

February 13, 2026

To: Courtney Knox Busch, City of Salem
From: John Horvick & Phoebe Wagner, DHM Research
Re: City of Salem Safety and Livability Survey, #74072

Introduction and Methodology

From February 3 to 10, 2026, DHM Research conducted a survey of Salem residents. The purpose of the survey was to assess residents' opinions of safety and livability. The survey benchmarked several questions from the previous survey done in September 2025 to track changes in opinion.

Research Methodology

The survey consisted of 400 Salem residents and took approximately 7 minutes to complete. This is a sufficient sample size to assess resident opinions generally and to review findings by multiple subgroups, including age, gender, area of the city, race and ethnicity, education level, political affiliation, and home ownership status.

Respondents were contacted from multiple lists, which may include a list of registered voters, a landline household list compiled from public records and consumer lists, and a cellular consumer list based on cell and cable consumer information matched to publicly available address information. Telephone respondents were contacted by a live interviewer, and text-to-online respondents received a text invitation directing them to an online survey. In gathering responses, a variety of quality control measures were employed, including questionnaire pre-testing and validation. Quotas were set by age, gender, area of the city, race and ethnicity, and political affiliation to ensure a representative sample.

Statement of Limitations

Any sampling of opinions or attitudes is subject to a margin of error. The margin of error is a standard statistical calculation that represents differences between the sample and total population at a confidence interval, or probability, calculated to be 95%. This means that there is a 95% probability that the sample taken for the study would fall within the stated margin of error if compared with the results achieved from surveying the entire population. The margin of error for this survey is: $\pm 4.9\%$.

DHM Research Background

DHM Research has been providing opinion research and consultation throughout the Pacific Northwest and other regions of the United States for over 40 years. The firm is nonpartisan and independent and specializes in research projects to support public policy making.



City of Salem
2026 Safety and Livability Survey
February 3–10, 2026
Salem Residents
N=400; margin of error ±4.9%
7 minutes
DHM Research Project #74072

Hello, my name is _____ from **[name of fielding house]**. I have some questions about your community (specify if possible). May I speak with **[name on file]**? **[Must speak with name on list. If unavailable schedule callback.]**

As needed:

- We are not trying to sell you anything.
- The survey should only take a few minutes, and I think you will find the questions interesting.
- Your answers are strictly confidential.

INTRODUCTION

1. First, in what language do you prefer to take this survey?

| Response category | n=400 |
|-------------------|-------|
| English / Inglés | 95% |
| Spanish / Español | 5% |

2. What is your age?

| Response category | n=400 |
|-------------------|-------|
| 18-24 | 7% |
| 25-34 | 27% |
| 35-54 | 33% |
| 55-64 | 13% |
| 65+ | 20% |

3. How do you describe your gender?

| Response category | n=400 |
|-------------------------------------|-------|
| Man | 51% |
| Woman | 49% |
| Non-binary or gender non-conforming | n=1 |

4. What is your zip code? **[Asked for verification purposes]**



SAFETY & LIVABILITY

5. In the last 30 days, how many days did you visit downtown Salem?

| Response category | 2026 n=400 | 2025 n=400 |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------|
| 0 days | 20% | 14% |
| 1 to 5 days | 49% | 38% |
| 6 to 10 days | 14% | 18% |
| 11 to 20 days | 8% | 14% |
| More than 20 days | 9% | 16% |

Next, please indicate if you feel very safe, somewhat safe, somewhat unsafe, or very unsafe in the following area of Salem during the day and at night.

| Response category | Total Safe | Very safe | Somewhat safe | Total Unsafe | Somewhat unsafe | Very unsafe | Don't know |
|---|---------------|--------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------------|----------------|---------------|
| 6. Downtown Salem during the day | | | | | | | |
| 2026, n=400 | 68% | 34% | 34% | 29% | 20% | 9% | 3% |
| 2025, n=400 | 69% | 28% | 42% | 27% | 18% | 9% | 4% |
| 7. Downtown Salem at night | | | | | | | |
| 2026, n=400 | 39% | 13% | 27% | 51% | 24% | 27% | 9% |
| 2025, n=400 | 33% | 12% | 21% | 57% | 30% | 26% | 10% |
| 8. North/Northeast Salem during the day | | | | | | | |
| 2026, n=400 | 54% | 21% | 33% | 36% | 22% | 15% | 10% |
| 2025, n=400 | 58% | 22% | 36% | 32% | 19% | 13% | 11% |
| 9. North/Northeast Salem at night | | | | | | | |
| 2026, n=400 | 34% | 11% | 23% | 53% | 23% | 30% | 13% |
| 2025, n=400 | 26% | 7% | 19% | 60% | 24% | 35% | 14% |
| 10. South Salem during the day | | | | | | | |
| 2026, n=400 | 79% | 40% | 39% | 10% | 8% | 2% | 11% |
| 2025, n=400 | 80% | 43% | 37% | 11% | 8% | 3% | 9% |
| 11. South Salem at night | | | | | | | |
| 2026, n=400 | 59% | 22% | 36% | 24% | 18% | 5% | 18% |
| 2025, n=400 | 57% | 22% | 35% | 27% | 19% | 8% | 16% |
| 12. West Salem during the day | | | | | | | |
| 2026, n=400 | 71% | 38% | 33% | 12% | 8% | 4% | 17% |
| 2025, n=400 | 71% | 39% | 33% | 12% | 8% | 4% | 17% |
| 13. West Salem at night | | | | | | | |
| 2026, n=400 | 50% | 21% | 29% | 24% | 15% | 9% | 26% |
| 2025, n=400 | 48% | 16% | 32% | 27% | 18% | 9% | 26% |
| 14. Your neighborhood during the day | | | | | | | |
| 2026, n=400 | 89% | 61% | 27% | 11% | 8% | 3% | <1% |
| 2025, n=400 | 88% | 56% | 32% | 12% | 10% | 2% | -- |
| 15. Your neighborhood at night | | | | | | | |
| 2026, n=400 | 73% | 36% | 37% | 26% | 16% | 11% | <1% |
| 2025, n=400 | 71% | 36% | 35% | 29% | 20% | 9% | <1% |

Next, consider the overall livability of parts of Salem. Livability means a place is safe, clean, and easy to get around, with affordable homes, good jobs, access to quality services, and a welcoming feeling for everyone.

Rate the overall livability of the following areas of Salem.

| Response category | Total Good | Very good | Good | Total Poor | Poor | Very poor | Don't know |
|---------------------------|------------|-----------|------|------------|------|-----------|------------|
| 16. Downtown Salem | | | | | | | |
| 2026, n=400 | 39% | 8% | 31% | 55% | 35% | 21% | 6% |
| 2025, n=400 | 33% | 8% | 25% | 58% | 38% | 20% | 8% |
| 17. North/Northeast Salem | | | | | | | |
| 2026, n=400 | 35% | 5% | 30% | 56% | 36% | 20% | 9% |
| 2025, n=400 | 32% | 3% | 29% | 54% | 32% | 22% | 13% |
| 18. South Salem | | | | | | | |
| 2026, n=400 | 69% | 22% | 47% | 18% | 13% | 5% | 12% |
| 2025, n=400 | 69% | 21% | 49% | 20% | 15% | 5% | 11% |
| 19. West Salem | | | | | | | |
| 2026, n=400 | 63% | 26% | 36% | 22% | 17% | 5% | 15% |
| 2025, n=400 | 59% | 19% | 40% | 25% | 18% | 7% | 17% |
| 20. Your neighborhood | | | | | | | |
| 2026, n=400 | 74% | 29% | 44% | 25% | 18% | 8% | 1% |
| 2025, n=400 | 74% | 29% | 45% | 25% | 17% | 7% | 2% |

DEMOGRAPHICS

These last few questions are for categorization purposes only.

21. Area of city **[From sample]**

| Response category | n=400 |
|-------------------|-------|
| West | 15% |
| North/Northeast | 50% |
| South | 35% |

22. Downtown area resident **[From sample]**¹

| Response category | n=400 |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| Downtown Salem resident | 1% |
| Not downtown Salem resident | 99% |

23. Party **[From sample]**

| Response category | n=400 |
|-------------------|-------|
| Democrat | 30% |
| Republican | 21% |
| NAV | 42% |
| Other | 7% |

¹ Defined as west of the Willamette River to 12th St NE and from Market St NE to Mission St SE.

24. How many years have you lived in Salem?

| Response category | n=400 |
|---------------------|-------|
| 0-5 years | 15% |
| 6-10 years | 14% |
| More than 10 years | 70% |
| I prefer not to say | 1% |

25. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

| Response category | n=400 |
|------------------------------|-------|
| Less than high school | 4% |
| High school diploma/GED | 36% |
| Some college | 31% |
| College degree | 14% |
| Graduate/professional school | 14% |
| I prefer not to say | 1% |

26. Which category best describes your 2025 gross household income, before taxes? Remember to include everyone living in your household. Your best estimate will do.

| Response category | n=400 |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| Less than \$25,000 | 8% |
| \$25,000 to less than \$50,000 | 13% |
| \$50,000 to less than \$75,000 | 15% |
| \$75,000 to less than \$100,000 | 21% |
| \$100,000 to less than \$150,000 | 21% |
| \$150,000 or more | 16% |
| I prefer not to say | 7% |

27. Which of the following best describes your race or ethnicity? You may choose more than one. **[Allow for multiple responses]**

| Response category | n=400 |
|---------------------------------------|------------|
| African American/Black | 6% |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 4% |
| Hispanic/Latino | 24% |
| Native American/American Indian | 4% |
| White/Caucasian | 68% |
| Other (please specify): [Open] | 1% |
| I prefer not to say | 2% |
| White alone | 62% |
| POC | 36% |

28. Do you rent or own your home?

| Response category | n=400 |
|---------------------|-------|
| Rent | 37% |
| Own | 56% |
| Something else | 5% |
| I prefer not to say | 2% |