

## **Feedback from the July 23, 2025 State of Downtown event sponsored and organized by Salem Main Street**

Approximately 50 people representing downtown businesses and property owners gathered on July 23, 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, Fire, and paid on-street parking. State Representative Kevin Mannix and Marion County District Attorney Paige Clarkson were both in attendance and offered responses to questions from participants.

Staff shared key dates for future Council conversations about these topics. 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. Dana DeKlyne, Assistant Director for Urban Development, spoke to the initial performance of the paid on-street parking program and business' priorities of increasing security and cleaning, should revenues continue to grow beyond cost of existing services. No revenues from the paid on-street parking system are anticipated to fund staffing.

Questions and comments from the group were focused on empathy for those facing addiction and behavioral health challenges, working within existing law and available facilities or resources, and reducing impacts of behaviors on downtown visitors, employees, and businesses. The majority of those present sought opportunities to work collaboratively with the City on a broader solution, incorporating a variety of perspectives. One question prompted a response about the recent Legislative Session, and efforts to secure funding support in payment in lieu of taxes.

Staff offered to provide more detail in a follow up communication to Main Street on questions related to: (1) the lease for the ARCHES property; (2) timing of updates on performance of paid on-street parking and whether non-profits would be eligible for reduced cost parking; and (3) update on the Rudy's property.

Another conversation with the Main Street group is anticipated, at their request, in September 2025.