

**From:** [Scott W. Cantonwine](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Public comment - Jan 12 2026 City Council meeting  
**Date:** Monday, January 12, 2026 1:59:18 PM  
**Attachments:** [CWC Investment Company Salem City Council Public Comment Jan 12 2026.pdf](#)

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Hello,

Please see attached public comment for the Jan 12 2026 City Council meeting.

Thanks, Scott

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January 12, 2026

City of Salem  
City Council  
cityrecorder@cityofsalem.net

**RE: Salem Business Climate  
Public Comment – January 12, 2026 City Council Meeting**

Dear City Council Members:

I am unable to attend tonight's City Council meeting, but wanted to take a moment to share public comment in support of the Salem Chamber of Commerce's assessment of the Salem business climate.

Our business touches many sectors of the Salem business community – property management, real estate holdings and investments, and the various businesses engaged in by our tenants. Despite the diversity in these sectors, there is a common theme: frustration. To distill these frustrations into one sentiment, there is a strong frustration about the delta between taxes/fees/regulations and service delivery/priorities. Despite historical policy differences between the business community and City, we need to align on shared understandings to leverage ways to improve the City. As Kennedy once said, *"a rising tide lifts all boats"*.

As a suggestion for a starting point, one shared understanding should be: **what we're currently doing isn't working**. Perhaps the most visible example of this is the homelessness issue in Salem. Two things can be true at once – we can have compassion and concern for the dignity of the homeless in Salem AND enforce reasonable rules that preserve the livability and "business-ability"<sup>1</sup> of Salem.

As a real estate investor and licensed commercial real estate broker, I would love to be able to promote Salem as a great place to live, work, and do business (and have it be true!). Moreover, regardless of our political or policy allegiances, **we need it to be true**. Communities with high "business-ability" generate wages and business income, increase property values, and support the non-profits that do a lot of the heavy lifting on social and cultural issues. We can all agree those are good outcomes (back to Kennedy's theory on tides). So, let's make Salem a place where they happen.

Scott Cantonwine  
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<sup>1</sup> "Business-ability" is a creatively-coined word that means "the measure by which one can successfully conduct business in a given place."