

**From:** [Christine Chute](#)  
**To:** [citycouncil](#); [CityRecorder](#)  
**Cc:** [walter Perry](#)  
**Subject:** Downtown safety and security  
**Date:** Monday, July 21, 2025 8:33:39 AM

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Dear Council,

Thank you for considering the important topic of safety and security downtown. I know you are as aware of the complexities of the issues as I am, so I am writing only to say that I hope Council does not treat this discussion as one involving simply more police presence. That's not the answer.

For example, I think making public restrooms available downtown might go a long way toward cleaning up some of the sidewalks. And perhaps the city could reconsider Councilor Nordyke's ideas about sending mental health professionals or paraprofessionals to incidents that appear to involve people in crisis. I would support either of these ideas.

Thanks.

Christine

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Christine Chute  
Ward 2

**From:** [noreply@cityofsalem.net](mailto:noreply@cityofsalem.net) on behalf of [dj.vincent@churchatthepark.org](mailto:dj.vincent@churchatthepark.org)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Submission  
**Date:** Monday, July 21, 2025 8:37:54 AM  
**Attachments:** [Clean Start 7.21.25.pdf](#)

Your Name	DJ Vincent
Your Email	<a href="mailto:dj.vincent@churchatthepark.org">dj.vincent@churchatthepark.org</a>
Your Phone	5039492124
Street	1336 Heather Ln Se
City	Salem
State	OR
Zip	97302
Message	<p>Church at the Park is proposing a new Clean Start program. C@P can support unsheltered individuals in moving toward stability through job training and employment, while also enhancing the safety, cleanliness, and livability of our community. Clean Start offers unhoused individuals supported employment opportunities as sanitation workers who work to keep their community safe and sanitary. Similar efforts across the nation have demonstrated effective outcomes including: <b>CLEANER CITY:</b> Clean Start helps keep the city clean by employing unhoused individuals to remove litter and maintain public spaces, improving the appearance and health of our community. <b>STRENGTHENED RELATIONSHIPS:</b> Clean Start strengthens relationships between the unhoused community and the City of Salem by fostering visibility, trust, and mutual respect—demonstrating the value of inclusive employment and shared responsibility for a cleaner, healthier city <b>INCREASED EMPLOYMENT:</b> Clean Start increases employment outcomes for unhoused individuals by providing paid, low-barrier job opportunities, hands-on work experience, and connections to long-term employment pathways.</p>

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# CHURCH @ THE PARK



**CLEAN START  
PARTNERSHIP  
OPPORTUNITY**

**Through Clean Start, C@P will support unsheltered individuals in moving toward stability through job training and employment, while also enhancing the safety, cleanliness, and livability of our community.**

# IMPACT.

Clean Start offers unhoused individuals supported employment opportunities as sanitation workers who work to keep their community safe and sanitary. Similar efforts across the nation have demonstrated effective outcomes including:

- ✦ **CLEANER CITY:** Clean Start helps keep the city clean by employing unhoused individuals to remove litter and maintain public spaces, improving the appearance and health of our community.
- ✦ **STRENGTHENED RELATIONSHIPS:** Clean Start strengthens relationships between the unhoused community and the City of Salem by fostering visibility, trust, and mutual respect—demonstrating the value of inclusive employment and shared responsibility for a cleaner, healthier city
- ✦ **INCREASED EMPLOYMENT:** Clean Start increases employment outcomes for unhoused individuals by providing paid, low-barrier job opportunities, hands-on work experience, and connections to long-term employment pathways.

# SERVICES & INVESTMENT.



**FOR** \$120,000 in start-up expenses & \$345,000 in annual expenses, C@P will provide the following services:

## **ON-CALL RESPONSE**

C@P will operate a 24/7 hotline for City staff and downtown businesses to report areas of concern, allowing the Clean Start team to respond quickly and prioritize cleanup efforts where they're needed most.

## **SCHEDULED CLEANING 7 DAYS / WEEK**

The Clean Start team will provide cleaning services seven days a week, focusing on areas with the highest need to ensure consistent care and visible impact throughout the city.

## **WRAP AROUND SUPPORT TO UNSHELTERED INDIVIDUALS**

By operating Clean Start, C@P will leverage our outreach team, licensed safety staff, and shelter services to offer wraparound support to unhoused individuals encountered during cleanup efforts—helping maintain a safe, clean environment while connecting people to dignified, stable alternatives to encampment living.

**From:** [Lynelle Wilcox](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Cc:** [Vanessa Nordyke](#); [Julie Hoy](#); [Paul Tigan](#); [Linda Nishioka](#); [Shane Matthews](#); [Deanna Gwyn](#); [Dr. Irvin M Brown](#); [Mai Vang](#); [Micki Varney](#); [Trevor Womack](#)  
**Subject:** Public comment: 072125 City Council work session - agenda item 2a  
**Date:** Monday, July 21, 2025 9:20:11 AM

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Mayor Hoy and City Councilors

My name is Lynelle Wilcox. I live on Norway Street in Ward 1.

I'm writing in regard to Work Session Agenda item 2a: Improving Public Safety and Livability.

I began working with people experiencing homelessness when I volunteered at a Salem warming center about 8 years ago. I've been captured ever since.

**Why don't they just...?** I wondered initially why so many people were homeless? If they need money and a place to live, why don't they just get a job?

If they are struggling with addiction, why don't they just go to detox or rehab?  
If they have mental illness, why don't they just go to a psychiatrist and get medication?

If I were to write a book, it would be "Why don't they just...?" and I'd share all the things I've learned along the way. Nothing is as easy as it seemed to me back then.

Yet while I still believed in easy answers, I met a woman who sometimes screamed profanity and other words at people I can't see. That behavior sometimes led to her being kicked out of stores and shelters. One day I asked her... why don't you see a psychiatrist? Why don't you get medication so you don't struggle so much? She told me...Lynelle I tried that so many times. The only medication that quiets the voices in my head gives me extreme diarrhea. So I can be the crazy lady who screams and curses at people you can't see, or I can be the woman who has poop on her clothes. There is more shame in having poop on my clothing than yelling at people others can't see. You pick.  
And I realized I'd make that same choice.

**Perceptions of danger:** I've changed my mind and heart so many times about so many of my beliefs along the way. At my last job, I was a social worker helping people with disabilities to use Social Security work incentives to move

forward.

One client experienced mental illness and turrets, and during our meetings in the office he sometimes yelled at people I can't see. I wasn't afraid. I knew his diagnosis and expected this behavior from him sometimes.

When I began working with people experiencing homelessness, I noticed that I DID feel fear whenever someone was yelling at people I can't see. I had to think... WHAT is the difference? I'm in public! WHY am I afraid?

Someone can yell at people I can't see in an office, where I knew their diagnosis and was working with the person anyway, with no fear. Yet if someone I didn't know had the same behavior, outside in the world, I was afraid. **The only difference I could come up with is that some part of me must think homeless people are dangerous. Without even realizing I had that belief, it was creating my fear. I had to fix that inaccurate belief in my own head.**

Homeless or not, mental illness or not, some people will be dangerous. I want to always have situational awareness and my intuition engaged, while I also stay aware of my own beliefs and adjust them as needed to reflect reality. Sometimes the work is inside my own head.

**About safety and livability:** I asked some officers this month about what they are seeing. They shared that downtown crimes seem to be mostly livability crimes – feces, broken windows, camping, fires, trash, petty theft – crimes that reflect people having nowhere to have basic human needs met. Nowhere to sleep, go to the bathroom, eat, or live.

Business owners should not have the workload of cleaning those things up. And every human being should have the means and access to having basic human needs met. The duality matters and is interconnected – when basic human needs are met, livability crimes decrease.

Meanwhile, we have shootings, gang violence, and sheltered adults and teens who specifically commit violence against people experiencing homelessness. Last year one TEENAGER beat a 64 year old homeless man to DEATH. Just this month, a business owner casually admitted that he dumps vomit, feces, and food onto homeless people on his property. Just this week, two young adults were arrested for throwing eggs at people experiencing homelessness. How is

any of this a safe and livable environment for unsheltered homeless?

National data reflects that homeless people are more likely to be the victims of violence than perpetrators of violence against a stranger.

Some women and men share that they first began doing meth when they were homeless, because they need to stay awake at night in order to stay safe. Men sleeping on sidewalks have shared that they sometimes woke up because some men are peeing on them as they sleep. The bars let out, and THIS is their fun? Homeless women AND men are in danger every day and night of their lives.

**We know what works:** A lot has been done to house and shelter more people, and we need more of the things that work: Housing First, affordable housing that is actually affordable for people living on \$967/month SSI, permanent supported housing for people who need ongoing support, more treatment and places to live for people who experience mental illness, more detox and recovery options, more places people can live as their health decreases and disabilities increase, so fewer people fall through each of those gaps. More mental health professionals as first responders for people experiencing mental health crises. And more basic needs being met along the way – restrooms that are open 24/7, water fountains, cell phone charging stations, trash cans.

**Good stewardship:** We're spending tons of time and money to clean up after livability crimes, when we could shift to investing more time and money to prevent or decrease those crimes by enabling more livability. Wouldn't the latter reflect better stewardship of our limited funds?

**Values:** Salem conduct an annual Belonging survey. The survey's purpose is to assess what people in Salem are experiencing, so we can identify ways for **all** people in Salem to experience community-ness, inclusion, and belonging.

Annual survey results consistently reflect that people experiencing homelessness also experience significant discrimination, often daily. They are often treated as if they are invisible or vermin, and they are ongoing targets for violence.

As a result of the survey's findings, Salem's Human Rights Commission recommended that City Council make housing status a protected class. In November 2022, Salem's City Council voted to add "housing status" as a protected class, because the discrimination against people experiencing

homelessness was so extensive.

The discrimination and violence are still happening against people who are homeless. We DO have a safety and livability issue - people experiencing homelessness do NOT have any safety, or livability of even having basic human needs met. This calls the question of whether our values apply to ALL people who live and work in Salem, or just sheltered people?

Please act in ways that live up to Salem's professed values and not down to our fears. Please act in ways that enable communityness, belonging, safety, and livability for ALL.

Thank you for your consideration.

Lynelle Wilcox

**From:** [Lynelle Wilcox](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Cc:** [Vanessa Nordyke](#); [Julie Hoy](#); [Paul Tigan](#); [Linda Nishioka](#); [Shane Matthews](#); [Deanna Gwyn](#); [Dr. Irvin M Brown](#); [Mai Vang](#); [Micki Varney](#)  
**Subject:** Public comment: 072125 City Council work session - agenda item 2a  
**Date:** Monday, July 21, 2025 11:35:56 AM

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Mayor Hoy and City Councilors

My name is Lynelle Wilcox. I live on Norway Street in Ward 1.

I'm writing this second letter as public comment on Agenda item 2a: Improving Public Safety and Livability.

Back in 2019, the city was considering a Sit/Lie ordinance. Advocates wrote many letters to share our reasons and perspectives for opposing sit/lie. We also went to the streets to learn and share what some businesses and unsheltered individuals were experiencing.

As a result of meetings and outreach, we collected a combination of 383 letters and/or signatures, opposing sit/lie. We delivered a ribboned packet of letters to the City Recorder's office and also brought our own packet to the City Council meeting. At the time, sit/lie did not pass.





**Outreach:** Advocates were happy about that, yet whatever the outcome had been, the proposed sit/lie ordinance was a valuable catalyst to speak to many downtown businesses and unsheltered individuals.

None of the business people shared that they committed violence against homeless individuals, yet other than that, our findings back then were similar to the Salem Reporter's findings in their recent article.

Many businesses conveyed that they are affected by people living outside. Many expressed some inconveniences, yet most also conveyed sadness that people are living outside with nowhere to be, and some acknowledged that it could be any of us, and that every human being is somebody's someone. Many business people shared that initially they were annoyed and sometimes scared, yet when they offered kindness, a relationship usually happened, and the connection was often valuable on both ends.

Some business owners shared that they (understandably!) don't appreciate the ripples of homelessness. And yet some shared that they befriended people who live outside their store. And by building a relationship, different ripples happened – some shared that the homeless individuals became extra eyes and ears on their business – free extra security. Some shared that connections changed their own perception and that in itself changed the dynamics to be positive.

Many conveyed that the vibe you give is often the vibe you get back. Not always, but often. Many business people conveyed that when they offered kindness, the relationship flourished and they were better for that experience

and from what they learned.

Some business owners shared about the challenge and biohazard of having poop in their doorway. I had assumed that doorway poops reflect situations of people who experienced health issues, or cases of disrespectful people who were leaving a purposeful, metaphorical “F” you.

**Safety and livability:** Safety and livability is a complicated topic, as it requires balance in order to have safety and livability for all. What enables livability and what enables dignity and inclusion of people experiencing homelessness? What does balance look like? What is enforceable in ways that won't do more harm than good? And WHY would anyone poop in a doorway?! And people shared slivers of their stories.

**Shame of homelessness:** One man shared about the first time he slept on the sidewalk. And how ashamed he felt. And how he waited till the city was dark and asleep before he unfolded a blanket and folded himself up into it. And how he woke up early, to leave no trace, and so no one would know that he had slept on the sidewalk.

Because he never expected to be someone who would end up with no place to live, and he didn't want people to think of him as one of “those” people.

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And as we talk about problems downtown, one girl is brushing her long lovely hair. And she tells you that she was taught that you brush hair and clip toenails in private. Yet when her toenails were pushing against the inside of her shoes, and she finally found a nail clipper but had nowhere to go for privacy, she clipped her toenails in a park. Feeling shame for doing personal hygiene in a public park with people all around.

And she tells you that every day, a little bit of dignity slips away, as you make do, as you do what is needed wherever you can, because options are often a luxury that doesn't exist for them.

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A woman shared about the lack of bathrooms in general, and especially at night. And a man shared that he'll go to the alleys, behind dumpsters, to have a sliver of privacy as he relieves himself. And some women shared that the alleys

are not safe for them. So they might go on the sidewalks or doorways.

And none of them never expected to be in this position, yet what do you do when you find yourself in this place, with no options for meeting such a basic human need? And what do you do when you have no plastic bags, no toilet paper, nothing to pick it up with, and no trash cans nearby to put it, even if you had toilet paper? And with each person sharing, their words and the tears in their voices convey their deep shame. Their shame is deeper than our disgust.

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And one man shared that he tries to eat in ways and times that he won't need to relieve himself until places are open for him to use a bathroom. Yet sometimes health issues result in runny and unpredictable poop, or some drugs (prescription or not) are laxatives, or nature has no heed for the bathroom scheduling you aim for. So he'll use alleys and behind-dumpsters as needed.

Yet when there's no warning or lead time, and when relieving yourself in public is already undignified and shame-filled, a doorway offers a shred more privacy than the sidewalk itself. And a doorway means you're less likely to attract attention for doing a basic human function that every human being does. And a doorway reduces the chance of being cited for indecent exposure, and possibly being a sex offender as a result. Men and women have had that happen.

And he's embarrassed to admit that he's used doorways on rare occasions. And the shame in his voice is thick. Public disapproval only adds to the shame that he already feels at a deep core level that eats him up a tiny bit each day.

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Things I didn't know at the time:

Some people use meth for the first time specifically to stay awake at night, in order to be safe. Sleeping is safer in the daytime, when people are around. For some people, meth causes diarrhea. So you trade dignity for safety in order to stay alive.

Metformin is a common prescription medication for people who have diabetes. Metformin causes diarrhea for some people. So you choose whether to take meds to help stabilize your blood sugar, or you choose not to take that medication, because you don't have fast and easy access to a restroom 24/7.

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Another man shared that he also trained his body to only need to go to the bathroom once restrooms are available. And he feels so much shame about using doorways or sidewalks that on the rare times that he couldn't make it to a restroom, he soiled his pants rather than using a doorway.

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And now I see that these situations are rarely, if ever, the "F" you I imagined them to be. Now I see those times as a reflection of a shared human need not just to relieve ourselves, but also to have a shred of privacy, dignity, and safety when we do so. And I'm embarrassed that as a community we haven't done better yet.

And I am reminded once again of the things that seem so obvious to me only after someone shares slivers of their stories. And I am grateful for their trust and candor, and so sad to see our lack in enabling ways for fellow human beings to meet basic human needs with some safety and dignity.

With every individual I spoke with about bathroom needs, their shame was bigger than our disgust.

In a city rich with beauty, and in a city aiming for inclusion, belonging, and dignity for all, my heart breaks for the shame they feel and conveyed to me. And I'm in sad awe of the lengths some individuals go, to avoid using public space as a restroom.

And there have been times in my own home or travels where due to illness, lack of bathrooms, or other issues, I barely made it to the bathroom in time. Haven't we all been there now and then? **What if that was your reality every single day?**

And I know there are problems and messes to clean up when we have bathrooms. Yet we have problems and messes to clean up when we don't have bathrooms.

If we're investing our collective time and money on cleanup anyway, what if we chose paths that enable dignity, livability, and more safety for ALL?

Thank you for your consideration.

Lynelle Wilcox

**From:** [Missy Melissa](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** PUBLIC COMMENT TONIGHTS MEETING 7/21/2025  
**Date:** Monday, July 21, 2025 9:35:07 AM

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**Dear Members of the City Council,**

I am writing today to address an issue that is deeply important to me and our community: homelessness. It is impossible to ignore the growing number of individuals struggling without shelter, often right in our own neighborhoods. They are our neighbors, our fellow community members, and they deserve more than to be overlooked or ignored. Among them are our veterans, who have served our country and now find themselves without the basic security of a home.

One solution that I believe could make an immediate difference is the repurposing of empty buildings throughout our city. These buildings, which are sitting vacant, can be transformed into tiny homes or apartments, providing safe, secure shelter for those in need. Having a stable place to call home is essential to offer individuals the security they need to not have to move constantly. It is vital that they have a safe place to rest, the ability to shower, and an address from which to seek employment. For those who have fallen into homelessness due to unfortunate circumstances, this will provide the opportunity to rebuild their lives and regain their dignity.

These homes would not only offer shelter but could include basic amenities such as air conditioning during the hot summer months and heat in the winter. This is not only practical but compassionate, as it ensures the basic needs of those most vulnerable are met.

Moreover, I urge the council to consider the reinstatement of trash cans in neighborhoods that are experiencing increased homelessness. Proper waste disposal is crucial for maintaining dignity and hygiene, and it can make a world of difference for individuals who are struggling. By providing these basic amenities, we are sending the message that we value all members of our community, regardless of their circumstances.

For those struggling with addiction, I believe it is crucial to support rehabilitation programs such as Union Gospel Mission (UGM) and similar local initiatives. These programs provide vital services that not only help individuals regain stability but also offer the chance for recovery, health, and dignity. The individuals affected by addiction are not simply a problem to be swept away; they are people in need of compassion and the right resources to rebuild their lives.

I ask the city council to approach this issue with empathy, prioritizing long-term solutions that treat people with dignity, respect, and care. We have the opportunity to make meaningful changes that offer a path to stability for the most vulnerable in our community, including our veterans who have sacrificed so much for our freedom. I urge you to take action and use the

resources available to improve the lives of those who are suffering.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I trust that, together, we can work to make our city a place where everyone has the chance to live with dignity.

Sincerely,

Melissa Gauger

In area code 97302

**From:** [Evan West](#)  
**To:** [Julie Hoy](#); [CityRecorder](#); [citycouncil](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Downtown Safety Work Session  
**Date:** Monday, July 21, 2025 9:58:35 AM

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Mayor Hoy and Members of City Council,

You cannot police away homelessness. You cannot police away mental health crises. If you want to bolster a police presence downtown by bringing back the bicycle unit, that's great. However, as recent crime has shown, people experiencing homelessness are themselves most likely to be the victims. Do not drain police resources from other parts of our community in an effort to dress up our downtown core. If you want to do something effective for our downtown, eliminate the paid parking experiment before it causes irreversible damage to our struggling businesses.

Sincerely,

Evan West

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Evan West, M.A.

He/Him/His

970-980-1445

[evanwest714@gmail.com](mailto:evanwest714@gmail.com)

**From:** [Kindness Closet of Salem](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Public testimony for work session 7/21/25  
**Date:** Monday, July 21, 2025 10:18:34 AM

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Mayor Hoy and City Councilors,

I am writing today as a concerned Salem resident of Ward 2 and community advocate. I am the Executive Director of Kindness Closet of Salem as well as a Clinical Social Work Associate working toward licensure at a local community mental health agency.

Kindness Closet of Salem originated as a grassroots group of Salemites who desired to be part of change in the community by coming alongside our neighbors experiencing homelessness. Since 2016, we've served thousands of meals and provided essential items for survival. But the most important, and impactful, thing we've done, is to cultivate a sense of belonging and community by meeting people where they're at and allowed space for relationships to grow. In the years of providing services and engaging in outreach, we've never experienced a situation where things escalated to a point of needing law enforcement intervention.

As a citizen, I campaigned for the livability levy before the last election. I was so pleased when the levy passed because I know how tight the budget is and how ardently our city staff work. I am now deeply concerned about the messaging regarding homelessness and violence impacting "livability" in our city.

People experiencing homelessness are much more likely to experience violence than they are to perpetrate violence. My friends have told me stories about being urinated on while sleeping on sidewalks downtown by people stumbling out of bars. We don't need to look further to corroborate these stories than a story recently published by Salem Reporter in which a downtown business owner gloated about throwing homeless people into the street and throwing urine, feces, and vomit on them. Only a few days later, two young adults were found throwing eggs at homeless individuals for entertainment. Finally, the most horrifying situation of a homeless man, Russell, beat to death in NE Salem for simply existing.

The situation at UGM was a horrible example of the failures of our mental health systems and processes in Oregon of which I am well aware because of my "day job". Our city leaders should focus on what has been working such as the SOS team. I urge you to fully restore and invest in mental health supports for the livability and quality of life for Salemites. More police would not have prevented the tragedy at UGM, however proper mental health care support may have. Additionally, get the Cahoots model of street response up and running as soon as possible.

I want to end my letter on a positive story noting a few community partners. I met my friend Jim in 2020 while operating the Kindness Closet day center in NE Salem. Jim visited us pretty much every single week and became a very close friend who happened to live in a trailer which he attempted to pull around the city. Jim's trailer was constantly at risk of being towed and impounded by the city, and was, at least once at which time private citizens banded together to rescue Jim's home in the middle of an ice storm in 2023. Jim became terminally ill late last year and ultimately passed away housed in a warm bed with the support of Salem Hospital and their Fetch program as well as Little Critters Rescue. Jim's only family when he passed away were his three small dogs. He left this world knowing he was loved by his friends

at Kindness Closet and that his pups would be cared for. Jim was not dangerous. Jim deserved livability as much as anyone with skills and resources to be sheltered.

Respectfully,

Kendra Taylor, CSWA  
Executive Director of Kindness Closet of Salem  
1080 16th St SE  
Salem, Or 97302  
Ward 2

**From:** [Manny Martinez](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** testimony  
**Date:** Monday, July 21, 2025 12:10:18 PM

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Hello,

I would like the following testimony to be added to today's meeting. Thank you.

Manny Martinez  
Ward 2

Testimony

Hello, my name is Manny Martinez and I live in Ward 2. I am here today to speak about public safety and homelessness in Salem, specifically in and around the downtown area. This has become a very divisive issue in our city. And like most issues these days, the arguments are generally divided by left vs. right. The left argues for the side of compassion. We are told that we must be more compassionate, and provide more services, as the majority of the homeless are suffering from mental illness and addiction issues. The right will argue that the homeless population are committing crimes, some of which are serious crimes, and causing significant damage to the business community, and downtown as a whole. Today, I would like to say something that perhaps has never been said at a city council meeting. Both sides are correct. We do need to have compassion for these people. They are human beings, and they are suffering. We do need to make more investments into mental health and addictions services, as well as shelters, and some transitional housing. However, we cannot ignore the fact that the homeless community is committing a significant amount of crime. And even though it is true that being homeless itself is not a crime, it is indeed a crime to defecate in the streets. Public urination is a crime. Leaving giant piles of trash on the sidewalks and streets is a crime. Shoplifting is crime. Trespassing on private property is a crime. Harassment and threatening behavior towards fellow citizens is a crime. I could go on and on. And I say this as a recovering alcoholic with over 6 years of sobriety. I understand this issue on a very personal level, and I have a tremendous amount of compassion for the homeless community. However, we either have laws or we don't. And laws are only laws when they are enforced, regardless of the economic status of the individual. Chief Womack has made it abundantly clear that one of the best things we can do in the immediate, to improve our public safety, is to provide the police department with enough additional funding to bring back the bicycle patrol to downtown Salem. Ideally, this would be an additional 8 officers that would be deployed to patrol the downtown area on bicycles. I remember when we had this, and the officers did a fantastic job. They were in constant communication with the local business owners, and provided the downtown area with a heightened sense of peace and security. With the passing of the tax levy, and now the addition of paid parking in all of downtown Salem, I insist that the city council make public safety the number 1 priority. Additional funding to the police department for the bicycle patrol officers is a practical, and necessary first step, to address the ongoing issue of public safety in Salem. Thank you.

**From:** [Daniel Rouslin](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Letter to City Council (time critical)  
**Date:** Monday, July 21, 2025 12:40:32 PM  
**Attachments:** [Dear City Council and Mayor Hoy.docx](#)

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Dear City Recorder:

Please accept the attached letter to City Council for today's meeting.

Thank you,

Dan Rouslin  
Jeanne Collins

Dear City Council and Mayor Hoy:

My wife and I are concerned about the homeless situation in Salem, especially the conflicts between folks occupying areas near downtown businesses. Shop owners are justified in wanting this population to disappear so that more people with homes and means will be attracted to their businesses.

On the other hand, we believe that most unhoused people do not choose to live this way. The high cost of affordable housing in Salem and elsewhere, as well as an economic system that favors wealthier Americans over those with very little, is the main reason the latter are so visible on our streets. In addition, most shelters have barriers to entry. These include people with pets, people with families, and people with mental health issues and substance addiction. The new Navigation Center addresses some of these issues, but has a limited number of spaces.

We feel that it is important for the Salem police to keep these factors in mind when they confront houseless folks on our streets. Humane treatment accompanied by helpful suggestions should be an important part of their approach.

Sincerely,

Dr. Daniel Rouslin

Jeanne Collins, retired pilot, Horizon Airlines