



# CITY OF SALEM

555 Liberty St SE  
Salem, OR 97301

## Written Testimony #1

### Urban Renewal Agency

---

**Monday, March 25, 2024**

**6:00 PM**

**Council Chambers /  
Hybrid Meeting**

---

**3.3a. [24-105](#)**

Initiate creation of a potential new North Waterfront Urban Renewal Area

Ward(s): 1 and 5

Councilor(s): Stapleton and Gonzalez

Neighborhood(s): CANDO, Grant, Highland

Result Area(s): Strong and Diverse Economy; Welcoming and Livable Community; Safe, Reliable and Efficient Infrastructure

**Recommendation:**

Direct staff to begin the process of initiating a new URA in the north waterfront area.

**Attachments:**

[Public Comments received by 1:30.p.m., March 25, 2024](#)

*Add - Written Testimony.*

**From:** [Bill Dixon](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Delay action on URA agenda item 3.3a  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 6:55:47 PM

---

Dear Board Members,

Regarding item 3.3a on the March 25 Urban Renewal Agency agenda, to initiate creation of a potential new North Waterfront Urban Renewal Area: Please delay any action on this proposal until staff has provided information about its potential impact on general fund revenues and until it is clear that the impact won't further undermine city services beyond their current precarious state.

At the moment, the city has cut funding for vital services in its fire, police, library and parks agencies - and is proposing cutting even more. Staff has indicated that, without spending curbs, the city won't be able to produce a balanced budget for fiscal year 2026. To further reduce funding for these services without closer examination of the impacts would not seem to be prudent.

Thank you for considering this testimony and for your service to the community.

--

*Bill Dixon, 608 Salem Heights Ave. S., Salem 97302*  
[bill.r.dixon@gmail.com](mailto:bill.r.dixon@gmail.com)  
503-602-1708

**From:** [Lloyd Chapman](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Urban Renewal Agency Meeting of 3/25/2024  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 4:59:50 PM

---

## For the record of item 3.3a - Initiate creation of a potential new North Waterfront Urban Renewal Area

Mayor Hoy and Councilors,

I urge the council, acting as the Salem Urban Renewal Agency, to delay/halt any consideration of adding a seventh urban renewal area to the City of Salem. Based on 2020-21 data from the Oregon Department of Revenue, of the five Oregon cities with a population between 100,000 and 200,000, only Salem has more than two urban renewal areas.

In addition, Salem's urban renewal revenue dedicated to infrastructure in the existing six areas exceeded \$13 million in fiscal year 2020-21. Revenue in the other large cities was typically closer to \$5.5 to \$6 million dollars.

At a time of great financial stress for the city and the school district (whose general fund is also impacted by the loss of urban renewal funds), the city should be considering closing existing urban renewal areas and moving funds to the general fund rather than approving new districts that will further limit the future growth of the general fund.

Lloyd Chapman

1240 Hillendale Dr SE

**From:** [Sue Crothers](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on creating new Urban Renewal area  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 7:49:04 AM

---

I am all for getting creative to bring vibrancy to various areas of our city that are in need of development. However, I hope, especially during this time of budget challenges and retail vacancies, the City Council will carefully weigh reducing tax revenues in the proposed area against the possible positive outcomes.

When I returned to Salem after living 3 years in Alaska in 2008, I was so excited to see the various attractive urban renewal projects along Portland Road and other spots around town. Yet today in 2024, a significant portion of the projects that were funded remain vacant (I'm thinking of the buildings near Center 50+ and along Broadway near Broadway Commons, VA Center, etc.). It's debatable whether the housing created in that area has played a significant part in revitalizing the area.

I don't know if mixed outcomes are tolerable and expected. They may be. Just please be careful about chasing money for development without careful thought. The City, County, and Public Transit Board chased money for the Courthouse Square project, and we are still left with a partial wasteland.

Good luck, and thank you for your work.

Susan Crothers  
1530 Chemeketa St. NE