

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

At Your Service

A few months ago, Park Ranger, Mike came across Irene. She was living in a make-shift home in one of our parks. Instead of sending her away, Mike listened to her story and then reached out to the Salem Housing Authority for help. He found that they had been looking for Irene, who had once applied for assistance. Today Irene is warm and snug in her own apartment. She is getting a chance, that had she just been moved along, she may never have received.

COVID-19

City employees, partners, and dependents continue to have vaccination and booster opportunities through the Sale Fire Departments vaccine clinics.

Homelessness

There are more than 1,000 people living unsheltered in Salem, and despite legal restrictions, people will often make camp where it is prohibited. We are getting out to Cascades and other parks to work to address those camping. *Oregon Revised Statute 203.079* (amended by HB 3124 in 2021) requires public bodies like the City to post an unauthorized campsite 72-hours prior to removing the encroachment (and to make any personal property at the campsite available for retrieval by the owner for 30 days afterward). This is a time and resource intensive process, and we need to balance the work with other urgent priorities.

Library

I have approved an amendment to the renovation and retrofit project to complete the informational and directional signs on the library shelving. The signage was desired but cut from the project scope early in design to achieve other project goals. Now that the project is complete, there remains overall budget to procure and install this work. These signs will assist the public and staff looking for media throughout the library. The amendment results in additional costs of \$15,763 that are funded by the project budget.

Projects

Planning for the customer service center, planned for the former café space at the Civic Center, is well underway for an opening by Spring 2023. This new customer service hub, or one-stop-shop, is where residents can access City services.

Groundbreaking for the new Public Works operations building is January 20.

We brought the geotechnical engineers back to reevaluate the stability of the River Road S landslide area. About two to three cubic yards of new rock debris came down recently. The rock is within the catchment area. The road will remain open, but we will be removing accumulated rock debris from the catchment area. This work will require lane closures on River Road S.

City of Salem Website transformation

What have we done so far?

- Web Design. With help of an industry expert, Granicus, we've built out our new website's look and feel. The [new web page design](#) shows how information will be organized and appear, as you scroll. The design is based on a "heat map" which tracked user navigation of our existing website in the Fall of 2021.
- Menus and Site Map. With input from a user survey and the "heat map", we built out new navigation menus and a site map showing most visited areas and pages. This means we'll have more extensive menus available (fewer clicks) to help people navigate to find the information they're looking for. While this part is still in development, you can see what it will look like and how it will work on another, similar site. <https://www.cityofhenderson.com/> or <https://www.unioncountync.gov/> As you hover, a menu will appear. (Our words will be different.)

What's next?

- We're currently moving all our existing content over into the new web format. We'll be kicking the tires and working out bugs. We are projecting to be live in our new web world by April 2022.

Feedback?

- Let us know if you have any feedback for us. Connect with Courtney at 503-540-2426 or cbusch@cityofsalem.net.

Natural Environment Stewardship

The sanitary sewer overflows that occur during extreme rains happen when the western half of the sewer system can no longer hold and convey sewage to the treatment facilities at Willow Lake and River Road. During these storms, all pump stations and treatment facilities are working at maximum capacity. The problem is caused by infiltration and inflow of groundwater into the sanitary sewer pipe system. Overflow into the Willamette River prevents having sewage back up into downtown and streets and buildings. The overflow spilled for 18.5 hours. We estimate 2.26 million gallons of highly diluted, untreated sewage spilled into the Willamette River during that time. We also had several other smaller locations where the sewer system surcharged locally. Salem crews responded to each of those locations. We never like to see that kind of sewer overflow from our system, but to give a sense of proportion, our two treatment plants combined treat over 175 million gallons per day.

Upcoming Issues

Two days before Christmas, one of the two Fire Department ladder trucks went out of service with a blown motor. A reserve 30-year old ladder truck has been put into service so the City will still have two ladders in service. At an upcoming council meeting, I will be recommending using \$250,000 of contingency funds to lease a new engine and a ladder truck. Leasing two available trucks now will mitigate the operational risks caused by the aging fleet and the lengthy delivery time for new vehicles.

Written public comments on the package of proposed code amendments updating the Unified Development Code (UDC) were accepted through Monday, January 10. City Council is schedule to deliberate on the proposed code amendments on Monday, January 24. Additional testimony will not be accepted at the meeting.

Thanks for reading,
Steve