

City of Salem 2026-2031 Strategic Plan



2026-2031 Strategic Plan



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City Goals: Result Areas

Result areas are derived from the vision, mission, and values in the 2021-26 Strategic Plan and provide the framework for the presentation of the budget. Our fiscal year budgets begin July 1 and end on June 30 of the following year.

Safe and Healthy Community

Provide emergency services while proactively addressing the impact of crime, fire, natural disasters, and health emergencies to residents, visitors, businesses, and property.



Welcome and Livable Community

Develop Salem to be a safe and well-maintained City with a mix of quality housing for all residents featuring access to parks, recreation, historic and cultural resources, and the arts.



Good Governance

Manage the enterprise to be fiscally sustainable, provide quality services equitably across our community, proactively engage all residents, be forward thinking, and build capacity and partnerships to prepare for the future.



Natural Environment Stewardship

Protect natural resources including all waterways, tree canopy, and our natural ecosystem and reduce the impact from the built environment and City operations on both the environment and all residents.



Strong and Diverse Economy

A diverse economic base, robust job growth, business retention and recruitment, and a thriving, resilient downtown.



Safe, Reliable, and Efficient Infrastructure

An integrated municipal asset system of streets, bridges, bike paths, and sidewalks, civic buildings, parks, technology, and utility infrastructure.



2026-2031 Strategic Plan



About the 2026-2031 Strategic Plan

Through the development of the City of Salem 2026-2031 Strategic Plan, the City Council, community, and staff can assess progress, refine priorities, and create a clear roadmap for the next five years, ensuring that Salem continues to grow as a vibrant and resilient community.

Why is this update important? Strategic planning helps the City focus its resources on what matters most, responding to community needs, planning for future growth, and ensuring efficient, effective public services. By updating the 2021 Strategic Plan, we can build on what’s working, address emerging challenges, and adapt to the changing needs of our city.

How was the 2026-2031 Strategic Plan developed? Through work sessions, the City Council engaged directly in consideration of key elements of the City’s 2026-2031 Strategic Plan. In July 2025, the City began the process of updating its Strategic Plan. As part of this process, the City Council received a detailed report on the 2025 Community Satisfaction Survey to assess residents’ satisfaction with City services and communications, gather opinions on the value and distribution of City resources, and gauge residents’ sense of safety and livability. Insights from this survey and other outreach activities are critical in assessing progress, refining priorities, and creating a clear roadmap for the next five years.

Community member and employee feedback. In early April, community members and employees were invited to share their feedback on the draft Strategic Plan, guiding principles and measures through a survey. More than 620 people participated in the survey, in Spanish or English, which was open from April 3 to April 12, 2026. About 63% described the overall outlook on the goals and direction as extremely positive or somewhat positive, and 90% of respondents indicated that proposed outcome measures in the Strategic Plan aligned well or somewhat well with community priorities. Comments and suggestions for improvement included importance of prioritizing core services and basic City functions – alongside any new initiatives, an interest in greater transparency about funding, and more reporting on value of, effective management of services, with progress and performance measures.

For more information, find a complete schedule for development of the 2026-2031 Strategic Plan, annual City Council Policy Agendas or work plans, and community satisfaction surveys on the City’s website.

2025 Mayor and City Council



Julie
Hoy
MAYOR



Paul
Tigan
WARD 1



Linda
Nishioka
WARD 2



Shane
Matthews
WARD 3



Deanna
Gwyn
WARD 4



Dr. Irvin M.
Brown
WARD 5



Mai
Vang
WARD 6



Vanessa
Nordyke
WARD 7



Micki
Varney
WARD 8

Mission, Vision, and Values



Our vision is ...

A leading capital city that sets the standard for safety, livability, and sustainability—fueling a dynamic economy and nurturing a vibrant community that is welcoming to all.

Our mission is to ...

Provide fiscally sustainable and quality services that enhance community safety and resiliency, protect the quality of our environment and neighborhoods, and support a strong economy.

Our values are ...

- ▶ **Community-Focused:** We strive to provide high-quality, responsive, and equitable services that meet the needs of our community.
- ▶ **Respectful:** We strive to create a healthy work environment based on teamwork and mutual respect.
- ▶ **Accountable:** We act with integrity and honesty. We take responsibility for our actions and communicate with residents to ensure transparency.
- ▶ **Inclusive:** We foster an anti-racist culture of equity, accessibility, and inclusion within our organization and across all City services.
- ▶ **Proactive:** We continuously seek innovative solutions, using data-driven insights, and community input to deliver meaningful programs with measurable results.

Guiding Principles

Guiding principles in a strategic plan provide a framework for decision-making. They ensure consistency with the City's mission, vision, and values to ensure a deliberate and consistent process when determining initiatives aligned with strategic goals.

- ▶ **Forward-Looking:** The City will embrace innovative solutions that anticipate future needs, leverage emerging technologies, and strengthen resilience. We prioritize long-term benefits over maintaining the status quo and ensure that the City is adaptable to evolving challenges.
- ▶ **Partnership and Collaboration:** The City will actively seek partnerships with governmental, business, and nonprofit entities across our region that expand impact and align with the City's values and strategic priorities.
- ▶ **Measurable Impact:** The City will focus on initiatives that deliver tangible, measurable outcomes and align closely with strategic goals. Every opportunity is assessed for its ability to generate clear benefits and demonstrate progress toward the City's long-term vision.
- ▶ **Equity and Inclusion:** The City is dedicated to fostering an inclusive community where all residents have equitable access to opportunities, services, and resources. We actively address systemic barriers and prioritize policies that promote fairness, diversity, and socioeconomic inclusion.
- ▶ **Community Engagement:** The City is committed to meaningful resident participation to strengthen trust, collaboration, and civic engagement, so that community voices shape our services and outcomes.
- ▶ **Financial Stewardship:** The City commits to responsible and transparent management of public resources, ensuring fiscal sustainability and efficiency. Budgeting and investments are aligned with strategic goals to promote long-term community resilience and sustainable growth.
- ▶ **Sustainable Service Commitment:** We will thoughtfully align service levels with our staffing capacity and reliable, ongoing revenues, pursuing new programs or service expansions only when supported by a clearly identified and sustainable funding source. By evaluating proposals for their impact on core services, workforce capacity, and long-term financial health, we ensure responsible growth while maintaining a stable, resilient organization for our community.

Strategic Planning Terms

Vision Statement

An overarching statement that describes the ideal state of our community in the future. It helps answer the questions: What are we working toward? Where do we want to go? Who do we want to be as a community?

Mission Statement

A statement of how we, as a City Government, plan to achieve to vision. It defines who we are, as well as our services and stakeholders. The mission describes what the organization does and why it exists.

Value Statements

Guiding principles by which we strive to work. These central tenets are the basis for the standards of behavior among City staff and leadership and reflect the expectations of the community.

City Goals/Result Areas

The City has identified six broad result areas that describe the major outcomes the City hopes to create through the municipal services it provides. These include: Safe Community; Welcoming and Livable Community; Strong and Diverse Economy; Safe, Reliable and Efficient Infrastructure; Natural Environment Stewardship; and Good Governance.

Strategic Priorities

City leaders have established five strategic priority areas that demand urgent attention and additional resources: addressing homelessness, creating community resilience, increasing equitable delivery of City services, building great neighborhoods, and taking action on climate change. These strategic priorities are based on an analysis of the City's current condition— which includes the city's strengths and challenges, resident needs, and the wider cultural, political, and natural environment within which the City operates.

Strategic Objectives

Within each of the strategic priority areas, City leaders have established specific objectives to accomplish within the next five years.

Strategic Actions

For each strategic objective, City leaders have established activities that can be measured and tracked.

Milestones & Measures

Specific measures of progress toward the City's goals, including key milestones, activities, and outcome data.

Council Policy Agenda

Through its annual Council Policy Agenda, City Council members agrees on specific actions in the coming year and provides direction on aligning resources toward the Strategic Plan priorities through the City's budgeting process. Activities shown for year-one implementation will become the 2021 City Council Policy Agenda.



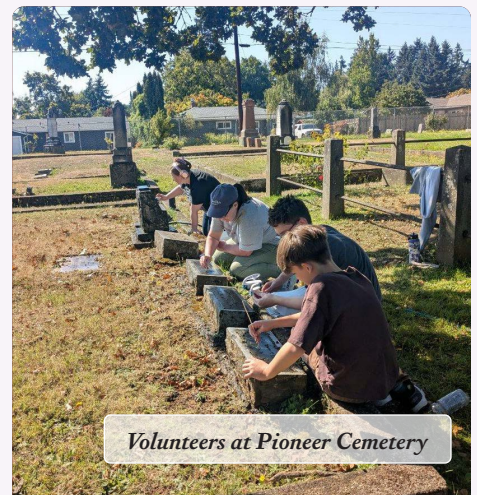
Center 50+ luncheon



Water rescue response



Z.E.U.S. EV mini sweeper



Volunteers at Pioneer Cemetery



Safe and Healthy Community



Officer Morse and K9 Shelby



Salem Firefighters promotion and swearing in ceremony

Goal 1

Provide emergency services while proactively collaborating to address the impact of crime, fire, natural disasters, health emergencies, and homelessness to residents, visitors, businesses, and property owners.

Year 1 Activities

- Provide emergency services while proactively collaborating to address the impact of crime, fire, natural disasters, health emergencies, and homelessness to residents, visitors, businesses, and property owners.
Role of the City: Convener
- Pilot the use of expanded first responder teams with specialized training for coordinated responses to homelessness and drug-related challenges
Role of the City: Doer
- Evaluate the effectiveness and long-term sustainability of expanded Safe, Clean, Healthy pilot focused on outreach and connection to services through the Homelessness Support Team (HST), Clean Salem team, and the Rapid Engagement, Assessment and Community (REACH) team.
Role of the City: Doer/Partner
- Develop and implement the Fire Department Strategic Plan.
Role of the City: Doer

Additional Plan Activities

- Implement violence reduction initiatives and traffic safety programs.
- Increase emergency staffing levels to improve response capacity.
- Strengthen crime reduction, drug prevention, and enforcement efforts.

Proposed Outcome Measures

- Emergency Response Time (Priority 1 Calls)
Metric: Percent of emergency calls responded to within target time
- Crime Rate Reduction (Part I Crimes per 1,000 residents)
Metric: Year-over-year percent decrease
- Homelessness Service Connection Rate
Metric: Percent of individuals contacted by outreach teams who are connected to services

Welcoming And Livable Community



Upcoming playground improvements at Riverfront Park



New quality housing

Goal 2

Develop Salem as a clean, safe, and healthy City offering a mix of quality housing, libraries, parks, recreation, art, and historic and cultural resources for all ages.

Year 1 Activities

- ▶ Complete the environmental review process for Block 45 and Block 50 housing projects.
Role of the City: Doer
- ▶ Streamline the permitting processes to make homebuilding faster, easier, and more affordable.
Role of the City: Doer
- ▶ Collaborate with developers to lower costs and accelerate multi-family housing construction.
Role of the City: Partner
- ▶ Increase community awareness of available library services and resources to maximize public benefit and utilization.
Role of the City: Doer
- ▶ Initiate *Our Parks*, a multi-year update of the City's Comprehensive Park System Plan and a key implementation action of Our Salem, beginning with an assessment phase focused on equitable community outreach, identification of unmet needs, and evaluation of existing park system assets, conditions, and performance.
Role of the City: Doer

Additional Plan Activities

- ▶ Develop Block 45 and Block 50 housing projects.
- ▶ Implement the City's Housing Production Strategy activities.
- ▶ Strategically allocate bond funds dedicated to affordable housing initiatives.
- ▶ Provide additional financial incentives to support affordable housing development.
- ▶ Maintain clean downtown streets and add public restrooms to enhance accessibility and public comfort.
- ▶ Address blighted properties, support local businesses, and enhance downtown livability.
- ▶ Increase recreational opportunities, sporting events, family programming, and improve access to parks and library services.

Proposed Outcome Measures

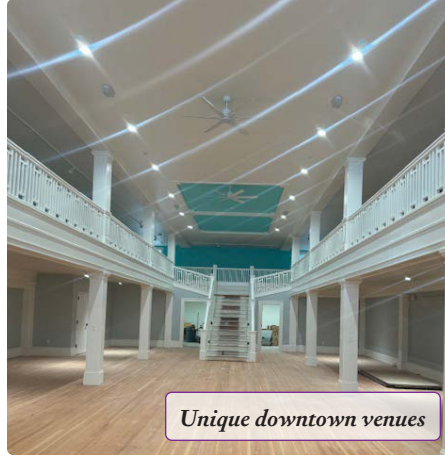
- ▶ Housing Production (Units by Type and Affordability Level)
Measure: Percentage increase in total housing stock (by unit type and affordability level) and proportion of housing strategy actions completed on schedule.
- ▶ Increase use of parks, libraries, recreation programs, and community facilities.
Measure: Annual attendance and participation rates at parks, library programs, Center 50+, recreation programs, and City-sponsored community events.
- ▶ Improve the cleanliness of the City
Measure: Number of cleanliness-related service requests (e.g., litter, illegal dumping, graffiti) per 1,000 residents.



Strong And Diverse Economy



New storefronts on Court St



Unique downtown venues



Short-term rental

Goal 3

Encourage innovation, entrepreneurship, business retention, and growth that provides broad community benefit in downtown and beyond.

Year 1 Activities

- ▶ Work with Short Term Rental operators to manage compliance with Tourism Promotion Area collections.
Role of the City: Doer/Partner
- ▶ Pursue funding priorities for the Safe, Clean, and Healthy program and City projects.
Role of the City: Doer
- ▶ Launch community engagement efforts—including outreach to existing advisory boards—on the North Waterfront Urban Renewal Area (URA) plan projects, complete updates, and adopt the North Waterfront URA plan.
Role of the City: Doer

Additional Plan Activities

- ▶ Collaborate with the Strategic Economic Development Corporation on business recruitment and retention initiatives that attract living-wage jobs.
- ▶ Convene local business and tourism promotion groups to develop a cohesive City brand and marketing strategy to promote Salem’s unique story and support downtown vitality.
- ▶ Enhance airport use and commercial air service by leveraging federal and state funding.
- ▶ Support airport infrastructure improvements to generate opportunities for commercial air services as a regional economic engine.

Proposed Outcome Measures

- ▶ Increase the number and diversity of businesses operating in Salem.
Measure: Net change in the number of businesses operating in Salem, including growth in small businesses and targeted industry sectors.
- ▶ Strengthen business retention and business survival rates.
Measure: Percentage of businesses remaining in operation after five years and reduction in business closure rates.
- ▶ Increase employment opportunities and household income.
Measure: Growth in local employment, reduction in unemployment rates, and increase in median household income relative to regional benchmarks.

Safe, Reliable, and Efficient Infrastructure



Civic Center seismic updates



New pedestrian crossing at State St and 25th St SE

Goal 4

Maintain and upgrade critical infrastructure systems, including transportation, water and wastewater, and public facilities, to meet community needs.

Year 1 Activity

- ▶ Support the construction of the Oregon Department of Transportation’s Center Street Bridge project, including the construction of the City’s water transmission line to West Salem.
Role of the City: Partner
- ▶ Launch community engagement, complete updates, and adopt the refreshed Water and Wastewater Utility Master Plans.
Role of the City: Doer
- ▶ Implement projects funded by the 2022 Voter-Approved Safety and Livability Bond, including seismic updates at the Civic Center, parks, and street projects
Role of the City: Doer
- ▶ Advance the Airport Master Plan.
Role of the City: Doer
- ▶ Update the Transportation Systems Plan with multiyear process updates.
Role of the City: Doer

Additional Plan Activities

- ▶ Prioritize maintenance of aging infrastructure with high risk of failure, including facilities, fleet, and utilities.

Proposed Outcome Measures

- ▶ Improve the condition and reliability of Salem’s transportation infrastructure.
Measure: Percentage of streets and sidewalks rated in good or fair condition and miles of streets, sidewalks, and bike lanes resurfaced or repaired annually.
- ▶ Strengthen the reliability and performance of water and wastewater systems.
Measure: Reduction in water main breaks, sanitary sewer overflows, and inflow and infiltration levels in the wastewater system.
- ▶ Reduce deferred maintenance and improve the condition of public facilities and infrastructure assets.
Measure: Reduction in infrastructure maintenance backlog and improvement in asset condition scores for key facilities and systems.

THANK YOU SALEM



Safety and Livability Bond



Natural Environment Stewardship



Goal 5

Safeguard environmental and natural resources, including waterways, wastewater, stormwater, tree canopy, parks, and ecosystems, while addressing environmental impacts from development and City operations.

Year 1 Activity

- Execute the Riparian Plan with data collection and inventory efforts to protect waterways and adjacent riparian corridors.
Role of the City: Doer
- Continue clean-up efforts in the Wallace Natural Area to remove trash, improve environmental quality and long-term conservation of the site.
Role of the City: Doer
- Address PFAS concerns related to waste stream, wastewater, and airport operations.
Role of the City: Doer

Proposed Outcome Measures

- Improve water quality and protect Salem’s waterways and watersheds.
Measure: Improvement in key water quality indicators and reduction in sanitary sewer overflows and contamination events.
- Protect and enhance natural habitats and riparian areas.
Measure: Acres of riparian corridors and natural areas protected, restored, or improved through conservation, restoration, and cleanup efforts.
- Increase and preserve Salem’s urban tree canopy.
Measure: Percentage of citywide tree canopy coverage and number of trees planted or preserved through City and community programs.

Additional Plan Activities

- Proactively assist community members with tree preservation, SEQ code compliance, and related efforts.
- Safeguard and diversify the City’s water supply, including backup sources.
- Enhance energy efficiency in municipal buildings and operations.

Good Governance



Public Works Operations planning



Neighborhood opioid prevention outreach

Goal 6

Provide fiscally responsible, transparent, and equitable services, proactively engage residents, and build partnerships to prepare for the future and cultivate long-term success.

Year 1 Activity

- ▶ Complete the implementation of Workday, the City’s new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system.
Role of the City: Doer
- ▶ Deploy new agenda management systems.
Role of the City: Doer
- ▶ Conduct an overhaul of the City’s website to align with updated accessibility guidelines and improve the user experience. Perform permit analysis and implement changes related to FEMA and ESA regulations.
Role of the City: Doer
- ▶ Perform permit analysis and implement changes related to FEMA and ESA regulations.
Role of the City: Doer
- ▶ Implement a new scheduling system, establish a Quality Assurance (QA) program, and pursue accreditation.
Role of the City: Doer
- ▶ Improve cybersecurity maturity and strengthen data governance practices.
Role of the City: Doer
- ▶ Refresh and track meaningful performance measures of City services to increase transparency and improve accountability.
Role of the City: Doer
- ▶ Continue implementing the Performance and Process Improvement Auditing Program.
Role of the City: Doer
- ▶ Maintain sustaining services and funding priorities for General and Transportation Funds.
Role of the City: Doer
- ▶ Conduct a review and restructure of operational fees to ensure cost recovery, financial sustainability, transparency, and alignment with current service levels and community expectations.
Role of the City: Doer
- ▶ Adjust garbage collection rates to support economic goals.
Role of the City: Doer/Partner
- ▶ Adjust system development charges as necessary.
Role of the City: Doer
- ▶ Formalize agreements such as the Siletz Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) concerning council policy on trust lands and provision of City services.
Role of the City: Doer/Partner
- ▶ Review the City Charter to identify necessary updates. Recommend revisions that support efficient, modern municipal operations.
Role of the City: Doer



Volunteer recognition at City of Salem Public Library

Additional Plan Activities

- Launch a new Customer Relationship Management System (CRM).
- Boost community involvement, improve external communications, and promote positive narratives.
- Clearly communicate outcomes, performance measures, and levy funding to the public.
- Stabilize and diversify budget and enterprise fund resources to secure long-term financial health.
- Prioritize local use of tax dollars to maximize community benefits.
- Build relationships with State, counties, community organizations, businesses, and residents to expand homelessness and drug prevention programs.
- Address staffing shortages and increase workforce capacity.
- Fill positions due to retirements and implement comprehensive succession planning.
- Mitigate staffing impacts through retention strategies and workload management.
- Enhance professional development, training, and career growth to improve morale and service delivery.

Proposed Outcome Measures

- Maintain the City's long-term financial sustainability and fiscal responsibility.

Measure: Ratio of ongoing revenues to ongoing expenditures, maintenance of strong bond ratings, and positive audit outcomes.
- Increase transparency and accountability in City operations and decision-making.

Measure: Public availability of performance dashboards, regular reporting on City performance measures, and completion of performance audits and process improvement reviews.
- Increase resident trust and satisfaction with City services and communication.

Measure: Percentage of residents reporting satisfaction with City services, communication, and transparency in community surveys.