

AGENDA ADDENDUM



INFRASTRUCTURE BOND ENGAGEMENT STEERING COMMITTEE

DATE: FRIDAY JANUARY 14, 2022
TIME: 1:00 PM
CHAIRPERSON: Mayor Bennett
PLACE: Virtual Online Meeting

STAFF LIASIONS:
Josh Eggleston, AIC Chief Financial Officer
503-588-6130
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Courtney Knox Busch, Strategic Initiatives Mgr.
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AGENDA ADDENDUM

3. Public Comment

- a. Correspondence from Katherine Daniels
- b. Correspondence from SCAN

Dear Bond Steering Committee Members,

January 11, 2022

You have heard from the Library Advisory Board's Chair, Lois Stark, as well as from Jim Scheppke, former State Librarian (*Statesman Journal* guest opinion 1/9/2022), both of whom make a persuasive case for the establishment of two new branch libraries in Salem as part of the proposed \$300 million dollar bond measure. I'm not going to repeat their well-supported arguments, but rather provide additional information you might find helpful.

First, both the new *Our Salem Plan* and the City's current five-year Strategic Plan include policies prioritizing the importance of new branch libraries, as does the City's previous Strategic Plan and a number of City and library surveys going back several years. I believe it is critical that the City follow through on its own policies and long-standing public sentiment to ensure the continued trust of the public.

Second, the library and community should not be penalized over the lack of a current library strategic plan that has been delayed due to the current absence of a head librarian, and that almost certainly would have strongly advocated, again, for more branch libraries. It would simply be unfair for our community to have to wait another 10+ years for these essential services. The City is growing in leaps and bounds and yet library services are significantly underfunded compared to other libraries of similar size and that have more branches.

Third, I am personally concerned about the potential for new branch libraries falling through the cracks in this process. At the Committee's initial meeting, Mayor Bennett expressed the view that new branch libraries could be included in the "Public Buildings Improvements" spending category and that the potential project list should not be limited. Yet the online option for the public to suggest project ideas does not include this category, limiting potential public input on branch libraries. In addition, the Bond webpage has not been kept up-to-date.

Further, while a City staff email requests input from City boards and commissions on two categories of potential projects: streets, bridges and sidewalks and park improvements, there is no information on when or if input may be provided to staff for the other categories of projects. We do not want to see the potential for public and board input on branch libraries limited at this early and critical stage, and request that these three oversights be corrected.

Finally, the prospect of two new branch libraries for the two farthest ends of town could generate significant support for the proposed bond measure as a whole. While many of the other proposed projects are intended to maintain basic services and facilities, the public would likely view two new branch libraries as broadly enhancing the City's quality of life and more equitably serving its residents. Forward-thinking cities are, additionally, more likely to draw library grant support from organizations such as the Oregon Community Foundation.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine Daniels
Vice-Chair, Salem Library Advisory Board

From: [Courtney Knox Busch](#)
To: [Kelli Blechschmidt](#)
Subject: FW: SCAN Resolution on Branch Libraries
Date: Thursday, January 13, 2022 6:33:19 AM
Attachments: [SCAN Resolution on Branch Libraries.doc](#)

For Friday's packet.

Courtney

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From: lorrie walker <dakotalor@msn.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 12, 2022 10:28 PM
To: citycouncil <citycouncil@cityofsalem.net>; Courtney Knox Busch <CBusch@cityofsalem.net>
Cc: Jim Schepke <jschepke@comcast.net>; lorrie walker <dakotalor@msn.com>
Subject: Fwd: SCAN Resolution on Branch Libraries

Dear Mayor Bennett and City Councilors,

I am sending you the resolution SCAN Board discussed, voted on and approved at our meeting tonight. SCAN is supportive of branch libraries being included in the November 2022 bond measure.

Respectfully,

Lorrie Walker

SCAN President



SCAN RESOLUTION ON INCLUSION OF BRANCH LIBRARIES IN THE NOVEMBER 2022 BOND MEASURE

Adopted on January 12, 2022

WHEREAS, only 37% of Salem's third graders were able to pass the third grade reading test according to 2018-19 statistics from the Oregon Department of Education, a figure that is 10% lower than the average for all Oregon third graders; and,

WHEREAS, research has shown that third graders who are not proficient in reading are four times more likely to drop out of high school than proficient readers, and that 88% of school dropouts were struggling readers in the third grade; and,

WHEREAS, access to library reading programs, beginning at birth, has been shown to make a significant difference in student success, including books and library cards for all newborns, storytime programs in multiple languages for infants and preschoolers, training for new parents on brain development and the importance of reading to children, and summer reading programs to keep children reading in the summer; and,

WHEREAS, libraries must be conveniently located within close proximity to families to encourage habitual and frequent library use as part of normal family activities; and,

WHEREAS, Portland is a model of best library practices in providing an extensive array of literacy services to children delivered from *fifteen branch libraries* located within a mile of two of most children in Portland; and,

WHEREAS, the excellence of library literacy services to children in Portland is reflected in third grade reading proficiency scores of Portland school children that are *19% higher* than scores in Salem; and,

WHEREAS, the Salem Public Library Advisory Board has recommended to the Salem City Council that construction of two new branch libraries in the underserved NE and SE/South areas of the city be included in the bond measure that will be referred to Salem voters in November, 2022.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of the South Central Association of Neighbors endorses the recommendation of the Salem Public Library Advisory Board for inclusion of two branch libraries in the November 2022 bond measure so that we can begin to better meet the needs of all our children to become proficient readers.