

From: [Kathleen Thorpe](#)
To: [CityRecorder](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]City Council 01/26/2026
Date: Monday, January 26, 2026 2:34:49 PM
Attachments: [City Council 01262026.pdf](#)
[City Council 01262026.pptx](#)

I would like to present the power point tonight.

Thank you,
Kathleen Thorpe
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City Council Meeting January 26, 2026 – Item 6.c A safe, clean and healthy Salem update

- Kathleen Thorpe
- Ward 1

Salem has lost Homeless services

People ask why there are so many people still on the streets after all the money we've invested in services for the homeless, and as some people are asking why we don't jail people for livability crimes, and mandate addiction and mental health treatment, my presentation includes some facts that connect to both of those questions.

Separately, yet connectedly, while many investments have increased homeless services and provided housing for thousands of people through these years, the current economy is now resulting in more people becoming homeless, as resources are now shrinking. Recent reductions:

- **Project Able** has closed its doors.
- **The ROCC** had to reduce staffing and hours of operation due to decreases in funding.
- Both **Project Able** and **the ROCC** offered a day center, mentoring, peer support, wellness services, partner connections and other supports.
- **Church at the Park** had to lay off 17 staff, reduced Adult Outreach services, and reduced their youth shelter beds in half.
- **Salvation Army's** co-ed shelter is closing its doors on 1/31/26.



Is Corrections a viable pathway for the Homeless

(excluding children and elderly)

Is being Homeless a crime in
Marion County?

What does it cost to incarcerate someone in Marion County?

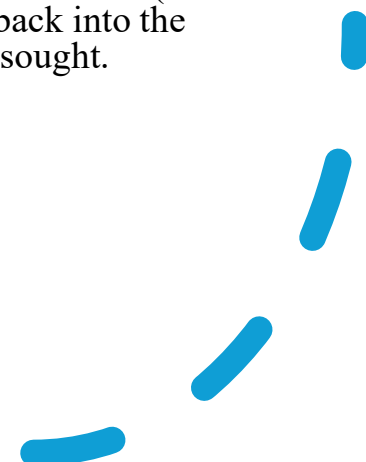
- The average cost of incarcerating a person in Oregon is \$84 - \$200 per day. (Marion County Oregon, 2025)
 - Marion County Oregon. (2026, January 25). Marion County Jail Reentry Program. Retrieved from Oregon.Gov: <https://okb.oregon.gov/Pages/marion-county-jail-reentry-program.aspx> - :~:text=Taxpayers benefit from reductions in,being of the family unit.
- $\$84 \times 30 = \mathbf{\$2,520}$ per month $\$200 \times 30 = \mathbf{\$6,000}$
- $\$2520 \times 12 = \$30,240$ per year $\$6,000 \times 12 = \$72,000$
- This covers staffing, food and basic services within the system. Outside care (medical, mental health) is in addition.
- The current tax base is barely covering what is currently in place. Correctional staff are already over stretched.
- Adding a high acuity population will require additional staff, there are mandated staff client ratios that need to be maintained.

William Cahal RN BS 2026
Marion County Jail 1992-1994
Oregon Department of Corrections 1995-2020
Bridgeway Health 2020-2023

Does the
Marion County
System have
capacity for
Homeless
folks? What
about
Homeless due
to mental
illness?
Substance or
alcohol abuse?

- Marion County jail has a capacity of around 400 inmates total, when fully staffed.
- The medical unit consists of 8 beds (at the time of my employment) and these beds are used for those who need closer observation for acute illness or injury and detox.
- The nursing staff is small, 2-4 nurses on depending on which shift, a medical doctor visits weekly.
- Medical needs outside of the scope of practice for a registered nurse are sent to Salem Health for treatment and many are released from custody at this point, unless being held on serious charges.
- Some potential inmates are refused if medically/mentally fragile and sent to Salem Health for treatment.
- At the time of my employment, Marion County Jail was not staffed for inmates with complex medical or mental health needs.
- Inmates who are detoxing from alcohol or drugs are monitored visually. There are limited resources for meaningful treatment as by design. Jail is a place to house people until conviction (and transfer to prison) or if not convicted, released back into the community where treatment can be voluntarily sought.

William Cahal RN BS 2026
Marion County Jail 1992-1994
Oregon Department of Corrections 1995-2020
Bridgeway Health 2020-2023



Does Marion County Corrections have capacity for a Homeless Community?

- Marion County Jail typically runs close to capacity; if over filled, those who can be released to await trial, will be released due to high census.
- The medical team covers chronic medical issues and responds to emergencies. Those outside of the legal scope of practice will be sent to the nearest hospital.
- At the time of my employment, OSP had a 22-bed infirmary for those who are sub hospital level but too acute to be in a cell. There was a 48 bed Special Management unit for those with acute mental health issues.
- OSP houses a total of 2300 inmates. So, of available beds, approximately 2% of the available beds are dedicated to acute mental health treatment, and only 1% to acute medical treatment.
 - At any given time, 99% of these beds are filled with convicted felons at OSP.
- There are some limited programs for substance abuse, and very few for transitioning people from corrections back into the community. Those without resources, will find themselves living on the streets. Often, they cannot legally leave the county they've been released in due to probation.

William Cahal, RN BS 2026 - I have worked at several institution while with Oregon department of corrections, serving as a registered nurse, a nurse manager and a health services manager.

Limited Resources


- I worked as the director of nursing of inpatient medical detox for Bridgeway Health. I found a good number of the people I worked with from the correctional setting, using these services, in large part because of lack of resources within the correctional setting.
- Bridgeway has approximately 28 beds for medical detox, those beds can be occupied for up to 7 days.
- There are very few programs after detox for sober living.
- One must be willing and able to access any follow up such as AA, NA or behavioral treatment.

William Cahal, RN BS 2026



National Homelessness Law Center

- *Order directs states to treat homelessness and mental illness as a crime (WASHINGTON, D.C – July 24th, 2025)*
- Everybody needs a safe place to live. Across America, sky-high rents are both the leading cause of homelessness and a primary cause of financial stress for most families.
- Specifically, this order:
- Expands the use of police and institutionalization to respond to homelessness
- Prioritizes funding for states that treat homelessness as a crime and ends housing-based solutions
- Cuts off funding for life-saving programs like harm-reduction.
- This executive order, combined with budget cuts for housing and healthcare, will increase the number of people forced to live in tents, in their cars, and on the streets. The safest communities are those with the most housing and resources, not those that make it a crime to be poor or sick.
- **Forced treatment is unethical, ineffective, and illegal.** People need stable housing and access to healthcare.
- Laws and budgets that make homelessness and poverty worse negatively impact us all. **To build truly safe, healthy, and just communities, we need housing and healthcare,** not handcuffs and budget cuts.



As of
January
2026,
Salem has
lost
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services

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From: [lorrie.walker](#)
To: [citycouncil](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]6C Safe, Clean, Healthy
Date: Monday, January 26, 2026 3:00:53 PM

Mayor, City Council,

How can we be silent about this as Mayor Julie How is promoting criminalization of people who are unsheltered?

Criminalize poor, mentally ill, disabled, addicts, etc.

Programs are being cut. There are no extra psych beds anywhere. No extra jail beds.

How long can council members be silent on Julie Hoy's hatred of people?

Respectfully,

Lorrie Walker

Ward 2, Legal Guardian, Advocate

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