



## Staff Report

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**TO:** Mayor and City Council  
**THROUGH:** Steve Powers, City Manager  
**FROM:** Norman Wright, Community Development Director

**SUBJECT:**

Salem Main Street Association: Salem Alley Days

Ward(s): Ward 1  
Councilor(s): Councilor Kaser  
Neighborhood(s): CANDU  
Result Area(s): Welcoming and Livable Community

**ISSUE:**

Salem Main Street Association's Downtown Salem Alley Days Summer Celebration.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Information Only

**SUMMARY:**

Salem's Main Street Association would like to proclaim the summer of 2019 a celebration of Salem Alley Days, which will include events celebrating the history of Salem's downtown alleys on First Wednesdays and On Your Feet Fridays.

**FACTS AND FINDINGS:**

In 2018, Salem's Main Street Association (SMSA) noted that Salem's local businesses have rediscovered Salem's downtown alleys, and residents and visitors have been enjoying the pedestrian friendly, historic nature of Salem's downtown. In an effort to further promote preservation based economic development downtown and create a welcoming and livable community, SMSA's Design Committee decided to embark upon a project to celebrate Salem's alleys. In addition to creating events within Salem's alleys, SMSA decided to develop a community project to name Salem's

downtown alleys. Naming of the alleys will be for place-making and community building, not for official addressing.

## **1. HLC Support and Background Research.**

SMSA's Design Committee representatives initially requested assistance from the Historic Preservation Officer in the spring of 2018 to help inform their understanding of the history of the alleys and, in particular, whether any alleys had been historically named.

As the Planning Division had received a Certified Local Grant (CLG) grant to complete an update to Salem's Downtown Historic District National Register Nomination in the summer of 2018, the timing was good for providing this updated information to SMSA's Design Committee. In the fall of 2018, after this research work was completed, staff prepared a packet which included a map and several alternative historic names for alleys within and adjacent to Salem's Downtown National Register Historic District (**Attachment 1**).

Representatives from SMSA's Design Committee attended the May 16, 2019 Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) meeting and presented their idea for the place-making efforts to name certain downtown alleys. The HLC voted to unanimously support their idea to celebrate the history of Salem's downtown alleys through the summer Alley Days celebration and the alley naming project (**Attachment 2**).

## **2. SMSA Public Outreach and Survey**

After receiving this historic information packet, the Salem Main Street Design Committee met with the larger SMSA Board and recommended five (5) names for a selected number of alleys. The Committee developed a flier announcing their project, which they mailed and also distributed by hand to downtown property and business owners, asking for support in naming the alleys (**Attachment 3**). On June 10<sup>th</sup> the Mayor will issue a Proclamation celebrating *Salem Alley Days* for the summer of 2019 (**Attachment 4**). Beginning in June, SMSA will coordinate summer events within Salem's downtown alleys. In addition to these events, SMSA plans to have a table at SMSA's "First Wednesdays" and "On Your Feet Fridays," which will have information about the history of Salem's alleys, their alley project, and provide an opportunity for interested parties to participate in a survey regarding alley naming. SMSA's plan is to select names in the fall of 2019 after completing their public outreach and survey work.

## **BACKGROUND:**

The Salem Main Street Association was formed in March 2016 as part of the National Main Street Program, which is based upon the successful Main Street Approach developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation Main Street Center. Main Street America, led by the National Main Street Center, provides leadership, technical assistance, and coordination to local communities to help build high quality sustainable places through preservation-based economic development while maintaining a sense of place. Oregon's Main Street Coordinator is located here in Salem, at Heritage Programs within the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

In 2015, legislation established a permanent fund for the 2017 legislative session, so that the SHPO can offer grants for up to \$200,000 in matching funds for downtown revitalization efforts in communities participating in the Oregon Main Street Network. In the 2017 legislative session, an additional \$5 million was approved for Oregon Main Street projects, and \$5 million in grants were awarded in spring of 2019 to communities throughout Oregon.

Salem's Main Street Association has not yet applied for any grants, as their organization is still young and developing, and they do not have any full time staff. Salem's Main Street Association is a nonprofit organization that operates through a volunteer community Board. In addition to the Board, there are four standing committees made up of board members and interested residents. The committees include: Promotions, Economic Vitality, Design and Organization.

Kimberli Fitzgerald, AICP  
Historic Preservation Officer

**Attachments:**

1. Historic Research - Alley Name Alternatives
2. HLC Letter of Support for "Salem Alley Days"
3. SMSA Flier
4. Proclamation: Salem Alley Days