

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

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

### *Fires*

I have provided an update through separate communication. Daily updates will be provided to mayor and councilors.

### *At Your Service*

We have had almost 860 participants come through our recreation programs. Much smaller than a typical year but still noteworthy. We hired new staff and recruited veteran staff to provide programming in an unprecedented time. We are past two weeks and have not received any contact-tracing reports of COVID-19. City staff and program participants took COVID precautions seriously. Staff worked hard to keep kids engaged while physically distancing and sanitizing like “nobody’s business”.

From a grateful resident,

“Just a big Kudos for Jake and Cesar for doing such a great job trimming the trees on Ruge St. NW Salem.

They were patient and so kind even though they had 2 bossy women telling them what they missed.

Thank you to the city of Salem for sending these wonderful young men out to trim the trees. They both are very hard workers. 😊

From the bottom of my heart thank you.”

### *Climate Action*

A task force to guide the climate action plan development will include mayoral appointees Nordyke and Gonzalez. Staff are working on filling the other 38 spots on the task force.

### *Emergency Management*

The City’s efforts to educate and persuade residents to be ready is clairvoyant. From last week’s Community Connection,

#### **Are You Ready for What's Coming?**

Disaster can strike anytime, anywhere. Are you prepared? In honor of **National Disaster Preparedness Month**, we are launching a **daily series** of stories about steps you can take to **better prepare your household for when disaster strikes**. The goal is be ready for at least a **two-week interruption** of food sources and other services, which is what can be expected in a

serious, regional disaster. Stories will be posted daily on the City of Salem home page, [CityofSalem.net](http://CityofSalem.net), through September.

**Housing**

The Salem Housing Authority could potentially qualify for additional federal funds. Staff have resubmitted a request for funding due to increases in our per-housing-unit-cost because of COVID-19. This is not a new application, just an update to what the Housing Commission approved on June 22, 2020. The potential amount of additional funding is currently unknown. Potentially, we could receive CARES Act Supplemental Funding prior to the end of the calendar year that would bring the SHA out of a funding shortfall caused by higher housing costs in the Section 8 program.

**Management**

The ordinance establishing the operations fee allows City Council to increase the fee annually for inflation using a CPI (consumer price index) measure. The FY2020/21 budget (July 2020 – June 2021) includes an increase effective January 1. My recommendation is to forgo the mid-fiscal year increase and line up the operations fee with most other City fees for a July effective date. City fees, with a few exceptions, are considered by City Council through a master fee schedule when the budget is adopted. The general fund budget forecast can be easily adjusted to account for the foregone \$90,000. The operations fee raises more than \$7 million for the general fund.

**Police**

For context, I thought the attached chart showing reported shots-fired calls from April to August of this year would be helpful.

The tentative schedule for the police chief interviews is to have first-round interviews the week of October 13. The first round will include a community panel and a law enforcement panel to help select finalists for consideration in round two. Mayor and councilor involvement would be during round two, several weeks later.

**Projects**

The Salem Police Station is nearing substantial completion under budget. The current contract dates for substantial completion are September 18 for the building and plaza and October 30 for the parking structure and site. Opening activities beginning with building tours are scheduled to start October 3, with the ribbon cutting scheduled for October 10. The department will begin moving in after the ribbon cutting. As of now, JE Dunn, the general contractor, is tracking to have greater than 90% of the building substantially complete by September 18. I have approved extending the substantial completion date to September 28. Punchlist and corrections will occur September 28 – October 2 and the opening tours and activities would still occur as scheduled. This will also result in a consistent warranty period for the entire building extending beyond what we would get if we hold the current substantial completion date.

One item that is currently scheduled for completion on September 28 are the street improvements. PGE was scheduled to connect permanent power to the traffic signals prior to September 25 but we are unsure if they will be able to meet this given other demands on their resources from the fires. We intend to update the public soon on a timeline for reopening Division Street with a heads up to the Council subcommittee first.

Air quality from the fires has impacted the project with work being shut down yesterday afternoon and today due to health concerns for the workers. Based on the current weather forecast, work should resume tomorrow. We will report if there are further impacts from the fires that affect our schedule.

The public art piece, *Equitas*, will include a plaque stating *Equitas* is Latin for justice, fairness, and equity. The piece represents the Salem community's aspirations through text collected during public outreach. The sculpture is an enduring reminder of the diversity that exists in Salem and the commitment of the police department to social justice, integrity, service, and compassion.

The public works building is getting started. The Council Oversight Subcommittee is the Mayor and Councilors Hoy and Andersen. Land use notifications have been initiated with the neighbors and neighborhood association.

### **Payroll Taxes**

The City will not be suspending the collection of Social Security taxes from City employees. We are concerned that it could cause a substantial financial burden. Employees would be required, if Congress does not make it permanent, to pay both the deferral and the regular tax during the first part of next year. Paying both in the same pay period could create a substantial hardship.

### **Upcoming Issues**

Staff will have a warming center update and recommendation for assistance to Arches on the September 14 council meeting agenda.

For the diversity and equity training for council and department directors, we are working with Dr. Johnny Lake. He is familiar with Salem, having spent time here and providing and providing training (Salem Keizer Education Foundation). He is currently in Eugene. We are just initiating conversations with him. We are looking at a November-January timeframe.

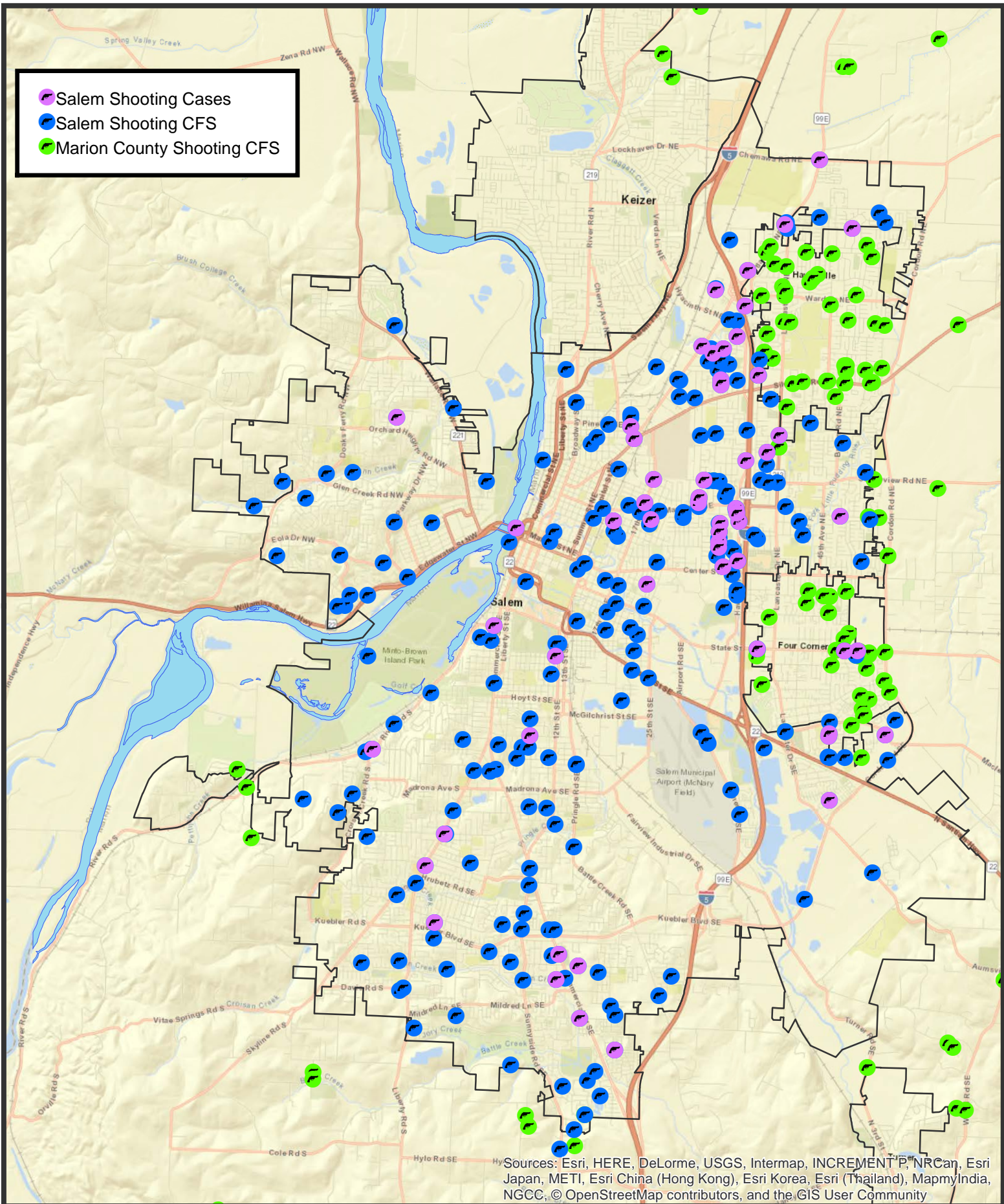
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### **Water/Wastewater**

Delinquent notices are being mailed out. Staff are working with MWVCAA on assistance program support.

On the October 12 council agenda will be a recommendation from the Water/Wastewater Task Force and public hearing to increase rates. All but one member supported the increase. The one member thought the rates should be higher to increase reserves.

Thanks for reading,  
Steve



# SALEM POLICE DEPARTMENT

Salem Shooting Calls  
April - August

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*Prepared by Analyst Ben Young on August 31, 2020*