Our Salem: Today

Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting #2

April 3, 2019

4 – 6 p.m., Center 50+

2615 Portland Rd NE, Salem, OR

Attendees

Stakeholder Advisory Committee:

Amador Aguilar, Enlace Cross Cultural Community Development Project
Sam Brentano, Marion County Board of Commissioners
Eli Brody, sitting in for Ian Johnson, Northeast Salem Neighborhood Association
Sadie Carney, Grant Neighborhood Association
Cathy Clark, City of Keizer
Sally Cook, Salem City Council
Rich Fry, Home Builders Association of Marion and Polk Counties
Geoffrey James, Morningside Neighborhood Association
Marcia Kelley, Cherriots
Jeff Miller, sitting in for Nick Williams, Salem Area Chamber of Commerce
Ian Levin, Salem Planning Commission
Jim Lewis, Salem City Council
Ashley Schweickart, Salem Planning Commission
Linda Wallmark, Salem 350

City of Salem Community Development:

Norman Wright, Community Development Director
Lisa Anderson-Ogilvie, Community Development Deputy Director
Eunice Kim, Planner III, Project Manager

Consultant Team:

Scott Fregonese, Fregonese Associates
Alex Steinberger, Cascadia Partners
Kristen Kibler, JLA Public Involvement

Meeting Overview

The City of Salem and consultant team held the second meeting of the **Our Salem Stakeholder Advisory Committee** (SAC). The purpose of the meeting was to discuss preliminary results of an analysis of the city's existing conditions and future scenarios for how Salem could grow. This work will inform decisions about how and where Salem should grow, particularly as the City looks to update the Salem Area Comprehensive Plan that guides development in the Salem area.

The SAC meeting included a presentation, discussion, and comments from the public. The presentation can be found online on the Our Salem project page.

The presentation included a look at how Salem performs against some of the 20 top indicators that the SAC and public voted for late last year. The preliminary results compared Salem today to Salem under two future scenarios. Both scenarios assumed development that could occur under *current* policies and zoning (e.g., no visioning and no policy changes). The first scenario illustrated how Salem could grow if

current trends in development were to continue. The second scenario showed what Salem could look like if housing developed at maximum densities allowed today.

The consultant team also presented the draft results of Salem's first Community Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory. The draft results looked at GHG emissions by different sources, and it compared Salem's emissions to those of other communities in Oregon.

A more in-depth description of the presentation and discussion is provided below. During and after the presentation, SAC members asked questions and discussed the results. The public was also invited to comment at the end of the meeting.

Community Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory

Alex Steinberger of Cascadia Partners provided an overview of the GHG inventory process, why GHG inventories are conducted, and how communities or organizations use them over time. Many communities use the information to determine how policies can add to or help reduce GHG emissions. The inventories also help communities focus efforts depending on sources of GHG emissions.

Alex described sources of GHG and reviewed some draft results from Salem's GHG Inventory. (The draft GHG inventory is expected to be complete May 8.) The draft results showed that more than half of Salem's GHG emissions are from transportation. Combustible fuel use by Salem residents and businesses is the next highest source. Alex reviewed the differences in the sources and gave some examples of how Salem compares to some other Oregon cities that have tracked GHG emissions.

The following comments and questions came up during the presentation:

- There was a question about whether compostables (GHG from biogenic matter) were counted in the inventory. Alex responded that they were removed from the count because they already emit GHG naturally.
- There was some discussion about landfilling (which creates methane) vs. incineration (which increased the GHG count). Methane is a more potent gas, but GHG lasts longer. Generally, the committee was interested in the methodology of how transportation of waste was accounted for in the inventory and whether there was "double counting" of GHG emissions.
- There was some interest in whether more food waste from restaurants and larger buildings/multifamily buildings could be pulled out of the waste stream.
- Several people brought up successes the City already has with positive role models or examples related to GHG, i.e. City Councilors with electric vehicles, Councilors who bike, and the bio-generator at the wastewater treatment plant.
- The committee was most interested in the GHG inventory methodology and how well Salem's draft results compared to other cities. Some cities' inventories were older or had some different methodology. Alex said Cascadia Partners explored the data for other inventories and understood where there were differences and the likely reasons for those differences. He said the inventory was most useful for Salem to compare to itself over time. More information and the methodology would be in the report being assembled. The Salem GHG inventory uses best practices for this work.
- People asked if the consultants would conduct the inventory in later years. Alex explained that the goal would be for Salem to have all the tools and methodology to do the inventory in the future.

Indicators: Analysis of Existing Conditions and Future Growth Scenarios

Scott Fregonese reviewed the list of the top 20 indicators that the consultant team modeled for the Our Salem project. The indicators were modeled for Salem today and for Salem under two possible future scenarios. Both future scenarios assumed current policies related to development remained in place.

- Future scenario 1 – Current Trends – seemed most likely. It assumed 54,000 new people by the year 2035, and it followed current trends in development with lower housing densities than what is allowed and some redevelopment of properties. Population forecasts assume roughly 60,000 new residents by 2035.
- Future scenario 2 – Zoning Buildout – assumed much higher growth, with 93,000 new residents by 2035. It assumed new housing would be built at the maximum density allowed per acre, and it included more redevelopment.

Scott showed maps from the scenario modeling of where new households and new jobs were likely to develop within both Salem city limits and Salem's portion of the urban growth boundary. In general, the areas of development follow what is happening now. However, with the higher growth scenario, Scenario 2, the City begins to see more households downtown and areas of activity (housing and jobs) getting larger.

Scott reviewed many of the top 20 indicators to show how the future scenarios compare to Salem today and to each other. Overall, the results for many of the indicators did not change under the future scenarios. Scott explained that this was because in those scenarios, current policies were assumed to remain in place, new homes were assumed to still be built on the edges of the city, and new jobs were assumed to mirror current jobs. Scott also pointed out that Salem was not projected to meet its adopted targets for tree canopy, walking and biking, and other indicators under the future scenarios.

The SAC asked questions and commented at several points in the presentation. The following highlights comments or discussion topics during the presentation:

- There was a comment that there is more development and redevelopment happening now in some Salem neighborhoods compared to others.
- There was a comment about the legislature looking at changing zoning to allow more multifamily housing. Scott clarified that the model only looked at what is allowed today given current policies and zoning. Changes to policy that affect the future can be modeled to show outcomes of those policy shifts.
- There was a question as to whether the City's new accessory dwelling unit regulations were included in the assumptions. They were not specifically included because much of Salem is not built to maximum density and many accessory dwelling units have not yet been built. Therefore, the allowance of accessory dwelling units would not likely change the maps.
- There was a questions as to whether Salem was considered a severely rent burdened city, where at least 25 percent of households are spending at least half of their income on housing. Keizer is facing this issue. Eunice said Salem is not considered severely rent burdened; currently, approximately 23 percent of households are severely rent burdened. There was some discussion about whether this might change in the future.
- There was a comment that there has been more multifamily projects developed in recent years. Someone asked if this trend was captured in the modeling. Eunice said the "today" results

captured all building permits in 2018.

- There was some discussion related to newer development on the fringes of the city, access to transit, and changes in transit service. The consultant team has data for existing transit service and anticipated future changes. The model, however, looks at transit frequency, which Cherriots does not anticipate changing in the near future.
- There was some discussion of addressing homelessness. Others commented on current discussions happening around that issue.
- There was a comment that the model results help show a need for some different policy solutions if the community expects certain goals or targets to be met. There was recognition that there is often community pushback when policies are changed.
- There was a suggestion that the comprehensive plan update process could look at access and barriers to walking and biking. There were some comments related to the desire for new sidewalks, safe routes to school, and other infrastructure or transit service that might address some barriers.
- There was a comment that State workers who commute outside of the urban growth boundary might skew some numbers compared to other cities.
- There was a comment that traffic congestion also influences where people and development go. Traffic congestion was not mapped, but the model can look at vehicle miles traveled.
- There was a comment about why no information was presented on the "Good Governance" indicators. Scott said all the top 20 indicators have been modeled, but some do not show considerable differences in results. Both scenarios show more property tax revenue in the future.
- There was a recommendation to and discussion about how to include minority communities in these conversations. There was recognition that this is a lot of data, and many on the committee have been studying these issues for some time. A committee member suggested that the data be shared with many people and communities to see how it compares to their experiences in the city.

Public Comment

Three members of the public commented. Two expressed support of the City's efforts to conduct the GHG inventory and thanked Alex for his attention to the process, diving into the information, and helping answer questions about the methodology. A third community member commented that it is important to remember that all neighborhoods (now and in the future) may not have some of the characteristics necessary for walking and bicycling. For example, hilly terrain creates challenges, and many new homes may be built on steeper slopes.

Next Steps

The results of the modeling and analysis will be shared in a "community report card." That report card will use graphics to illustrate how Salem performs against the top 20 indicators today and under the future scenarios. The draft report card will be shared at a public workshop May 8.

Our Salem Public Workshop
May 8, 2019, 6-8 p.m.
Court Street Christian Church, 1699 Court St NE, Salem

Meeting Adjourned