

**From:** [oberyfamily@comcast.net](mailto:oberyfamily@comcast.net)  
**To:** [citycouncil](#)  
**Subject:** Bike Lanes in Salem  
**Date:** Monday, May 16, 2022 8:22:49 PM

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Dear City Councilors,

I found myself discouraged this evening when listening to the presentation related to “Upgrades to Existing Roads” as related to bicycle facilities.

Then... Councilor Stapleton eloquently pointed out that all “bike lanes” are not equal.

Thank you Virginia for championing the traffic engineering of 2022!!!

Bike lanes “that meet the current standard” are not helpful in a city hoping to encourage more residents to choose active transportation. Using the “current standard” so as to avoid additional costs and efforts is not helpful for a city seeking to offer safe and comfortable transportation options to people who want to ride their bicycles. The “brave and the strong” are on the road and will stay there, but we “interested and concerned” ask you to not be fooled by paint and “current standards.” In this case, “current” means that they are in Salem’s Transportation System Plan. In this case, “current” does NOT mean a standard that is modern, popular, leading-edge, or even up-to-date.

Adding “bike lanes that meet the current standard” to a given road typically results in an even larger road from curb to curb... this increases the time it takes a pedestrian to cross an intersection and, many times, encourages people to drive their cars faster, as the road seems spacious and thus able to handle the increased speed. That’s not a road where you’ll see the moms, the kids, the seniors, and the “interested but concerned.” That’s not a road where folks new to choosing active transportation will feel safe and comfortable.

If you’re going to spend money on bike infrastructure, be sure you know what really is needed to meet your goal. Take the time to know the difference between bike lanes, buffered bike lanes, and protected bike lanes. The difference between these is important if you really want to get some bang for your buck... otherwise, all the presentations, discussions, and efforts are just plans on a shelf, more paint on the road, and talk that doesn’t improve life for Salem residents.

-Angela Obery  
Ward 2

**From:** [Chris Clarke](#)  
**To:** [citycouncil](#)  
**Subject:** Bike lanes  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 17, 2022 1:40:33 PM

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Please expand protected bicycle lanes here in Salem. This will be money well spent.

Thank you,  
Chris Clarke  
736 Rural Ave S  
Salem, OR

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [noreply@cityofsalem.net](mailto:noreply@cityofsalem.net) on behalf of [carmengo2012@gmail.com](mailto:carmengo2012@gmail.com)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** City meeting public comment  
**Date:** Monday, May 16, 2022 8:45:29 PM  
**Attachments:** [ATT00001.bin](#)

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Your Name	Maria Carmen Gonzalez
Your Email	carmengo2012@gmail.com
Your Phone	5035590679
Street	197 Gregory Ln SE
City	Salem
State	OR
Zip	97302
Message	Regarding the new infrastructure bill, this city needs to make it a priority to build an outdoor swimming pool in every neighborhood. Smaller towns around us have public swimming pools, we don't. We have spoken in the past about community hubs. This can be part of the community hub if enough land is found for the project. In the subject of lacking, other towns our size also have a public dumpstation for RV's. Given the increasing number of homeless relying on RV's as their permanent home, this is an important sanitary need as well as a community public service.

This email was generated by the dynamic web forms contact us form on 5/16/2022.

**From:** [Helen Caswell](#)  
**To:** [citycouncil](#); [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Bond measure thoughts  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 17, 2022 12:05:59 PM

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Dear City Council and Mayor,

I've lived in Salem since 2008, and, unfortunately, my household has had to call 911 for medical emergencies more than it would like - likely 8 or 9 times.

It has baffled me as to why, on several of these occasions, a fire truck has shown up after the ambulance. The discussion with 911 has never included mention of a fire or fire hazard. Sending fire trucks unnecessarily must add a lot of miles on these resources.

As the bond you are considering includes spending money on trucks, I think it would be wise for the city to review whatever strange policy it has implemented that sends these trucks at taxpayer expense for no reason at all.

The trucks would last longer.

Thank you,  
Helen Caswell  
Ward 3

**From:** [Anon A](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Community Infrastructure Bond should include allocation for protected bike lanes!  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 17, 2022 10:52:10 AM

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Esteemed City Council,

I'm writing to ask you include funding for protected bike lanes in the Salem Community Infrastructure Bond as outlined by [Salem Bike Vision for Salem!](#)

As it stands the arterial roads are insufficient for the encouragement and safety of bicycling. I use these roads to get to and from work, to run small errands and do light shopping or to visit friends and family, and there's close calls because of inattentive or inexperienced drivers all the time! When I drive I see all too often how dangerous it can be for cyclists and pedestrians. I've been safe so far, and I take every precaution, but no matter how much caution I exercise I and many people are at the dangerous whims of drivers who do not know how to safely pass or handle cyclists or simply don't care.

- Especially dangerous are Silverton road and Lancaster which many students take to Chemeketa Community College or McKay High School. People have died as a result of vehicle traffic on Lancaster leading to Chemeketa.
- Adding protected lanes to the area around the old police station and the renovated Salem Public Library would open up safe access to often scary and busy streets for both pedestrians & cyclists. Increased access to the investment at the library!
- Commercial and Broadway in particular are ripe for protected lanes which would not only improve safety, but open up a lot of businesses to people who normally would not visit.
- Center St. would open up safe routes between Downtown businesses, the Oregon State Hospital and its new residences, and the Lancaster mall area businesses.

The benefits aren't only to cyclists, but also to pedestrians, and even to drivers themselves because of the traffic calming effects of bike lanes. Studies show there will be fewer accidents across the board. And the benefits aren't only in safety, but in business! New protected lanes will create barriers between vehicles and cyclists/pedestrians, encouraging key foot traffic to local business along busy roads.

Let's invest in the future of Salem! Fund protected bike lanes on Salem's arterial roads. Save lives and help pave the way to a safer, healthier, cleaner, and more efficient Salem.

Thank you for your consideration,  
-Jeremy Engelsman, NEN Resident, driver and cyclist.

**From:** [Kyle](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Protected Bike lanes  
**Date:** Monday, May 16, 2022 6:34:13 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing to voice my support for protected bike lanes in Salem as outlined by the Salem Bike Vision. My wife and I love to run errands using our bikes but a lot of the times feel unsafe doing so in more congested parts of town. I think it would be a great asset for the city.

Thanks for your consideration. Respectfully,

Kyle Drummond

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Courtney Knox Busch](#)  
**To:** [Amy Johnson](#)  
**Cc:** [Irma Dowd](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Petitions for Speed Bumps for Stortz Avenue NE, Salem, OR 97301  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 18, 2022 5:15:29 PM  
**Attachments:** [petition 1.pdf](#)  
[petition 2.pdf](#)  
[petition 3.pdf](#)  
[petition 4.pdf](#)

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This is probably something intended for City Council.

**Courtney**

[cbusch@cityofsalem.net](mailto:cbusch@cityofsalem.net) | 503.540.2426

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**From:** Kaethe Mentrum <CelaandGany@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 18, 2022 4:22 PM  
**To:** Courtney Knox Busch <CBusch@cityofsalem.net>  
**Cc:** Irma Dowd <IDowd@cityofsalem.net>; Becca Strieper (stelladomina@gmail.com) <stelladomina@gmail.com>; Bill Berry (billberry97301@gmail.com) <billberry97301@gmail.com>; Don Jensen <djensen5913@gmail.com>; Jess Cruz (jessrcruz@yahoo.com) <jessrcruz@yahoo.com>; Joanne Barnhart (peechie13@gmail.com) <peechie13@gmail.com>; Mike (sammwich@protonmail.com) <sammwich@protonmail.com>; Pedro Mayoral (lacabanausa@gmail.com) <lacabanausa@gmail.com>; Phyllis Abbott-Cavota (phyllisabbott128@gmail.com) <phyllisabbott128@gmail.com>; taffynbb@gmail.com  
**Subject:** FW: Petitions for Speed Bumps for Stortz Avenue NE, Salem, OR 97301

Hello Courtney,

Thank you for suggesting at the City Council meeting that if people wanted something to be funded from the infrastructure funding, we can send in requests. Please note here are about 25 names just from Stortz alone. Btw, Stortz has already been approved by ODOT to be able to have speed bumps installed.

There are other streets like 31<sup>st</sup>, Edgemont, Fairgrounds. At this time, I am not certain whether Brooks is part of Northgate but if that doesn't matter, Brooks needs bumps too.

Thanks for your consideration.

Kaethe

**Petition for Road Improvement on the 2000-2499 Block of Stortz Ave NE  
(Speed Bumps)**

The undersigned residents of the 2000-2499 block of Stortz Avenue NE, Salem, Oregon ("Residents") hereby petition the Northgate Neighborhood Association and City Council of Salem, Oregon for improvements to the 2000-2499 block of Stortz Avenue NE ("Stortz") as set forth below.

**RECITALS**

WHEREAS, drivers on Stortz frequently exceed the posted speed limit, posing a danger to pedestrians, bicyclists, and to vehicles belonging to Residents and their guests parked on Stortz;

WHEREAS, the convenient location of Stortz causes higher than normal traffic for a residential street due to its use as a connection between Portland Road NE and Silverton Road NE by way of Williams Avenue NE and due to the presence of a gas station on the corner of Stortz and Portland Road NE;

WHEREAS, the presence of a restaurant open until midnight on the corner of Stortz and Portland Road NE causes higher than normal traffic on Stortz until late at night;

WHEREAS, reckless drivers exceeding the speed limit have in the past collided with unoccupied vehicles parked on Stortz;

**PETITION**

THEREFORE, Residents respectfully request the Northgate Neighborhood Association and City Council of Salem, Oregon to:

1. To direct the Public Works Department to construct at least one speed bump on Stortz Avenue NE between Portland Road NE and Williams Avenue NE;
2. Conduct a traffic impact analysis, draft a construction plan, obtain permits, and comply with any other applicable provisions of Salem Revised Code Chapter 77 and any other applicable laws; and
3. To allocate funds as necessary for the above said construction;

**SIGNATURES**

By: 

Print Name: Jesus Cruz

Address: 2142 STORTZ AVE NE

Date: 7-18-21

By: 

Print Name: Michael Hoselton

Address: 2163 Stortz Ave NE

Date: 7/18/21



By: Roy C Lawrence

Print Name: Roy C Lawrence

Address: 2115 Stortz Ave. NE

Date: 7-18-21

By: Michelle Cruz

Print Name: Michelle Cruz

Address: 2155 Stortz Ave

Date: 7-18-21

By: Jane Allen

Print Name: JANE ALLEN

Address: 2075 Stortz Ave

Date: 7/18/21

By: [Signature]

Print Name: WILLIAM BERRY

Address: 2095 STORTZ AV NE

Date: 7-18-2021

By: Tina Pefschneider

Print Name: [Signature]

Address: 2108 Stortz Ave

Date: 18 July 2021

By: \_\_\_\_\_

By: Manuel Silva L

Print Name: Manuel Silva L

Address: 2090 Stortz Av. NE

Date: 7-18-21

By: Nancy Padilla

Print Name: Nancy Padilla

Address: 2085 Stortz Ave. NE

Date: 7-18/21

By: [Signature]

Print Name: Kenneth Fuller

Address: 2070 Stortz Ave

Date: 07/18/2021

By: Alje Mi

Print Name: Amber Miranda

Address: 2040 Stortz Ave

Date: 7/18/21

By: Jose Ceja

Print Name: Jose m. Ceja

Address: 2148 Stortz AV

Date: 7/18/2021

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: BARBARA HOKKANEN

Address: 2166 STORTZ J.E.

Date: 7-20-21

By: Wendona McMahon

Print Name: WENDONA McMAHILL

Address: 2170 STORTZ AVENUE

Date: 7/20/21

By: Charles McMahon

Print Name: CHARLES McMAHILL

Address: 2170 STORTZ NW NE

Date: 7-20/21

By: Carl Willis

Print Name: Carl Willis

Address: 2470 STORTZ AVE NE

Date: 07/20/2021

By: Jose M. Ventura

Print Name: Jose M. Ventura

Address: 2475 Stortz Ave NE

Date: 7-20-2021

Print Name: BAYARD MENTRUM

Address: 2455 STORTZ AVE NE

Date: 7.20.2021

By: Marcie Lester

Print Name: Marcie Lester

Address: 2445 Stortz Ave NE

Date: 7/20/21

By: Maria Burke

Print Name: MARIA BURKE

Address: 2405 STORTZ AVE NE

Date: 7/20/21 Salem, Oregon 97301

By: Travis Wagner

Print Name: Travis Wagner

Address: 2195 STORTZ AVE. NE

Date: 07-20-2021

By: Jeff Eisenbawmen

Print Name: JEFF EISENBAMMEN

Address: 2230 STORTZ AVE

Date: 7-20-2021

By: Jim Smith  
Print Name: Jim Smith  
Address: 2165 Stortz Ave NE  
Date: 7/20/21

By: [Signature]  
Print Name: Luis Campos  
Address: 2050 Stortz Ave  
Date: 7/24/21

By: Mike Jordan  
Print Name: Mike Jordan  
Address: 2150 Stortz  
Date: 7/24/21

By: Lacey A. Smith  
Print Name: Lacey A. Smith  
Address: 2440 Stortz Ave NE  
Date: 7-24-21

By: Brixia La  
Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: 2450 Stortz Ave NE  
Date: 7-24-21

By: \_\_\_\_\_

By: Virginia McMichael  
Print Name: Virginia McMichael  
Address: 2495 Stortz Ave NE  
Date: June 24, 21

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

**From:** [Kirk Williams](#)  
**To:** [citycouncil](#)  
**Subject:** Bike lane supporter  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 18, 2022 6:54:33 AM

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Hello,

I am a south Salem resident who strongly supports adding more bike lanes as described by the Salem Bike Vision.

Thanks  
Kirk Williams

**From:** [Mercedes Hamilton](#)  
**To:** [citycouncil](#)  
**Subject:** Library Research for Bond Measure  
**Date:** Monday, May 16, 2022 6:40:37 PM  
**Attachments:** [library capstone -- hamilton, sypher, & roue.pptx](#)  
[Library Testimony.pdf](#)

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Hello,

I testified during the City Council Work Session tonight (5/16/2022). At the request of Mayor Bennett, attached is my written testimony and full capstone presentation with my research on library accessibility in Salem.

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Mercedes Hamilton (she/her/hers)  
Willamette University Class of 2023, B.A. Politics, Policy, Law, and Ethics  
Willamette University College of Law, J.D. Candidate for 2025

Quinna Sypher, Cede Hamilton, & Jordan Roue

# Creating More Accessibility to Libraries within the Salem Community: Three Solutions



The problem

# The Purpose of public Libraries

- Free services for the community
  - Books, databases, and internet access
  - Library staff, assistance, and programming
  - Shelter
- Perfect mix of an “unsupervised, yet safe” place to go
  - Children can explore and develop a sense of curiosity through
  - Young adults can hold symbolic ownership of their designated space
- Eight Roles of Libraries identified by the American Library Association



# Lack of library access in salem

- Libraries are not able to fulfill their roles in the community
  - Supporting Limited-English Speaking Communities (SLESC)
- 17.1% of Salem speaks Spanish
  - 13% of the US
- Despite this, SLESC is the lowest priority for Salem Public Library
  - They also identify this role as being not adequately addressed

# Who is unserved?

- Gaps in library systems – distance, transportation, etc.
  - Commonly seen in rural communities or areas of lower population density
  - North Salem communities are far from a library branch
- When examining solutions, we must think about who each solution serves, and why
  - Unserved & underserved: young children, teens, elderly, limited mobility, limited English speaking, etc.
  - Libraries are, by definition, intergenerational and accessible to all
  - Are the solutions addressing the greatest need? How can solutions serve multiple audiences?

# Current State of Salem Libraries

- 2.9 Public Libraries per 100,000 people
  - 175,535 (2020)
  - 5.09 Salem Public Libraries
  - 2- The Salem Public Library and the West Salem Branch
- Challenges with the Pandemic
  - Rapid shift to curbside and digital services including programming and resources
  - Renovations and Closures

 <p>An illustration of a woman with long dark hair and glasses, wearing a dark blue long-sleeved top and pants, sitting cross-legged on a grey park bench. She is holding an open book and reading. The background is a light beige color with a dark blue vertical bar on the left and a dark blue square in the bottom-left corner.</p>	<p>Policy Alternative: Increasing Spanish Language Materials</p>	

# Why is sIESC so important?

- Salem's Hispanic and Spanish speaking population is higher than national average
  - By not prioritizing this role, a large portion of the community is being left out
  - Bilingual children must be supported throughout their life
  - Encouraging Reading
- Benefits of bilingualism
  - Better sense of community, identity, and self worth
  - Cognitive benefits

# Program and catalog changes

- Salem Reads, “One Community, One Book”
  - Non-English translations have not always been provided
  - Reallocation of money within this program to prioritize SLESC
- Catalog increases
  - 5,000 Spanish books/144,000 English books
  - 200 YA Spanish books/8,000 YA English books
  - Work with locals to ensure relevancy



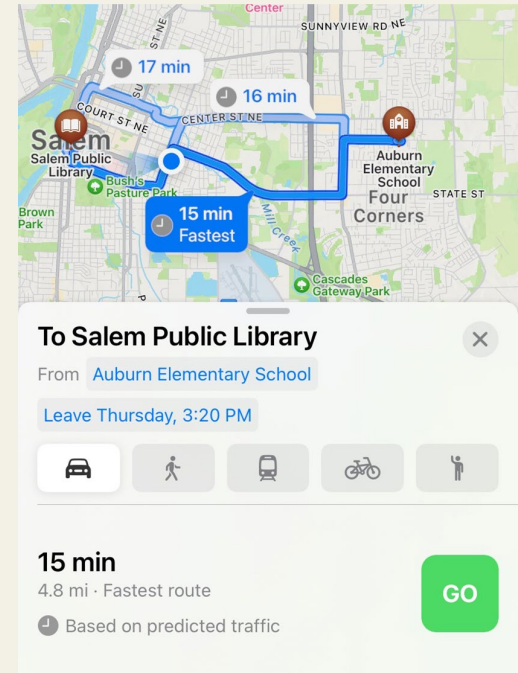
# Staffing Changes

- Spanish Language Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs)
  - Prioritize these in new staff members
  - This can help ensure relevancy and accessibility
- Partnerships with local communities
  - Schools, GRE services, etc.
  - Volunteer based, but an exchange of services



# Distance Drawbacks

- Studies show that people of color will not travel as far to get to a library
  - Average of 4 miles
  - North Salem schools, closest is 1.7 mi, 5 over 4 miles
  - North Salem HS is 62% Hispanic
- Already not prioritized, also facing additional distance barriers





# Pros/Cons

## Pros:

- Cost-effective
- Staffing and partnerships can be significant
- Effort into community building
- Increases support for readers of multiple ages

## Cons:

- Does not address distance issues
- Only helps current library patrons
- Ignores systemic issues that keep minority communities from visiting the library in the first place



Policy  
Alternative:  
Mobile Library  
Branch

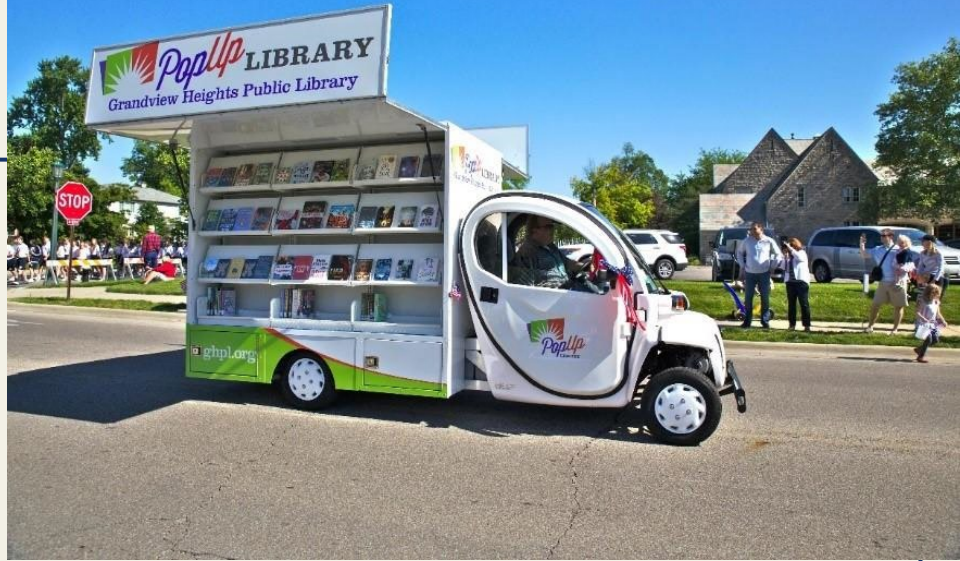
# Mobile Libraries

- Bring materials, resources, and services directly to patrons at predetermined stops
- Cost ranges by community involvement, size of vehicle, and intended usage
  - Larger vehicles need more infrastructure, but hold a “library-like” atmosphere when you go inside
  - Smaller vehicles are less expensive, can use a Class C license, and would require books and materials to be brought out and set up at each stop



# Benefits

- More affordable than new branches
- Helpful for those who are homebound or limited in mobility
- New patrons
  - Support for libraries/library services increases
  - Future branches and taxation
  - More visits, circulation, and funding to improve outreach
- Could improve current situation and provide community support for more long-term fixes



# Target Audience

- Catering to specific audiences at each stop
- Elementary aged, combat the “summer slide”
  - Programming like story time, reading challenges, and crafts
- Elderly audience
  - Programming like book groups and technology help
  - More likely to vote in local elections, so important audience for community support and funding
  - Could capitalize on nostalgia to excite audiences who lost touch with the library

# Staffing and stops: Building Community

- Stops dictate the intended audience
- Stops can be locations to find the branch, but they can be more than that – including programming, activities, familiar faces, and conversation
- Staff can make or break this experience for users
- Can be more personal than branch libraries
- Could be a more comfortable library experience for those without library experience

# Drawbacks

- Often close due to funding issues
- Space concerns, prioritizing some materials over others
- The audience is not centered – not all needs can be met
- Community members don't have the ability to get involved as directly as with a physical branch
- The goal of other mobile branches isn't to deliver resources and create community, the way a library is meant to be. Instead, they aim to get people excited to go into what they consider their “real” branches.



# Policy Alternative: New Branch



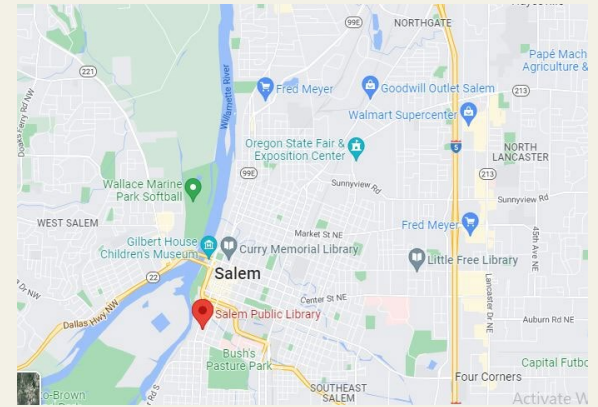
# North Salem Branch

- Cornerstone of social worth within communities
- Physical, permanent space
- In close proximity to the homes of North Salem Population
- Creates an increased sense of community



# Elements of Third places

- Neutral Ground
  - Close proximity better for walking and few public transportation options
  - Holly Whyte's concept of Triangulation
- Levelers
  - Resources for all regardless of age, race, socioeconomic background
  - "A good library serves everybody"
- Creating Conversation
  - Collaboration and Programming
  - Connecting with Community Members
- Accessibility and Accommodation
  - Reasonable hours to accommodate all
  - Space to utilize outside of operating hours
  - Adapt to evolving needs of patrons and evolving digital world



# Elements of Third places Cont.

- Regulars
  - Ritual-like usage for Patrons
  - Welcoming environment for new visitors
- Unassuming profile
  - Location
  - Design
- Playful Mood
  - Furniture and art from local artists
  - Revolving collection displays and featured books
  - Appeal to children's sense of curiosity
- Home away from home
  - Comfort
  - Freedom to be at ease



# Funding a New branch

- Bond Measure
  - \$300 Million for infrastructure improvements in Salem
  - No tax increase for Salem Population due to funding from previous bonds
  - Significant to city because there is greater needs that the current budget
- Sustainable Funding Method
  - Staffing needs
  - 70% of the budget from the past few years
  - Power options while building
- Special Library District
  - Ballot measure to dedicate levied property taxes to library budget
  - Operate in autonomy for the libraries in the district
  - Take strain off the City of Salem budget





# Policy Recommendation

# Current Library changes - short term

- Increases accessibility in current libraries, and a framework for priorities in additional libraries
- Financially has the least new costs
  - Mostly rearranging of current budget, priorities in new hires
  - \$260k in part time salaries
  - \$150k in books
    - \$4,500 estimated for Spanish books
- Supports Spanish speaking families and middle grade kids

# Mobile branch - medium term solution

- Reduce distance accessibility issues that the Spanish language expansion can't address
- Grant to create an outreach vehicle for Salem
  - Outreach tool, not a mobile branch like the previous version
  - Materials brought outside the van
- Smaller vehicle cannot fit people inside but allows Class C licenses to drive it
  - Less expensive to maintain and operate than a full size bus
- Vehicle will be tasked with reaching all of the underserved populations, so materials will need to be switched out between routes

# Mobile branch budgeting

- Money would need to be set aside for collections, promotion, gas and maintenance, and staffing
  - Full-time staff member costs approx. \$120,000 per year, two full time employees needed
  - Ballpark figure of \$300,000 per year to include staffing, gas and maintenance, collections and activities, and promotion. Not sustainable to operate.
- Addresses physical distance but fails to fulfill the community engagement role that libraries should, and therefore cannot be the only step taken to address the issue.



# New Branch in North Salem - long term

- Permanent space in close proximity to most underserved population
- Requires the most funding changes to sustain
  - Bond measure could create a significant support in funding
- Leads to expanded services and support of libraries
  - Additional branches further South of Salem and more
  - Prioritizing libraries to implement Special District





All three  
solutions should  
be implemented

questions?



Hello all. My name is Mercedes Hamilton and I have just completed my third year at Willamette University. This past semester, I've had the opportunity to research the importance of increasing Salem's library accessibility for my Politics, Policy, Law, and Ethics capstone project.

In my group's research we have found that Salem is not prioritizing its libraries in a way equitable to the increasing population. According to the Institute of Museum and Library Services the national average is 2.9 libraries per 100,000 persons. With the current Salem population, we should have about 5 libraries and yet we only have 2.

We do not have enough libraries to support the population and the current existing libraries don't have resources equitable to the population. 17.1% of Salem's population is Spanish speaking and yet only 3.3% of the books in the library system are in Spanish.

Libraries serve everyone, but they really need to reflect the community they are located in. With as diverse as Salem is now and will continue to become, we, as a whole community, need to have enough libraries that are able to reflect more of the characteristics of the areas they represent. It is difficult for a space to reflect the character of its patrons when only a small percentage of the population is utilizing the existing libraries. Salem needs additional libraries that reflect the needs of the diverse population of Salem.

There are additional gaps in the national library system in which there are discrepancies between the distance people must travel to access libraries and limited public transportation options for that population. We see this issue in Salem too; the people in North Salem and further down South Salem are not within walking distance to our public libraries and must rely on other transportation options that may not be accessible to them.

Public libraries are the only indoor public space for people to exist in with no expectation of spending money or a specific amount of time, so it appeals to a diverse array of socioeconomic backgrounds. Libraries are sheltered spaces that protect communities from the various weather conditions. But most importantly, libraries are public spaces that provide free services and resources for all. In an increasingly digital world, libraries remain open and hold significance throughout the country because they provide services and space that can't completely be seen online.

Utilizing some of the \$10m Affordable Housing Opportunity Fund will generate the private-public partnership we need in Salem to create more affordable housing and more accessibility to public libraries for our community. We've seen success with this concept in Cornelius Oregon, where the city chose to utilize an open space to address two important issues of public library accessibility and affordable housing. Salem can follow in the footsteps of

Cornelius and work towards prioritizing the social worth of public libraries. I urge you to utilize the opportunity with this bond measure funding to help Salem prioritize our public library system.

Thank you.

**From:** [Mercedes Hamilton](#)  
**To:** [citycouncil](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Library Research for Bond Measure  
**Date:** Monday, May 16, 2022 6:41:34 PM  
**Attachments:** [Library Capstone \(2\).pdf](#)

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And the full written report if wanted.

Thank you.

On Mon, May 16, 2022 at 6:39 PM Mercedes Hamilton <[mahamilton@willamette.edu](mailto:mahamilton@willamette.edu)> wrote:

Hello,

I testified during the City Council Work Session tonight (5/16/2022). At the request of Mayor Bennett, attached is my written testimony and full capstone presentation with my research on library accessibility in Salem.

--

Mercedes Hamilton (she/her/hers)  
Willamette University Class of 2023, B.A. Politics, Policy, Law, and Ethics  
Willamette University College of Law, J.D. Candidate for 2025

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Mercedes Hamilton (she/her/hers)  
Willamette University Class of 2023, B.A. Politics, Policy, Law, and Ethics  
Willamette University College of Law, J.D. Candidate for 2025

## **Policy Memo:**

To: The City of Salem

From: Quinna Sypher, Jordan Roue, and Mercedes Hamilton

Date: March 18th, 2022

Re: Significant Need for Changes within the Salem Public Library

The Salem Public Library system is currently unable to fulfill the roles and services it is expected to provide to the community. A library is meant to serve a greater democratic purpose, to be open and accessible to all and allow the community to thrive. This higher goal can only be met if the basic purposes, such as providing resources to those who need it, are met. Of the eight roles identified for libraries by the Public Library Association, Salem's biggest deficit lies in Supporting Limited-English Speaking Communities (SLESC). This is clear when looking at population and demographic information, Salem only has two libraries, whereas population information suggests five libraries would better serve the needs of the community<sup>1</sup>. North Salem is one area that is underserved as a result, and thus is the focus of this proposal. In order to address distance issues as well as increasing support for underserved populations while still preserving the connectivity aspect of libraries, we have developed three steps we recommend the city of Salem take as soon as possible.

First, in order to directly address the role of SLESC, expanding Spanish language accessibility should be a priority in our existing libraries. Salem has a fast growing Hispanic population, which is currently at 23.3%. Additionally, 17.12% of Salem speaks Spanish<sup>2</sup>. This proposal can be done by increasing bilingual and bicultural staff and volunteers, adding to the Spanish language collections in the libraries, and including Spanish languages in programming<sup>3</sup>. Some potential programming changes are increasing the frequency of the bilingual virtual storytimes and providing Spanish translations of the Salem Reads books for each year. Collection changes should also be focused initially on Young Adult (YA) books, as the Salem Main Library currently only has 200 Spanish language books available for this age group<sup>4</sup>. If this first solution is completed, the library will be able to appropriately serve a wider audience and can work towards the higher democratic purpose for all patrons, not just those who speak English.

With a focus on outreach, the medium-term solution lies in the creation of a mobile library branch to travel around Salem. Mobile branches can range in size from a trailer or decommissioned school bus to a sprinter van, all depending on the needs of the community it serves. Salem Public Library has a new outreach van in the works due to a recently approved grant that allows them to purchase and outfit a vehicle with the purpose of spreading the library's materials, education, and resources to underserved populations. Much more affordable than building a new branch in every corner of a city, mobile branches allow more people to access library materials and services. They are especially important to areas far from branch libraries, school-aged children in the summertime, and the elderly. This solution would allow the library to meet the needs of those who cannot come to a branch library, and expands the purpose of creating community and allowing everyone to take part in democratic action.

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<sup>1</sup> D.W. Swan, J Grimes, and T Owens, et al, "Institute of Museum and Library Services," Institute of Museum and Library Services (Institute of Museum and Library Services, January 2013), <https://www.imls.gov/>.

<sup>2</sup> "Salem, Oregon Population 2022," Salem, Oregon Population 2022 (Demographics, Maps, Graphs), 2022, <https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/salem-or-population>.

<sup>3</sup> Roue, Jordan. Interview of Annie Lewis. Personal, February 28, 2022.

<sup>4</sup> Library catalog

For the long-term, the implementation of a North Salem Branch of the Salem Public Library creates a permanent, physical space for patrons to exist. There is currently a bond measure within the City of Salem to support infrastructure in Salem; new library branches are currently one of the possible options to fund.<sup>5</sup> This solution would promote more accessibility for patrons in the North Salem community to best fit their needs for resources and services. Regardless of the shift to having more digital resources provided, the physical space of public libraries is significant in promoting the social worth of a community.<sup>6</sup>

Taking all three solutions into consideration would be the best option for creating the most effective accessibility within Salem. Each solution has benefits and drawbacks in promoting more library accessibility. The ideal situation would be to implement all of the solutions as short-term, mid-term, and long-term goals.

## **Policy Research Report:**

### **Statement of the Problem:**

Libraries serve communities as spaces for connectivity. People that visit the library are connected to information, resources, other patrons, and community values. The Public Library Association has identified eight key roles that libraries should play in communities, including Civic & Community Engagement and Supporting Limited-English Speaking Communities.<sup>7</sup> Salem libraries are currently not able to fulfill these roles, and this must be changed within the public library system. If the library continues to be unable to provide these roles, the community in Salem will continue to be divided, and many Spanish speaking children and families will not have adequate library access. Despite this, a needs assessment found that Supporting Limited-English Speaking Communities (SLESC) is currently the lowest priority of the Salem Public Library, as well as being identified as the role they are least able to fulfill. SLESC also ranked low for having other organizations that can provide this support to the community, and the 5-year plan identified access to Oregon's rapidly growing Hispanic population as a main

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<sup>5</sup> Scheppke, Jim. "Salem Needs More Branch Libraries. We Can Build Them without Raising Taxes." *Statesman Journal*. Salem Statesman Journal, January 7, 2022. <https://www.statesmanjournal.com/story/opinion/>.

<sup>6</sup> Barclay, Donald A. "Space and the Social Worth of Public Libraries." *Public Library Quarterly* 36, no. 4 (2017): 267–73. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01616846.2017.132776>

<sup>7</sup> Penny Hummel, "Public Library Needs Assessment: Oregon PL," Public Library Needs Assessment: Oregon PL, 2015, [https://oregoncf.org/Templates/media/files/reports/library\\_needs\\_assessment.pdf](https://oregoncf.org/Templates/media/files/reports/library_needs_assessment.pdf).



issue libraries need to address. However, access is still not adequate, and libraries continue to fall short of the changes that are necessary.

The City of Salem does not have enough libraries to support its current and growing population. Throughout the United States, libraries average 2.9 per 100,000 people.<sup>8</sup> As of the 2020 Census, the population of Salem, Oregon was 175,535.<sup>9</sup> With this information, the City of Salem should have approximately five libraries<sup>10</sup>, and yet, there are only two libraries under the Salem Public Library branch. Additionally, during the pandemic the West Salem branch was closed<sup>11</sup> and the Main Library's hours and services were reduced.

Salem library patrons have felt frustration by the Salem Public Library's closure for renovations and limited pickup times for materials throughout the pandemic.<sup>12</sup> Kimberley Carroll, Deputy Librarian for Salem Public Library explains that "The pandemic has been a challenging time for libraries as we are known for providing in-person services and welcoming spaces. In addition to the challenge of the pandemic, the Salem Public Library went through a major renovation which required reducing services while the project was completed."<sup>13</sup> However, through these challenges, Salem Public Library has created changes to better fit the digital and update some current practices by expanding curbside services, virtual programming, and digital resources.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> D.W. Swan, J Grimes, and T Owens, et al, "Institute of Museum and Library Services," Institute of Museum and Library Services (Institute of Museum and Library Services, January 2013), <https://www.imls.gov/>.

<sup>9</sup>U.S. Census Bureau, "U.S. Census Bureau Quickfacts: Salem City, Oregon," United States Census Bureau (U.S. Department of Commerce, April 1, 2020), <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/salemcityoregon>.

<sup>10</sup>  $(2.9 \times 175,535)/100,000 = 5.090515$

<sup>11</sup> Open as of 4/5 City of Salem. "City of Salem." City of Salem, Oregon Home. City of Salem, 2022. <https://www.cityofsalem.net/Pages/library-hours-services-to-expand-on-april5.aspx>.

<sup>12</sup> Harrell, Saphara. "How the Pandemic Is Frustrating Salem Library Patrons." Salem Reporter. Salem Reporter, March 19, 2021. <https://www.salemreporter.com/posts/3862/>.

<sup>13</sup> Hamilton, Mercedes. Interview with Salem Public Library, Deputy Librarian, Kimberly Carroll. Personal, March 16, 2022.

<sup>14</sup> Hamilton, Mercedes. Interview with Salem Public Library, Deputy Librarian, Kimberly Carroll. Personal, March 16, 2022.

In school districts, counties, or towns with populations across a large area of land, lack of access to a library is common<sup>15</sup>. This issue is most commonly seen in communities with large rural populations and small budgets, preventing additional library branches from being built and ensuring that most of the population served doesn't live in an accessible location to the library<sup>16</sup>. Even in a sufficient library system, there will be gaps where people do not have access to their library, possibly through transportation issues, hours of operation, languages served, or other challenges<sup>17</sup>. When people are deprived of library services, they not only lack the media services, but they cannot access the many other resources a library should provide. Increasing literacy, furthering education, and creating community are all noble goals of library programs that cannot be met if the populations they serve cannot access the library<sup>18</sup>.

Libraries are a perfect mix of an “unsupervised, yet safe” place to go<sup>19</sup>. Young adults can hold symbolic ownership of the space, gather, and fulfill the democratic promises libraries hold simply by being able to create community in the proper space to do so. This safety draws another possibly underserved group in parents and families – these parent-to-parent and child-to-child interactions are easy and secure within a library facility<sup>20</sup>. Children’s sections are often aimed at their primary audience (the children themselves), but could possibly improve their access to parents in order to increase this community. When aiming to serve children, library staff might really need to focus on their caregivers and families, and aim to get them all into the space

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<sup>15</sup> Calvert, K. “Beebe Badger Bookmobile...Blazing a Reading Trail.” *Knowledge Quest* 47 (2019): 8-14.

<sup>16</sup> Cummings, Jennifer. ““How Can We Fail?”: The Texas State Library's Traveling Libraries and Bookmobiles, 1916–1966.” *Libraries & the Cultural Record* 44 (2009): 299 - 325.

<sup>17</sup> Sypher, Quinna. Interview with Sonoma County Library, BiblioBus Coordinator, Monica Samantha Hernandez. Personal, March 4th, 2022.

<sup>18</sup> Cummings, Jennifer. ““How Can We Fail?”: The Texas State Library's Traveling Libraries and Bookmobiles, 1916–1966.” *Libraries & the Cultural Record* 44 (2009): 299 - 325.

<sup>19</sup> Bourke, Carolyn. “Library Youth Spaces vs Youth Friendly Libraries: How to Make the Most of What You Have.” *Australasian Public Libraries and Information Services* 23 (2010): 98.

<sup>20</sup> Klinenberg, Eric. *Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization, and the Decline of Civic Life.*, 2018.

together<sup>21</sup>. This demonstrates the key challenge of targeting an audience to improve access – libraries are, by definition, intergenerational<sup>22</sup>. They will always be heavily used and valued by children, parents, and young adults, as well as the elderly. The question shifts from who deserves the space the most to how space can be equitably distributed amongst those who need it.

## **Policy Alternatives:**

### Expanding Spanish Language Accessibility

One step towards increasing accessibility for Spanish speaking communities in Salem is expanding the services already offered in the main Salem Public Library and prioritizing outreach to non English speaking groups. Salem’s population is currently 23.3% Hispanic, which is higher than the national average, and 17.1% of the population speak Spanish either as a primary or additional language<sup>23</sup>. Because this population is greater than the national average, their accessibility must be even more of a priority, as a larger percentage of the Salem community is being excluded due to a lack of access. It is important to acknowledge at this point that even if an individual is fluent in both Spanish and English, it still may be more comfortable for them to read and discuss in one language or the other. Additionally, allowing and encouraging Spanish speaking children and adolescents to engage with other people in their culture is important for developing their identity and sense of self worth<sup>24</sup>.

By increasing Spanish language programs and books offered at the the library, these priorities would shift and the library would become more accessible to and inclusive of Spanish

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<sup>21</sup> Calvert, K. “Beebe Badger Bookmobile...Blazing a Reading Trail.” *Knowledge Quest* 47 (2019): 8-14.

<sup>22</sup> Klinenberg, Eric. *Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization, and the Decline of Civic Life.*, 2018.

<sup>23</sup> “Salem, Oregon Population 2022,” Salem, Oregon Population 2022 (Demographics, Maps, Graphs), 2022, <https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/salem-or-population>.

<sup>24</sup>“Multilingual and Bilingual Children: Questions and Answers,” Raising Children Network, November 19, 2021, <https://raisingchildren.net.au>

speaking people. Currently, the Salem Library only offers programs that involve non-English languages once a month on average, through their bilingual virtual storytime<sup>25</sup>. While this option is both physically accessible to Spanish speaking patrons that may live further from the library and linguistically accessible, it does not necessarily provide the community engagement libraries must strive for, nor does it help with encouraging further use of the library services. One of the library's biggest and most community building programs is Salem Reads, with the tagline One Community, One Book. The library then facilitates discussion between readers, as well as hosting programs such as art exhibits, trivia, and other group activities.<sup>26</sup> However, there have not always been Spanish translations of the books provided, which creates division in the single community the library is attempting to bring together. Providing copies of a Spanish translation of the book chosen and creating an option to interact and engage in the discussion with other Spanish speakers would provide an opportunity for people who may not have felt comfortable reading higher level books in English to participate in the community the library is building. This step towards fulfilling the roles of Supporting Limited-English Speaking Communities and Community Engagement will likely not increase costs much for the library, as funds within the program could simply be reallocated to include a section for Spanish translations.

Additionally, increasing staff diversity must be a high priority for the Salem Library, as this step would lead to increases in relevancy of programming and collections as well as a more approachable community of staff members. While this step is more costly, and a full time minimum wage library assistant would have a salary of approximately \$28,000 a year<sup>27</sup>, it has also been identified as one of the most effective and necessary in supporting the communities

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<sup>25</sup> "Salem Public Library," City of Salem, Oregon Home, 2022, <https://www.cityofsalem.net/Pages/library.aspx>.

<sup>26</sup> City of Salem, "City of Salem," City of Salem, Oregon Home, 2022, <https://www.cityofsalem.net/Pages/Readers-Invited-to-Salem-Reads-2022.aspx>.

<sup>27</sup>  $13.5 * 40 * 52 = 28,080$

that are currently underserved by the library system<sup>28</sup>. While the Salem library does have translation devices accessible to monolingual library assistants at all times, there still exists a barrier in the ease and comfortability of asking and answering questions.<sup>29</sup> Emphasizing the positive impact of bilingual and bicultural Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs) criteria during the hiring process will ensure that Spanish speaking individuals who visit the Salem library are able to be helped by someone who can assist them using the language they are most comfortable with, and can create an environment where a patron is more willing to ask questions<sup>30</sup>. This would increase the ability of the library to serve and support non-English speaking individuals, as well as creating an environment that is welcoming of a greater range of cultures and communities. By increasing support of these communities and encouraging their engagement, the Salem Public Library system will be able to take a step closer to serving the roles they want to in the city.

Finally, the library should work on expanding its current Spanish language book collection. As mentioned before, even if people are fluent in multiple languages, continuing to read in both languages will allow them to practice their language and reading skills, strengthening their bilingualism, which can be a valuable asset when entering the workforce, as well as a generally positive life and community skill. Providing Spanish books also means that students learning Spanish can access many different reading levels to practice the language. Currently, the Salem Main Library only has approximately 5,000 books available in Spanish. Around 2,000 are children's or early grade books, 3,000 are adult books, and only 200 are classified as Young Adult books.<sup>31</sup> Given that many children stop reading for fun around the age

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<sup>28</sup> Roue, Jordan. Interview of Annie Lewis. Personal, February 28, 2022.

<sup>29</sup> "Salem Public Library," City of Salem, Oregon Home, 2022, <https://www.cityofsalem.net/Pages/library.aspx>.

<sup>30</sup> Roue, Jordan. Interview of Annie Lewis. Personal, February 28, 2022.

<sup>31</sup> Salem Library, "Salem Library Catalog," Home, 2022, [https://catalog.ccrls.org/client/en\\_US/ccrls](https://catalog.ccrls.org/client/en_US/ccrls).

of nine, providing Young Adult books is essential to continue encouraging reading in the adolescent population of Salem.<sup>32</sup> The YA section is where the library should focus the initial expansion of the collection because currently 30% of young adult cardholders are frequent users of the library, and the English collection available is almost 8,000 books.<sup>33</sup> By increasing this portion of the collection and targeting middle grade and early high school readers, the library would not only be creating accessibility for these children, but also for their parents to read books with their children. While typically these students would also have access to their school librarian, the number of licensed librarians in schools in Oregon has plummeted, so the Salem public library system is likely the only access most students have to trained librarians and research help.<sup>34</sup> This means that creating an environment that is welcoming to 11-17 year olds is more imperative than ever. When considering the known frequency that young adult members visit the library, it is likely that providing more books with their age range as a target audience in Spanish will bring in more bilingual students, and hopefully make them more likely to utilize the other services the library has to offer.<sup>35</sup>

While all of these solutions would address language accessibility, simply increasing services available at already established libraries will never be able to address the barrier of distance and travel time. Using GIS analyses, researchers in Florida were able to determine the average actual travel distance different ethnic groups travel to go to their nearest library using patron information and census data. They found that white patrons travel the farthest to get to libraries, and are more willing to travel to a library that is further away if it had better services.

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<sup>32</sup> Michelle Woo, "Why Kids Stop Reading for Fun by Age 9 (and What to Do about It)," Lifehacker (Lifehacker, March 27, 2019), <https://lifehacker.com>.

<sup>33</sup> City of Salem, "City of Salem," City of Salem, Oregon Home, 2018, <https://www.cityofsalem.net/Pages/library-use-survey-provides-insight-to-develop-services.aspx>.

<sup>34</sup> State Library, "Library Services and Technology Act 5-Year Plan," Oregon Five Year Plan, 2017, <https://www.imls.gov/sites/default/files/state-profiles/plans/oregon5yearplan.pdf>.

<sup>35</sup> City of Salem, "City of Salem," City of Salem, Oregon Home, 2018, <https://www.cityofsalem.net/Pages/library-use-survey-provides-insight-to-develop-services.aspx>.

Other ethnic and racial groups, including Hispanic and Black people, would only travel an average of 4 miles to get to a library.<sup>36</sup> This is likely because of dynamics between race and socioeconomic status. People of color are more likely to work at hourly wage jobs, longer hours, weekend hours, and jobs that do not include paid time off.<sup>37</sup> This means that they are less likely to have the spare time to travel long distances with their children to spend time at libraries. When looking at North Salem High School, which is 62% Hispanic children, and its feeder elementary and middle schools, five of the schools are over 4 miles from the Salem Main Library.<sup>38</sup> This suggests that the families in North Salem are less likely to be able to travel the distance to the main library. Given this information, this solution on its own is inadequate to address the accessibility needs of the community, and additional changes must be implemented.

### Mobile Libraries

Another possible solution to the issue of accessibility is not in bringing people to the books, but rather the books to the people. Utilizing a mobile library branch, often called a bookmobile or a bookbus, library staff can bring library materials, resources, and services directly to the patrons. A mobile branch is often the result of libraries using the materials and labor readily available to them, as it doesn't require a construction crew the way a new branch would<sup>39</sup>. Involving the community in essential steps like gathering books from donations brings down the cost of the vehicle while inviting the community to take part in the creation of the mobile branch<sup>40</sup>. Mobile branches can range in size from a trailer or decommissioned school bus

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<sup>36</sup>Sung Jae Park, "Measuring Public Library Accessibility: A Case Study Using GIS," *Library & Information Science Research* 34, no. 1 (2012): pp. 13-21, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lisr.2011.07.007>.

<sup>37</sup> Kelly Dermody et al., "School of Public Health," Black, Hispanic Americans are Overrepresented in Essential Jobs, 2021, <https://publichealth.uic.edu/news-stories/black-hispanic-americans-are-overrepresented-in-essential-jobs/>.

<sup>38</sup> Google Maps

<sup>39</sup> Calvert, K. "Beebe Badger Bookmobile...Blazing a Reading Trail." *Knowledge Quest* 47 (2019): 8-14.

<sup>40</sup> Calvert, K. "Beebe Badger Bookmobile...Blazing a Reading Trail." *Knowledge Quest* 47 (2019): 8-14.

to a sprinter van, all depending on the needs of the community it serves. A larger vehicle, designed to welcome people inside, will be more expensive. The vehicle would need to be outfitted with heating and air conditioning, shelves and furniture secured in place, and desks to utilize a mobile wifi connection with computers<sup>41</sup>. Versions like this can include pop-out trailer sections and hold nearly 7000 books, roomy workspaces, and ample space to browse<sup>42</sup>. A smaller vehicle could be driven by anyone with a Class C driver's license, which is a major draw when considering staffing of the branch, and could be parked in most parking spaces<sup>43</sup>. A smaller version is likely designed to bring the materials out of the vehicle to allow room to browse, and would need to include amenities such as awnings or tents for weather, televisions or projectors to run programming, and mobile checkout kiosks for librarians to lend books from outside the van<sup>44</sup>. With these smaller bookmobiles, books and programming materials are prioritized over furniture, which impacts the amount of time people spend at the stop. The library may run programming through the van, but it is unlikely people stay very long at each stop unless they are specifically taking part in the class or workshop offered.

The draw of a bookmobile lies in the name – they are mobile. Much more affordable than building a new branch in every corner of a city, mobile branches allow more people to access library materials and services. They are especially important to rural areas<sup>45</sup>. Mobile libraries are also important for those who do not have access to library branches, including those who are homebound, incarcerated, or limited in mobility, and libraries aim to reach these populations

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<sup>41</sup> Knight, Robert and Lynne Makin. “Branches on Wheels: Innovations in Public Library Mobile Services.” *Australasian Public Libraries and Information Services* 19 (2006): 89.

<sup>42</sup> Knight, Robert and Lynne Makin. “Branches on Wheels: Innovations in Public Library Mobile Services.” *Australasian Public Libraries and Information Services* 19 (2006): 89.

<sup>43</sup> Sypher, Quinna. Interview with Sonoma County Library, BiblioBus Coordinator, Monica Samantha Hernandez. Personal, March 4th, 2022.

<sup>44</sup> Sypher, Quinna. Interview with Sonoma County Library, BiblioBus Coordinator, Monica Samantha Hernandez. Personal, March 4th, 2022.

<sup>45</sup> Knight, Robert and Lynne Makin. “Branches on Wheels: Innovations in Public Library Mobile Services.” *Australasian Public Libraries and Information Services* 19 (2006): 89.



through many forms of outreach including bringing materials directly to them<sup>46</sup>. When people are exposed to this form of outreach, history has shown that interest and support in local libraries increases, which could allow for later development of new branches and new taxation to fund the branches<sup>47</sup>. A new interest in libraries boosts visits, circulation, and funding to further improve outreach<sup>48</sup>. A mobile library could improve not only the current situation in Salem, but future issues of funding or support as well, and provide community backing for a new branch.

Mobile libraries, as both a draw and a drawback, are forced to cater to a specific audience due to their size – with a smaller collection, libraries must choose who to serve or risk serving all patrons poorly. Some libraries, like the Sonoma County Bibliobus, change the contents of the bus based on each stop to properly cater to each desired audience<sup>49</sup>. This approach allows for a variety of underserved populations to be reached, but presents issues for staff as they load and unload different materials and limit their stops to the day’s audience. For an elementary school aged audience, the bus aims to combat the summer slide and get kids reading during summer months<sup>50</sup>. Aiming to meet the needs of this group creates specific goals of the staff – librarians might need to organize a story time, a reading challenge, or crafts relating to popular books, and they might track success based on book check outs or new library card registrations. To cater to an older population, a bus would carry different materials and focus on programming like book groups or technology classes. Older audiences are a popular focus for a mobile branch, as older people live alone and can be isolated more than younger patrons<sup>51</sup>. In the interest of gathering

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<sup>46</sup> Miller, Rebecca. “Model TLC.” *Library Journal*, July 2004, 42-44.

<sup>47</sup> Cummings, Jennifer. ““How Can We Fail?”: The Texas State Library's Traveling Libraries and Bookmobiles, 1916–1966.” *Libraries & the Cultural Record* 44 (2009): 299 - 325.

<sup>48</sup> Cummings, Jennifer. ““How Can We Fail?”: The Texas State Library's Traveling Libraries and Bookmobiles, 1916–1966.” *Libraries & the Cultural Record* 44 (2009): 299 - 325.

<sup>49</sup> Sypher, Quinna. Interview with Sonoma County Library, BiblioBus Coordinator, Monica Samantha Hernandez. Personal, March 4th, 2022.

<sup>50</sup> Calvert, K. “Beebe Badger Bookmobile...Blazing a Reading Trail.” *Knowledge Quest* 47 (2019): 8-14.

<sup>51</sup> Klinenberg, Eric. *Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization, and the Decline of Civic Life.*, 2018

support for library funding, an older population is more likely to vote in local elections and contribute to the decision making around public funds<sup>52</sup>. In communities like Salem, a mobile branch could capitalize on the nostalgia of the older book mobile program and excite an older audience who lost touch with the library<sup>53</sup>.

To build community with a mobile branch, we have to focus on the stops it makes and the people who staff it. A route of carefully considered stops will fill the main mission of the library – to reach people who cannot or will not go into a physical branch. They can mean more than just that, though. Stops might include daycare centers, parks, and playgrounds to find an audience of young children<sup>54</sup>. They might instead be at churches, retirement homes, or community centers to find elderly patrons<sup>55</sup>. The stops are more than just locations to find the bus, they may include programming and activities or just familiar faces and conversation<sup>56</sup>. With a smaller list of patrons, a mobile branch can be more personal than the branch libraries. Staff often knows each visitor by name, and brings not only materials and resources, but connection, to each patron they serve<sup>57</sup>. This can help create a more comfortable and personable library experience for those who may not feel as though the library is accessible to them<sup>58</sup>. The staff can “make or break” this community and experience for users<sup>59</sup>. In the Sonoma County Bibliobus

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<sup>52</sup> Miller, Rebecca. “Model TLC.” *Library Journal*, July 2004, 42-44.

<sup>53</sup> Sypher, Quinna. Interview with Sonoma County Library, BiblioBus Coordinator, Monica Samantha Hernandez. Personal, March 4th, 2022.

<sup>54</sup> Calvert, K. “Beebe Badger Bookmobile...Blazing a Reading Trail.” *Knowledge Quest* 47 (2019): 8-14.

<sup>55</sup> Snell, Kim. “Beyond Library Walls: Improving Kindergarten Readiness in At-Risk Communities.” *Children and Libraries*, Spring 2012, 27-29.

<sup>56</sup> Miller, Rebecca. “Model TLC.” *Library Journal*, July 2004, 42-44.

<sup>57</sup> Miller, Rebecca. “Model TLC.” *Library Journal*, July 2004, 42-44.

<sup>58</sup> Cummings, Jennifer. ““How Can We Fail?”: The Texas State Library's Traveling Libraries and Bookmobiles, 1916–1966.” *Libraries & the Cultural Record* 44 (2009): 299 - 325.

<sup>59</sup> Bourke, Carolyn. “Library Youth Spaces vs Youth Friendly Libraries: How to Make the Most of What You Have.” *Australasian Public Libraries and Information Services* 23 (2010): 98.

discussions, a bookmobile was the chosen outreach method compared to stationary kiosks due specifically to the desire from the patrons to have staff interaction<sup>60</sup>.

A mobile library might not be the best solution for every community. A common issue with mobile branches is that they frequently close due to staffing concerns or funding issues<sup>61</sup>. Staff can be difficult to find for a mobile branch – the job is physically demanding, could require specialized driving licenses based on the vehicle, and is a very social, customer-facing role<sup>62</sup>. Although the programming is key to building community around the stops, the space of the vehicle might demand tough choices and prioritizing some materials over others. The underlying cause of this issue is that the audience themselves are not centered – the reality of a mobile branch means that not all needs can be met. Community members can give feedback or request stops, but they don't have the ability to get involved as directly as with a physical branch that might run volunteer programs that fit someone's schedule better, hold rooms open for a study group they're part of, or give them a place to sit and make friends with the other students they always see in their favorite section. The Sonoma County Bibliobus demonstrates a key issue with bookmobiles – in accepting the bus's limitations, they aim instead to use the bus to get patrons into the physical branch<sup>63</sup>. The goal of the Bibliobus is not to deliver resources and create community, the way a library is meant to be. Instead, they aim to get people excited to go into what they consider their "real" branches<sup>64</sup>.

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<sup>60</sup> Sypher, Quinna. Interview with Sonoma County Library, BiblioBus Coordinator, Monica Samantha Hernandez. Personal, March 4th, 2022.

<sup>61</sup> Cummings, Jennifer. "'How Can We Fail?': The Texas State Library's Traveling Libraries and Bookmobiles, 1916–1966." *Libraries & the Cultural Record* 44 (2009): 299 - 325.

<sup>62</sup> Sypher, Quinna. Interview with Sonoma County Library, BiblioBus Coordinator, Monica Samantha Hernandez. Personal, March 4th, 2022.

<sup>63</sup> Sypher, Quinna. Interview with Sonoma County Library, BiblioBus Coordinator, Monica Samantha Hernandez. Personal, March 4th, 2022.

<sup>64</sup> One of the largest considerations that needs to still be examined is the budgeting around this proposed solution. There are interviews scheduled with Salem Library Foundation staff that will help to answer these questions and provide steps to possibly achieve this solution.

## North Salem Branch

The third solution to be examined in this report is the implementation of an additional Salem Public Library Branch in North Salem. This solution would create a permanent, physical space for the community to utilize. Physical libraries are the cornerstone of social worth within communities. Despite the increased dependence on technology in the United States, the number of libraries, visits, and the total items borrowed has increased in the last few decades.<sup>65</sup> A new library branch that fulfills the suggestions of the first identified solution will meet the library needs of North Salem.

Before examining the characteristics and purpose of an additional library branch in North Salem, it is essential to note that there is a \$300 million bond measure for Salem infrastructure improvements, approved by Salem City Council to appear on the November ballot.<sup>66</sup> Of various improvements to Salem, creating two branches of the Salem Public Library in North East Salem and further South Salem is up for deliberation.

Libraries throughout the United States exist as what Ray Oldenburg considers third places. Third places exist as social environments outside of home and work.<sup>67</sup> Oldenburg provides the components for which third places entail in his book *The Great Good Place*; these components can analyze the significance of an additional library branch and set the framework to rationalize libraries as public space.

Third places must be on neutral ground with accessibility for all. People of North Salem have a much further distance to travel to visit the currently existing library branches in South and

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<sup>65</sup> Barclay, Donald A. "Space and the Social Worth of Public Libraries." *Public Library Quarterly* 36, no. 4 (2017): 267–73. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01616846.2017.132776>

<sup>66</sup>Harrell, Saphara. "Salem to Ask Voters to Approve \$300 Million Infrastructure Bond next November." Salem Reporter. Salem Reporter, November 29, 2021. <https://www.salemreporter.com/posts/5513/>.

<sup>67</sup> Oldenburg, Ray. *The Great Good Place: Cafes, Coffee Shops, Bookstores, Bars, Hair Salons, and Other Hangouts at the Heart of a Community*. New York, NY: Marlowe and Company, 1999.

West Salem, and very few public transport options. Research shows that residents prefer to visit libraries close to their homes.<sup>68</sup> By implementing a library branch in North Salem, more people within the North Salem area will be able to utilize the space. Holly Whyte's idea of triangulations fits well into this component; the arrangement of public spaces is significant in promoting public use and connecting community members.<sup>69</sup> Finding a location that connects apartment buildings, public parks, and more to a new library branch will allow more people to access the library and sense of community it provides.

Libraries must be levelers to be considered a third place, they fulfill this requirement within the communities by providing resources for people of all ages, socio-economic backgrounds, races, and more. Public libraries often cater to low-income families because they provide free resources and information; "a 2019 Gallup Poll found that lower-income households (earning less than \$40,000 per year) visit the library more frequently than average- and higher-income households" (2).<sup>70</sup> As a leveler, the North Salem Branch must be inclusive to all of Salem and cater to all the language and socio-economic backgrounds. While library services are free for all people, it is also essential that all library visitors feel comfortable utilizing the resources available and welcome to engage with their community.

Creating conversation is the main activity for third places; this idea may sound a bit strange in the context of libraries, but collaboration is an important component of libraries. Storytime for young readers, book clubs for others, reference desk librarians, and small interactions at the library fulfill this component of a third space. Patrons can create connections

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<sup>68</sup> Noh, Younghee. 2021. "A Study on the Evaluation Analysis of the Library's Social Values." *Journal of Librarianship & Information Science* 53 (1): 29–49.  
doi:10.1177/0961000620911695.

<sup>69</sup> PPS. "Eleven Principles for Creating Great Community Places." *Projects for Public Spaces*. PPS, 2012.  
<https://www.pps.org/article/11steps>.

<sup>70</sup> Kavalier, Bernard. "Libraries Provide Critical Services for Working Low-Income Families, Particularly during COVID." *Connecticut by the Numbers*. Connecticut by the Numbers, September 8, 2020.  
<https://ctbythenumbers.news/ctnews/libraries>.

with one another based on the books they enjoy and the subjects they research. Though libraries are not inherently social, meaningful connections between community members exist and thrive within libraries. This role is vital to the perseverance of libraries, but it is difficult to measure with simple data and metric. One potential metric to evaluate this factor could be program attendance.

Accessibility and accommodation are significant factors for third places to ensure there are places for relaxation and social interaction. Reasonable operating hours create more accessibility for patrons to coincide with their schedules. The Salem Public Library is currently open five days a week from 11 am to 6 pm and the West Salem Branch remains closed.<sup>71</sup> These hours are not accommodating to most working-class families and may need to be adjusted to fit the needs of the City of Salem. For former librarian for the State of Oregon and longtime supporter of libraries, Jim Scheppke, the ideal situation would allow Salem libraries to be open seven days a week, for a solid set of hours, and a full-time, professional librarian.<sup>72</sup> The North Salem Branch would need to create hours of operation that would allow for optimum library usage. Accessibility in public spaces often provides community members with places accessible 24 hours a day. The Deschutes Public Library has plans to remodel existing libraries and build some new locations; within this plan is the idea to have a space connected to the library that can remain open after library operating hours. Library patrons would not have access to all library services, but there could be a space with wifi, heating, cooling, and permanent furniture that unlocks after scanning a library card.<sup>73</sup> This idea could translate to the North Salem Branch by allowing library patrons to utilize part of the space when the branch cannot be staffed. In terms

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<sup>71</sup> City of Salem. "Library Hours and Locations." City of Salem, Oregon Home. City of Salem, 2022. <https://www.cityofsalem.net/ages/library-hours-and-locations.aspx>.

<sup>72</sup> Hamilton, Mercedes. An Interview with Jim Scheppke, former Librarian for the State of Oregon. Personal, February 22, 2022.

<sup>73</sup> Hennebery Eddy Architects. "Deschutes Public Library." DPL Final Full Report.pdf. Deschutes Public Library, July 2, 2022AD. <https://www.deschuteslibrary.org/about/DPL%20Final%20Full%20Report.pdf>.

of accommodations, Deputy Librarian Kimberley Carroll notes that Salem Public Library is constantly evolving to meet the needs of the community it serves.<sup>74</sup> Adapting to the evolving needs of library patrons is a significant component for creating notions of accessibility and accommodation.

Third places have regulars, libraries are no exceptions; Salem community members have their own habitual time to go to their local library. A new library branch could be seen as an investment for the community by becoming a city wide commitment to bring the assets of library resources to a greater number of people. Library trips are rituals for frequent library users; opening a new library branch in North Salem may encourage library users from North Salem to visit the library more because it will be near their homes. Newcomers are also welcome to enjoy the offerings of a public library and the new branch may further welcome additional people to visit and utilize the resources provided.

An unassuming and low profile is significant to the role of third spaces because it allows all types of people, from all backgrounds to feel welcome to partake in resources, air conditioning, comfortable furniture, and other library amenities. The Salem Public Library is for everyone to utilize, but that is not the reality based on the location being closer to South Salem and next to the original Salem Police Department. Simplicity in design and location will allow the success of a North Salem branch of the Salem Public Library.

Third places have a playful mood inviting joy and acceptance from all community members. Playfulness can be achieved through comfortable furniture or art created by local artists and students from the schools in the area. Donald A. Barclay provides his perspective on this concept by explaining how libraries are inherently local in character and meant to reflect the

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<sup>74</sup> Hamilton, Mercedes. An Interview with Salem Public Library, Deputy Librarian, Kimberly Carroll. Personal, March 16, 2022.

values of the community.<sup>75</sup> The community character of a library reflects acceptance within the space. An additional element of a playful mood is the idea of magic. A new library branch could create a sense of magic by featuring books that change weekly and rotating display collections. Nostalgia is a key factor in this idea of magic. A library trip can be special and ritualistic for current library patrons who have been patrons since their youth. Angela Shanté Johnson, author and teacher, shares that coming from a family with no disposable income connected her to the library at a young age. Johnson's local library provided education and entertainment to find self-identity, feed her curiosity, and drive her love for reading.<sup>76</sup> Implementing a new North Salem Library Branch to promote new generations of library patrons is a compelling opportunity for the City of Salem.

A new North Salem Library Branch would need to become a home away from home to function as a third place. A library should be a place where one can relax in comfortable furniture and exist in a space that contrasts the elements; libraries need to provide air conditioning to patrons in the summer and heat to patrons in the winter to ensure the comfort of the community. Third places need to promote the freedom to be at ease by creating inclusivity and notions of safety within the space.

The current Deschutes Public Library plan serves as a model for the future of Salem Public Library with a new North Salem Branch. Deschutes County voted on a bond measure in 2020 to expand and improve library services.<sup>77</sup> Compared to the population change of any other county in Oregon, Deschutes County saw the largest population increase.<sup>78</sup> The county has

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<sup>75</sup> Barclay, Donald A. "Space and the Social Worth of Public Libraries." *Public Library Quarterly* 36, no. 4 (2017): 267–73. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01616846.2017.132776>

<sup>76</sup> Johnson, Angela Shanté. "Falling through the Cracks: The Importance of Libraries to Low-Income Families." *Knowledge Quest* 49, no. 3 (2021): 54+. *Gale Academic OneFile* (accessed January 27, 2022). <https://link.gale.com/>.

<sup>77</sup> Walker Davis, Tina. "Voters Support Deschutes Public Library Bond Measure." Deschutes Public Library. Deschutes Public Library, November 4, 2020. <https://www.deschuteslibrary.org/about/news/news?newsid=9322>.

<sup>78</sup> Spurr, Kyle. "US Census Says Deschutes County Population Fastest Growing in Oregon." *The Bulletin*. The Bulletin, August 14, 2021. <https://www.bendbulletin.com/localstate/us-census->



created a plan in which seven libraries will be renovated or created by May 2025.<sup>79</sup> This plan provides some support that it will likely take Salem between six months and two years to implement a new branch. Additionally, as creating a new third place is significant to the design of a new branch in Salem, Deschutes County is using a foundation based on accessibility and community engagement.<sup>80</sup> The model in Deschutes County serves to clarify the need to prioritize libraries in areas with growing populations and how to do so with the support of funding through a bond measure.

<b>2020 Conceptual Design Projects</b>	<b>with Escalation to Assumed Bid Date</b>	
	<i>low</i>	<i>high</i>
Downtown Bend Library Renovation	\$20,180,000	\$20,180,000
La Pine Library Renovation	\$2,020,000	\$2,020,000
Sisters Library Renovation	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000
Sunriver Library Renovation	\$2,680,000	\$2,680,000
New Redmond Library (40,000-45,000 SF)	\$42,460,000	\$47,270,000
New Central Library (95,000-115,000 SF)	\$99,120,000	\$116,530,000
Projects Total	\$168,460,000	\$190,680,000
Program Contingency	\$8,540,000	\$9,320,000
<b>Total Program</b>	<b>\$177,000,000</b>	<b>\$200,000,000</b>

Figure 1: The budgets for each conceptual design project and the proposed overall capital improvement program.<sup>81</sup>

The table for the proposed library design budget in Deschutes County above shows the estimated cost for the renovations and new libraries. Compared to the 5,400-square-foot space

<sup>79</sup> “Future Libraries.” Deschutes Public Library. Deschutes Public Library, March 9, 2022. <https://www.deschuteslibrary.org/about/bond/>.

<sup>80</sup> Hennebery Eddy Architects. “Deschutes Public Library.” DPL Final Full Report.pdf. Deschutes Public Library, July 2, 2022AD. <https://www.deschuteslibrary.org/about/DPL%20Final%20Full%20Report.pdf>.

<sup>81</sup> Hennebery Eddy Architects. “Deschutes Public Library.” DPL Final Full Report.pdf. Deschutes Public Library, July 2, 2022AD. <https://www.deschuteslibrary.org/about/DPL%20Final%20Full%20Report.pdf>.

that the West Salem Branch occupies,<sup>82</sup> these new libraries in Deschutes County are far larger than the anticipated size of the North Salem Branch. Salem City Council is considering approximately \$10 million “opportunity funds” that could be used to encourage a private-public partnership to create an affordable housing and branch library hybrid; models like this exist in Cornelius, Oregon.<sup>83</sup> Based on that \$10 million figure, the strategic plan Deschutes County is working towards creates a model for design and foundational planning but is not quite in the same economic environment as Salem can commit to at this time. Deschutes County is prioritizing public libraries in its county; this is evident in the amount of funding they have secured for their plan. This model shows what could be possible for how Salem prioritizes the function and need of libraries, as it works towards creating a library branch in North Salem and future plans.

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<sup>82</sup> Feidman, Stuart. “West Salem Library New Branch.” Newspapers.com. Statesman Journal, April 6, 1987. <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/16388388/>.

<sup>83</sup> Hamilton, Mercedes. An Interview with Jim Schepke, former Librarian for the State of Oregon. Personal, February 22, 2022. \*update from email correspondence\*



Figure 2: Marketplace Design for Library Space<sup>84</sup>



Figure 3: Storytime or Teen Hangout Space<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Hennebery Eddy Architects. "Deschutes Public Library." DPL Final Full Report.pdf. Deschutes Public Library , July 2, 202AD. <https://www.deschuteslibrary.org/about/DPL%20Final%20Full%20Report.pdf>.

<sup>85</sup> Hennebery Eddy Architects. "Deschutes Public Library." DPL Final Full Report.pdf. Deschutes Public Library , July 2, 202AD. <https://www.deschuteslibrary.org/about/DPL%20Final%20Full%20Report.pdf>.



Figure 4: Design for Open Concept Library Space<sup>86</sup>

The conditions necessary for building a new library branch rely mainly on the funding for staff wages. The previously mentioned bond measure would fund the creation of the library, including the books, computers, furniture, and other resources needed to open a library.<sup>87</sup> Unfortunately, the bond measures City of Salem is utilizing, only funds the initial expenditures of implementing a new branch. The infrastructure bond measure does not provide renewable funding to projects like the additional library branch, so funding staff and maintenance would require a new funding method to sustain operation of the library. Salem Public Library currently receives funding from the General Fund of the City of Salem and also through Chemeketa

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<sup>86</sup> Hennebery Eddy Architects. "Deschutes Public Library." DPL Final Full Report.pdf. Deschutes Public Library , July 2, 202AD. <https://www.deschuteslibrary.org/about/DPL%20Final%20Full%20Report.pdf>.

<sup>87</sup> Hamilton, Mercedes. An Interview with Jim Scheppke, former Librarian for the State of Oregon. Personal, February 22, 2022.

Cooperative Regional Library Service (CCRLS).<sup>88</sup> There is sufficient funding to maintain the way Salem Public Library operates currently, but it is inadequate to fund an additional branch.

Staff wages are a significant cost associated with libraries, but libraries cannot compromise staffing costs. Based on Salem City Council budgets, staffing expenses have been approximately 70% of the entire library budget.<sup>89</sup> Having trained staff and professional librarians ensures that patrons receive the support they need to navigate through resources.<sup>90</sup> It costs the City of Salem approximately \$120,000 per staff member for wages, health benefits, and training.<sup>91</sup> Expecting the North Salem Branch to be of relative size to the West Salem Branch, approximately three staff members and a supervisor would be necessary. These staff would need to be bilingual to best serve the North Salem Population, which includes an additional pay incentive.<sup>92</sup> Staff funding is a large barrier to maintaining operating costs for a new library branch, but also one that cannot be compromised.

One way to create more funding for the public libraries in Salem would be to create a special library district through a city ballot measure. In Oregon, library districts are a tool to dedicate an agreed percentage of levied income taxes within the district that allows library funding to operate in autonomy.<sup>93</sup> This change would take much of the strain off the City of Salem budget and provide more funding for library services.<sup>94</sup> To create the district, the City of

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<sup>88</sup> Hamilton, Mercedes. An Interview with Salem Public Library, Deputy Librarian, Kimberly Carroll. Personal, March 16, 2022.

<sup>89</sup> City of Salem. "FY2021 Salem City Budget." Department Budgets . salemma.gov, 2022. <https://www.salemma.gov/FY21>.

<sup>90</sup> Hamilton, Mercedes. An Interview with Salem Public Library, Deputy Librarian, Kimberly Carroll. Personal, March 16, 2022.

<sup>91</sup> Sypher, Quinna. Interview with Jessica R. Marie, Youth Services Senior Librarian, Salem Public Library & Alice MacGougan, MLIS, Adult Services Librarian, Salem Public Library & Kate Van Ummersen, Executive Director, Salem Public Library Foundation. Personal, April 5th, 2022.

<sup>92</sup> Hamilton, Mercedes. An Interview with Salem Public Library, Deputy Librarian, Kimberly Carroll. Personal, March 16, 2022.

<sup>93</sup> State Library of Oregon. "Library Service in Oregon: Library Districts in Oregon." InfoGuides.State Library of Oregon, October 2020. <https://libguides.osl.state.or.us/libraryservice/>.

<sup>94</sup> Unclear exactly what the budget breakdown would look like, there is no data easily accessible

Salem would need to create a ballot measure, then that ballot measure would need enough support to pass. Salem attempted to create a library district in 2004, but the measure failed as a result of the necessary tax increase.<sup>95</sup> Special Library Districts require areas to put high priority and support in their libraries. To better understand the current environment in Salem, further research needs to be conducted to see if there is an increase in support from 2004 to implement a library district.

### **Policy Recommendation:**

Each solution works towards creating more library accessibility than what currently exists in Salem. Implementing any of these solutions would promote and expand the distribution of library resources to patrons. However, each solution on its own has problematic limitations. Therefore, we recommend that all of the solutions be implemented as short-term, mid-term, and long-term goals.

As a short-term solution, expanding Spanish language book collections, programming, and prioritizing staff diversity will allow the current libraries to fulfill more parts of their role in Supporting Limited-English Speaking Communities. Libraries typically measure the effectiveness of changes using inputs, or the resources dedicated to the mission, and outputs, such as number of visits, books circulated, and program attendance.<sup>96</sup> However, with the increase of online library resources/programming and digital book borrowing, libraries have begun to transition to measuring success using outcomes, like interviews and surveys.<sup>97</sup> To evaluate the effectiveness and success of this short-term step, a mix of all three should be used. If the solution

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<sup>95</sup> Thompson , Dennis. "3 Nov 2004, Page 47 - Statesman Journal at Newspapers.com." Newspapers.com, November 3, 2004. <https://www.newspapers.com/image>.

<sup>96</sup> Penny Hummel, "Public Library Needs Assessment: Oregon PL," Public Library Needs Assessment: Oregon PL , 2015, [https://oregoncf.org/Templates/media/files/reports/library\\_needs\\_assessment.pdf](https://oregoncf.org/Templates/media/files/reports/library_needs_assessment.pdf).

<sup>97</sup> Penny Hummel, "Public Library Needs Assessment: Oregon PL," Public Library Needs Assessment: Oregon PL , 2015, [https://oregoncf.org/Templates/media/files/reports/library\\_needs\\_assessment.pdf](https://oregoncf.org/Templates/media/files/reports/library_needs_assessment.pdf).

is effective, libraries should see an increase in Spanish language books being checked out, higher attendance at programs like virtual bilingual storytime, and utilization of Spanish translations of books during the Salem Reads program. Additionally, an outreach survey could be done in North Salem schools asking if families have visited the library recently, if they plan to in the future, and if the implementation of these services would make them more likely to visit. These could be done with minimal input change, but adding bilingual and bicultural staff and volunteers would require a funding increase for these resources. However, since this is likely to make the biggest difference in culture and accessibility of the current library services, it is a necessary component of this portion of the solution.<sup>98</sup> This solution on its own is not adequate, as it leaves a large part of the identified accessibility issues unaddressed.

As a medium-term solution to the accessibility issues of the Salem library, a mobile library or outreach vehicle would help reduce the distance accessibility issues identified in this report, and that the Spanish language expansion cannot address. This is newly in place through the recent approval of a grant to create an outreach vehicle for the Salem library system. This vehicle is an outreach tool, not a mobile branch in the way the previous Salem Library Bus was<sup>99</sup>. Patrons cannot get onto this van, and materials will be brought outside of the van rather than bringing people inside. It will look something like the examples below when completed.

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<sup>98</sup> Roue, Jordan. Interview of Annie Lewis. Personal, February 28, 2022.

<sup>99</sup> Sypher, Quinna. Interview with Jessica R. Marie, Youth Services Senior Librarian, Salem Public Library & Alice MacGougan, MLIS, Adult Services Librarian, Salem Public Library & Kate Van Ummersen, Executive Director, Salem Public Library Foundation. Personal, April 5th, 2022.



Figure 1: The La Crosse Public Library Outreach Vehicle<sup>100</sup>



Figure 2: The Grandview Heights Public Library Pop-Up<sup>101</sup>

A smaller vehicle would allow any staff member, not just someone with a commercial drivers license (CDL) to operate the branch, and could help solve potential staffing concerns. A bus like

<sup>100</sup> "Pop-Up Library." La Cross Public Library. Accessed 4/5/2022.

<https://www.lacrosselibrary.org/programs/pop-library>.

<sup>101</sup> Waite, Steph. "Bookmobiles that Break the Mold." WebJunction. OCLC.org, 7/3/2018.

<https://www.webjunction.org/news/webjunction/bookmobiles-innovations.html>



the old Salem mobile branch requires a CDL and could be more expensive to maintain and operate, in addition to costing thousands to get it into operating condition again<sup>102</sup>. A van allows anyone working for the Salem library with a driver's license to operate the vehicle. Following the lead of the Sonoma county BiblioBus, choosing an audience that can shift based on each stop would allow the mobile branch to serve multiple populations, but will require more work from staff to switch materials from day to day and route to route. This is the plan for the Salem vehicle as well, as there are many underserved populations to reach and the vehicle will be tasked with reaching all of them. Although the grant helps to obtain the van, money would need to be set aside for collections, promotion, gas and maintenance, and (most importantly) staffing. A full-time staff member costs the city of Salem approximately \$120,000 per year<sup>103</sup>. Library staff estimated the need for at least two full-time employees, one tasked with operations and one tasked with promotion and scheduling. The mobile outreach vehicle will cost approximately \$240,000 per year in staffing alone – this can be rounded to a ballpark figure of \$300,000 per year to include gas and maintenance, collections and activities, and promotion. While the van is relatively easy to obtain through the grant, it is not easily sustainable with a limited city budget to operate effectively. Even if this solution is possible in the short-term with the recent grant for outreach purposes, many mobile libraries calculate their success through getting patrons into physical branches, which is still difficult if there are only two Salem branch libraries. It also excludes those who depend on the mobile branch such as those who are unable to physically get to the library. They are still library patrons and deserve for their experience to be as community-centered as the experience would be at a “real” branch. While this solution addresses

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<sup>102</sup> Sypher, Quinna. Interview with Jessica R. Marie, Youth Services Senior Librarian, Salem Public Library & Alice MacGougan, MLIS, Adult Services Librarian, Salem Public Library & Kate Van Ummersen, Executive Director, Salem Public Library Foundation. Personal, April 5th, 2022.

<sup>103</sup> Sypher, Quinna. Interview with Jessica R. Marie, Youth Services Senior Librarian, Salem Public Library & Alice MacGougan, MLIS, Adult Services Librarian, Salem Public Library & Kate Van Ummersen, Executive Director, Salem Public Library Foundation. Personal, April 5th, 2022.

physical distance to the resources a library provides, the limited audience a mobile branch can serve fails to fulfill the community engagement role that libraries should, and therefore cannot be the only step taken to address the issue.

Finally, the long-term, larger scale solution to this issue is to add at least one branch to the Salem library system, specifically one in North Salem. While this solution has the most complicated financial implications, it also addresses the distance issues while still being the third space that libraries strive to occupy in communities. The City of Salem will see whether this solution works by the increased number of people residing in North Salem obtaining library cards and visiting the library. Increased programming and program attendance of North Salem residents could also be used to evaluate the effectiveness of this solution. With the \$300 million dollar bond measure on the November Ballot, the time to build the library is now.<sup>104</sup> The lack of a funding model limits the possibility for sustainability to keep a new branch operating.<sup>105</sup> While this solution addresses distance and community issues, the Spanish language expansion must be present in both this new branch and the existing branches in order to adequately support the Limited-English speaking communities in Salem; by ensuring the branch meets this condition it would become the most effective way to increase library accessibility.

By implementing all three solutions, there will be an expansion in services for Salem as a whole. The Salem community will prioritize and understand the significance of library services so that creating more accessibility in the future will be reasonable changes.

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<sup>104</sup> Scheppke, Jim. "Salem Needs More Branch Libraries. We Can Build Them without Raising Taxes." Statesman Journal. Salem Statesman Journal, January 7, 2022.

<https://www.statesmanjournal.com/story/opinion/2022/01/07/guest-opinion-salem>.

<sup>105</sup> Hamilton, Mercedes. An Interview with Salem Public Library, Deputy Librarian, Kimberly Carroll. Personal, March 16, 2022.

## **Appendix:**

### List of Interviews Conducted:

Carroll, Kimberley. Deputy Librarian for Salem Public Library. March 16th, 2022 by Mercedes Hamilton.

Hernandez, Samantha. Monica: BiblioBus Coordinator, Sonoma County Library. 3/4/22, by Quinna Sypher

Lewis, Annie. Director of Library Community Service, Multnomah Public Library. Feb 28, 2022 by Jordan Roue

Schepke, Jim. Former Librarian for the State of Oregon. February 22nd, 2022 by Mercedes Hamilton

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<sup>106</sup> Mission and values from the Salem Public Library to refer back to

<sup>107</sup> Basic information on social issues in relation to libraries.

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43.

**From:** [Nicholas Kline](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Date:** Monday, May 16, 2022 5:51:53 PM

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**I would like additional support/funding for supported bike lanes as outlined by the Salem Bike Vision for Salem, in the community infrastructure bond.**

We are expanding and it has already been VERY dangerous to ride on our streets. We need much more. I would ride from NE Salem, but it is too treacherous. Streets are highly congested. When are we going to give options other than driving?

Nicholas Kline  
3301 D St NE, Salem, OR 97301

**From:** [noreply@cityofsalem.net](mailto:noreply@cityofsalem.net) on behalf of [olivia@backlinkpro.club](mailto:olivia@backlinkpro.club)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** DA50 Backlink to cityofsalem.net  
**Date:** Monday, May 16, 2022 10:41:50 PM  
**Attachments:** [ATT00001.bin](#)

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Your Name	Olivia Jackson
Your Email	<a href="mailto:olivia@backlinkpro.club">olivia@backlinkpro.club</a>
Message	<p>Hi, We're wondering if you'd be interested in a very strong backlink for your site <a href="http://egov.cityofsalem.net">egov.cityofsalem.net</a>? We currently run 2934 sites, covering all subjects and each backlink is priced from just \$70. If your budget allows and you'd like to know more, please reply to this email and we can discuss further. Kind Regards, Olivia -- ----- If you do not wish to hear from us again, just reply with 'NO' in the subject line.</p>

This email was generated by the dynamic web forms contact us form on 5/16/2022.

**From:** [Ron Kelemen](#)  
**To:** [citycouncil](#)  
**Subject:** Two Infrastructure Bond Requests  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 17, 2022 9:47:47 AM

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I respectfully request two projects:

1) Saginaw Street South, between Mission and Owens Streets, be included in the proposed bond measure. It is a concrete surface pot holed, axel-breaking mess.

I have been previously told by the public works director that it was too expensive of a project to be included in a normal street resurfacing project, and that it would need to be part of a CIP.

Given all the new traffic that this segment now has given the Meridian apartments, Cascade Cardiology, and First American Title, this project is long overdue.

2) Improvement of the South River Road Bicycle path, especially the 150 northern most yards. It is rough and dangerous, especially with bicycles and pedestrians sharing it and going against the traffic when heading southbound.

Ronald Kelemen

777 Commercial Street SE #515

Salem, 97301

[rwk777@gmail.com](mailto:rwk777@gmail.com)

**From:** [sydney.demechko@gmail.com](mailto:sydney.demechko@gmail.com)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Protected Bike Lanes  
**Date:** Monday, May 16, 2022 8:25:15 PM

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To whom it may concern,

Just emailing to voice my support of protected bike lanes as outlined in the Salem Bike Vision for Salem in the community infrastructure bond. It will help with safety in the community, as it is a very scary city to bike around.

Thank you,

Sydney Demechko