See Attachment 7.

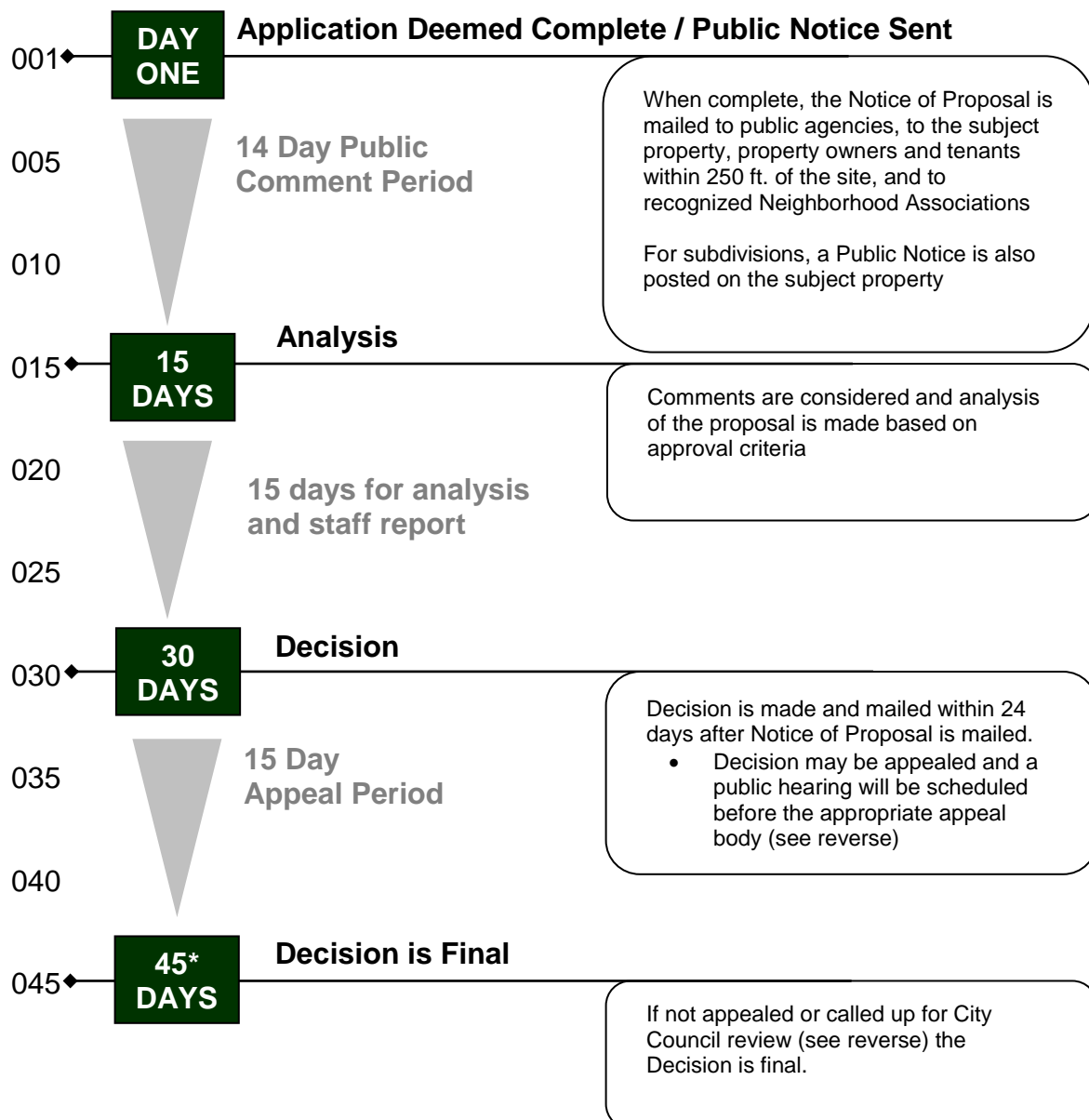




Planning Division \* 503-588-6213  
City Hall \* 555 Liberty St SE, Room 305 \* Salem, OR 97301-3503 \*

## TYPE II REVIEW TARGET TIMELINE

Pursuant to ORS 227.178(2), applications will be reviewed for completeness within 30 days of the date they are submitted to the City of Salem; the Planning Division's target timeline is 20 days. If incomplete, the applicant is notified in writing of information needed for completeness. The applicant has 180 days to provide the missing information.



\* Oregon State law requires a final local decision within 120-days of the date an application is deemed complete. Applicants always retain the right to postpone a decision or extend the 120-day timeline.

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## Appeals and Review

Unless appealed, or review is initiated by the City Council, a Type II approval shall become effective on the date when the Notice of Decision is mailed.

Only the applicant, persons who provided comments during the public comment period, and persons entitled to notice of the decision have standing to appeal the decision. If the decision is appealed, a public hearing will be scheduled.

## Appeal Hearing and Decision

The type of appeal hearing held varies by land use application type. Appeal hearings are held before the following review bodies:

- Hearings Officer (applicable to most Type II applications)
- Planning Commission (Partition or Subdivision Tentative Plan, Replat, Fairview Plan Minor Amendment, Manufactured Dwelling Park, etc.)
- City Council (UGA Preliminary Declarations, and other applications where the Council initiates review proceedings under SRC 300.1050)

The appeal body may affirm the decision, affirm the decision with additional conditions or modifications, remand the decision to the lower level review authority for further action, or reverse the decision. The decision upon appeal becomes final on the date when the written Notice of Decision is mailed to persons entitled to notice of the decision. Any further appeal shall be to the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA).

\\CommDev\CDGroup\CD\PLANNING\PAC Planning Protocols\2019 Training, Checklist and Template\Completeness\LUR Type II Timeline.11.12.2019.doc

WHO	WHAT	Fiscal Year	AMOUNT
Virginia Stapleton	Conference: League of Oregon Cities, Hermiston, OR	2022	\$ 766.49
Virginia Stapleton	Conference: Congress for New Urbanism, Charlotte, NC	2023	\$ 2,320.58
Chris Hoy	Conference: New Mayor Conference	2023	\$ 250.00
Chris Hoy	Government Affairs: Washington, DC	2023	\$ 2,316.70
Chris Hoy	Conference: League of Oregon Cities, Bend, OR	2023	\$ 1,820.37
Chris Hoy	Conference: Oregon Association of Mayors	2023	\$ 435.00
Linda Nishioka	Conference: League of Oregon Cities, Eugene OR	2023	\$ 570.00
Chris Hoy	Government Affairs: Washington, DC	2024	\$ 386.11
Chris Hoy	Government Affairs: Lincoln City, OR	2024	\$ 73.85
Chris Hoy	Government Affairs: Washington, DC	2024	\$ 2,605.79
Chris Hoy	Conference: US Association of Mayors	2024	\$ 1,500.00
Virginia Stapleton	Conference: League of Oregon Cities, Eugene OR	2024	\$ 1,056.83
Chris Hoy	Conference: League of Oregon Cities, Eugene OR	2024	\$ 997.82
Deanna Gwyn	Conference: League of Oregon Cities, Eugene OR	2024	\$ 911.76
Julie Hoy	Conference: League of Oregon Cities, Eugene OR	2024	\$ 336.76
Chris Hoy	Conference: Oregon Association of Mayors	2024	\$ 1,160.98
Chris Hoy	Bloomberg-Harvard Initiative: New York, NY	2024	\$ 195.98
Total			\$ 17,705.02



Library or Library District	City or District Permanent Levy Rate (\$/\$1,000)	Local Option Levy or Additional Perm Rate (if applicable) (\$/\$1,000)	Total of Levies	Library Budget Size	In Compression?	Jurisdiction AV Ranking (Low to High)	Services Provided	Comments
Corvallis-Benton Co. Public Library	\$5.11 (City) \$ 0.3947 (County Library District)	1.07 (City)	\$6.57	\$9,301,660	Yes	1	City services include: Public safety, community services (eg: parks / library), wet utilities, internal services.  Library district only includes library services.	Appx. 50% of levy goes to Library, with remainder going to other City services.
Beaverton City Library	\$4.62	\$0.22 (Library portion of Local Option Levy - Washington County) \$2.2484 (Portion of Washington County Permanent Rate) **	\$7.09	\$12,389,174	Yes	2	Police, community services (eg: parks / library), wet utilities, internal services.  Fire service is provided by Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue.	Washington County local option levy is \$0.69 / \$1,000 AV. A portion funds the public safety (\$0.47)of the county and the remainder is a pass through to the City of Beaverton (and others) to run the libraries.  A portion funds raised from Washington County's permanent rate passes through and also contributes to fund libraries
Hillsboro Public Library*	\$3.67	\$1.72 (City of Hillsboro) \$0.22 (Local Option Levy - Washington County) \$2.2484 (Portion of Washington County Permanent Rate) **	\$7.86	\$30,429,794	Yes	4	Public safety, community services (e.g: parks / library), storm and sewer, internal services, etc.	City levy supports multiple services including Police, Fire and Library.  Washington County levy is \$0.69 / \$1,000 AV. A portion funds the public safety (\$0.47)of the county and the remainder is a pass through to the City of Hillsboro (and others) to run the libraries.  A portion funds raised from Washington County's permanent rate passes through and also contributes to fund libraries
Eugene Public Library*	\$7.01	Multiple levies for City Services 1. Levy of \$0.15 for Library 2. Levy of \$0.28 for Parks and Recreation	\$7.44	\$32,566,856	Yes	5	Police, community services (eg: parks / library), internal services.  Fire is a shared service between the Cities of Eugene and Springfield.  Utilities are sewer / storm only	Only the \$0.15 levy is used for Library, other for Parks and Recreation.  Most recent budget had a reduction of 9.2 FTE from Library (\$4M).  City of Eugene also has a payroll tax to support City services.
Salem Public Library	\$5.83	\$0.08 (Chemeketa Cooperative Regional Library System)	\$5.91	\$5,418,630 (After supplement budget 2)	Yes (Marion County)	3	Full service jurisdiction (public safety, community services (eg: parks / library), airport, wet utilities, internal services, etc).	Portion of funds from this permanent levy from CCRLS comes to City for Library operations.
Deschutes Public Library District	\$0.55	\$0.00	\$0.55	\$18,674,871	Yes	7	Single service provided - resources are only needed to support this	
Jackson County Library Services	\$0.52	\$0.00	\$0.52	\$15,855,250	Yes	6	Single service provided - resources are only needed to support this	

\* City does biennial budgeting (budget is two year cycles), assessed values are single, most current year.

\*\* Washington County's full levy rate is displayed



Current URA Contracted & Committed Projects

Updated 3/29/2024

Urban Renewal Area	Project	Amount	Contract Status	Timeline	Additional Relevant Information
<u>Riverfront Projects</u>					
	Streetscape	\$2.8M	Under Contract	Current Phase Completed Fall 2024	Phased Project and each phase runs into the next more phases expected
	Marion Parkade Improvements	\$110,978.80	Design Under Contract	Initial Design Expected to be Complete Spring 2024	Construction Funds would be committed in future
<u>Riverfront Grants</u>					
	Electro Retro	\$600k	Grant commitment	Completion Fall 2025	
	John Gross Design	\$51,360	Grant commitment	Completion Spring 2024	
	Liberty Plaza	\$600k	Grant commitment	Completion Spring 2025	
	Whitlocks	\$500k	Grant commitment	Summer 2024	
	Rivenwood	\$749,999	Grant commitment	Spring 2024	
	Broadway Place	\$30k	Grant commitment	Spring 2024	
	Side Hustle Bar	\$9,650	Grant commitment	Spring 2024	
	Citizens Apartment	\$749,999	Grant commitment	Spring 2026	
	Block 50			Spring 2028 est.	
<u>Mill Creek Projects</u>					
	Turner Road SE Improvements	\$378,340	Phased with Development	TBD	
	Deer Park Dr SE Improvements	\$2,866,770	Phased with Development	TBD	
	Turner Rd SE/Kuebler Blvd SE	\$2,274,650	Developer Reimbursement	TBD	
<u>West Salem Projects</u>					
	2nd Street NW Improvements	\$6,143,073	Under Contract	Late Summer 2024	
<u>West Salem Grants</u>					
	West Salem Machinery	\$118,360	n/a	Late Summer 2025	
<u>North Gateway Projects</u>					
	2640 Portland Road Market Assessment/Development Analysis	\$40k	Under Contract	Summer 2024	Additional \$2M budgeted for development work tbd Design funds combined with contruction-project merged with Bond project to leverage funding. Funds not budgeted but have had discussions to participate in funding with Bond project for leveraging purposes.
	17th/Silverton Road Improvements	\$6.5M	Design Under Contract	2026	
	Portland Road Improvement Project-Bond	n/a	n/a	n/a	
<u>North Gateway Grants</u>					
	Fox Infrastructure	\$108,765	Grant commitment	Winter 2025	
	Mustang Truss Construction	\$300k	Grant commitment	Summer 2025	
	Epping Construction	\$300k	Grant commitment	Summer 2025	
	Don Froylan Creamery	\$129,240	Grant commitment	Winter 2026	
	Creative Auto Construction	\$115k	Grant commitment	Winter 2026	
	2525 Hyacinth	\$20k	Grant commitment	Spring 2024	
<u>McGilchrist Projets</u>					
	McGilchrist Street Improvement Project Phase 1	\$1.24M	Under Contract	Late 2024/early 2025	
	McGilchrist Street Improvement Project Phase 2 & 3	\$3-4M est.	Design Under Contract	TBD	Design underway, hope to go out for construction bid in late 2024.
<u>South Waterfront</u>	Pringle Creek Trail Design	\$200k	Early Stages no Contract Yet	TBD	
<u>Jory Projects</u>					
	Property Tax Rebate Program	TBD	Development Agreement		97% Rebate of TIF Recevied- Based on Annual Property Taxes Paid- 2052 Single Property URA





Department / Division	Classification	Total Vacant Positions	Greater than 6 months	Positions in Recruitment Status
Community Planning and Development / Parking Services	Code Enforcement Officer 1	2	2	
Community Planning and Development / Parking Services	Parking Enforcement Offcr	3	3	
Community Planning and Development / Planning Services	Planner II	2	1	2
Community Planning and Development / Urban Development	Management Analyst I	1		1
Community Planning and Development / Urban Development	Manager II	1	1	
Community Planning and Development / Urban Development	Program Manager I	1	1	
Community Planning and Development / Urban Development	Program Manager III	1	1	
Community Services / Library	Library Assistant, Senior	1		
Community Services / Library	Manager II	1		1
Community Services / Library	Supervisor II	1	1	
Community Services / Parks	Parks Maint Operator	2		2
Enterprise Services	Manager I	1		1
Enterprise Services / Facilities	Custodial Worker I	3		3
Enterprise Services / Facilities	Facility Maintenance Technician I	1	1	
Enterprise Services / Facilities	Security Officer	1	1	
Enterprise Services / Human Resources	Human Resources Business Partner, Sr	1	1	1
Enterprise Services / Information Technology	Dept Tech Support Analyst II	1	1	1
Enterprise Services / Information Technology	Network Analyst, Sr	1	1	
Enterprise Services / Information Technology	System Analyst, Sr	3	2	1
Enterprise Services / Information Technology	Systems Analyst, Lead	1	1	
Finance	Fiscal Analyst, Senior	1		1
Finance / Municipal Court	Court Operations Spec	1	1	1
Finance / Municipal Court	Supervisor II	1	1	1
Fire	Deputy Fire Chief	1	1	
Fire	Fire Apparatus Operator/Engineer	1	1	1
Fire	Fire Captain	1		
Fire	Fire Marshal	1		1
Fire	Firefighter-Medic	4		4
Legal	Management Analyst I	1	1	
Police	Clerk-Messenger	1		
Police	Corporal	2	1	
Police	Laborer	1		
Police	Management Analyst I	1	1	1
Police	Police Comm Svcs Officer	6	1	
Police	Police Officer	3	3	3
Police	Police Records Tech	1		1
Police	Sergeant	3	2	
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>59</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>27</b>



**CITY OF SALEM**



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# Electronic Traffic Enforcement Program

2023 Legislative Report

Salem Police Department  
Sgt. Scott Kofoid

## **Table of Contents**

- I. INTRODUCTION
- II. BACKGROUND
- III. IMPLEMENTATION
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- IV. PUBLIC INFORMATION CAMPAIGN
- V. PROCESS & OUTCOME EVALUATION
- VI. PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE
- VII. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS

## **INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND**

The Oregon Legislature enacted a law in 1999 allowing for the use of photo enforcement technology by select cities. The law allowed jurisdictions to enforce capture and enforce traffic light violations. With revisions to the law in 2001 and 2003, additional Oregon communities were provided the opportunities to implement photo enforcement programs with the intention of improving overall traffic safety. In 2017, the Oregon Legislature again revised the law allowing for photo speed enforcement at intersections by jurisdictions.

The use of Photo Enforcement technology has been shown to reduce the overall number of red light and speeding violations. These types of violations are the leading contributing factors to motor vehicle and pedestrian involved collisions within, or near, intersections.

This technology provides several benefits. The technology is capable of monitoring an intersection 24 hours a day and does not require an officer to be at the location. Additionally, the system does not require an officer to conduct a traffic stop in response to a violation. This increases safety for the community, officers and aids in decreasing congestion.

When the Photo Enforcement Technology captures a violation, four photographs and a video are mailed to the violator. The four photographs provide an overview of the violation, the license plates of the involved vehicle and a close up view of the driver's face.

## **BACKGROUND**

The City of Salem encompasses 48.45 square miles in both Marion and Polk County and has an estimated population of 177,487 as of 2022 (US Census Bureau). The City of Salem has had a growth rate of more than 28% in the last twenty years and data indicates the increase in population will continue.

A significant issue facing the City of Salem is vehicular traffic management. There are several major factors contributing to this problem along with the increase in population:

1. There is a significant commuting traffic increase during normal business hours from Monday to Friday.
2. Mission St (Hwy 22E) is a major east-west thoroughfare for motorists, which connects to Hwy 22W for travelers trying to get to the Oregon coast.
3. Motorists also use Commercial St as a major north-south thoroughfare to connect from I5 to Hwy 22W.

As a result of these factors, the community feels the impact of an increase in both local traffic and regional traffic. With the increase in traffic volume, there has been an increase in intersection related traffic crashes.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

In March of 2008, the City of Salem implemented a Photo Red Light Program with the intention of improving traffic safety. In Q4 of 2019 the City of Salem added one fixed Speed on Green Photo Enforcement at one of the existing Photo Red Light Camera intersections. In Q3 of 2020 the City of Salem added three more Photo Red Light cameras at three new intersections. With the addition of speed enforcement, the program is now called the Electronic Traffic Enforcement Program.

The intersections were selected in part based on crash data obtained from sources such as the Salem Police Department's internal Records Management Systems and Oregon Department of Transportation.

All of these intersections are located within the corporate city limits of Salem. Two of these intersections have a state highway approach that is controlled by the Oregon Department of Transportation. Requests were made to the Oregon Department of Transportation to allow for the placement of the cameras prior to installation.

When the program was first initialized, the vendor chosen by the City of Salem was Redflex Traffic Systems. Since that time, another company, Verra Mobility has acquired Redflex. This has not resulted in any changes in operations.

### **Current Photo Monitored Intersections:**

The City of Salem operates Photo Red Light Traffic Enforcement Cameras at the following intersections:

1. Center St NE at Hawthorne Av NE
2. Commercial St NE at Marion St NE.
3. Commercial St SE at Madrona Av SE
4. Commercial St SE at Kuebler Blvd SE
5. Mission St SE (Hwy 22E) at 25<sup>th</sup> St SE
6. Silverton Rd NE at Fisher Rd NE

The City of Salem operates Speed on Green Traffic Enforcement Cameras at the following intersections:

1. Center St NE at Hawthorne Av NE
2. Commercial St SE at Madrona Av SE

3. Commercial St SE at Kuebler Blvd SE
4. Silverton Rd NE at Fisher Rd NE

### **PUBLIC INFORMATION CAMPAIGN**

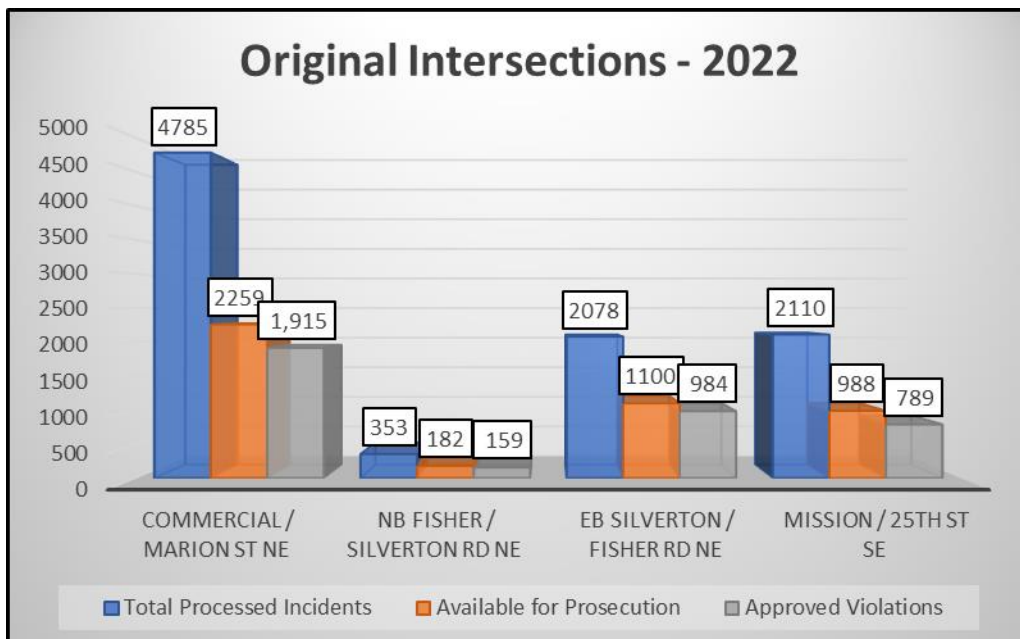
The City of Salem conducted an extensive and thorough public information campaign regarding the proposed use of red light camera enforcement, before the final decision was made to utilize photo red light and long before any cameras were ever installed. The campaign included presenting and providing information through the local media. In 2019, the City of Salem conducted a similar public information campaign prior to adding the new intersections and the fixed Speed on Green enforcement.

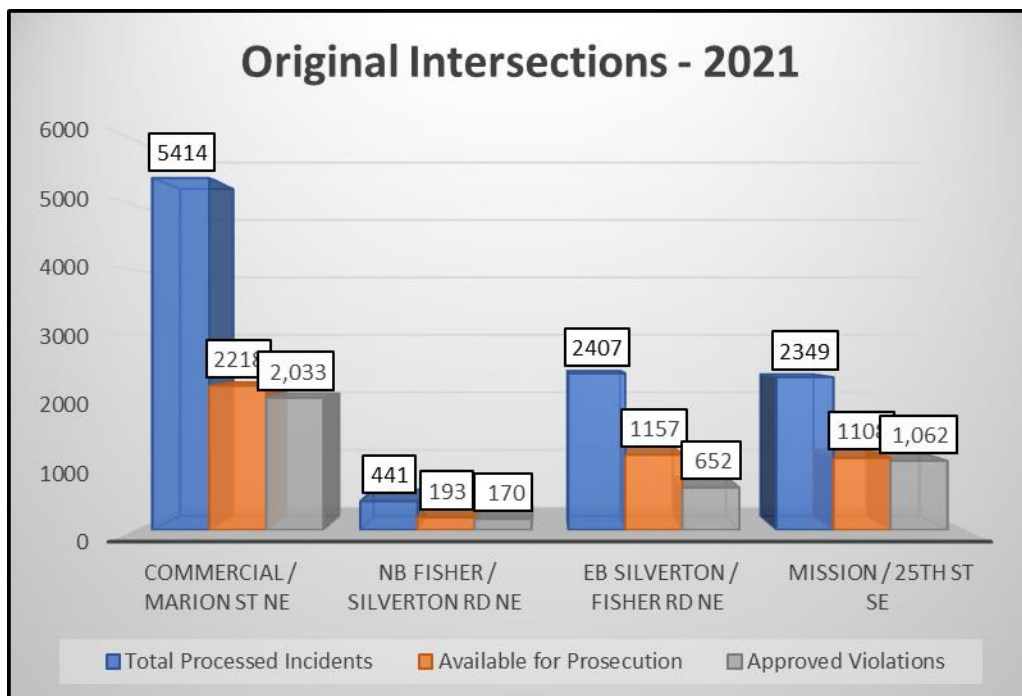
Since the start of the Electronic Traffic Enforcement Program, the City of Salem has maintained public information through their legislative reports. The Police Department also fields calls periodically about the system and process for capturing violations and the secondary process involving the issuance of citations.

### **PROCESS AND OUTCOME EVALUATION**

The City of Salem’s Electronic Traffic Enforcement Program formally began when the cameras went operational in March 2008. For the first thirty (30) days, the system issued only warnings to those drivers who violated a red light. The system began issuing citations in April 2008. In 2019 and 2020 the City of Salem used a similar format when the speed on green enforcement and three new photo red light camera intersections were added.

#### **Recorded Violations Red Light Violations – Original Intersections 2021/2022:**



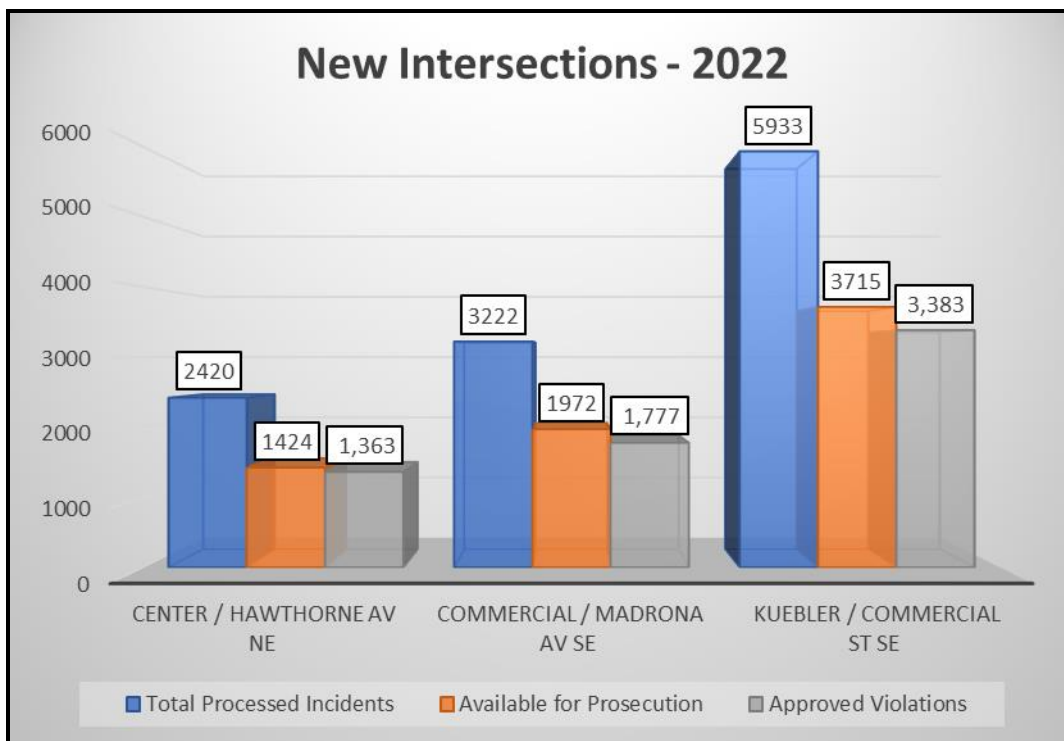
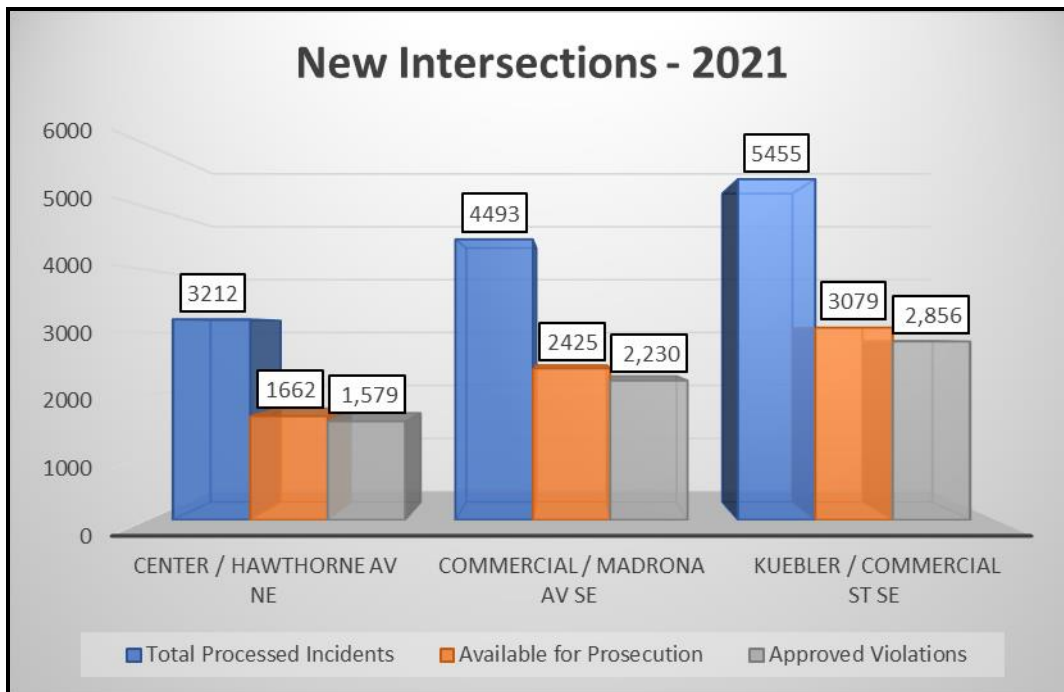


### Traffic Volume & Citations Issued – Original Intersections:

RED LIGHT NOTICES ISSUED AND TRAFFIC VOLUME - ORIGINAL INTERSECTIONS				
YEAR	TOTAL VEHICLES	PERCENT CHANGE	CITATIONS ISSUED	PERCENT CHANGE
2009	Unknown	Unk	4,333	-
2010	Unknown	Unk	4,095	-5%
2019	22,168,630	Unk	3,753	-9%
2020	18,996,690	-16%	4,048	+7%
2021	19,075,831	<1%	3917	-3%
2022	18,655,517	-2%	3847	-1%



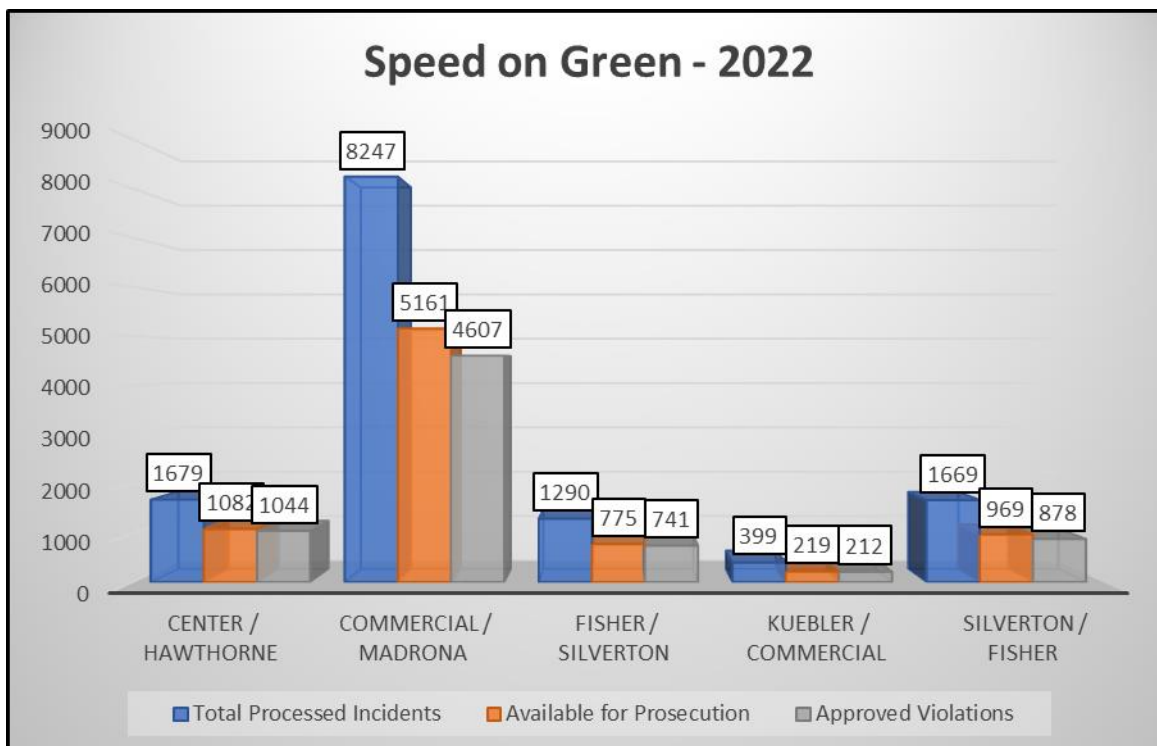
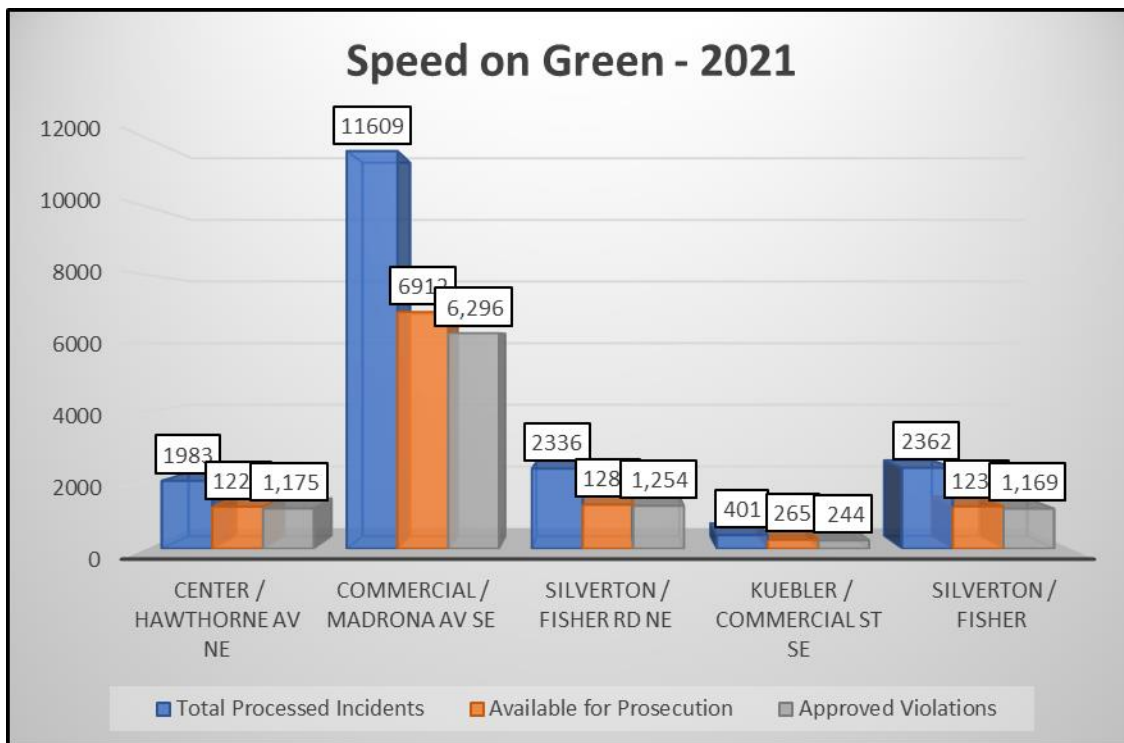
## Recorded Red Light Violations – New Intersections 2021/2022:



## Traffic Volume & Citations Issued – New Intersections:

RED LIGHT NOTICES ISSUED AND TRAFFIC VOLUME – NEW INTERSECTIONS				
YEAR	TOTAL VEHICLES	PERCENT CHANGE	CITATIONS ISSUED	PERCENT CHANGE
2021	11,162,872	-	6665	-
2022	11,557,587	+3%	6523	-2%

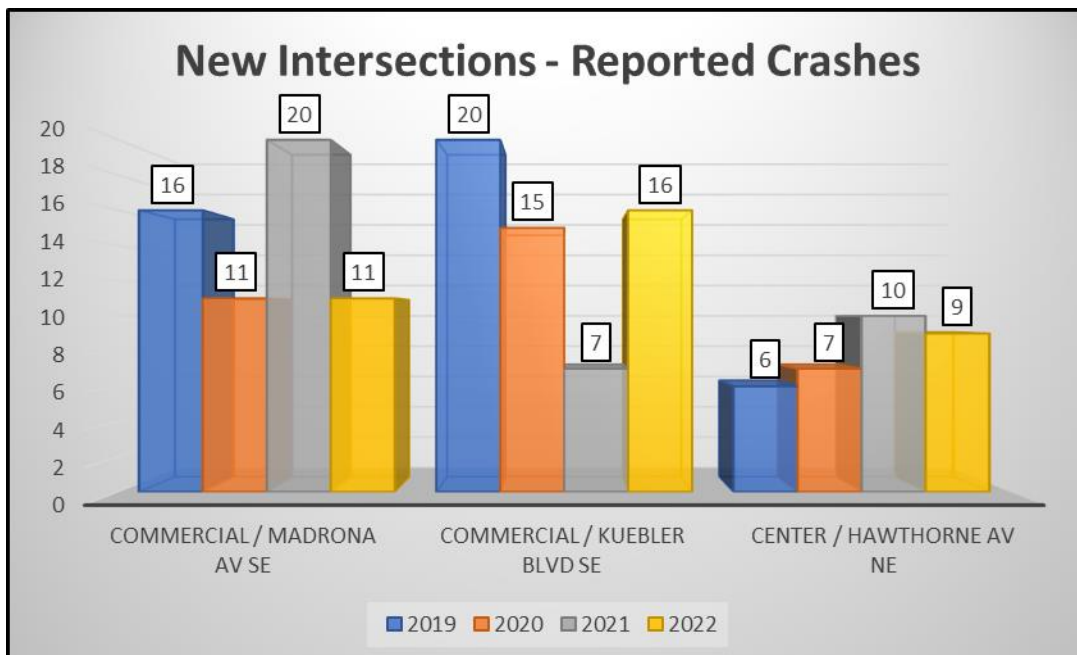
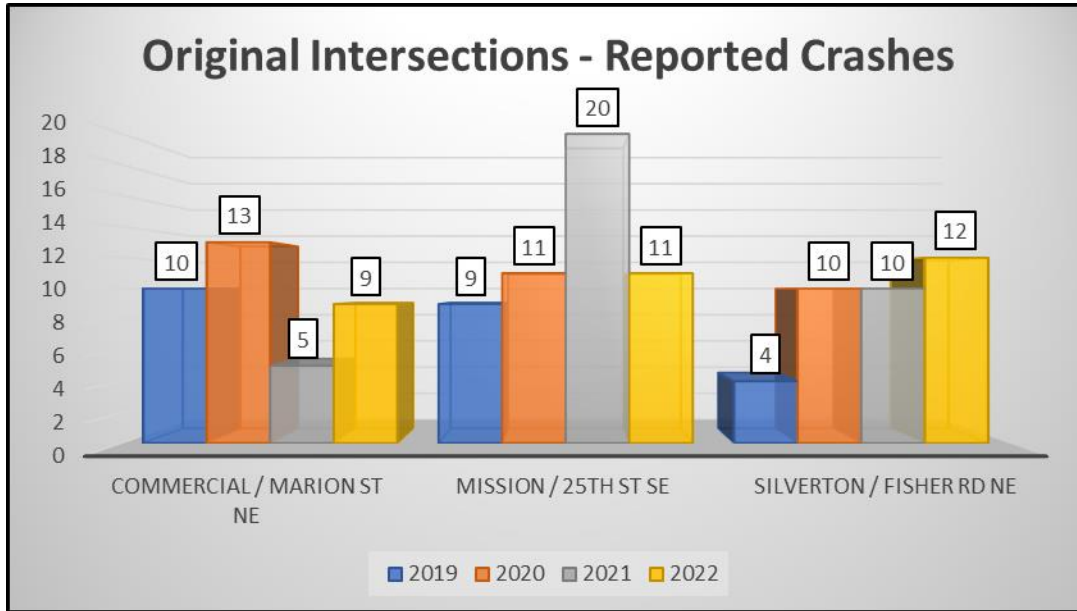
## Recorded Speed on Green Violations – All Locations 2021/2022:



## SPEED ON GREEN NOTICES ISSUED AND TRAFFIC VOLUME – ALL INTERSECTIONS

YEAR	TOTAL VEHICLES	PERCENT CHANGE	CITATIONS ISSUED	PERCENT CHANGE
2021	16,761,740	-	10,138	-
2022	17,659,014	+5%	7482	-35%

### Reported Traffic Crashes:



In 2012, the traffic volume at the three original intersections was recorded to be 7,936,482 per year. In 2022, the traffic volume at the original three intersections was reported to be 18,655,517. The result is a traffic volume increase at the three intersections of 57% in 10 years.

Since the implementation of the Electronic Traffic Enforcement Program, The City of Salem has had an overall reduction of traffic collisions at the original intersections of 87%. Since the initial decrease, the number of collisions associated with each intersection has leveled off with a small amount of fluctuation. This has occurred regardless of the fact the traffic volume has increased significantly.

### **Public Acceptance:**

While there has not been any formal survey conducted recently, informal results obtained throughout the Public Information Campaign and during the early period of the program indicate consistent public acceptance of the Photo Red Light and Speed on Green Program. Public opinion polls have appeared through local media outlets in the past and routinely indicate a belief that the cameras are improving roadway safety in Salem.

Citizen groups that have engaged the Police Department in the past about Photo Red Light have been supportive and some communities have made requests and recommendations for expansion of the program. The Salem Police Traffic Team regularly receives questions from citizens regarding electronic traffic enforcement and how they could have more locations added at other intersections within the city.

As with any enforcement based traffic safety initiative, there have been some detractors. The City of Salem Police Department investigates all formal complaints which it receives. To date, the City of Salem Police Department has not received any formal complaints in regard to the Electronic Traffic Enforcement Program.

### **The Electronic Traffic Enforcement Program's Administrative Process:**

The administrative process of the Electronic Traffic Enforcement Program includes many steps. The process includes;

- Violation detection - This means that a car must travel across the intersection stop line against a solid red light, or speed at 11mph or greater over the posted speed limit on a green light.
- Quality control checks - Internal checks made by the vendor (Redflex) to ensure the system was functioning properly at the time the violation was captured.
- Violation processing - Every violation is reviewed to ensure the violation is valid.

- Police Officer review - The final review of each violation by a City of Salem Police Officer who issues and signs the citation.
- Certificate of Innocence – Document submitted in the event the registered owner of a vehicle receives a citation and was not the driver at the time of the violation.
- Defendant Response – Defendants are offered all standard pleading options as with any other traffic violation.
- Municipal Court – Salem Municipal Court hears all cases involving photo enforced violations in the City of Salem. Whenever possible, defendants are offered the opportunity to view their violations prior to a trial. The court has been upfitted with the technology necessary in order to hear these types of trials.

Throughout this process the City of Salem complies with all applicable statutes, including ORS 810.434 and 810.436. All citations are issued into the jurisdiction of the City of Salem Municipal Court and are handled the same as all other citations.

Prepared by:

Sgt. Scott Kofoed

Salem Police Department

Traffic Control Unit

(503)588-6171

**This report is provided in accordance with ORS 810.434 (3, b), (4), and ORS 192.245.**

**Distribution:**

**(1)** Office of the President of the Senate

**(1)** Office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives

**(5)** Legislative Administration Committee

**(90)** Legislative Assembly Members



FINAL REPORT

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**City of Salem**  
**HOMELESSNESS STUDY**

March 8, 2024

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Moss Adams LLP  
999 Third Avenue, Suite 2800  
Seattle, WA 98104  
(206) 302-6500



MOSSADAMS

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# I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## A. BACKGROUND, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

Homelessness is a persistent social challenge that has widespread impacts on individuals, communities, and governments across the country, including the City of Salem (the City). Despite significant investments by the City and its partners in addressing homelessness, the total population of individuals experiencing homelessness within the City has continued to increase, which is consistent with national trends. This underscores the urgent need for the City and regional partners to expand capacity for successful programs and identify innovative ways to address this important issue. The City remains committed to supporting homelessness prevention and response and is actively exploring new strategies to ensure that everyone in its community has a safe and stable place to live.

The City engaged Moss Adams LLP (Moss Adams) to perform an evaluation of its homelessness response. This study was conducted to respond to a City Council request that Salem review its contracted services to better understand these processes and program impact in the community. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to celebrate successes and identify opportunities for improvement within the City's purview and ability to respond to homelessness-related issues within the Salem community. This work is intended to support future strategic planning that will guide the City's homelessness efforts and includes three primary components:

- **Planning and Strategy**
  - Identify the City's current goals and strategies for homelessness efforts
  - Document gaps or needed clarification in current goals, performance measures, and data tracking
  - Analyze whether the City is meeting current goals to the extent possible
- **Ecosystem and Resource Utilization**
  - Identify all City services related to homelessness response, including service descriptions, delivery method (contracted vs. in-house), successes, and challenges
  - Analyze total expenses and funding sources to support City interventions to homelessness using available data
  - Evaluate the City's participation in regional initiatives to advance homelessness response
- **Contracts**
  - Document current City contracts related to homelessness services
  - Review current contracts and contract management in comparison to best practice to identify opportunities for improvement

The study was conducted between August 2023 and February 2024 and consisted of four major phases: project startup, fact-finding and data collection, analysis, and reporting results. To complete this assessment, Moss Adams conducted 37 interviews with City leaders, staff, service providers, and community groups to gain an up-to-date understanding of the current environment. We also conducted a comprehensive document review, performed research into evidence-based best practices, and evaluated the City's efforts in relation to peer and industry best practices.

## B. COMMENDATIONS

Based on the insights gathered throughout our assessment, we noted several areas of strength at the City that can be leveraged to support ongoing efforts related to homelessness prevention and response:

- **Housing Status Anti-Discrimination Policy:** The City's civil rights code (Municipal Code Section 97.0005) specifies its policy intention to eliminate discrimination based on housing status. This supports the idea that people experiencing homelessness have equal access to programs, services, and opportunities within the City.
- **Internal Collaboration:** The City's efforts at collaboration and its relationship-focused approach have begun to establish continuity in an otherwise complex system, particularly the efforts of the Homeless Services Team (HST), Salem Outreach and Livability Services Program (SOS), and the Internal Homelessness Committee (IHC).
- **Low-Barrier Shelter Bed Increase:** Due to City investments, there has been a significant increase in low-barrier shelter beds in Salem over the past several years to help increase the number of individuals who are able to shelter indoors throughout the year.
- **Developing Regional Continuum of Care:** The developing regional Continuum of Care (CoC) Program presents significant opportunity to enhance homelessness response services throughout the Mid-Willamette Valley.

## C. SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Observation and recommendations are grouped into three sections: 1) City Homelessness Response, 2) Ecosystem and Resource Utilization, and 3) Contracts. Observations and recommendations for each section are summarized below, with greater details and actionable recommendations listed in Section IV of this report.

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS		
City Homelessness Response		
1.	Finding	Although the City has defined plans, goals, and strategies related to homelessness in several documents, there is not currently a unified plan that encapsulates the entirety of the City's response. As a result, the City's response is often reactive and sometimes disconnected between departments.
	Recommendation	A. In the long-term, develop a comprehensive and unified homelessness strategic plan to set clear policy direction, promote alignment across City stakeholders, and promote regional efforts. B. In the short-term, if resources to create a full strategic plan are not available, develop a homelessness operating plan that aligns with the goals in the MWVHA strategic plan and the City's overarching strategic plan.
2.	Finding	Although the City measures performance across its service ecosystem in a variety of ways, it does not have an overarching performance measurement framework to consistently track, compare, and communicate the impact of homelessness response efforts. As a result, the City is not yet able to comparatively assess program effectiveness or concisely convey the outcomes of its efforts to internal and external stakeholders.

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS		
	<b>Recommendation</b>	<p>A. Develop community-level outcome-driven performance measures related to homelessness that support the MWVHA and City strategic plans to keep leadership, staff, and stakeholders informed of progress.</p> <p>B. To better communicate the outcomes of the City's homelessness services, consider developing a dashboard to regularly report community-level performance measures (see <a href="#">External Communication</a>).</p> <p>C. Reevaluate and align performance measures for any service contracts that are engaged in the future (see Service Provider Performance Measures).</p>
3.	<b>Finding</b>	Systems to collect homelessness-related data across City-operated and City-funded programs and services are siloed. This limits the City's ability to accurately assess performance in a timely and meaningful manner.
	<b>Recommendation</b>	Consider different strategies, such as leveraging the City's GIS or gaining access to the HMIS, to develop a unified system-wide approach to data collection, management, and reporting.
4.	<b>Finding</b>	The City communicates its homelessness activities through several mechanisms, including newsletters, neighborhood association meetings, and its website. However, absent an overarching strategy and related performance measures, the community may not be aware of the full scope or impact of services available in the City.
	<b>Recommendation</b>	<p>A. Continue updating the Housing &amp; Shelter webpage to provide a centralized repository for community resources, key reports, and relevant articles.</p> <p>B. Consider breaking out the Addressing Homelessness section of the Housing &amp; Shelter webpage into its own dedicated page that communicates the City's efforts.</p> <p>C. To better communicate the outcomes of the City's homelessness services, consider incorporating community-level performance measures into the Transparent Reporting and Analytics for Residents Portal.</p>
5.	<b>Finding</b>	The City has largely funded its homelessness response efforts through one-time funds, hoping to create appropriate infrastructure for its longer-term homelessness response efforts.
	<b>Recommendation</b>	With the depletion of special one-time funds and the City's approaching revenue shortfalls, City leadership should develop a vision and strategy for the financial role of the City in supporting local homelessness response services.
6.	<b>Finding</b>	The City does not measure or report its total homelessness response spending, including both primary and secondary costs, to articulate overall City resources dedicated to this important community issue.
	<b>Recommendation</b>	The City should establish a process to measure and report its total homelessness response funding commitments Citywide, recognizing the strategic benefits of measuring and communicating this information.

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS		
Ecosystem and Resource Utilization		
7.	<b>Finding</b>	Roles, specialty services, and capacity among community-based service providers are sometimes uncoordinated, which can contribute to confusion around expectations and appropriate service referrals that would facilitate a clear continuum as individuals move from experiencing unsheltered homelessness to becoming stably housed.
	<b>Recommendation</b>	<p>A. In the short-term, the City should explore opportunities to inventory community-based service providers, including core information around service restrictions, criteria, and capacity, to help support a more seamless approach to service referrals and delivery.</p> <p>B. In the long-term, the City should work with the MWVHA to advocate for system improvements including enhancing the Coordinated Entry System, a system-wide HMIS, and opportunities to streamline the continuum of care among service providers.</p>
8.	<b>Finding</b>	While a diverse portfolio of services are available in the City, stakeholders note opportunities to expand services to address capacity constraints and unaddressed populations. Critical gaps and limitations include mental and behavioral health services, low-barrier shelter for vulnerable groups, and transitional housing.
	<b>Recommendation</b>	Continue efforts to evaluate benefits against costs and identify solutions for assessed resource gaps, including investing in infrastructure at the local level, cultivating partnerships with regional service providers, advocating for the ongoing development of the MWVHA, and other opportunities.
9.	<b>Finding</b>	The need for housing in Salem continues to rise, with notable gaps in affordable and permanent supportive housing units.
	<b>Recommendation</b>	Continue to prioritize the development of housing, including permanent supportive housing and affordable housing units, to enable service providers to institute rapid re-housing and provide appropriate supports, thereby increasing the cost-effectiveness of services and the rate at which individuals can exit homelessness.
Contracts		
10.	<b>Finding</b>	The City of Salem's contract management practices include limited coordination between departments, which results in some inconsistencies across departments and across service providers.
	<b>Recommendation</b>	Establish clear policies, procedures, and expectations for contract design and management to support a consistent experience and efficient operations for all City contract managers and service providers.
11.	<b>Finding</b>	Performance measures are a critical component of service contracts, but differences in how they are outlined between departments may lead to inconsistencies in measuring progress and assessing goals for contracted services.

## OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Recommendation**

- A. Develop a suite of suitable performance measures for service providers to support consistency in ongoing monitoring.
- B. Incorporate the updated performance measures into all service contracts.
- C. Continue to follow a reporting cadence for service providers that incorporates performance measure reporting.

## II. INTRODUCTION

### A. BACKGROUND

Preventing and responding to homelessness are persistent social challenges that have widespread impacts on individuals, communities, and governments across the country. Within the City of Salem (the City), staff and stakeholders report that challenges related to homelessness in the City appear to be more visible and widespread in recent times. The City and its partners have invested significant resources into addressing homelessness, including the development of affordable housing, low-barrier emergency shelter beds, and increasing access to supportive services. In mid-2023, City Council requested that the City review its contracted services to better understand these processes and program impact in the community.

In addition, the City is facing a \$19 million budget shortfall that significantly limits future funding for services related to homelessness. To address this shortfall, the City proposed a new payroll tax that would have expanded and maintained police and fire department resources, as well as paid for homelessness services. However, voters in Salem overwhelmingly rejected this measure in November 2023, with 82% of the vote against it. This has put many services related to homelessness at risk, highlighting the urgent need for the City and its partners to find new and innovative ways to address this pressing issue. Despite these challenges, the City remains committed to addressing homelessness and is actively exploring new strategies to prevent and respond to homelessness in the community.

### B. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to provide observations and actionable recommendations that identify opportunities to optimize the City's homelessness services. The recommendations in this assessment are intentionally developed to fall within the City's influence and ability to prevent and respond to homelessness-related issues in its community. This study focused on three primary areas: the City's planning and strategy environment, the regional and local service ecosystem, and contracts with service providers.

- **Planning and Strategy**
  - Identify the City's current goals and strategies for homelessness efforts
  - Document gaps or needed clarification in current goals, performance measures, and data tracking
  - Analyze whether the City is meeting current goals to the extent possible
- **Ecosystem and Resource Utilization**
  - Identify all City services related to homelessness response, including service descriptions, delivery method (contracted vs. in-house), successes, and challenges
  - Analyze total expenses and funding sources to support City interventions to homelessness using available data
  - Evaluate the City's participation in regional initiatives to advance homelessness response
- **Contracts**
  - Document current City contracts related to homelessness services

- Review current contracts and contract management in comparison to best practice to identify opportunities for improvement

This assessment was conducted between August 2023 and February 2024, and consisted of four major phases:

PROJECT PHASES			
	Phase	Description	Period
1	<b>Start-Up and Management</b>	<p>Project initiation consisted of collaborative project planning with City leadership and project management, including developing our scope of work and final work plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Conducted kickoff meeting to finalize scope of work</li> <li>● Performed project management and provide status reports</li> </ul>	August 2023
2	<b>Fact-Finding and Data Collection</b>	<p>In the second phase, we conducted our fieldwork, including documentation review, walk-throughs, observations, interviews, and data collection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Submitted document request and review available data and documents</li> <li>● Conducted interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders, including City leaders, staff, and community service providers</li> </ul> <p>Conducted and consolidated research on industry standards and best practices related to homelessness interventions at the regional and municipal level</p>	September 2023
3	<b>Analysis</b>	<p>Based on the information gained during our fieldwork phase, we performed a gap analysis of current conditions and identified opportunities for improvement. Leveraging best practice information and our own experience from working with similar entities, we developed practical recommendations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Assessed performance from the following perspectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Comprehensiveness of current plans and goals</li> <li>○ Achievement and/or progress toward current goals or performance targets</li> <li>○ Gaps or redundancies in current service offerings and capacity</li> <li>○ Contract and contract management processes in comparison to best practice</li> <li>○ Data tracking and management</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Developed inventory of sources and uses of City funds, including in-kind contributions, with uses identified by vendor or City department</li> </ul> <p>Evaluated opportunities for improvement relative to best practices to formulate recommendations</p>	October–December 2023
4	<b>Reporting Results</b>	<p>We communicated the results of our analysis with observations and recommendations presented first in a draft report that was</p>	January–February 2024

PROJECT PHASES		
Phase	Description	Period
	<p>reviewed with management to confirm the practicality and relevance of recommendations before finalizing the report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepared and reviewed a draft report, including an executive summary, observations and recommendations with the City</li> </ul> <p>We will deliver a final report and present it to the City management team and City Council.</p>	

This engagement was performed in accordance with Standards for Consulting Services established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Accordingly, we provide no opinion, attestation, or other form of assurance with respect to our work or the information upon which our work is based. This report was developed based on information gained from our interviews and analyses of documentation.

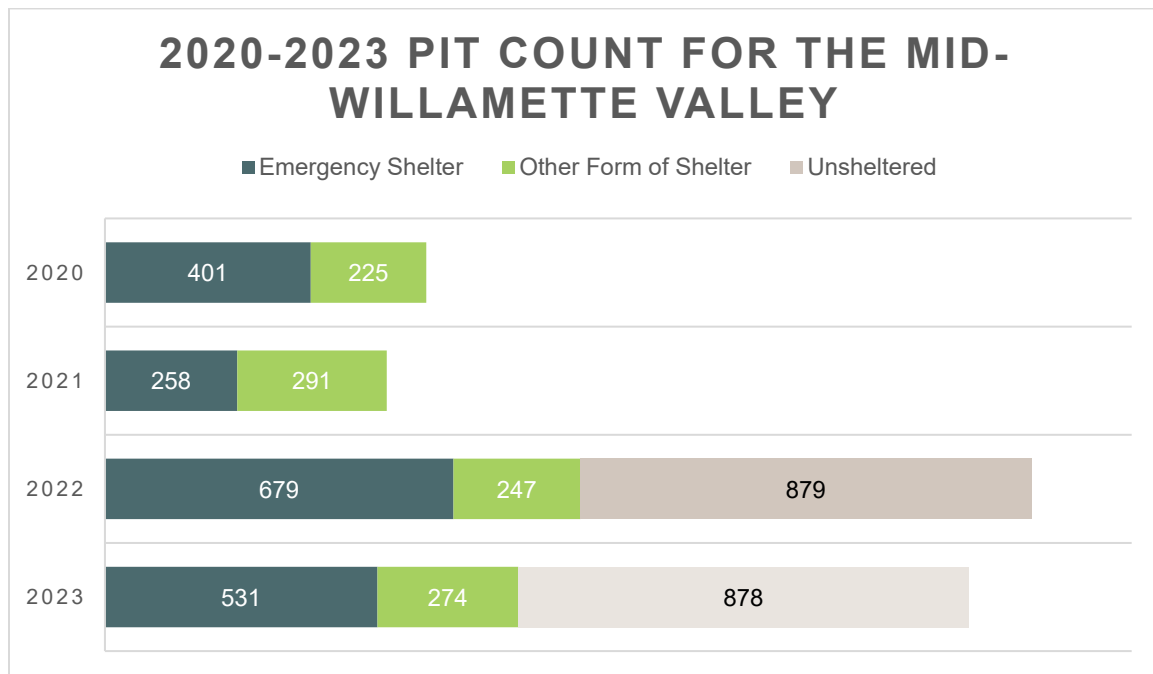


### III. ENVIRONMENT

#### A. HOMELESSNESS TRENDS

According to the 2023 Point-in-Time (PIT) count<sup>1</sup>, the State of Oregon has the third highest rate of homelessness at 48 people per 10,000; only New York and Vermont had higher rates of homelessness. In Oregon, over half (64.6%) of these individuals were reported in unsheltered locations, indicating that they were primarily living outdoors. Notably, Oregon has the highest rate of unsheltered family homelessness, with 58.7% of families with children lacking shelter. Between 2020 and 2022, Oregon had the fourth highest increase in homelessness with 3,304 more individuals experiencing homelessness in 2022 than in 2020, representing a 22.5% increase.

In recent years, both the State of Oregon and the Mid-Willamette region have seen a steady increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness. Although homelessness has been a consistent challenge in Oregon for decades, the crisis has become more visible and widespread in recent years. Communities across the region sit at the crux between a desire to assist people experiencing homelessness and impatience and disappointment with the society's ability to effectively respond to the crisis. The graph below summarizes homelessness trends in the Salem region, as reported by the federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Department.<sup>2</sup> **Unsheltered counts in 2020 and 2021 were unavailable due to the COVID-19 pandemic.**

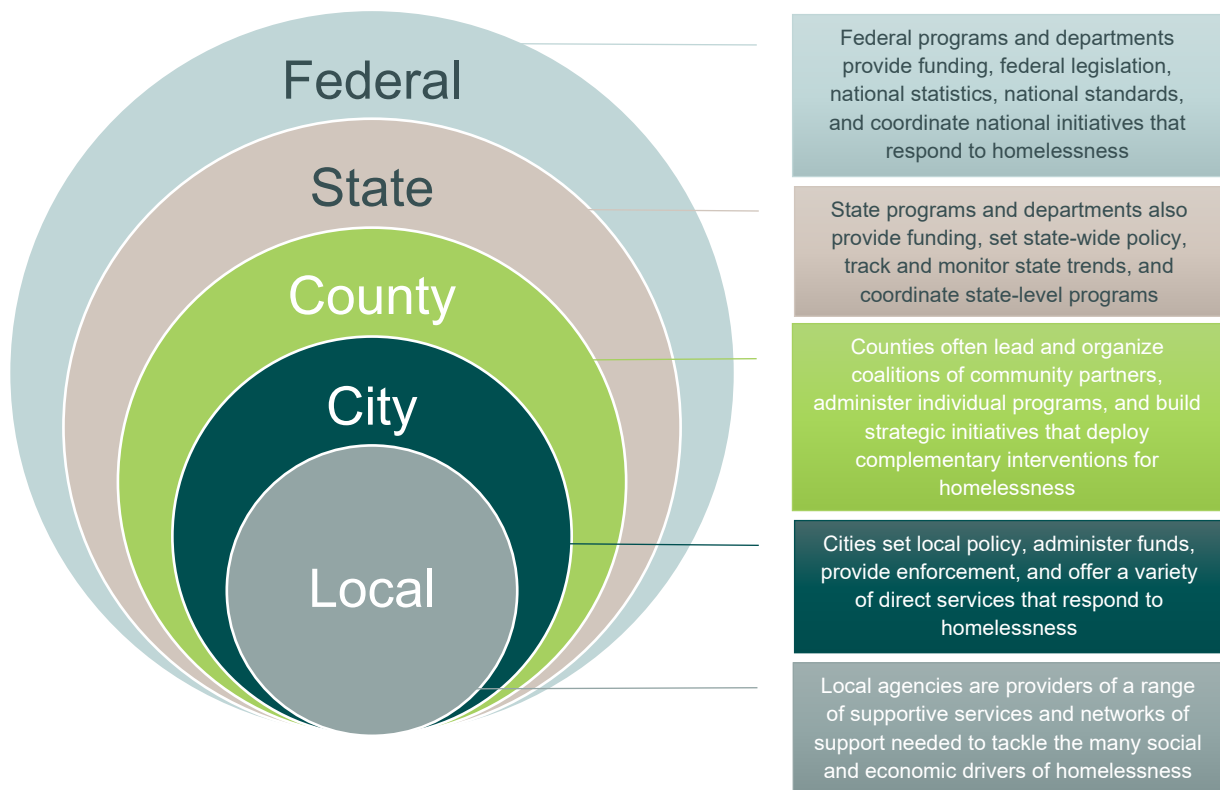


<sup>1</sup> The 2023 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/2023-AHAR-Part-1.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/3031/pit-and-hic-data-since-2007/>

## B. FEDERAL, STATE, COUNTY, CITY, AGENCY, AND COMMUNITY ROLES

The complex issue of homelessness has precipitated multi-layered responses at the federal, state, county, and local levels. Jurisdictions across all levels are working to evaluate the issue of homelessness and develop funding, programs, and strategies to prevent and end the experience of homelessness. Interagency collaborations strive to align housing, health, education, and human services, and establish a set of strategies that facilitate partnerships across industries (including the private sector, philanthropy, and state and local governments) to employ cost-effective and comprehensive solutions. The following graphic provides an overview of the roles each agency plays in addressing homelessness.



An assessment of where each level has dedicated its resources to respond to homelessness is detailed in the subsequent section. As the response to homelessness continues to grow, agency, roles, funding, and programs are subject to shift over time.

### Federal Support

There are three primary federal agencies that establish policy and regulations, financially support, and coordinate homelessness response efforts.

- **US Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH):** The USICH coordinates the Federal response to homelessness by partnering with 19 federal agencies, state and local governments, advocates, service providers, and people experiencing homelessness. USICH drafts and implements the Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness.

- **Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS):** The DHHS is the federal government's principal agency supporting the social and economic well-being of Americans, including those who experience homelessness. DHHS provides funding to state, local, and non-profit entities for health care for people experiencing homelessness, as well as for substance use disorders, mental health, and nutrition.
- **Housing and Urban Development (HUD):** In general, the federal government supports low-income people in affording housing through the HUD Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program and provides Homeless Assistance Grants, including grants for the Continuum of Care (CoC) program, and entitlement programs such as Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and Emergency Services Grants, to communities that administer housing and homelessness services. HUD funding is prevalent and is often used as leverage for other regional and local funding, therefore HUD definitions and regulations can often constrain programs, even if they are only partially funded by HUD. Most of the City's housing vouchers are funded through these federal programs.

## State of Oregon Programs

Oregon Revised Statute 458.528<sup>3</sup> defines the State of Oregon's approach to homelessness, which outlines a system that includes:

- The redesign and realignment of response systems to support permanent housing
- The inclusion of community-based treatment, outreach services, early intervention strategies, housing and service management to address compounding needs
- The coordination of multiagency service providers to create integrated and cost-effective programs that deliver housing and other services to people experiencing homelessness in a seamless and timely manner
- Programs of care that have an accompanying set of outcomes to support accountability and the ongoing development of increasingly effective methods to address individual needs
- An individualized approach to homelessness services that includes an assessment of individual needs, identification of appropriate services, coordination, and cost-effective support across agencies

Multiple State-run entities administer homelessness services programs to provide housing, housing-related supports, outreach, and advocacy services. Lead State agencies include:

- Oregon Housing and Community Services
- Oregon Department of Human Services
- Oregon Governor's Office of Emergency Services

Rather than providing direct services to individuals, these agencies typically provide funding to organizations that offer housing subsidies and other homelessness interventions through grants.

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<sup>3</sup> [https://oregon.public.law/statutes/ors\\_458.528](https://oregon.public.law/statutes/ors_458.528)

## County Programs

Typically, county governments provide the majority of direct services in support of homelessness prevention and response through their human service agencies. Generally, counties coordinate core services such as shelters, warming and cooling programs, food programs, behavioral health services, and substance abuse treatment to prevent and respond to homelessness. This is most often performed through a collaborative effort with municipal governments and local non-profits, with funding distributed by the County.

The City straddles both Marion and Polk counties. Marion County's Housing Authority and Department of Health and Human Services play a key regional role in providing housing, health, and behavioral health services to the community. Additionally, Polk County has a Family and Community Outreach team that provides similar services for those residing within its jurisdiction. Polk County also has the West Valley Housing Authority that functions similarly to the Marion County Housing Authority.

## Mid-Willamette Valley Homeless Alliance (MWVHA)

CoCs are federal designations that receive federal funding (primarily from HUD) for homelessness prevention and response. The CoC program aims to provide community-wide strategies to address homelessness by encouraging coordination among various organizations, including non-profits, local governments, and other social service providers to provide services. CoC services typically include the following:

- **Coordinated Entry System (CES):** A CES is a strategic approach to streamline and centralize the process of assessing and matching individuals and families experiencing homelessness to the most appropriate services available. The CES establishes a standardized and uniform process to assess individual's needs, vulnerabilities, and preferences to match them with suitable housing and services. The CES assigns priorities based on severity of need, vulnerability, and other factors to ensure that those who are most in need of housing and support receive assistance first. It's designed to promote fair and equitable access to housing and other support services to people experiencing homelessness.
- **Housing assistance:** Housing assistance is designed to meet the different needs and circumstances of people experiencing homelessness. Housing includes emergency shelter, transitional housing, permanent, permanent supportive housing, and rapid rehousing.
- **Homeless Management Information System (HMIS):** CoCs establish a consolidated data system to collect information on people experiencing homelessness within the CoC, including tracking services provided and evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of interventions. The HMIS is used by providers to triage service delivery and forms the basis for HUD reporting requirements.
- **Supportive services:** CoCs help support the provision of case management, mental health services, substance abuse treatment, employment assistance, and other services to help provide stability to people experiencing homelessness.
- **Prevention programs:** Prevention programs implement strategies to help prevent individuals and families from becoming homeless, such as through eviction prevention.

The MWVHA was recognized by HUD in December 2019 to serve as a regional CoC, with partners including Polk County, Marion County, and the cities of Salem, Keizer, Silverton, and Detroit. The

Alliance's mission is to develop an evidence-based system of services, including stable housing, designed to meet the unique and complex needs of adults, youth, children, and families in Marion and Polk counties who are at risk of or are experiencing homelessness.

In Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22), the Alliance was awarded \$1,340,420 in federal dollars<sup>4</sup> for programs that provide shelter, housing, and services to people experiencing homelessness. As the designated CoC for the region, the MWVHA is responsible for annually compiling a single community application for federal CoC dollars.

## City Programs and Services

The following is a list of City departments involved in this work and a summary of the services and programs they lead, as well as estimated expenditures in FY22-23. Expenditures are listed as either primary costs (e.g., cost of providing specific programs directly or through a service agency) or secondary costs (e.g., costs of general City services, such as public safety and infrastructure maintenance, which can be attributed to serving those experiencing homelessness in the City).

PRIMARY EXPENDITURES, FY22-23			
Department/Division	Service Description	Funding Source(s)	FY22-23 Funding
Non-Departmental	United Way Safe Sleep Expansion	ARPA	\$300,000
Non-Departmental	Center for Hope and Safety Project Turnkey	ARPA	\$230,000
Non-Departmental	C@P Micro Shelter 1: CCS Shelter	ARPA	\$200,600
Non-Departmental	Towing Services - State Sheltering Grant	State Grants	\$200,000
Non-Departmental	C@P Micro Shelter 1: CCS Shelter	ARPA & State Grants	\$2,442,816
Non-Departmental	C@P Micro Shelter 2: Village of Hope	ARPA, State Grants, and \$3k from General Fund	\$2,132,188
Non-Departmental	Navigation Center Operations	State Grants	\$568,929
Non-Departmental	C@P Micro Shelter 3: Turner Road Shelter	State Grants \$6k from General Fund	\$540,887
Non-Departmental	Safe Park - Church At The Park	General Fund	\$235,133

<sup>4</sup> [https://files.hudexchange.info/reports/published/CoC\\_Dash\\_CoC\\_OR-504-2022\\_OR\\_2022.pdf](https://files.hudexchange.info/reports/published/CoC_Dash_CoC_OR-504-2022_OR_2022.pdf)

PRIMARY EXPENDITURES, FY22-23			
Non-Departmental	Warming Network - MWVCAA	General Fund	\$148,644
Non-Departmental	Mobile Crisis Response	General Fund	\$80,007
Non-Departmental	C@P: Mobile Laundry Unit	General Fund	\$13,400
Non-Departmental	Homeless Rental Assistance Program	General Fund	\$630,000
City Manager	Homeless and Sheltering Coordination	General Fund	\$183,330
City Manager	SOS Team – Community Services	State Grants	\$130,910
Community Services	SOS Team	State Grants	\$678,920
Community Services	Youth Development	General Fund	\$5,413
Police	SOS Team - Police HST	State Grants	\$288,320
Community Planning and Development	Northwest Human Services Crisis and Information Hotline and Emergency Financial Assistance	General Fund	\$235,000
Community Planning and Development	Marion Polk Food Share Nourishing Salem Residents in Need	General Fund	\$165,000
Community Planning and Development	Community Planning and Development CDBG Programs	Federal HUD Funds	\$1,957,234
Community Planning and Development	Community Planning and Development CDBG Admin	Federal HUD Funds	\$243,363
Community Planning and Development	Community Planning and Development HOME Programs	Federal HUD Funds	\$1,223,876
Community Planning and Development	Community Planning and Development HOME Admin	Federal HUD Funds	\$62,533
Community Planning and Development	Community Planning and Development HOME - ARP Programs	Federal HUD Funds	\$385,250

PRIMARY EXPENDITURES, FY22-23			
Community Planning and Development	Community Planning and Development HOME - ARP Admin	Federal HUD Funds	\$36,743
Community Planning and Development	Community Planning and Development CDBG & HOME Admin Costs Reallocated to General Fund	General Fund	\$77,935
<b>Total Primary Costs</b>			<b>\$13,396,430</b>

SECONDARY EXPENDITURES, FY22-23			
Department/Division	Service Description	Funding Source(s)	FY22-23 Funding
City Manager	CMO Indirect Costs	General Fund	\$24,431
Community Development	Code Enforcement, Homelessness-Related Costs	General Fund	\$396,000
Community Services	Parks Indirect Costs	General Fund	\$221,129
Finance	Contract & Invoice Management	General Fund	\$19,204
Fire	Public Safety - Fire	General Fund	\$7,884,848
Police	Public Safety - Police	General Fund	\$1,660,921
Public Works	Public Works Indirect Costs	Predominantly General Fund \$17,700 in Other Revenues	\$120,000
Community Planning and Development	Community Planning and Development Indirect Costs	General fund and all dollars that fund Community Planning and Development	\$25,197
<b>Total Secondary Costs</b>			<b>\$10,351,730</b>

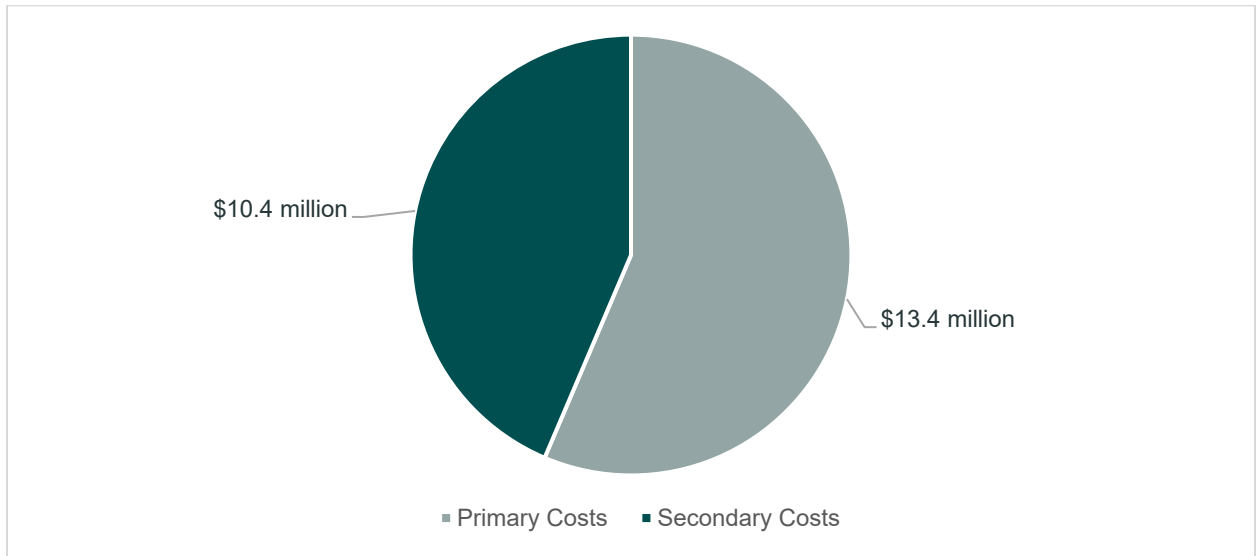
## C. CITY EXPENDITURES ON HOMELESSNESS RESPONSE

In FY22-23, the City spent over \$23.7 million on homelessness-related services. For this analysis, costs were identified as either primary or secondary costs:

- **Primary costs:** Direct expenditures for homelessness services and programs, including both contracted and City-operated programs

- **Secondary costs:** Estimates of expenditures of general City services (e.g., Police, Fire, Code Enforcement) that can be attributed to homelessness response based on available data and staff expertise

### ***FY22–23 City Homelessness Costs***



The City spent \$13.4 million on primary costs (direct homelessness services and programs). The vast majority of these primary costs (\$11.6 million) were funded through the state and federal monies.

CITY OF SALEM HOMELESSNESS RESPONSE PRIMARY COSTS BY SOURCE OF FUNDS	
General Fund	\$1,783,335
State & Federal Special Revenues (Includes CDBG & HOME funds for Community Planning and Development Administration)	\$8,046,735
HUD CDBG & HOME Pass Through Funds	\$3,566,360
<b>Total Primary Costs</b>	<b>\$13,396,430</b>

In addition to these costs which are directly attributable to homelessness-related programs, the City also had secondary costs within nearly all of its operating departments. Secondary costs are expenses that are not *designated* for homelessness but end up being used in the City's homelessness response efforts. Unlike primary costs that are identified through financial records and contracts, secondary costs are estimated using available data and staff expertise. Because City systems are not set up to track homelessness response costs, estimating secondary costs comes with some uncertainty—true secondary costs could be higher or lower than the estimated in the table below.



PRIMARY AND SECONDARY HOMELESSNESS RESPONSE COSTS, FY22-23						
Department	General Fund	Other Revenues	Pass Through Funds	Primary Costs Total	Secondary Cost Estimates	All Costs Total
City Manager	\$207,761	\$130,910	\$0	\$314,240	\$24,431	\$338,671
Community Development	\$396,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$396,000	\$396,000
Community Services	\$226,542	\$678,920	\$0	\$684,333	\$221,129	\$905,462
Finance	\$19,204	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$19,204	\$19,204
Fire	\$7,884,848	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7,884,848	\$7,884,848
Police	\$1,660,921	\$288,320	\$0	\$288,320	\$1,660,921	\$1,949,241
Public Works	\$102,300	\$17,700	\$0	\$0	\$120,000	\$120,000
Community Planning and Development	\$503,132	\$342,639	\$3,566,360	\$4,386,934	\$25,197	\$4,412,131
Non-Departmental	\$1,116,657	\$6,605,947	\$0	\$7,722,604	\$0	\$7,722,604
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$12,117,365</b>	<b>\$8,064,435</b>	<b>\$3,566,360</b>	<b>\$13,396,430</b>	<b>\$10,351,730</b>	<b>\$23,748,160</b>

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## Contracted Programs and Services

The following is a list of current City contracts related to homelessness services, a summary of the services they provide, and the cost of the contract in FY22-23.

Contractor	Funder	Service Description	Contract Amount in FY22-23
Applegate LLC	HOME	Applegate Terrace Veterans Housing	\$600,000
Center for HOPE and Safety	ARPA	Renovate the Mosaic shelter for women to include 22 kitchenettes (Project Turnkey)	\$230,000
Center for HOPE and Safety	HOME - ARP	Pay for verified eligible costs related to the HOME ARP Assisted units at the site.	\$250,000
Center for HOPE and Safety	HOME - ARP	Provide 24-hour crisis intervention, emergency shelter, and case management for up to 2,200 people	\$100,000
Center for HOPE and Safety	CDBG Non-PS	HOPE Plaza Low-Income Housing Project	\$50,000
Church at the Park	General Fund	Build and operate a micro-shelter village for up to 40 guests	\$429,057
Church at the Park	General Fund	Acquire and operate a laundry trailer	\$13,400
Church at the Park	General Fund	Operate 80 sheltering spaces	\$2,111,880
Church at the Park	General Fund	Operate 132 sheltering spaces for families with children	\$388,120
Church at the Park	General Fund	Provide shelter services to families with children and maintain 132 sheltering spaces	\$2,218,971
Church at the Park	General Fund	Provide safe park services to individuals and families in Salem	\$260,000
Community Development Partners	HOME	Acquire land and construct 184 apartments	\$650,000
Corvallis Neighborhood Housing Services	HOME	Acquire property, demolish existing buildings, and construct a 24 single family home subdivision	\$650,000
Family Promise of the Mid-Willamette Valley	General Fund	Provide shelter services to families with children and offer case management support	\$40,000

Contractor	Funder	Service Description	Contract Amount in FY22–23
Integrated Supports for Living	CDBG Non-PS	Rental housing project that will include repairs and improvements to an existing property	\$300,000
Marion Polk Food Share	General Fund	Crisis and Information Hotline Program	\$165,000
Marion Polk Food Share	CDBG PS	Support key staff positions to provide guidance to youth, in order to grow healthy produce that is available to vulnerable seniors	\$15,000
Marion Polk Food Share	CDBG PS	Support key staff positions to the provision of healthy, home delivered meals to vulnerable seniors	\$165,000
Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency	Recovery Funds	Acquire 80-room hotel to use as temporary shelter for 1,500 bed-nights on average per month	\$500,000
Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency	General Fund	Provide temporary emergency shelter during inclement weather for 300 residents	\$150,000
Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency	General Fund	Establish and deliver behavioral health services at the Navigation Center	\$247,000
Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency	General Fund	Provide 75 sheltering spaces and help individuals transition to positive destinations	\$1,919,505
Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency	CDBG Non-PS	Rehabilitation improvements to include code compliance required for childcare and public access to other supportive services	\$705,000
Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency	HOME	Provide monetary assistance (security deposits, rent, and utility assistance) for 16 households	\$300,000
Mid-Willamette Valley Homeless Alliance	General Fund	Provide an Affordable Housing Summit, implement Diversity Equity and Inclusion, and assist with Point in Time Counts.	\$150,000
Northwest Human Services	General Fund	Acquire a dedicated vehicle for mobile crisis personnel to assist 1000 people	\$135,000
Northwest Human Services	General Fund	Offer vehicle repairs to unsheltered individuals	\$10,000

Contractor	Funder	Service Description	Contract Amount in FY22–23
Northwest Human Services	General Fund	Crisis and Information Hotline Program	\$135,000
Northwest Human Services	HOME - ARP	Provide emergency shelter and case management support services for up to 15 youth	\$35,965
Salem Housing Authority	HOME - ARP	Sequoia Crossings	\$1,500,000
Seed of Faith Ministries	CDBG Non-PS	Rental housing project that will include repairs and improvements to Premises	\$900,000
St Francis Shelter	HOME - ARP	Provide case management supportive services up to 60 households under the Navigating to Home program.	\$60,000
St Francis Shelter	HOME	Provide security deposit and rental assistance to 14 households	\$140,000
Women at the Well	HOME - ARP	Provide case management and supportive services for up to 20 women	\$47,000

## D. REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

Regulations set by case law and the State of Oregon provide a framework to guide how the City responds to homelessness. The City is obligated to operate within the existing regulatory system and framework, which can impact its ability to respond to homelessness within the community. Key regulations are summarized below:

### Measure 110

Measure 110 was a State of Oregon ballot initiative that passed in November 2020 with 58% in favor of the vote. It decriminalized the possession of small amounts of drugs and redirected some of the funds from law enforcement to addiction treatment and harm reduction services.

Prior to Measure 110, police officers and courts would leverage the threat of criminal punishment to encourage individuals using substances to participate in treatment. Since the potential consequence of punishment is no longer applicable to individuals possessing small amounts of drugs, it has been increasingly difficult to get people using substances to pursue treatment, despite the increase in funding.<sup>5</sup> As a result, 63% of Oregonians support reinstating criminal penalties for drug possession.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Oregon Public Broadcasting, Measure 110: <https://www.opb.org/article/2023/06/27/oregon-measure-110-drug-addiction-treatment-model-changes-from-jail-time/>

<sup>6</sup> DHM Research, Measure 110 Oregon Voter Survey: [https://www.dhmresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/DHM-Panel-Oregon\\_Measure110\\_May-2023.pdf](https://www.dhmresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/DHM-Panel-Oregon_Measure110_May-2023.pdf)

## Camping on Public Property Ordinance

In March 2020, the City passed a sidewalk conduct ordinance that prohibited sitting or lying on public sidewalks and other spaces during specific hours of the day. The goal of the ordinance was to address safety concerns from residents and maintain access to public spaces. The ordinance was passed with conditions that must be met to enforce it; but, these conditions were never determined and therefore the ordinance was not enforced. However, Oregon lawmakers passed two bills in 2021 (HB 3124 and HB 3115) that restricted how cities and counties can regulate camping on public property. These bills were passed to codify rulings in federal court that cities cannot enforce anti-camping ordinances if they do not have enough shelter beds available.

The City approved a revised ordinance on June 22, 2023 to remove restrictions from the original sit-lie ordinance that did not adhere to the new provisions in State law. This ordinance resulted in camping restrictions in some areas such as parks, near vision clearance areas and building entrances, residential zones, near existing shelters, and areas designated by the City Manager as no camping. The ordinance also includes a requirement that camps maintain a 36-inch pedestrian path on public sidewalks.

## IV. OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### A. CITY HOMELESSNESS RESPONSE

#### Planning and Strategy

1.	Observation	Although the City has defined plans, goals, and strategies related to homelessness in several documents, there is not currently a unified plan that encapsulates the entirety of the City's response. As a result, the City's response is often reactive and sometimes disconnected between departments.
	Recommendation	<p>A. In the long-term, develop a comprehensive and unified homelessness strategic plan to set clear policy direction, promote alignment across City stakeholders, and promote regional efforts.</p> <p>B. In the short-term, if resources to create a full strategic plan are not available, develop a homelessness operating plan that aligns with the goals in the MWVHA strategic plan and the City's overarching strategic plan.</p>

The City has defined plans, goals, and strategies related to homelessness in its City-wide strategic plan, in homelessness-related workgroups, and with regional partners as described below.

**City-Wide Strategic Plan:** The City lists “Addressing Homelessness” as one of five strategic priority areas in the 2021-2026 Strategic Plan.<sup>7</sup> The plan includes the following specific objectives in that priority area:

- **Crisis Response:** Develop a crisis response process and regional network of resources to ensure that all unhoused individuals are safe, respected, and connected with appropriate services.
- **Homelessness Prevention:** Develop a long-term, regional strategy to address upstream factors that increase homelessness with the goal of eliminating homelessness by 2050.
- **Affordable Housing Expansion:** Ensure an adequate supply of housing that is affordable and accessible for current and future generations, with a focus on providing housing options that can reduce the incidence of homelessness.

**Homelessness-Related Workgroups:** The City has convened the Internal Homelessness Committee (IHC), a workgroup of City staff that facilitates cross-departmental collaboration, information sharing, and proactive planning. Although roles and responsibilities, timelines, and performance measures have not yet been established for the group, IHC's current workplan sets out the following specific, community-based goals:

- Manage public spaces to be welcoming, livable, and safe for all

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<sup>7</sup> City of Salem, 'Strategic Plan 2021-2026'.  
<https://www.cityofsalem.net/home/showpublisheddocument/5752/637804422145870000>

- Engage private property owners for their spaces to be livable and safe for all
- Inform community members and decision-makers with accurate and respectful communications
- Collaborate efficiently, effectively, and supportively as a multi-departmental and multi-organizational staff team

**Regional Partners:** The City is an active part of the MWVHA, the relatively new regional CoC for the Marion-Polk region of Oregon. The MWVHA strategic plan was established in July 2021 and includes well-defined strategic goals and activities.<sup>8</sup> The Alliance has also created a specific plan for serving individuals and families with severe service needs who are experiencing unsheltered homelessness.<sup>9</sup> The nine goals in the 2021 MWVHA Strategic Plan are:

1. **Homeless Services System:** Develop a robust, responsive, coordinated and client-focused system of services to engage and support individuals and families experiencing homelessness to achieve housing stability.
2. **Affordable Housing:** Increase access and expand affordable housing units to help fill the gap in housing supply across Marion and Polk counties.
3. **Shelters:** Address gaps in shelter beds, including the need for low-barrier shelters.
4. **Transitional Housing:** Address gaps in transitional housing, including capacity for transitional case management.
5. **Permanent Housing:** Utilize the resources of Rapid Re-housing and expand Permanent Supportive Housing to address the needs of the high percentage of chronically homeless individuals concentrated in the Salem/Keizer area.
6. **Health & Safety:** Address physical and mental health and safety issues relating to homelessness.
7. **Prevention Services & Systems Alignment:** Align systems and expand strategies that mitigate risks of becoming homeless or returning to homelessness.
8. **Specific Populations:** Address the unique needs and characteristics of specific populations (chronically homeless, youth, families, seniors, LGBTQ populations, farmworkers, Veterans, survivors of domestic violence, survivors of human trafficking, and persons with disabilities, including those who are medically fragile).
9. **Community Engagement:** Increase leadership, communication, collaboration and community engagement in preventing and reducing homelessness.

Although the City has defined City-wide strategic goals and the IHC and the MWVHA have defined objectives, there are not currently any well-defined, unified goals that capture the entirety of the City's response to homelessness. Overall, the goals that are in place lack enough detail to provide clear direction on priorities, philosophy, and overarching strategy. As a result, the City is often reactive in its service provision, and has historically focused on mitigating the impact of homelessness on the community through activities like encampment clean-ups and monitoring areas throughout the City. In addition, the City's efforts are sometimes disconnected between departments. For example:

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<sup>8</sup> MWVHA, 'Strategic Plan'. <https://mwvhomelessalliance.org/strategic-plan/>

<sup>9</sup> MWVHA, 'Comprehensive CoC Plan'. <https://mwvhomelessalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Unsheltered-Homelessness-Comprehensive-Plan-REFRAMED-2.3.23.pdf>

- Resources are currently conceptualized and funded separately among some departments, such as Community and Planning Development and Community Services.
- The role of law enforcement has not been defined and contributes to contention within the community. For example, the Police Department is the only group in the ecosystem that has the authority to clear encampments. However, there are community and leadership concerns related to the role of sworn officers in serving as a primary responder to people experiencing homelessness in the community.

Interviewed staff indicated that there is not unanimous agreement among City leadership, including City Council and Department heads, regarding the City's role and philosophy in addressing homelessness, which would be defined in a homelessness strategic plan. There is an opportunity to coordinate strategic planning efforts between the City and the MWVHA to support regional efforts while addressing City-specific needs. The City should develop a comprehensive and unified strategic plan on homelessness to set clear policy direction, promote alignment across City stakeholders, and integrate regional efforts. The strategic plan should focus on the elements of the MWVHA's strategic plan that the City can meaningfully contribute to, such as coordinating and aligning the system of services and mitigation strategies, and should incorporate the goals and activities of all groups across the City, including the IHC.

Developing a cohesive homelessness-specific strategic plan is a common practice for municipalities. According to the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), strategic planning has been shown to result in decreases in homelessness when the plans are well-crafted and implemented.<sup>10</sup> The federal strategic plan from USICH can be used to promote alignment with federal strategies.<sup>11</sup> It also provides a useful framework to develop local solutions by centering around three foundations (equity, data and evidence, and collaboration) and three solutions (housing and supports, crisis response, and prevention).

Several other cities in Oregon have established homelessness-related plans. The City of Medford maintains a Homeless System Action Plan that was developed to better understand its role in relation to the newly established Jackson County CoC and create specific goals for the City that could be adopted by the larger region.<sup>12</sup> The plan focuses on the City's ability to promote and provide regional leadership. The City of Portland's Homelessness and Urban Camping Impact Reduction Program (HUCIRP)<sup>13</sup> and Oregon City<sup>14</sup> have also both published homelessness-specific strategic plans. Other cities, including the City of Bend<sup>15</sup> and the City of Eugene<sup>16</sup> maintain community-facing

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<sup>10</sup> United States Interagency Council on Homelessness: Developing and Implementing Strategic Plans to End Homelessness: [https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset\\_library/CommunityStrategicPlanning\\_February\\_2011.pdf](https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/CommunityStrategicPlanning_February_2011.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> United States Interagency Council on Homelessness: Federal Strategic Plan Overview: <https://www.usich.gov/federal-strategic-plan/overview>

<sup>12</sup> Medford, Oregon: Homeless System Action Plan: [https://www.medfordoregon.gov/files/assets/public/v/1/planning/hcd/plans-policies/homeless-system-action-plan\\_final-rev-june-2020.pdf](https://www.medfordoregon.gov/files/assets/public/v/1/planning/hcd/plans-policies/homeless-system-action-plan_final-rev-june-2020.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> City of Portland: Homelessness and Urban Camping Impact Reduction Program Strategic Plan 2019-2021: <https://www.portland.gov/impactreduction/documents/homelessness-and-urban-camping-impact-reduction-program-strategic-plan/download>

<sup>14</sup> Oregon City: Homelessness Strategy for Oregon City 2022-2026: <https://www.orcity.org/DocumentCenter/View/3325/Homelessness-Strategy-for-Oregon-City-2022-to-2026-PDF>

<sup>15</sup> City of Bend: Supporting Homelessness Solutions: <https://www.bendoregon.gov/city-projects/community-priorities/homelessness#:~:text=The%20City%20is%20working%20with,of%20affordable%20housing%20in%20Bend.>

<sup>16</sup> City of Eugene: What We Are Doing: <https://www.eugene-or.gov/4900/What-We-Are-Doing>



resources that clearly state what the City does and does not do to mitigate homelessness. This can help create clarity on the City's role within a broader societal and regional context.

Developing a strategic plan requires the input from a variety of stakeholders across the City, including department representatives, leadership, community members, and service providers. Highly effective homelessness strategic plans generally include the following elements:

- **Needs Assessment:** Root the plan and associated strategies in the specific needs of the local homelessness population. Utilize an analysis on demographics, causes of homelessness, and service needs to inform interventions and the need for right-sized capacity among existing programs.
- **Collaboration and Partnerships:** Foster collaboration and partnerships with other regional governmental agencies, non-profits, community groups, and healthcare providers to serve as a network of interconnected resources.
- **Housing:** Integrate the need for affordable housing solutions and other programs to help prevent individuals from becoming unhoused, such as rent subsidies.
- **Services:** Evaluate the scope of available services and shelter options in the community to meet the diverse needs of people experiencing homelessness. Consider developing a mechanism to prioritize service offerings to meet core needs.
- **Community Education and Awareness:** Educate the community about the causes and consequences of homelessness to reduce stigma and encourage empathy.
- **Roles and Responsibilities:** Define roles and responsibilities that fall within the City's purview to clarify ways that individuals can or should operate individually or collaboratively. This section can also help define the role of law enforcement and emergency medical services in homelessness prevention and response.
- **Performance Measures:** Based on strategic plan goals, establish meaningful performance measures to evaluate progress toward initiatives and promote continuous improvement.

If resources to create a full strategic plan are not available, the City should consider developing a short-term operating plan that aligns with the goals in the MWVHA strategic plan and the City's overall strategic plan. This will support coordinated regional efforts, clarify the role of the City in addressing homelessness, and define meaningful performance measures. Operating plans differ from strategic plans in that they provide tactical actions and initiatives to pursue strategic goals. A homelessness operating plan would outline key initiatives that the City would undertake to prevent and respond to homelessness, and typically includes associated funding to support these activities.

## Performance Measurement

2.	Observation	Although the City measures performance across its service ecosystem in a variety of ways, it does not have an overarching performance measurement framework to consistently track, compare, and communicate the impact of homelessness response efforts. As a result, the City is not yet able to comparatively assess program effectiveness or concisely convey the outcomes of its efforts to internal and external stakeholders.
	Recommendation	<p>A. Develop community-level outcome-driven performance measures related to homelessness that support the MWVHA and City strategic plans to keep leadership, staff, and stakeholders informed of progress.</p> <p>B. To better communicate the outcomes of the City's homelessness services, consider developing a dashboard to regularly report community-level performance measures (see <a href="#">External Communication</a>).</p> <p>C. Reevaluate and align performance measures for any service contracts that are engaged in the future (see <a href="#">Service Provider Performance Measures</a>).</p>

Across the City's programs and contracted service providers, many performance measures are tracked related to homelessness services; however, the measures are largely siloed. The table below summarizes the performance measures that are currently tracked across the City's service ecosystem:

ENTITY	REPORTING VENUE	PERFORMANCE MEASURE
Northwest Human Services	Invoice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of people served</li> </ul>
Police Department	Internal Homeless Services Team metrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of current camps and individual structures</li> <li>Number of hours spent at camps or clean-ups</li> <li>Number of individuals contacted</li> <li>Number of service referrals</li> </ul>
Navigation Center (operated by Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency)	Quarterly Report Dashboard (submitted to City Homelessness Liaison)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of available shelter spaces</li> <li>Number of unduplicated persons who obtained shelter at the navigation center</li> <li>Number served who demonstrated improved physical health and well-being</li> <li>Number served with no recidivating event for six months</li> <li>Number served who were unemployed and who obtained employment</li> <li>Number served who achieved and maintained capacity to meet basic needs for 90 days</li> </ul>

ENTITY	REPORTING VENUE	PERFORMANCE MEASURE
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number served who exited to positive destinations and percent compared to total served who exited to positive destinations</li> <li>Highlights and successes of the program over the reporting period</li> </ul>
Church at the Park (Safe Park, Village of Hope, Catholic Community Services site)	Invoices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of people served</li> <li>Number of exits</li> <li>Number and percent of exits to permanent destinations (HUD)</li> <li>Total households, adults, and children served (CCS)</li> <li>Total number and percent of exits to C@P's definition of "positive destinations" (permanent housing, transitional housing, residential projects, emergency shelters, etc.)</li> <li>Total number of current residents</li> <li>Percent of exits to positive destinations</li> <li>Current number of Safe Parkers (Safe Park)</li> <li>Current number of residents (CCS, VOH)</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>
MWVHA	Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PIT Count</li> </ul>
	HUD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in the average and median length of time persons remain homeless</li> <li>Reduction in the percent of persons who return to homelessness</li> <li>Reduction in the number of persons who are homeless</li> <li>Increase in the percent of adults who gain or increase employment or non-employment cash income over time</li> <li>Reduction in the number of persons who become homeless for the first time</li> <li>Reduction in the percent of persons defined as homeless who return to homelessness</li> <li>Increase in the percent of persons who exit to or retain permanent housing</li> <li>Increase in the percent of persons who exit the streets to an emergency shelter, sheltered housing, transitional housing, or permanent housing destination</li> </ul>

There is not currently one place where all these performance measures are consolidated and easily digestible. This is in part because the City has not yet established an overarching performance measurement and reporting framework that supports a clear overall picture of the City's progress and successes. However, this work is currently underway and is reliant, in part, on MWVHA determining what performance measures it will track. The following limitations are contributing to this environment (see [Data Collection and Management](#)):

- Service providers are expected to track and report performance measures in the HMIS, which is overseen and managed by the MWVHA. City staff do not currently have access to the HMIS in

order to create or view reporting. Although service providers report performance measures in their invoices to the City, those metrics are not reported to anyone except the contract administrator.

- Although the Police and Fire Departments interact frequently with people experiencing homelessness, data is limited because there is not a way to identify that a response related to homelessness. This functionality has not been added because the departments are concerned it would introduce bias in their call response. However, the Police Department tracks some data related to the involvement of those experiencing homelessness in violent crimes. The HST in the Police Department track data separately from the Department in the City's Geographic Information System (GIS).
- As mentioned in [Planning and Strategy](#), interviewed City staff reported that there is not currently an overall set of goals related to homelessness, which naturally limits the development of meaningful City-wide performance measures.

In alignment with a comprehensive homelessness strategic plan and relevant regional partner goals, the City should develop a small set of key community-level performance measures (four to six measures) that document top-line homelessness related outcomes. These metrics should be designed to show the impact of the complete service environment within the City, while balancing the potential impact of upstream impacts to service delivery. These top-line indicators represent the information that is most important to community members—who are typically much less focused on the City's specific activities and much more interested in the ultimate impact on homelessness. Commonly reported outcome indicators related to housing and homelessness include:

- Number of people experiencing homelessness (PIT count)
- Number of households entering homelessness
- Number of households exiting homelessness into temporary or permanent housing
- Number of households returning to homelessness
- Housing affordability
- Number of available housing units by type (e.g., affordable housing, permanent supportive housing)
- Number of people prevented from becoming unhoused or number of prevented evictions
- Utilization rates of emergency and transitional housing
- Racial and gender demographics of people experiencing homelessness and/or receiving services

Many of the measures above are already reported to the City by service providers and need only be aggregated and tracked as one community-wide metric. To reduce duplication, consider opportunities to align City-wide measures with HUD's required performance measures, MVWHA's outcome-driven measures, and any other performance measures that are already tracked by service providers. Alongside these measures, the City should ensure that appropriate context is reflected within performance reporting to help community members understand trends. For example, if the PIT count continues to increase, the City should consider how many new households entered homelessness and the availability of affordable housing units. The suite of performance measures should be compiled and presented in a way that shows a complete picture of the holistic environment within the community.

City Councilmembers expressed the desire to receive regular performance briefings on the City's homelessness response efforts and the status of homelessness in the City. Performance measures that would be helpful to brief leadership on a regular basis include bed counts, usage rates, and measures related to outcomes. In addition, to better communicate the outcomes of the City's homelessness services, the City should consider developing a dashboard to regularly report community-level performance measures (see [External Communication](#)).

In addition, expectations around performance measurement and monitoring for City-funded programs are currently incorporated into the contracts that are created between the City and the various service providers. After the City develops community-level performance measures, it should reevaluate and align performance measures for any service contracts that are engaged in the future (see [Service Provider Performance Measures](#)).

## Data Collection and Management

3.	Observation	Systems to collect homelessness-related data across City-operated and City-funded programs and services are siloed. This limits the City's ability to accurately assess performance in a timely and meaningful manner.
	Recommendation	Consider different strategies, such as leveraging the City's GIS or gaining access to the HMIS, to develop a unified system-wide approach to data collection, management, and reporting.

There is not a centralized source of homelessness response data throughout the City, resulting in data siloes and difficulty in evaluating activities Citywide. Data is currently collected and stored in a variety of ways across the homelessness service ecosystem. For example:

- The HST in the Police Department collects data in GIS, which in turn informs a performance dashboard. Parks previously tracked homelessness-related data in the GIS but has discontinued this practice.
- The Salem Housing Authority (SHA) maintains its own data on internal platforms that do not integrate with the City's data platforms. SHA can also access the HMIS and sometimes inputs information from others across the City to support continuity of services for individuals experiencing homelessness in the community.
- Salem Outreach and Livability Services (SOS) conducts data intake through Public Works Dispatch and community complaints to track the volume of disposed waste.
- The Fire Department does not collect any data related to homelessness calls for service or subsequent actions.

The HMIS for the recently established MWVHA is not yet sufficiently developed to operate as a regional data repository, and service providers reported that they often track data in spreadsheets in addition to the HMIS to ensure data integrity and produce reports required by donors. The City does not have access to the HMIS and therefore cannot pull reports or help to coordinate efforts related to this data if the need arises. This issue was documented in the CoC's 2022 Gaps Analysis of the Homeless Services Delivery System for the Marion-Polk Region.

The following service providers in the region have access and participate in HMIS data-sharing:<sup>17</sup>

- A Ray of Hope Today!
- Church at the Park
- Center for Hope & Safety
- Department of Veteran Affairs HUD/VASH
- Easterseals Oregon
- Family Promise
- Prism Inc. – Shelly’s House
- SABLE House
- Salem Housing Authority
- Shangri-La Corporation
- Sheltering Silverton
- St. Francis Family Housing
- Marion County Housing Authority
- Mid-Willamette Valley Homeless Alliance
- Northwest Human Services
- Oregon Housing and Community Services
- Polk County Family & Community Outreach
- Polk County Veteran Services
- The Salvation Army
- Union Gospel Mission – Simonka Place
- United Way – SafeSleep
- WestCare/VetCare
- West Valley Housing Authority
- Women at the Well – Grace House

As noted in [Performance Measurement](#), the siloed data environment contributes to challenges in understanding the community-wide use and impact of the service ecosystem. To help mitigate this, the City should consider different strategies to work with the MWVHA to develop a unified system-wide approach to data communication and management. There are several options that the City could pursue to achieve this; the pros and cons of each are discussed below:

**GIS:** The City has a mature GIS program with 16 staff. This team is in the beginning stages of developing a Citywide data strategy. Interviewed staff reported the perception that this team is underutilized and may provide a viable mechanism to help support homelessness response strategies. For example, the GIS could be a mechanism to receive community referrals to help support people who are experiencing unsheltered homelessness in the City. The downside of fully relying on GIS is that it is disconnected from service provider data and therefore not comprehensive. In addition, it would require manual updates for performance measures.

**HMIS:** If the City gained access to the HMIS, it would be able to access the most consolidated data bank available and pull community-wide reports. However, the City does not own or control the data entered into that system and may not be able to isolate the data that pertains only to the City. In addition, it is unlikely that the Police Department would be given access to the HMIS, which would require the HST to partner with a social worker or case worker to access the database.

Peer approaches to the HMIS indicate that there is no standard approach to the role a City plays in the regional HMIS. In Lane County, the County manages the community’s HMIS while the City

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<sup>17</sup> MWV Homeless Alliance, ‘Agencies List’. <https://mwvhomelessalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Agencies-list-for-website.pdf>

contributes funding and policy leadership to regional leadership organizations.<sup>18</sup> Conversely, the Portland-area CoC's HMIS is managed by Northwest Social Connections, an administrative arm of the Portland Housing Bureau.<sup>19</sup>

As the City considers which data sharing option best fits its needs, it should also evaluate the following elements for collecting and sharing data in housing collaborations as recommended the Urban Institute:<sup>20</sup>

- Data security and privacy concerns
- Technical barriers
- Cultural differences among partner organizations

## External Communication

4.	Observation	The City communicates its homelessness activities through several mechanisms, including newsletters, neighborhood association meetings, and its website. However, absent an overarching strategy and related performance measures, the community may not be aware of the full scope or impact of services available in the City.
	Recommendation	<p>A. Continue updating the Housing &amp; Shelter webpage to provide a centralized repository for community resources, key reports, and relevant articles.</p> <p>B. Consider breaking out the Addressing Homelessness section of the Housing &amp; Shelter webpage into its own dedicated page that communicates the City's efforts.</p> <p>C. To better communicate the outcomes of the City's homelessness services, consider incorporating community-level performance measures into the Transparent Reporting and Analytics for Residents Portal.</p>

Communication around homelessness is an important topic for City staff, leadership, and community members. The City communicates its efforts related to homelessness through several mechanisms, including:

- **Weekly Emails:** The City sends weekly emails to anyone who subscribes. These updates are cross posted in the weekly "Friday Salem Connections" newsletter that is sent to anyone who subscribes to the City's general updates function, and on the City's website on the "Learn About City Efforts to Address Homelessness" page.

<sup>18</sup> City of Eugene: Regional Agencies – Partnerships: <https://www.eugene-or.gov/4906/Regional-Agencies---Partnerships>

<sup>19</sup> City of Portland: Homeless Management Information System: <https://www.portland.gov/phb/hmis>

<sup>20</sup> The Urban Institute: Making It Real, Keeping It Real: Implementing Housing and Health Collaborations: [https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/89586/housing\\_makingitreal\\_final.pdf](https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/89586/housing_makingitreal_final.pdf)

- **Shelter Siting:** While undergoing the process of finding sites to host sheltering services, City staff attend neighborhood association meetings and host Zoom and in-person feedback sessions, among other community outreach activities.
- **Online:** Information about the City's response to homelessness is published on the City's website.<sup>21</sup>
- **Social Media:** The City utilizes social media to communicate generally, with some posts related to homelessness if there is relevant information. The City utilizes a number of different platforms including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and Nextdoor.

Given the volume of diverse City, regional, State, and national initiatives that support homelessness prevention and intervention, it can be challenging to fully grasp the extent of services available in the City, as well as their costs and impact, in a complex environment. Interviewed City leaders noted that the community's attitude toward homelessness is difficult for the City to influence, but that homelessness is a very important issue to the public; the 2022 Community Satisfaction Survey found that homelessness was a top concern for 57% of respondents, a substantial increase from 17% in 2016.<sup>22</sup> Adding complexity to this is the perception by many community members, reported by staff and stakeholders, that people experiencing homelessness in Salem predominantly originate outside of the City, which contributes to tension around how and to whom the City provides services. It is critical to effectively communicate about this issue with community members to garner support for ongoing resources dedicated to preventing and responding to homelessness.

The City should continue to develop the Housing & Shelter webpage to provide a centralized repository for community resources, key reports, and relevant articles. The City could consider breaking out the Addressing Homelessness section of the webpage into a singular landing page that is dedicated to homelessness. This page would support enhanced understanding and better leverage historical and new reports related to homelessness, and could display or link the following materials:

- Housing resources and options to connect with services
- Community resources, including appropriate phone numbers to call
- Articles on recent events
- Results from the most recent point in time count
- Homelessness strategic plan
- Annual reports on homelessness
- Community-level performance measure dashboard, including total City expenditures on homelessness (see [Financial Monitoring, Reporting, and Communication](#))
- Quarterly program-level key performance indicator report
- Links to historical staff reports
- Links to recent press releases, blog posts, and community newsletter articles
- Links to other relevant webpages, such as MWVHA and community partners

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<sup>21</sup> City of Salem, 'Housing & Shelter'. <https://www.cityofsalem.net/government/shaping-salem-s-future/housing-shelter>

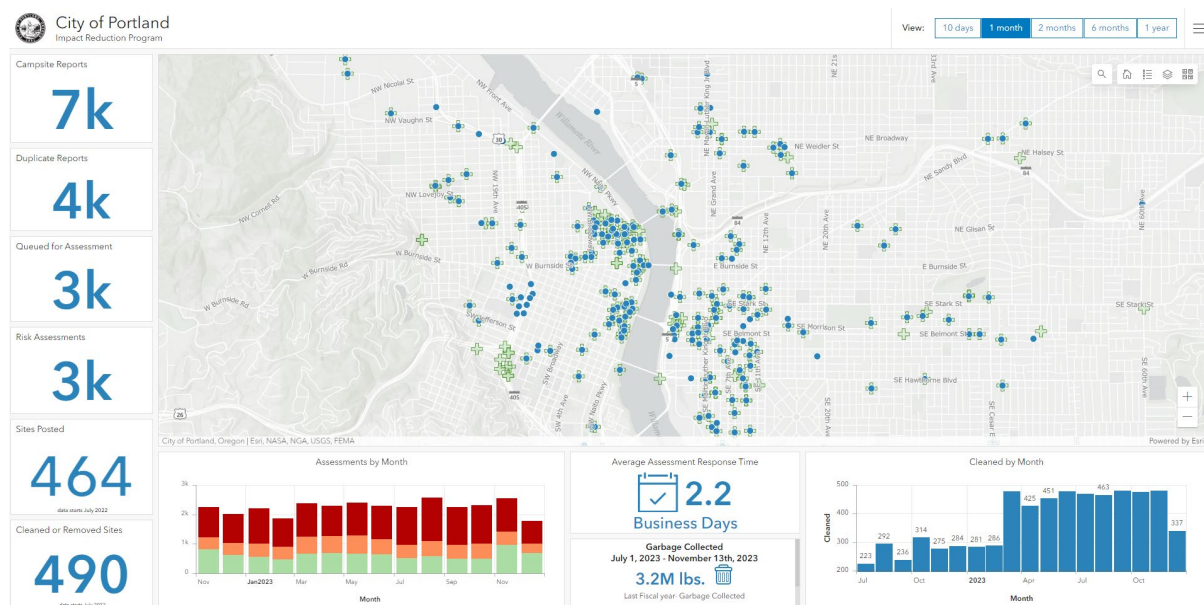
<sup>22</sup> City of Salem, 'Community Satisfaction Hybrid Survey'.  
<https://www.cityofsalem.net/home/showpublisheddocument/17934/638042851019426694>



By continuing to develop a centralized location for all homelessness-related reports and communications, the City can support an improved understanding of its many programs and partnerships in this space.

In addition to centralizing communication resources, the City should consider leveraging a performance measurement dashboard that is updated on a regular basis. Ideally, the dashboard should be able to automatically pull relevant data from a single repository (see [Data Collection and Management](#)) to reduce staff time dedicated to these routine updates. The dashboard could be incorporated into the new Transparent Reporting and Analytics for Residents portal; a link to this reporting tool should be included on the homelessness-related City webpage

In addition to presenting regularly updated performance measures that reflect service utilization and resource capacity, the City can use dashboards to show data trends over time, which is a practice some cities are moving toward. For example, King County in Washington state has developed a homeless response system dashboard<sup>23</sup> that presents a variety of metrics and trends to measure results, monitor performance, increase transparency, and build accountability. If the City decides to pursue the development of a dashboard, this activity should be integrated into the homelessness strategic or operating plan. For example, to support the City of Portland's strategic goal of increasing communication about HUCIRP program processes, their strategic plan states that the program will collaborate with the City's existing data visualization and performance management network to conduct data and operational analyses, improve data visualization, and increase transparency.<sup>24</sup> This goal was set in 2019, and the City of Portland's HUCIRP dashboard, included below, is comprehensive and public-facing.<sup>25</sup>



<sup>23</sup> King County's Homeless Response System dashboard: <https://kcrha.org/regional-homelessness-data/>

<sup>24</sup> City of Portland: Homelessness and Urban Camping Impact Reduction Program Strategic Plan 2019-2021: <https://www.portland.gov/impactreduction/documents/homelessness-and-urban-camping-impact-reduction-program-strategic-plan/download>

<sup>25</sup> City of Portland: Impact Reduction Program Dashboard: <https://pdx.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/c68d1d2e29e444a7b70f20aaafcbfbeb>

Although clear reporting of performance measures will not directly address homelessness, consistent and transparent data reporting can help inform stakeholders about the efficacy of existing services, identify opportunities to support continuous improvement, and track progress over time.

## Financial Role of the City in Homelessness Response

5.	Observation	The City has largely funded its homelessness response efforts through one-time funds, hoping to create appropriate infrastructure for its longer-term homelessness response efforts.
	Recommendation	With the depletion of special one-time funds and the City's approaching revenue shortfalls, City leadership should develop a vision and strategy for the financial role of the City in supporting local homelessness response services.

Many of the City's homelessness response services have been funded through one-time special state and federal revenues, along with HUD funds. In addition to the provision of services during the past few years, these funds were used with the intention of developing infrastructure in Salem to better respond to homelessness. Some of this infrastructure is physical, including the capital assets developed through Community Planning and Development's administration of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) federal pass-through dollars, particularly through affordable housing construction. Additionally, some of this infrastructure is organizational and operational, such as through the development and strengthening of local homelessness response service providers.

However, these special revenues are already or almost depleted, and the City faces a pronounced revenue shortfall in the coming years. Although the City will continue to receive and can strategically use CDBG and HOME funds for homelessness response in the coming years, the City will receive far less federal support than the prior three years during which these funds were supplemented with HUD American Rescue Plan Act dollars.

As the City's financial environment is changing, City councilors and staff leaders should collaborate to conceptualize and articulate a strategic vision for the financial role of the City's response to homelessness. Most importantly, this strategy must reflect the types and limitations of financial resources that the City has available or can pursue to respond to homelessness. In this process, it is important to consider the City's role and strategy related to homelessness, capacity of regional partners, and the impact on ongoing operating costs (e.g., secondary costs).

In their efforts to define the optimal financial vision for the City's homelessness response, Salem's political and professional leaders can consider one or more of the following strategies:

- Reflecting the lack of general fund resources, the City could act as a pursuer and a conduit of external funds. City staff can apply for federal, state, and philanthropic grants to pass through to local service providers.
- Without directly expending general fund dollars, the City can partner with service providers in name and in-kind donations (e.g., parks, facilities, volunteer resources) to increase their prominence, enhancing their own grant pursuit efforts.

- The City can use the on-the-ground expertise of local service providers to help identify where opportunities exist in the homelessness response ecosystem and local pathways to long-term stable housing. To the extent possible and strategically advantageous, the City can allocate its CDBG and HOME funding to address these opportunities.

## Financial Monitoring, Reporting, and Communication

6.	Observation	The City does not measure or report its <i>total</i> homelessness response spending, including both primary and secondary costs, to articulate overall City resources dedicated to this important community issue.
	Recommendation	The City should establish a process to measure and report its total homelessness response funding commitments Citywide, recognizing the strategic benefits of measuring and communicating this information.

Although the City measures, monitors, and has some reporting on each form of its primary spending and pass-through funds dedicated to homelessness response, this financial information is disaggregated. There is no unified figure or source of data demonstrating the resources that the City commits to its response to homelessness. There is no requirement to combine, monitor, and report disparate funding streams and projects into one unified statement of homelessness funding commitments. Doing so, however, would help the City communicate how it supports the community's prioritization of homelessness response, improve public communications, and supplement performance monitoring efforts.

The City should report its total homelessness response funding commitments in its external communications (see [External Communication](#)). Like many government services and functions, homelessness response is a community priority. Residents who are interested in how the City is responding to homelessness should also understand what financial resources are actually available to the City and what it costs to effectively respond to homelessness. Synthesizing, summarizing, and communicating the City's full funding commitments to homelessness response can help improve the public's understanding of Salem's efforts, and would demonstrate that the City is treating homelessness as a priority in alignment with community expectations.

In addition to the above advantages to communications and public relations, combining and monitoring homelessness response funding commitments within a single, easily digestible report could help the City to monitor and understand its broad homelessness response performance (see [Performance Measurement](#)). Although information on the connection between financial commitments and performance is more actionable and more easily understood at the program or department level, measuring and monitoring Citywide spending and performance is still strategically important. High-level, strategic thinking and planning on Citywide homelessness response efforts should be informed by current and historic levels of funding commitments and the historical results of these commitments in addressing homelessness. This is particularly important for informing City councilors who are ultimately responsible for steering the City's homelessness response.

## B. ECOSYSTEM AND RESOURCE UTILIZATION

As mentioned in [Planning and Strategy](#), the City participates in the MWVHA, a relatively new CoC that presents many opportunities to enhance and expand services strategically at a regional level. As an active member of the MWVHA, the City can influence how the MWVHA is developed, managed, and integrated to serve the region. Given the regional nature of homelessness services and the City's revenue shortfall to support service delivery in the community, the relationship with and maturation of the MWVHA is critical to support homelessness response and prevention services in Salem.

### Siloed Service Ecosystem

7.	Observation	Roles, specialty services, and capacity among community-based service providers are sometimes uncoordinated, which can contribute to confusion around expectations and appropriate service referrals that would facilitate a clear continuum as individuals move from experiencing unsheltered homelessness to becoming stably housed.
	Recommendation	<p>A. In the short-term, the City should explore opportunities to inventory community-based service providers, including core information around service restrictions, criteria, and capacity, to help support a more seamless approach to service referrals and delivery.</p> <p>B. In the long-term, the City should work with the MWVHA to advocate for system improvements including enhancing the Coordinated Entry System, a system-wide HMIS, and opportunities to streamline the continuum of care among service providers.</p>

Service providers report that roles, specialty areas, and capacity across Salem's service ecosystem are sometimes unclear, which can lead to confusion around expectations among various governmental entities, agencies, and non-profit service providers. Within the City's service ecosystem, there is not always a clear continuum of services for a person or family to rely on as they move from experiencing unsheltered homelessness to becoming stably housed within the community. These individuals and families often have unique needs and encounter capacity constraints among service providers, which can create a non-linear path to services and housing. This sometimes results in confusion and unintentional barriers to service, which can impact how individuals are placed for services within the service ecosystem. Examples of siloed service offerings that impact service delivery and coordination are included below.

- **Outreach:** Outreach work is a combination of efforts from multiple sources who do not typically work together, including:
  - The City's Homeless Services Team (HST), which is staffed by two police officers who liaise with service providers, which may include SHA outreach workers or direct service providers
  - The City's SOS team, which is staffed by one dedicated coordinator who supports the Police Department and Public Works to share resources, clean up encampments, and help manage refuse, shopping carts, and other material in public spaces
  - SHA, which is staffed by three outreach workers that engage people experiencing homelessness in the community to help them identify and access appropriate services

Through the IHC, HST and SOS coordinate closely with one another, but there are additional opportunities to enhance collaboration and coordination with outreach workers at SHA.

- **Crisis Hotline Administration:** With the City's financial support, Northwest Human Services (NWHS) administers the 988 crisis hotline which is a resource for people who are experiencing, or near to experiencing, homelessness. However, NWHS is not a CES provider, and therefore call center representatives must refer individuals who call the crisis line to another agency (Community Action Agency) to be entered into the CES. Entry into the CES is the best way to identify eligible services and potential openings for shelters and housing based on their vulnerability score. If this resource is not available to call takers, it can inadvertently create barriers to accessing services by introducing a hand-off rather than providing resources at the first request.
- **Navigation Center Client Acceptance:** The Navigation Center does not accept walk-ins from individuals off the street (60 beds are intended to be filled through the CES and 15 beds are reserved for law enforcement referrals) and has certain conditions that must be met to accept an unsheltered individual, with varying vulnerability scores accepted. For example, individuals who stay at the Navigation Center must be able to perform their Activities of Daily Living (ADLs), manage their emotions, and sleep in an open bay without disrupting others, all of which the Community Action Agency screens for at the time of entry. However, requirements have not been well-communicated, resulting in individuals who were referred from other community provider agencies being turned away for services because they do not meet these criteria. This has the potential to re-create trauma for individuals who are unhoused.
- **HST Data Collection:** Although the HST often connects with various social and case workers, officers are not continuously paired with a caseworker or social worker. Case workers and social workers typically have access to enter data into the HMIS, and without this pairing, data collected by the HST is not consistently entered into the HMIS, which would ideally be used to triage and identify eligible services.

Service providers also reported that there can be confusion around which partner is best positioned to help a person experiencing homelessness based on their unique needs. Compounding the above concerns, service providers are not always aware of the services and capacity available from other partners in the community. Therefore, there is a need for one dedicated function or role that triages the correct place for clients to go based on factors such as vulnerability scores, partner status, and health status. An interactive, real-time map of available services within the City, along with their capacity and requirements for participants, would help support continuity of care.

Typically, this resource is provided through a CoC; therefore, the City should help support the MWVHA in developing a robust system that can help provide this information in real-time. This work will likely take additional time to develop given the regional nature of services. Therefore, in the short-term, the City should explore opportunities to help stakeholders across the local service ecosystem better understand roles, responsibilities, specialty areas, and short- and long-term capacity to assist individuals and families. The City could develop and host a central resource that would act as a guide to define what services each local community partner offers, and any specialty areas to serve individuals with unique needs. For example, someone using the resource could easily find the available services and correct contact if they are experiencing homelessness and have a medical condition.

The City's Housing and Shelter webpage currently publishes several resources including 2-1-1, the NWHS Crisis and Information Hotline, and information about Safe Vehicle Parking and shelters, but

there is an opportunity to expand this information so it is more actionable to fill this identified need.<sup>26</sup> For example, though the shelter page publishes the addresses and phone numbers of all shelters, it may be helpful if information about who the shelter serves, any shelter restrictions, and current bed capacity is easily accessible. SHA also provides a community resources page that the City could seek to integrate with its own.<sup>27</sup>

To improve system integration in the long-term, the City should work with the Alliance to prioritize system improvements noted in other sections of this report, including a robust CES that allows appropriate service providers to perform assessments, prioritizes the most vulnerable, and enables a system-wide approach to data management and reporting through the HMIS. Over time, the MWVHA should develop a system that provides comprehensive access to available services and a standard prioritization process.

## Ecosystem Gaps and Barriers

8.	Observation	While a diverse portfolio of services are available in the City, stakeholders note opportunities to expand services to address capacity constraints and unaddressed populations. Critical gaps and limitations include mental and behavioral health services, low-barrier shelter for vulnerable groups, and transitional housing.
	Recommendation	Continue efforts to evaluate benefits against costs and identify solutions for assessed resource gaps, including investing in infrastructure at the local level, cultivating partnerships with regional service providers, advocating for the ongoing development of the MWVHA, and other opportunities.

Although there is excellent work happening throughout the City—including a high-quality drug treatment program and a significant increase in low-barrier shelters within City limits over the past several years—gaps and barriers in the service ecosystem remain. City leadership reports that these gaps are anticipated to widen with the upcoming budget shortfall, specifically for the following areas that currently rely on City funds to operate<sup>28</sup>:

- **Micro-Shelter Villages:** The City will no longer be able to provide funding to support three micro-shelter sites that provide temporary shelter for 232 people. Unless C@P is able to secure additional funding, these shelters may close on July 1, 2024. Each adult and family micro-shelter community costs about \$2.4 million each year to operate, while the newly opened youth micro-shelter costs approximately \$1.8 million per year.
- **Navigation Center:** The City will no longer be able to provide funding to support ongoing operations at the Navigation Center that provides 75 beds with intensive case management. Current funding will expire on July 1, 2025. The Navigation Center costs about \$2.1 million each year to operate.

<sup>26</sup> City of Salem: Housing & Shelter: <https://www.cityofsalem.net/government/shaping-salem-s-future/housing-shelter>

<sup>27</sup> Salem Housing Authority: Resources: <https://www.salemhousingor.com/community-resources>

<sup>28</sup> At the time of this report's finalization, C@P leadership reported that the MWVHA will provide funding for micro-shelter shelter villages.



As the City undergoes a process to address its revenue shortfall, leaders should continue efforts to evaluate benefits against costs and identify solutions for assessed resource gaps, including investing in infrastructure at the local level, cultivating partnerships with regional service providers, forging public-private partnerships, and other opportunities.

The following tables provide a snapshot of the current gaps and barriers in service delivery facing the City.

### Gaps

SERVICE GAP	DESCRIPTION
<b>Shelter Bed Capacity</b>	
Emergency and Transitional Beds	<p>Based on the January 2023 MWVHA point-in-time (PIT) count, the demand for temporary housing exceeds the current capacity of emergency and transitional beds in the region. The PIT count observed 1,683 people experiencing homelessness, of which 531 were in emergency shelter, 259 were in transitional shelter, 15 were in Safe Haven, and 878 were unsheltered (including 432 people characterized as chronically homeless).<sup>29</sup> Although utilization of available beds the night of the PIT count was 90%, there are 1,524 total beds available in the region—a shortage of 159 beds – and the majority of locations had a utilization rate of 100%.<sup>30</sup></p> <p>Interviewed service providers reported that there is a need for transitional housing that supports people who need to learn how to live inside again after long periods of being unhoused. The lack of availability of this type of transitional housing has resulted in some individuals losing their affordable housing option because housing units became damaged or unsafe to occupy.</p>
Low Barrier Shelter Beds	<p>While the City has invested heavily in increasing the number of low-barrier shelter beds in the community over the past several years, there is still a shortage of options. Barriers to accepting shelter include partners, pets, people who are not capable of living inside, and the inability of some individuals to perform ADLs.</p>
Shelter for Vulnerable Individuals	<p>There is extremely limited emergency or long-term shelter available for people who are unable to perform ADLs for any reason, including disability or other medical condition(s). These individuals are highly vulnerable and unable to access shelter within Salem due to this gap in the service ecosystem. There is also currently no dedicated shelter for the elderly, though as of February 2024 C@P is proposing a public/private collaborative project to provide 50 supportive shelter spaces for people over the age of 55.</p>
Shelter for Youth	<p>There are currently only 10 shelter beds available for youth under 18 in the City. In addition, the Church at the Park recently stood up a micro-village with 38 beds for youth aged 18–24. There are also transitional living beds at HOST for youth aged 18–24. Additional beds for youth, particularly those under the age of 18, are needed within the community.</p>

<sup>29</sup> MWVHA, '2023 Public Summary'. <https://mwvhomelessalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/2023-Public-Summary.pdf>

<sup>30</sup> MWVHA, 'Housing Inventory Count – January 2023'. <https://mwvhomelessalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/2023-HIC-Summary.pdf>

SERVICE GAP	DESCRIPTION
<b>Services</b>	
Mental and Behavioral Health Services	Although there are robust substance abuse programs operated by Ideal Option, Tribal programs, Bridgeway, NWHS, and outpatient medical assisted treatment, there are not sufficient mental or behavioral health services available. Additionally, it is reportedly very difficult to access these types of services, which are typically provided by a county. Marion County is currently suing the State of Oregon over the availability of mental health beds at the State hospital.
Case Management	Although the HMIS is intended to serve as a case management system that can track a person's information between service providers as they progress through the CoC, this system has not yet been used for this purpose. The MWVHA is concerned about data reliability and has therefore limited data entry and usage to preserve the integrity of data. However, this presents challenges in providing long-term case management across providers.
Discharge Planning	Related to case management, there are insufficient facilities (e.g., temporary or affordable housing) to support those who are exiting the State hospital or a nearby State prison. The lack of discharge facilities is also a concern when teenagers are exiting the foster care system, which is exacerbated by the limited shelter beds for youth.

## Barriers

SERVICE BARRIER	DESCRIPTION
Coordinated Entry System	<p>Ideally, a Coordinated Entry System (CES) serves as a mechanism by which people who are currently or at risk of experiencing homelessness can access the crisis response system quickly and connect with appropriate resources that fit their needs. As noted in <u>Mid-Willamette Valley Homeless Alliance (MWVHA)</u>, CES is a CoC-established system that uses standardized assessment tools and practices to identify the best options to address the individual or family's unique needs. However, the current CES is largely still in development to support the regional population of people experiencing homelessness within and in areas surrounding the City.</p> <p>Because the CES at MWVHA is still largely under development, there are limitations as to how the prioritization framework influences the decision of who is given access to the limited resources and services that are available. Some interviewed service providers reported the perception that, as a result, some service providers help candidates that they think are more likely to have successful outcomes or prioritize finding services for certain individuals. Best practices suggest that service providers should prioritize the most vulnerable to help reduce overall costs.<sup>31</sup></p> <p>The intent of a CES is to transform a CoC into a fully integrated crisis response system by leveraging data that can be used for system and project planning as well as resource allocation. This system is a critically important data gathering and information tool that local service providers should leverage in order to coordinate services for each individual. Though the CES is the purview of the MWVHA, the City can advocate for the further development of a robust CES and encourage prioritization of the effort, including the recommendations from the 2021 CES</p>

<sup>31</sup> Oregon Housing and Community Services, "How to Fight Homelessness with Data" [https://cdnsnm5-hosted.civiclive.com/UserFiles/Servers/Server\\_3585797/File/Government/County%20Departments/Health%20and%20Human%20Services/Human%20Services/HMIS%20ServicePoint/Fight%20Homeless%20wth%20Data%20Presentation.pdf](https://cdnsnm5-hosted.civiclive.com/UserFiles/Servers/Server_3585797/File/Government/County%20Departments/Health%20and%20Human%20Services/Human%20Services/HMIS%20ServicePoint/Fight%20Homeless%20wth%20Data%20Presentation.pdf)



SERVICE BARRIER	DESCRIPTION
	Evaluation contained in the CoC's 2022 Gaps Analysis of the Homeless Services Delivery System for the Marion-Polk Region. <sup>32</sup>
Housing Assessments	Completing a housing assessment is the first step in the CES for rapid re-housing services, but this is reportedly a hurdle for many people who are experiencing homelessness in the City. The Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency is the primary organization that conducts housing assessments, and the line to receive a housing assessment often begins outside their site office at 7:00 am. As a result, teams in the field are not able to initiate next steps when a person agrees to accept services. As of December 2023, the Alliance agreed to grant SHA outreach workers access to complete housing assessment in the field which would alleviate some of this backlog (at the time of this report's finalization, SHA outreach workers had not yet been granted access). In addition, interviewed staff reported that the assessments include questions that some people experiencing homelessness may prefer not to answer, and that can present its own barriers to service.
Safe Parking	People experiencing homelessness may use Safe Parking to park their vehicles while they are living in them, but accessing Safe Park is difficult for many as it requires participants to have up-to-date vehicle insurance and registration.
Service Resistance	Numerous interviewed City staff noted that service refusal presents a barrier to their work, with some staff estimating that up to 80% of contacted people do not wish to accept services. There are a number of potential reasons that a person experiencing homelessness may appear to resist services, with each individual's situation being unique. Commonly cited reasons include a history of trauma and subsequent reluctance to trust service providers, mental health challenges, lack of tailored services that address their unique needs, a desire to preserve autonomy and independence, or substance use disorders.

## Housing

9.	Observation	The need for housing in Salem continues to rise, with notable gaps in affordable and permanent supportive housing units.
	Recommendation	Continue to prioritize the development of housing, including permanent supportive housing and affordable housing units, to enable service providers to institute rapid re-housing and provide appropriate supports, thereby increasing the cost-effectiveness of services and the rate at which individuals can exit homelessness.

The 2022 Salem Area Comprehensive Plan, “Our Salem,” included housing as part of a list of guiding principles that were informed by community engagement. Specifically, the goals and policies in Our Salem were informed by the City’s intention to “provide a variety of housing types throughout Salem to accommodate the needs, abilities, and preferences of all residents, including ensuring an adequate supply of housing that is affordable and accessible for current and future generations.”

<sup>32</sup> MWVHA, 'Gaps Analysis'. <https://mwvhomelessalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/2022-FINAL-Gaps-Analysis-8.22.22-race-data-added.pdf>

Beyond the need for additional housing to keep Salem accessible for future generations, City leaders are keenly aware that housing is a critical component of responding to homelessness. The City has prioritized the development of affordable and Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), including the following recent developments:

- Construction is underway on the Center for Hope and Safety's HOPE Plaza, an affordable housing complex in downtown Salem with 20 units for domestic violence survivors. Construction is set to finish in June 2024.<sup>33</sup>
- In December 2023, the City Council approved a purchase to facilitate the development of 120 affordable housing apartment units at the former Salem General Hospital.<sup>34</sup>
- The SHA opened Yaquina Hall, a building with 51 affordable apartments at the Oregon State Hospital North Campus, in May 2023.<sup>35</sup> SHA also plans to open Sequoia Crossings, a building with 60 new units for chronically homeless people, in early 2024.<sup>36</sup>
- The City opened the Salem Navigation Center in April 2023, a 24/7 75-bed shelter facility that is the first of its kind in Marion County.<sup>37</sup>
- The City finalized a partnership with a real estate investment company in July 2023 to preserve and restore Northeast Salem's Orchard Park Apartments, a 224-unit building that is Oregon's largest affordable housing complex outside the greater Portland area.<sup>38</sup>

However, a shortage of affordable and permanent supportive housing persists in the City. SHA staff report that their waiting lists at any given time are closed due to the amount of people already on the list. The following sections describe the current housing shortfalls and the importance of continuing to invest in affordable and permanent supportive housing.

### ***Permanent Supportive Housing***

PSH is a key component to both homelessness prevention and response. PSH is a form of affordable housing in which housing assistance (e.g., rental assistance) and supportive services are provided to help households achieve housing stability. PSH units are designed to serve individuals who experience chronic homelessness or community members with complex medical or behavioral health needs. PSH offers safe and stable housing environments with voluntary and flexible supports and services to help people manage serious, chronic issues, such as mental health or substance use disorders. Research indicates that developing PSH is highly effective in reducing homelessness, and results in cost savings between an estimated \$30,000 to \$50,000 per year.<sup>39</sup> However, PSH is

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<sup>33</sup> The Statesman: What's that under construction on Church Street in downtown Salem?  
<https://www.statesmanjournal.com/story/news/local/2023/12/20/whats-that-under-construction-on-church-street-in-downtown-salem/71910469007/>

<sup>34</sup> Salem Reporter: UPDATE: City to support affordable housing development at former Salem General Hospital:  
<https://www.salemreporter.com/2023/12/05/your-government-plans-for-revenue-task-force-to-take-shape/>

<sup>35</sup> Salem Housing Authority: Yaquina Hall: <https://www.salemhousingor.com/yaquina-hall>

<sup>36</sup> City of Salem: Responding to Sheltering in Public Spaces: <https://www.cityofsalem.net/government/shaping-salem-s-future/housing-shelter/learn-about-city-efforts-to-address-homelessness/responding-to-sheltering-in-public-spaces>

<sup>37</sup> OPB: Salem launches 'low barrier' navigation center, supportive housing units to combat homelessness:  
<https://www.opb.org/article/2023/04/03/salem-homelessness-oregon-homeless-shelters/>

<sup>38</sup> The Statesman: City partnership to save largest affordable housing complex in Salem:  
<https://www.statesmanjournal.com/story/news/local/2023/07/24/city-partnership-to-save-largest-affordable-housing-complex-in-salem/70445338007/>

<sup>39</sup> United States Interagency Council on Homelessness – Ending Chronic Homelessness in 2017:  
[https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset\\_library/Ending\\_Chronic\\_Homelessness\\_in\\_2017.pdf](https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Ending_Chronic_Homelessness_in_2017.pdf)

expensive upfront; for example, Multnomah County reportedly spent approximately \$14.8 million to place 934 people into PSH between August 2022 and August 2023.<sup>40</sup>

Although many groups across the ecosystem are focusing on increasing the availability of PSH, City staff and service providers noted that there is still a gap in availability. The 2023 Annual Gaps Analysis by the MWVHA found that 42% of households experiencing homelessness required PSH. An estimated 1,393 new units with accompanying supportive services are needed to fill this gap in the Salem-Keizer area.<sup>41</sup>

The shortage of PSH creates barriers in exiting people from homelessness and hinders the effectiveness of the homelessness response system in multiple ways. First, it creates the perception that there are insufficient emergency and transitional beds by restricting the ability for individuals to successfully exit chronic homelessness, creating longer stays in temporary housing and a backlog at the front end of services. Second, it creates a potentially competitive environment among people experiencing homelessness for limited units among a population that may already be facing significant trauma and barriers to service access. Third, being denied housing due to a shortage can perpetuate the distress experienced by people experiencing homelessness, which can result in relapses of mental health or substance use disorders over time.

The current shortage of PSH also presents barriers to effectively understanding the success of homelessness interventions. If someone is unable to readily transition into permanent housing after completing a program, securing financial assistance or employment, and/or benefitting from other medical services, staff and stakeholders report that they are more likely to return to unsheltered living. Often, these outcomes reflect poorly on the program that served the individual rather than showing the insufficient capacity of permanent housing to help the individual regain independence.

Finally, PSH has generally been shown to increase the success rate of people exiting homelessness and reducing taxpayer costs associated with homelessness services. One meta-analysis, which assessed 72 studies of PSH, concluded that this service was effective in reducing homelessness and achieving housing stability while also resulting in cost offsets.<sup>42</sup>

### ***Affordable Housing***

Although this study focuses on the City's response to homelessness, it is important to note that one of the primary ways to prevent homelessness is through the production of affordable housing—and the availability of affordable housing is a key strategy for reducing cyclical homelessness. Affordable housing is defined by HUD as housing in which the occupant pays no more than 30% of their gross income for housing costs, including utilities.<sup>43</sup> The link between housing affordability, renters, and homelessness is well-documented. In 2020, the U.S. Government Accountability Office estimated that

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<sup>40</sup> OPB: Here are some solutions to homelessness in Oregon: <https://www.opb.org/article/2023/10/10/oregon-homelessness-solutions-supportive-housing-villages/>

<sup>41</sup> Mid-Willamette Valley Homeless Alliance – Regional Needs Assessment: <https://mwvhomelessalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/10.2023-Gaps-Analysis-v.3.2-FINAL-1.pdf>

<sup>42</sup> Effectiveness of Permanent Supporting Housing and Income Assistance Interventions for Homeless Individuals in High-Income Countries: A Systemic Review (The Lancet, 2020): <https://www.thelancet.com/action/showPdf?pii=S2468-2667%2820%2930055-4>

<sup>43</sup> US Department of Housing and Urban Development – Glossary of Terms to Affordable Housing: <https://archives.hud.gov/local/nv/goodstories/2006-04-06glos.cfm>

for every \$100 increase in median rent, there is an associated 9% increase in the estimated homelessness rate.<sup>44</sup>

Unfortunately, similar to PSH, the gap in affordable housing is difficult to precisely quantify. However, available data indicates that there is a significant gap. For example:

- The City performed a Housing Needs Analysis in 2015 to project housing needs for Salem from 2015 to 2035. The analysis found that 52% of Salem's rented households were cost-burdened, and projected: a) A surplus of single-family detached housing (projected surplus of 1,975 acres/9,131 units), and b) A deficit of multifamily housing (projected deficit of 207 acres/2,897 units).
- The organization Imagine Salem reports 10.5% of the City's housing is considered affordable (2,032 units), with 10% of those units at risk of expiring by 2030.<sup>45</sup> MWVHA's 2022 Gaps Analysis reported that although Salem was in the top third of affordable housing markets in the country 10 years ago, the City now ranks 213th of 238 housing markets nationwide when accounting for average home sale prices and average incomes.<sup>46</sup>

To support cost-effective programs, enable accurate performance monitoring, and best support people experiencing homelessness in the community, the City should continue to prioritize the scouting for and development of permanent housing units (affordable housing and PSH).

## C. CONTRACTS

### Contract Design and Management

10.	Observation	The City of Salem's contract management practices include limited coordination between departments, which results in some inconsistencies across departments and across service providers.
	Recommendation	Establish clear policies, procedures, and expectations for contract design and management to support a consistent experience and efficient operations for all City contract managers and service providers.

Contract management is a critical component of any organization's operations, and the City is no exception. Effective contract management ensures that the City can efficiently and effectively provide services to people experiencing homelessness. The Harvard Kennedy School's Government

<sup>44</sup> U.S. Government Accountability Office – Better HUD Oversight of Data Collection Could Improve Estimates of Homeless Population: <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-20-433.pdf>

<sup>45</sup> Department of Planning and Community Development, Imagine Salem – Housing in Salem FAQs and Common Concerns: <https://imaginesalem.org/faqs-and-common-concerns>

<sup>46</sup> Mid-Willamette Valley Homeless Alliance – The Homeless Services Delivery System for the Marion-Polk Region GAPS ANALYSIS: <https://mwvhomelessalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/2022-FINAL-Gaps-Analysis-8.22.22-race-data-added.pdf>

Performance Lab has worked with government agencies regarding contract management and found that most contract management practices fall short in three ways:<sup>47</sup>

- Lack of purposeful attempts by government agencies to improve outcomes of contracted services
- Failure to collect and use meaningful data to improve service delivery
- Lack of productive collaboration with service providers

The evaluation of the City's contract management practices revealed that there are opportunities for improvement. Currently, the City manages contracts related to homelessness services in a decentralized manner split between two primary departments, Community Services and Community Planning and Development. However, there appears to be limited coordination between the two departments as it relates to managing grants and contracts, which creates the possibility of inconsistencies in processes, expectations, and relationship management with service providers. The City uses resources from the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing (NIGP) to guide their practices associated with contract management. While this is a strong starting point to ensure contracts are being managed appropriately, there are no City-specific documented policies and procedures on contract management which creates the risk that departments are applying these practices inconsistently.

### ***Contract Design***

Policies and procedures related to contract design are crucial for ensuring that grant awards are distributed fairly and consistently. Without clear guidelines in place, inconsistencies can arise between contracts, leading to confusion and undocumented expectations. The City currently lacks policies and procedures related to contract design for grant awards. As a result, inconsistencies have been observed between contracts, highlighting the need for the development of clear and comprehensive guidelines for contract design in the context of grant awards.

More specifically, contracts had inconsistencies in the following areas:

- **Indemnification:** Contracts usually include a clause on indemnification to reduce liability if there is ever a lawsuit, claim, or action made against the City. However, there are a few contracts where this clause is not included, potentially exposing the City to unnecessary risk.
- **Withholding of Funds:** Most language in the contracts regarding noncompliance is about terminating the agreement as a result. While termination is an option, contracts should also include clauses about withholding funds, so that the City has more options instead of abandoning the agreement if something goes wrong.
- **Structure:** Contracts managed by the Community Services are mostly structured as grant agreements, while contracts managed by Community Planning and Development (CPD) are mostly structured as deferred forgivable loans. This difference is partly due to restrictions associated with federal funds managed by CPD.

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<sup>47</sup> Harvard Kennedy School Government Performance Lab - Active Contract Management: How Governments Can Collaborate More Effectively with Social Service Providers to Achieve Better Results: [https://govlab.hks.harvard.edu/sites/hwpi.harvard.edu/files/govlabs/files/active\\_contract\\_management\\_brief.pdf?m=1538680014](https://govlab.hks.harvard.edu/sites/hwpi.harvard.edu/files/govlabs/files/active_contract_management_brief.pdf?m=1538680014)

- **Compliance with Law:** It is critical that contracts aim to reduce the liability of the City. Many contracts include sections that the recipient/developer/grantee shall comply with all relevant laws and regulations. However, this section is missing for some of the contracts managed by CS.

To document the process of contract design related to homelessness services, The City should create a set of policies and procedures that outline the steps involved in the contract design process. This can include creating templates for different service providers based on their organizational type, function, or more. These templates can be customized to meet the specific needs of each service provider, while also ensuring that all contracts meet the minimum standards set forth by the City. Additionally, it is important to establish clear guidelines for the evaluation and selection of service providers, as well as the monitoring and evaluation of their performance. This can include regular reporting requirements, site visits, and other measures to ensure that service providers are meeting their contractual obligations and providing high-quality services to those experiencing homelessness in the City.

### ***Contract Management***

Several current grant agreements managed by CS were not competitively bid, which has led to questions regarding the cost-effectiveness and sustainability of services. To initiate needed programs and services, the City originally conducted a capacity needs assessment to survey community partners on their capabilities, capacity, and financial needs to provide homelessness response services. This analysis formed the basis for existing grants out of CS. It is important to note that these agreements were initially an emergency response to the pandemic to provide sheltering services, meaning that future costs were not accounted for.

Relatedly, the majority of grants are funded on a reimbursement basis, which can make it difficult to determine and forecast the actual cost of services. This approach relies on contractors submitting the correct documentation in a timely manner, which can be challenging if service providers submit invoices inconsistently. Establishing clear guidelines for service providers on how to submit invoices and documentation for reimbursement, including requirements for timely submission and specific formats for documentation, can help ensure that the reimbursement process is efficient and accurate.

According to interviewees, there are perceptions that service providers do not always select clients from the CES. To address any perception of inconsistent advocacy towards certain individuals seeking assistance, the City should incorporate the requirement to use CES to determine eligibility and prioritization for assistance. By doing so, City contract managers and service providers will have clear expectations, which ensures that vulnerable populations receive the services they need.

To ensure that all grant awards are fair, transparent, and cost-effective, it is important for the City to establish clear policies and procedures related to contract bidding and requirements. Having these processes documented promotes consistency from the applicant's perspective and eases concerns around the cost-effectiveness of service providers that are provided funding. This would ensure that all applicants have an equal opportunity to secure City funding and promotes the delivery of cost-effective services. The City should conduct regular evaluations of grant agreements to ensure that services are being provided in alignment with contract terms, including use of resources, performance outcomes, and compliance with key provisions, such as using CES for service placement.

Additionally, the City should establish clear policies, procedures, and expectations related to ongoing contract management practices. This documentation should address, at a minimum:

- How the City approaches contract management as a strategic and purposeful function
- Best practices for managing contracts, collaboration, reporting, and documentation
- Establish guidelines for:
  - Equal treatment towards those seeking assistance
  - Service providers on submitting documentation for reimbursement
  - Competitive bidding on grant awards
  - Conduct regular evaluations of grant agreements
  - Communication standards for service providers

Documenting these processes is critical to ensure that all contracts are managed in a transparent and efficient manner, reducing the risk of errors and misunderstandings. This could be achieved by developing a comprehensive contract management manual that outlines the steps for managing contracts from start to finish. This manual could include information on how to draft contracts, how to monitor and evaluate performance, and how to handle disputes or issues that may arise. Additionally, it could include guidelines for collaboration between contract managers and service providers, as well as expectations for reporting and documentation.

To support the success of all stakeholders, including service providers, the City, and residents, it is imperative that everyone engaged in this transition is familiar with these concepts and that a consistent approach to service providers is applied by City contract managers.

## Service Provider Performance Measures

11.	Observation	Performance measures are a critical component of service contracts, but differences in how they are outlined between departments may lead to inconsistencies in measuring progress and assessing goals for contracted services.
	Recommendation	<p>A. Develop a suite of suitable performance measures for service providers to support consistency in ongoing monitoring.</p> <p>B. Incorporate the updated performance measures into all service contracts.</p> <p>C. Continue to follow a reporting cadence for service providers that incorporates performance measure reporting.</p>

Performance measures provide a framework for evaluating the effectiveness of contracted services and are an essential aspect of service contracts. In the context of homelessness, performance measures are even more critical due to the significant impact that homelessness has on individuals and communities. The importance of addressing homelessness underscores the need for clear and consistent performance measures to ensure that contracted services are meeting the needs of the community and making a meaningful impact on reducing homelessness.

As detailed in [Contracted Programs and Services](#), the City has many contracts that include relevant performance measures. However, because contracts are managed by different departments,



performance measurement is not uniformly approached. Ultimately, this division has resulted in a wide array of performance measures across the City. For example, the Church at the Park CSS Site Sheltering Services contract has a specific measurable output of maintaining an average of 132 sheltering spaces by the end of the agreement. However, there are also contracts that either do not have specific performance measures or the performance measures are unclear. In the NWHS Vehicle Assists Program contract, performance measures are not specifically defined and include general ideas aimed at helping individuals secure sustained employment and housing. While this is certainly beneficial, specific measurements are necessary to align expectations. Unclear performance measures can lead to confusion and disputes between parties involved in the contract. Additionally, without clear performance measures, it can be challenging to determine whether the contract has been fulfilled satisfactorily, which can lead to dissatisfaction and a breakdown in the relationship.

- As described in Contract Management (see [Contract Management](#)), contract management in the City is split between two departments: the Community Services (CS) and CPD.
- **Community Services:** Most of the contracts managed by CS contain an Exhibit A attached to the document titled “Grant Specifications.” This section outlines the actions of the service provider and the measurable outputs that will result, referencing both specific and quantifiable goals. The contracts also note that substandard performance will constitute noncompliance with the agreement.
- **Community Planning and Development:** Performance measures in contracts managed by CPD are less clearly laid out. Like the CS contracts, there is language that outlines how substandard performance will constitute noncompliance. This language also references that there is an Exhibit C that describes the program, similar to the Exhibit A for the CS contracts, but it is not attached to the contract. Instead, it notes that exhibits can be found using a link to the City website. This can make it more difficult to find specific performance measures for each project.

To address any inconsistent performance measures across the City’s contracts, a comprehensive approach is needed. Based on the homelessness strategic or operating plan (see [Planning and Strategy](#)), the City should develop a suite of performance measures that could be used in service provider contracts to ensure that all contracts have clear and consistent performance measures that align with the City’s goals. Federal requirements for CDBG and HOME programs will also still apply. This will provide a framework for evaluating the effectiveness of contracted services and ensure that service providers are uniformly held accountable for meeting the established benchmarks.

Additionally, the City should incorporate the updated performance measures into all service contracts to ensure that all contracted services meet the needs of the community and demonstrate impact on homelessness in the community. By doing so, the City can track progress towards its goals and make data-driven decisions to better serve those experiencing homelessness within the City. Finally, the City should continue to follow a reporting cadence for service providers that incorporates performance measure reporting. This will allow the City to identify areas for improvement and make necessary adjustments to contracted services. By taking these solutions and actions, the City can improve the effectiveness of its contracted services and make a meaningful impact on reducing homelessness in the community.



## APPENDIX – ACRONYM GLOSSARY

Acronym	Definition
ADLs	Activities of Daily Living
ARPA	American Rescue Plan Act
C@P	Church at the Park
CCS	Catholic Community Services
CDBG	Community Development Block Grants
CES	Coordinated Entry System
CS	Community Services
CoC	Continuum of Care
CSS	Community Supported Shelters
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
GIS	Geographic Information System
HB	House Bill
HCV	Housing Chouse Voucher
HMIS	Homeless Management Information System
HOME	HOME Investment Partnerships Program
HOST	Health Outreach Shelter Transitions
HST	Homeless Services Team
HUCIRP	Homelessness and Urban Camping Impact Reduction Program
HUD	Housing and Urban Development
IHC	Internal Homelessness Committee
MWVCAA	Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency
MWVHA	Mid-Willamette Valley Homeless Alliance
NIGP	National Institute of Governmental Purchasing
NWHS	Northwest Human Services
PIT	Point-in-Time

Acronym	Definition
PSH	Permanent Supportive Housing
SHA	Salem Housing Authority
SOS	Salem Outreach and Livability Services Program
CPD	Community and Planning Development
USICH	United States Interagency Council on Homelessness
VOH	Village of Hope



MOSSADAMS