

## City Manager's Update — June 9, 2020

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

### ***At Your Service***

From an appreciative resident regarding Brandon Carter, Parking Services,

I was in my work truck, waiting at the rail crossing on Court Street to cross 12<sup>th</sup> Street heading down town about 2:40 pm. I saw an act of kindness and compassion by a city employee that I believe you should know about. As I waited for the lights to change, a woman and what appeared to be her school-aged child waited to cross Court Street. The mother appeared uncomfortable and hesitant to cross, but a member of the City Parking Services Team on a bicycle saw the situation and acted. He could have ridden on but didn't; he turned back and entered the cross walk with the woman and child and remained in the center of the cross walk until the pedestrians were safely across the road.

He then returned to his duties possibly considering it just an anonymous event in his work day, but it wasn't anonymous, it was an inspirational action that reflected high personal qualities. The Parking Services Team member on Tuesday acted in a way that reflected personal qualities and concern for others that should be recognized by his boss for the credit he brings to his team and the City of Salem, our city. As a Salem resident, it's my hope you can help bring credit where credit is due.

I encourage you to read the summer issue of the Salem Parks Foundation newsletter. The Salem Parks Foundation highlights the Mill Creek Correctional Facility's Adults in Custody (AIC) program. Adults in Custody makes a difference in Salem parks and helps individuals gain skills. The newsletter also highlights Matt Johnston, City Parks manager for AIC. AIC had not been available during COVID-19 and the absence is noticeable. We welcome back AIC!

### ***Community Development***

Building permits issued in May 2020 totaled 157. From July 1, 2019 through May 31, 2021, 2,128 permits have been issued. New dwelling unit permits totaled 31, two higher than the May average over the past 15 years.

### ***Council Follow-up***

The collective bargaining agreement with the International Association of Firefighters has been signed.

## **COVID-19**

Phase 2 guidance from OHA for reopening playgrounds is forthcoming. Marion and Polk counties have applied for Phase 2. Once we have a timeline and specific directives, we can move forward with playground reopening measures that are effective at preventing illness, address potential liability, and preserve the life of the playground equipment.

Staff have distributed the sidewalk dining permit application to downtown restaurants. The permit allows use of the sidewalk for eating and drinking.

The small business assistance grant program will be opening June 15. The program will set aside 25 percent of the grant awards in the first round for minority and women-owned businesses.

## **Diversity Equity Inclusion**

In 2018, Human Resources initiated a diversity, equity, and inclusion awareness program for the organization. Employee engagement and learning/training opportunities were conducted. An organization-wide Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DE&I) Plan was established in September 2019. The DE&I Plan outlines the City's vision to establish and retain a talented workforce where all employees are respected and value diversity and fairness in support of creating programs and services provided to the community. All departments share in this responsibility to support the organizational goals in building and promoting a workforce culture that supports DE&I, analyzes and includes DE&I as part of all organizational systems, and fosters a diverse workforce that is representative of the entire community the City of Salem serves. Actions taken:

All personal information that may lead to identity assumptions or gender bias have been removed from the employment job application and screening process.

Partnerships with diversity recruitment sites have been utilized for positions to encourage equal employment opportunities across gender or identity groups.

Employment policies, rules, procedures, plans, job classifications, and forms have been updated to include inclusive and gender-neutral language.

Pay equity practices have been implemented which assess appropriate compensation based on the job's required skills, knowledge and abilities versus the applicant's current compensation.

Job classifications have been broad banded based on experience, technical skills, level of organizational responsibility, and consequence of error versus "stereotypical" occupations that may be associated with gender bias (office/clerical, labor, or technical work, and managerial/leadership roles).

Job classifications include ability to demonstrate respect, value differences, and foster diversity in the workforce of all positions necessary to perform essential job functions.

Project Search, a pilot program was implemented, providing eight internships for people with developmental/intellectual disabilities from the community to acquire and build new job skills. We are in the process of wrapping up our project search internships this year. We have a graduation date of June 26!

Updated the ADA process during the application and hiring process to remove any unintended barriers for potential employment for those with developmental/intellectual disabilities.

Career-growth opportunities have been developed in certain operational areas as internships or entry-level positions to reduce potential barriers due to lack of education or years of experience in the workforce.

Review of other municipalities efforts in DE&I topics, such as a meeting (to be resumed following the pandemic) with the City of Portland's Disability Resources and Employment Specialist about programs they have implemented.

These actions align to the goals within the DE&I Plan to evaluate systems, policies, and programs with a DE&I lens, encourage and foster a workforce culture of fairness and equity, and begin identifying ways to ensure the organization reflects the community. Analysis of HR programs and services will continue, such as in the areas of recruitment, performance management, employee onboarding and training, to identify opportunities to further the DE&I initiatives that will have meaningful impact to the employee culture and workforce development.

## **Housing**

Campus Court, a 46-unit apartment building, has agreed to renew and extend their affordability for two years. Apartment complexes losing federal affordability (PuSH) was a threat shared with City Council during the affordable housing work session. Private property owners may opt-out of the federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) project-based rental assistance contract.

Redwood Crossings continues to be scheduled for a July opening. The project is turning out beautifully. The schedule variables are door hardware and state elevator inspection.

## **Police**

The police chief survey currently available for public input is to inform the development of a position profile that will be used for the recruitment. The last position profile is from Chief Moore recruitment 14 years ago and needed updates. The recruitment will begin mid-July, with interviews in September. Interview panels and community opportunities are being developed with COVID limitations as a consideration.

## **Upcoming Issues**

A hearings officer has **denied** the Conditional Use Permit for the Safe Sleep Shelter. There were a few comments in opposition, mostly related to off-site behavior in the neighborhood. The City proposed conditions to mitigate the use, but the hearings officer determined the conditions were not enough to meet approval criteria. If the decision is appealed, it will go to the Planning Commission, unless City Council calls it up and takes jurisdiction. It will be on the council agenda as an information report on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. July 27<sup>th</sup> would be the best Council hearing date unless the emergency order is extended. The hearings officer decision is subject to ex parte contact rules, so avoid having substantive communications about the decision with members of the public. Staff communications with councilors are not ex parte, so please contact staff if you have questions or would like a copy of the hearings officer decision.

On June 22<sup>nd</sup> there will be a public hearing on the City's 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan. The Plan identifies community housing and development needs that can be assisted with federal HOME Investment Partnership and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding resources. The Consolidated Plan provides a guide for determining Salem's federal funding priorities over the next five years. The plan was built on feedback from community partners and community members. The five priority categories proposed in the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan are: Homelessness; Special Needs Populations; Low-to-Moderate Income Housing; Public Facilities; and Economic Development. Electronic versions of the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan, the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing, and the Annual Action Plan are available for public review and comment from June 9, 2020 – June 13, 2020 on the [City's website](#).

Thanks for reading,  
Steve