

City Manager's Update — July 26, 2021

Prepared for Mayor and Councilors. Please contact Steve Powers, City Manager, for additional information.

At Your Service

Examples of service,

We had an unfortunate suicide last night that we discovered this morning. Your police officers who responded were incredibly kind and efficient. There were here in minutes after our call and stayed throughout the entire morning. They even were on their hands and knees with the environmental response team cleaning the blood. That is far beyond the call of duty. A police escort accompanied the body as our friend was a veteran. We could have not asked for better service.

I didn't get the name of the gentleman who came and fixed our water leak, but I would like to let you know what an excellent representation he made for your department and city workers. If there is any kind of reward system in place for City of Salem workers, his name should be put in the hat! Thank you, Happy Salem Area utility customer...

A broader example,

With the City's partnership, the Food Share was able to quickly mobilize to provide extra bottled water to our partner food pantries and cooling centers as well as fans for our Meals on Wheels clients. Your support provided relief to our most vulnerable community members. Thank you again for your generosity and for your care for our neighbors.

An example from a government partner,

Salem Fire Engine 3 and crew responded to assist Falck Ambulance Service with a Cherriots transit operator who was suffering a medical emergency. Engine 3's crew assisted Falck with the initial care of the Operator who was transported from the scene via Falck Ambulance. Engine 3's crew then stood by with our bus, which still had passengers on board, until our relief Operator was able to get to the scene and assume control. The relief Operator was very complimentary of the entire Engine 3 crew and wanted to ensure that we (Salem Area Mass Transit District, Cherriots) expressed our thanks for not only the care they provided to the Cherriots Operator at the scene, but for remaining with the bus until the relief Operator could assume its control.

Sheltering and Assistance

The City has received responses to our request for additional shelter sites. As a result, we are hitting pause on some sites as we review the cost effectiveness of the new possibilities. The feasibility will include outreach to neighbors and neighborhood associations.

I have signed a grant that provides \$172,830 in City funds to the Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency for the hotel program. The funding will provide 15 hotel rooms for ten weeks.

The City is purchasing Compact Livables Temporary reusable shelters from a Salem company, High Impact Technology. The shelters, \$4,696 each, will be used at managed shelter sites.

I have signed an agreement to provide \$170,000 in emergency food assistance to the Marion Polk Food Share, as approved by City Council. The funding is from the City's General Fund.

The City has closed on the purchase of the building for the navigation center. The next step is to prepare the building for use, including sheltering use that requires installing a fire suppression (sprinkler) system.

Gretchen Bennett updated the Salem Chamber's past presidents on the efforts to assist our unsheltered residents and camp clean-ups. The group appreciated Gretchen's perspective on tackling the challenges daily.

Boards and Commissions

The City's advisory boards and commissions have been asked to consider meeting in person or virtually. The City lacks spaces to conduct hybrid meetings as some boards and commissions meet at City facilities other than Council Chambers.

The Human Rights Commissions report to assist the City and Salem Community identify steps needed to promote diversity and ensure that everyone in our city can thrive in safety and dignity is under review. The City Attorney is reviewing as several of the recommendations would require changes to Salem Revised Code. The Police Department has responded to the HRC on the community input that relates directly to the Salem Police Department.

Building Activity

From July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021, the City issued 518 permits for new single family or duplex housing, the fourth highest fiscal year of any of the past 16 fiscal years. The total number of permits issued was 2,033, the third highest of any fiscal years since 2011-2012. Included in the total were 59 multi-family permits adding 759 units.

Building plan examiners performed three hundred and two reviews (302) and inspectors completed twenty-five hundred and fifteen (2,515) inspections. Building and Safety Division performed thirty thousand nine hundred and thirty-eight (30,938) inspections in fiscal year 2020-2021.

Cemetery

The City will be funding \$15,000 for professional headstone repair and resetting at the Salem Pioneer Cemetery.

Communications

Some questions have come in regarding the City's use of and responses to social media. We do not post responses to comments on others' social media platforms. We do, as is best practice in emergency communications, gather information about important topics on community members' minds from social media. Often, these perspectives help shape our communications or messaging on topics.

Within our own social media platforms, we are working under a terms of use policy that envisions our social media sites as limited public forums. As such, there are only certain types of things that we can moderate and/or hide— like foul language, comments that are off topic, etc. <https://www.cityofsalem.net/Pages/social-media-terms-of-use.aspx>

Communications Team members meet each week with one of our media outlets – one week, Statesman; the next, Salem Reporter. These are great networking and information sharing opportunities. Communications staff solicit input on topics to share with others. We also meet with other communicators in Salem – Travel Salem, SEDCOR and the Chamber – to share messages and seek opportunities to amplify each other’s voices on topics of interest to our communities.

Community and Economic Development

The City has closed on the purchase of the former UGM site.

Emergency Preparedness

Fire is receiving hazardous materials equipment and supplies through a grant from the state. The HazMat Rail grant will fund infrared thermometers, thermal imagers, drain covers, gas detectors, and a containment pool. With active rail lines through the city, the grant helps ensure the department is equipped.

Development Code

The Planning Commission is working through code changes that would increase the preservation and protection of trees, clarify pedestrian access standards, support homeless shelters, and eliminate the property boundary verification process. The changes also implement recent legislative bills that address occupancy of residential dwelling units and expand where childcare homes and centers can be located. Council’s first point of involvement will occur with a future report in October.

Housing Related:

- Middle housing (HB 2001) allow duplex, triplex, quadplex, cottage cluster and townhouses in all residential zones
- Tent Camping, Car Camping, Cooling/Warming Emergency Shelters, etc.
- Updates to standards for Manufactured Dwelling Parks - will allow new units to be more easily added, will allow travel trailers to be placed in parks, will eliminate design requirements for roof, skirting, etc. (needed to comply with state law)
- Eliminate requirement for new homes to provide a 2-car garage (builder can choose garage, carport or screened parking)
- Allow density in multi-family zones to be adjusted or varied
- Reduce parking standards for homeless shelters

Commercial/Industrial Development/Multi-family:

- Updates to CB zone (improve design standards, eliminate drive thrus, add storage as a permitted use, eliminate overlay, etc.)

- Clarify landscaping requirements around loading docks and mini storage
- Bike parking: introduce standards for long term bike parking; clarify that bike parking is required for any new use; increase bike parking required for shopping centers
- Amendments to pedestrian path requirements (clarifies standards and exempts some uses)
- Clarify Site Plan Review exemptions
- Prohibit new methadone clinics in CO zone

Natural Resources:

- Updates to tree preservation standards required for middle housing; plus, updates to fencing requirements, minimum amount of preservation in new subdivisions, expanding what constitutes a 'significant' tree

Other:

- Update Annexation chapter to reflect state law (prohibiting voter approval) and clarify application procedures
- Update streets chapter for street trees, stormwater, transit stops, etc.
- Miscellaneous amendments to clarify measurements of fences, height of flag poles, driveways for single family, setbacks along alleys, parking lot layout standards etc.

The Planning Commission and staff continue to receive and consider input on the various drafts.

Management

To continue the efficiencies and virtual service that some City customers prefer, City employees can request remote work. Not all positions are eligible for remote work, depending on department/division operational needs.

Chief Financial Officer Robert Barron resigned on July 8, 2021. I am evaluating options for organizational structure to benefit the City, not just for the Finance Department. During the interim, I have asked Josh Eggleston to serve as acting Chief Financial Officer overseeing the Finance Department.

Partnerships

In partnership with the Salem Foundation, ARCHES is creating a fund at Redwood Crossings dedicated to helping chronically unhoused people replace their lost or stolen forms of identification. Replacing a lost birth certificate in Oregon costs thirty-three dollars and replacing a Driver's License or ID card costs forty. While seventy-three dollars may not seem like much, most of our residents are classified as having extremely low incomes, and don't have the necessary funds to purchase these documents. The ID fund will give our recently unhoused residents a fresh start by assisting them in obtaining identification, so they can work towards stability and self-sufficiency.

Pedestrian Safety

I have signed a grant agreement with the Oregon Department of Transportation for \$1.4 million for improved crossings at River Road N at River Road Park, Lancaster at Weathers, Lancaster between Wolverine and Sunnyview, State at 19th Street SE, and State at 21st Street SE.

Permits

Individuals and organizations that do not apply for required permits in the parks are informed of the permit requirements, such as for amplified sound or erecting tents, are warned, and then issued a citation if the failure to comply continues. Citations have been issued.

Policing

To fill existing vacancies, Police hired seven recruits and a community service officer. I had the opportunity to meet and speak with the recruits. Their enthusiasm to serve was inspiring.

A committee comprising representatives from the Marion County District Attorney's Office, City Attorney's Office, Police Divisions, Information Technology, and the Salem Police Employees Union have nearly finalized a body-worn camera policy. The policy is needed before we can earnestly begin seeking and evaluating vendors. The department is also developing a process for obtaining community input before finalizing the policy and discussing a communications strategy for eventual program launch.

Police continue to handle challenging protests exactly in line with the objectives and priorities, as stated by Chief Womack. Officers place themselves in dangerous and precarious positions to keep groups separated and make necessary arrests. One stated objective is to conduct thorough follow-up investigations. We did that again with Friday's arrest of a man who assaulted and stole a firearm from another protester.

Projects

Design for the Public Works Operations Building is progressing. The architect, contractor, and City's owner's representative are applying value engineering for cost containment purposes while not losing the building's functionality.

The City has submitted a \$13.2 million federal grant request for the McGilchrist complete street project. The total project is \$28.3 million. The federal RAISE grant, if successful, will fund additional travel lanes, turn lanes, bicycle lanes, sidewalks, planting areas, green stormwater infrastructure, signalized street crossing, and improvements to the existing rail crossing.

The planning for the use of the first floor of the Civic Center continues. Public Works Project Management Team has taken on the customer service center project. Public Works Project Management has successfully delivered the Police Station and will soon deliver the Library. The customer service center will be completed within twelve months. The first floor has demolition needs, asbestos, and lead. Planned uses for the remainder of the space include Municipal Court, employee wellness, and printing services.

Storm Damage

The tree damage from the ice storm for just the City- owned trees, the street trees and the parks trees, that were collected totaled 18,000 tons. Much of it was kept as timber that will be milled for City use. Debris not suitable for milling was made into firewood using the Marion County Juvenile Services, per a pre-existing agreement. The rest was chipped into over 1.2 million pounds of wood chips. The free wood chips have ended. The remaining chips will be used on park trails.

Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT)

The City's TOT Advisory Committee recommended the award of facility operator grants and event grants for this fiscal year to:

Organization	Grant Amount
Willamette Art Center / Facility Operator Grant	\$29,690
Willamette Heritage Center / Facility Operator Grant	\$30,440
Bush House Museum / Facility Operator Grant	\$30,740
Gilbert House Children's Museum / Facility Operator Grant	\$29,540
Hallie Ford Museum of Art / Facility Operator Grant	\$30,740
Salem Multicultural Institute / Facility Operator Grant	\$31,480
Salem Riverfront Carousel / Facility Operator Grant	\$28,190
Willamette Art Center for Artisan's Village Event	\$7,500
Willamette Heritage Center for Heritage Rail Day Event	\$7,500
Willamette Master Chorus for Holiday Concert	\$7,500
Willamette Master Chorus for 17 th Annual Veteran's Concert	\$7,500
Salem Make Music Day Foundation for Salem Make Music Day Event	\$5,430
Englewood Forest Festival for Englewood Forest Festival Event	\$3,000
Helping Hands Resources for Quiltopia Event	\$2,000
Capital Futbol Club for Capital Cup Tournament	\$7,500
Capital Futbol Club for Timbers U23 Tournament	\$7,500
Festival Chorale Oregon for Alzheimer's Stories Concert by Robert Cohen	\$7,500
Gilbert House Children's Museum for Gilbert House Re-Opening Event	\$7,500
Gilbert House Children's Museum for Halloween Re-Engineered Event	\$7,500
Hoopla Association for CherryFest NW Event	\$7,500
Hoopla Association for Hoopla Tournament Event	\$7,500
Salem Multicultural Institute for World Beat Festival	\$7,500
Salem Public Library Foundation for Salem Reads, One Book, One Community	\$7,500

Contracts and Procurement

In accordance with the City's Public Contracting Rules and Oregon Revised Statutes requiring Qualification Based Selection (QBS), staff negotiated a scope of work and corresponding not-to-exceed fee with Carollo for engineering the new well at Geren Island. Carollo was determined to be highly qualified for the project. The total proposed not-to-exceed fee for engineering services is \$3,333,610. The fee includes all civil engineering tasks necessary for design and services during construction including inspection and materials testing. The Carollo fee

represents approximately 15 percent of the \$23 million estimated construction cost which aligns well with the numbers included in the project budget for these services. The City of Salem Engineering Project Manual lists a benchmark percentage for engineering services compared to construction cost on this type of project that should fall within a range between 25 to 26 percent. The Carollo fee compares favorably to the City's benchmark percentages. Carollo's hourly rates align with the rates included in their existing consultant of record agreement, which are consistent with rates for other firms of their size with comparable technical expertise.

Water

Fortunately, in Salem conservation can be a choice and not a mandate. The City's source of water is the Santiam River. The City's water rights to the Santiam guarantee an adequate water supply. The flow from the Detroit Reservoir is controlled by the Army Corps of Engineers. A minimum flow is released by the Corps to protect salmon. The minimum flow is well above the City's daily water needs. Unlike other cities in the state and country, drought conditions are not impacting our drinking water supply currently. The City will continue to share information on how to save money on water bills and protect fish species in the summer when river flows are lower. This is even more important now, as our normal summer is drier than 10 years ago.

There are 61 City water accounts that have been shutoff for non-payment and have remained shut off. Over \$217,000 in assistance has been provided since May of 2020. The emergency Utility Assistance fund has a balance of \$422,000.

Upcoming Events

National Night Out is Tuesday, August 3, starting at 6:00 pm. Earlier in the day is the Geren Island Ozone Water Treatment Facility ribbon cutting in Stayton starting at 2:00 pm

Thanks for reading,
Steve