

SALEM DOWNTOWN PARKS CONNECTIONS

A pair of bridges connecting all three parks would allow park users – runners, walkers, bicyclists, families, visitors – to move safely among these scenic spaces, adding to that ever important community element: livability. »

William Merrill, President –
Willamette Valley Road Runners



About Salem Urban Development

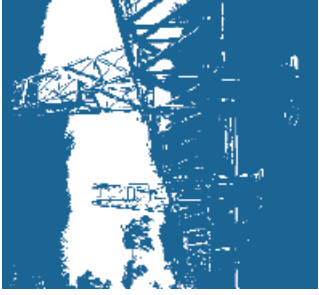
Mission To provide for the sustainable expansion of the community's prosperity, measured in terms of jobs and income growth, human development, education, health, and environmental sustainability.

Urban Development

- Manages the City's eight urban renewal areas and redevelopment projects.
- Administers federally funded block grant and housing programs.
- Provides loans and grants to eligible businesses, homeowners, and renters.
- Manages leases, acquires, and sells properties for the City.
- Manages Parking Services

Three Parks, Two Bridges, One Community





SALEM DOWNTOWN PARKS CONNECTIONS

Overview | Two bridges hold the promise of connecting the City’s major urban parks and trails, and providing needed multi-modal access for families, commuters, visitors, and recreationists who live, work, and play in Salem. With a 1,036-acre portfolio of popular downtown parklands and over 20 miles of trails, Salem has an exceptional collection of urban recreational resources. These facilities, located in the heart of Salem, are poised to serve as vital community connections as adjoining areas of the city transform and revitalize. Two critical projects include:

- The conversion of the historic Union Street Railroad Bridge into a bicycle / pedestrian facility
- A new footbridge connecting Minto-Brown Island Park with Riverfront Park and downtown Salem

“The bridges will help further the collaborative partnership between Cycle Oregon, Travel Oregon, Oregon State Parks and the Oregon Department of Transportation to connect the state with a series of scenic bikeways and position Oregon as America’s best place to ride a bike.”

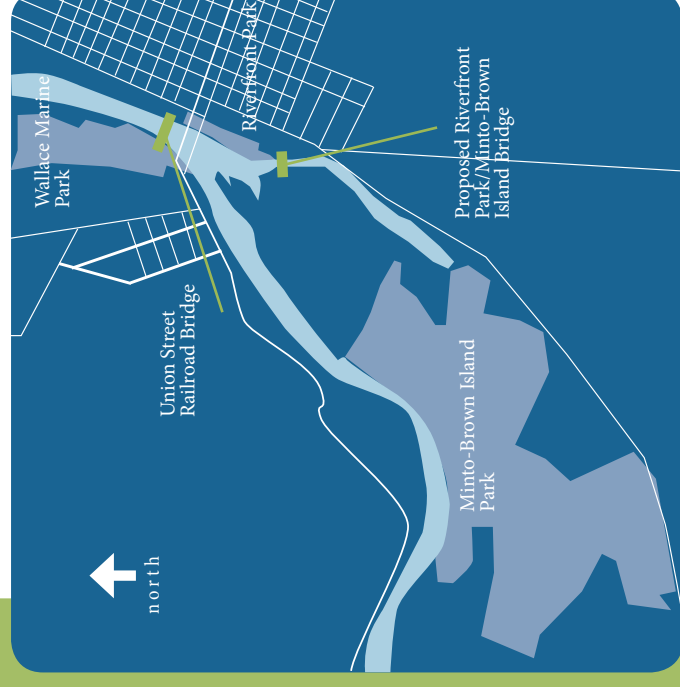
Governor Ted Kulongoski

Linking the City’s major urban parks, the bridges will also unite bicycle and pedestrian networks on both sides of the river, becoming a popular spot for tourists. Bicycle and foot commuters from West Salem can now reach jobs downtown and at the Capitol Mall on a safe, more pleasant, traffic-separated route. Cycle tourists riding along Oregon’s new “scenic bikeway” system can glide along this convenient, picturesque corridor to discover and explore Salem’s riverfront, downtown, and parks.

Areas adjoining both proposed bridges are being transformed from underutilized industrial sectors into vibrant mixed-use neighborhoods blending retail, office, and housing. Supportive zoning changes, urban renewal programs, and the dedication of the new Minto bridge will further these revitalization efforts. Even after this

Salem’s Downtown Parks

Minto-Brown Island Park 900 acres	Open space and natural wooded areas Limited farming; some crops remain unharvested to maintain waterfowl and wildlife habitat 1.5 miles of trails Picnic shelters, play equipment, off-leash dog area
Riverfront Park 23 acres	Riverfront Carousal Amphitheater, covered pavilion Play equipment, large grassy areas Popular spot for community events
Wallace Marine Park 114 acres	Ball fields for tournament and league play Soccer fields Play equipment Boat launch and river access



Friends of Two Bridges

is a grassroots citizen group focused on the design, construction, and opening of the Union Street and Minto Island bridges to bicyclists and pedestrians.

A variety of interests are represented in this group, including the recreational community, historic preservationists, area children’s advocates, downtown merchants, property owners, and statewide cycling interests.

transformation is complete, the two bridges will continue to serve an important role in the community. The experience of other cities confirms Salem’s new bridges will become celebrated assets, used to symbolize community connection and become popular venues for rides, races, runs, parades, and other civic events.

Minto Island Bridge – Connecting the Park and Downtown

Salem citizens have long envisioned a foot bridge connecting two popular parks along the Willamette River and their downtown. This project will provide that link. A 350 foot-long bridge will be constructed for pedestrians and bicyclists. The bridge will span the Willamette River Slough from the south end of Riverfront Park to the Minto-Brown Island Park, and connect users to the existing trail systems via a multi-use path. Initial steps in this project include the development of design options, compliance with regulatory permits, acquisition of an access easement, and a pending environmental review.

Union Street Railroad Bridge - Connecting West Salem and Downtown

Salem transformed the unused historic steel bridge and timber trestle into a new passage for bicyclists and pedestrians. Two large parks – Wallace Marine and Riverfront – bookend this historic Willamette River crossing, which now connects Salem’s bicycle and pedestrian systems into a single safe and enjoyable network.

The concept for this project gained momentum in 2004 when the City purchased the Union Street Railroad Bridge and adjoining right-of-way from the Union Pacific Railroad for one dollar. The Railroad donated \$550,000 for long-term maintenance, becoming the project’s first partner.

Oregon Department of Transportation contributed a \$600,000 design grant. \$3,200,000 was raised to fund Phase 2 of the bridge conversion. Major contributors to the project include, the City of Salem, Urban Renewal Areas, Cycle Oregon, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department Local Government, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department Trail Grant, and the Oregon Department of Transportation - Transportation Enhancement Program.

Since it’s Grand Opening, celebrated on April 18, 2009, the bridge has received the 2010 Oregon Heritage Excellence Award, the 2010 Engineering Excellence Grand Award for Transportation from the American Council of Engineering Companies, and the 2010 Transportation Planning Excellence Award in both the Livability and Sustainability categories.