
City Manager's Update – October 22, 2019

I started the City Manager's Update to focus on how we are helping make a difference in Salem and in the organization. I include topics that I think might be of interest to you. Please let me know if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Thanks!

At your Service!

To celebrate the Salem Housing Authority's 50th year, Authority staff gave back to the community by participating in the City's Adopt-A-Street program and the Bridgeway Recovery Walk. Thank you for the great attitudes and team work.

For me, the most gratifying examples of serving the public is when one person is helped. Through the Library's Operation Bookshelf Tablet Lending Program, a 93-year-old customer will experience eBooks and watching YouTube videos for the first time. Great work by Sara Chesney and Ashley Folgate!

Management

The City is working with consultants from Moss Adams to improve our city-wide operations. The first phase of this project is an organizational assessment of the City's internal systems, processes, structure, and culture. Moss Adams' preliminary observations center around the themes of 1) leadership and culture, 2) organization structure and staffing, 3) planning and communication, and 4) systems and processes. The observations are based on the results from the July all-staff survey, a review of City documents, and interviews with more than 50 staff members. The full report—containing observations, recommendations, and potential future projects with the Moss Adams team—will be shared by the end of the year. Thank you to all who participated in the survey and interviews. I appreciate and value your engagement with this process. Please let me know if you have any questions as we move forward.

Partnerships

The City of Salem is excited to partner with Albertina Kerr to bring the Project SEARCH Program to Salem. Project SEARCH is a nine-month internship for adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities to gain real-life job skills training. The City of Salem is Kerr's fourth Project SEARCH site in Oregon. Coordinated by Human Resources, Project SEARCH has eight individuals from our community working alongside City of Salem employees who serve as skills trainers and mentors. While at the City of Salem, interns will learn key employability skills to ready them for the workforce and explore jobs in three City departments for 12

weeks each. Project SEARCH is an internationally recognized program in nine countries and 45 states, with over 500 sites.

Upcoming Issues

City Council on September 23 decided to proceed with an operating fee. The next step will be first reading on October 28 of an ordinance for a council-enacted operating fee. Second reading will be November 12. The operating fee will support City services in the General Fund. In Oregon, 50 cities use an operating fee to help pay for city services. The operating fee is not based on the property value. The fee would be collected through City of Salem utility bills. The fee would raise \$7.1 million over 12 months. The fee rate is \$8/month on single family residences, \$6.40/month per unit for multi-family residential accounts, and \$38.56/month for public, commercial and institutional accounts.

Community Feedback

Homelessness and affordable housing are top concerns for Salem residents, according to the [2019 Community Satisfaction Survey](#), and they are generally satisfied with core City services. Consistent with responses since 2016, almost nine of 10 residents are generally satisfied with core City services including police and fire protection, parks and recreation, library, and water and sewer services. Residents also expressed satisfaction with the City's protection of our natural environment and support of arts and culture.

Since 2016, the City has commissioned the Community Satisfaction Survey to better understand community priorities. Insights drawn from the survey and other outreach activities help us plan for the future of Salem. Survey results are one input into the City Council Policy Agenda, the Council's annual work plan, and direction to the organization.

Compared with survey responses from 2016, there is a growing concern about whether residents feel their neighborhoods are getting a fair share of City resources. Overall, about four in 10 residents think the City is headed in the right direction.

Homelessness and affordable housing remain top concerns. More residents (41 percent) list these issues as most important for Salem. Historically, Salem has provided services to those experiencing homelessness in our community through existing local social service providers with grants totaling \$400,000 each year. Since 2017, we've increased investment in affordable housing, allowed for more housing types, and initiated the Homeless Rental Assistance Program (see [Meeting Housing Needs](#)). Since its inception, more than 240 people in our community have been served through the program.

The 2019 Community Satisfaction Survey was conducted from September 4 to September 9, 2019 via cell and land-line telephone calls to both English and Spanish-speaking Salem residents. This year, survey respondents were offered an

online option. Measures were taken to ensure that survey responses accurately represented all areas of the City and the diverse backgrounds of its residents.

Community Report

The 2019 Community Report will be available on October 24. In the report, we share what we've been able to accomplish together. This report includes results from an annual Community Satisfaction Survey as well as other sources. I remain grateful to you, our volunteers, and our partners in all these endeavors. Your contributions make us a better Salem. I encourage you to take a look.

Preparedness

My thanks to Greg Walsh, Emergency Preparedness Manager, and all the safety monitors for their assistance with the October 17th Great Shake Out.

Instead of the all-city announcement, this year we used the internal Community Alert System for City employees. Our emergency preparedness team is evaluating what went right and how we can improve on this system.

My thanks to all of you for your participation.

Giving Back

The City's ***Charitable Giving Campaign*** is kicking off. This year's campaign will be hosted by the Community Development department, and will run five weeks, 10/21/19 through 11/22/19. The theme is ***Small Gifts...Big Impact!*** with a focus on encouraging new participants to give, if even a small gift, because together, our gifts DO make a big impact.

Wellness

The Health Hub, the City's employee health clinic, has been open for one year. In the first twelve months, the nurse practitioner and nurse have had 1,355 appointments, seen 774 patients, and made 86 specialist referrals. Check out the Health Hub for your health needs.

Thanks for reading!
Steve