

Feedback from the July 30, 2025 Northeast Salem Business Forum event

Approximately 30 people representing businesses, property owners, and community-based organizations gathered on July 30, 2025 to learn more about the City's progress on safety and livability within Salem. Staff shared an update on the City Council's conversation at the July 21, 2025 Work Session, and provided updates on Police and Fire activities. Marion County Sheriff Nick Hunter was in attendance and offered responses to questions from participants. Former Councilor Jose Gonzalez served as emcee and Councilor Brown shared some remarks to lead off the conversation. Chairs of both Northgate Neighborhood Association and North Lancaster Neighborhood Association (NOLA) were present.

Staff shared key dates for future Council conversations about safety and livability. Chief Trevor Womack spoke to the immediate increase in Police presence in downtown and northeast Salem, and introduced Sargeant assigned to this work. He also addressed the proposal to add more Homeless Services Team outreach, and longer-term proposal for re-instating downtown bike patrol. Chief Dave Gerboth discussed the proposal for a January 2026 medical and behavioral health co-response pilot, and automatic aid for closest agency to respond to fire or medical need.

The majority of those present sought opportunities to work collaboratively with the City on a broader solution, incorporating a variety of perspectives. Questions and comments from the group were focused on how to balance limited resources and capacity to respond to the day-to-day experience of business owners. Ideas and suggestions ranged from changing parking or traffic patterns to protecting property with no trespassing program.

Staff plan another conversation with northeast businesses, property owners, and residents in September 2025.