



**Staff Report**

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**File #:** 21-518  
**Version:** 1

**Date:** 11/22/2021  
**Item #:** 4.c.

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

**SUBJECT:**

Adoption of new City Council ward boundaries.

Ward(s): All Wards  
Councilor(s): All Councilors  
Neighborhood(s): All Neighborhoods  
Result Area(s): Good Governance

**SUMMARY:**

Salem is divided into eight wards, each represented by a City Councilor. Every 10 years, after the U.S. Census is complete, Salem City Council ward boundaries are adjusted to equalize the population represented by each ward. This process is known as Ward Reapportionment. Three alternative ward boundary scenarios have been prepared for City Council consideration.

**ISSUE:**

Shall the City Council select one of the three alternative ward boundary scenarios?

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Select one of the three alternative ward boundary scenarios.

**FACTS AND FINDINGS:**

*Procedures*

1. Every ten years following the enumeration by the U.S. Census Bureau, the Salem City Council ward boundaries are adjusted to equalize the population represented by each ward. This equalization of representation is known as Ward Reapportionment. The City has a contract

with the Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments (COG) to assist the City Council in the development of these new ward boundaries.

2. The U.S. Census Bureau released their redistricting data files from the 2020 Census late which delayed Oregon legislative and congressional redistricting. Oregon redistricting was completed on September 27, 2021. Upon completion of state legislative boundary redistricting, local governments and special government bodies were directed by the Oregon Secretary of State to begin reapportionment of ward and/or election district boundaries.
3. A public hearing has been scheduled for November 22, 2021 to receive testimony on the three alternative ward map scenarios. The City Council may vote that night to select a new ward boundary map or may delay the decision to December. While there is no firm deadline, the County Elections officials have requested that a new ward map be selected by the end of the year so as not to impact the May election.
4. The criteria that must be considered in Ward Reapportionment are as follows:
  - No district [ward] shall be drawn for the purpose of diluting the voting strength of any language or ethnic minority group;
  - No district [ward] shall be drawn for the purpose of favoring any political party, incumbent elected official or other person;
  - Each district or precinct [ward], as nearly as practicable, shall:
    - Be contiguous;
    - Utilize existing geographic or political boundaries;
    - Not divide communities of common interest;
    - Be connected by transportation links; and
    - Be of equal population.
5. City Councilors attended interviews with staff between October 4<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> providing feedback regarding reapportionment criteria, potential ward boundary changes, and identifying additional considerations for the reapportionment process. Councilors provided considerations and suggestions including, but not limited to, the following: consider neighborhood association boundaries; use natural boundaries so that residents can tell what ward they are in; keep like communities in same wards; consider school attendance boundaries; and consider having two wards cover downtown.
6. The three alternatives were presented to the City Council at their November 8, 2021 meeting. The City Council voted to conduct a public hearing on the matter. Notice of the hearing has been provided to interested parties and placed in the Statesman Journal.

- Interactive maps are available for the public on the City’s website ([www.cityofsalem.net](http://www.cityofsalem.net) <<http://www.cityofsalem.net>>). The maps show the three alternatives and allow users to review neighborhood association boundaries, legislative and congressional boundaries, to calculate the population in any given census block and to submit comments and suggestions. In addition to the online maps, comments may be provided by email to [planningcomments@cityofsalem.net](mailto:planningcomments@cityofsalem.net) <<mailto:planningcomments@cityofsalem.net>>.
- Staff has conducted outreach on the Ward Reapportionment process to residents, businesses, neighborhoods, community organizations, partner agencies, and others through a variety of means, including emails, press releases, newspaper articles, and radio appearances. There were two online public open houses where the draft alternatives were presented and staff demonstrated how to use the online interactive maps. Testimony received as of the date of the staff report can be found in **Attachment 5**.

*Alternative Ward Maps*

- All three alternatives achieve the target of balancing the population within each ward to within +/- 5 percent of the target population (21,942). The three alternatives have been developed on a scale of change from minimal changed needed to address the population imbalance (Alternative 1), moderate change (Alternative 2) and a plan for growth option (Alternative 3). The population deviation for the current wards and each alternative is provided in the table below.

Percentage of Population Deviation				
Wards	Current Wards	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3
Ward 1	-5.5%	-4.6%	2.6%	3.9%
Ward 2	-13.1%	-3.4%	-1.9%	2.8%
Ward 3	-1.6%	4.4%	-3.3%	2.3%
Ward 4	11.2%	3.7%	3.5%	0.7%
Ward 5	1.6%	-3.0%	-1.4%	-1.4%
Ward 6	-8.3%	-4.0%	0.8%	-1.3%
Ward 7	3.3%	4.2%	2.3%	-4.2%
Ward 8	12.3%	1.4%	-2.7%	-2.8%

The three alternatives are described below.

10. Alternative 1: Minimal Change

Alternative 1 represents the least amount of change needed to balance the population across the eight wards. Specifically, this alternative takes Ward 8 and 4 from 12.3 percent and 11.2

percent above the target population to 1.4 percent and 3.7 percent above, respectively. It also addresses Wards 2 and 6 which are currently 13.1 percent and 8.3 percent under the population target. In Alternative 1 they move to 3.4 percent and 4 percent under the population target.

Highlights of the changes in Alternative 1 are listed below. Please refer to the attached map to see all the proposed changes (**Attachment 1**).

- Ward 1 moves further into west Salem expanding along Edgewater St NW, this would shift Capitol Manor from Ward 8 to Ward 1;
- Ward 2 expands north to State Street which becomes the new dividing line between Wards 1 and 2;
- Ward 3 expands west to Liberty Rd S with Mize Rd SE making up the new southern boundary between Lone Oak Rd SE and Liberty Rd S;
- Ward 4 contracts with Liberty Rd S becoming the new western boundary;
- Ward 5 contracts with Sunnyview Rd NE becoming the new southern boundary;
- Ward 6 expands north to Sunnyview Rd NE on the west side of Interstate 5;
- Ward 7 contracts on the east side of Liberty Rd S north of Mize Rd SE and expands east to Liberty Rd S south of Kuebler Blvd S;
- Ward 8 contracts, with the southwest portion of Ward 8 moving into Ward 1.

#### 11. Alternative 2: Moderate Change (Attachment 2)

Alternative 2 represents a moderate amount of change to the ward boundaries. The intent behind this alternative is to bring the population of each ward closer to the target population. In Alternative 1 the wards average 3.5 percent deviation from the target population. In Alternative 2 the average deviation is 2.3 percent which means the wards are slightly more balanced.

Highlights of the changes in Alternative 2 are listed below. Please refer to the attached map to see all the proposed changes (**Attachment 2**).

- Ward 1 expands northwest to Eola Dr NW, Minto-Brown Island Park and Salem Golf Club move from Ward 7 into Ward 1;
- Ward 2 expands north to State Street in downtown, expands west of Liberty Rd S to include the Fairmount area, contracts east from 21<sup>st</sup> St NE to 24<sup>th</sup>/25<sup>th</sup> St NE on the north side of State Street, expands north of Highway 22, Vista Ave SE and McGilchrist St SE become the new southern boundary;
- Ward 3 expands west to Liberty St S at Browning Ave SE, expands south of Kuebler on the west side of Interstate 5 and contracts north of Highway 22;
- Ward 4 contracts with Liberty Rd S becoming the new western boundary and Interstate 5 becoming the new eastern boundary;
- Ward 5 expands south to Highland Av NE and west to Cherry Ave NE, shifting Center 50+ from Ward 1 to Ward 5, Sunnyview Rd NE becomes the new southern boundary near Interstate 5;
- Ward 6 expands north to Sunnyview Rd NE and south to Center St NE on the west side of Interstate 5;
- Ward 7 contracts with Minto-Brown Island Park and Salem Golf Club moving to Ward 1, the residential areas west of Liberty Rd S, north of Fairmount Park, moving to Ward 2, the area north of Browning Ave SE between Lone Oak Rd SE and Liberty Rd SE moving to Ward 3; Ward 7 expands east to Liberty Road S south of Kamela Dr S;
- Ward 8 contracts north with Eola Dr NW becoming the southern boundary.

## 12. Alternative 3: Plan for Growth (Attachment 3)

Alternative 3 is designed to plan for room to grow in the outer wards in order to accommodate future growth. While it is not a requirement that the new ward boundary map accommodate growth, it may be a good idea to draw boundaries that have the fastest growing wards below the target population, so that they do not greatly exceed the target population over the next ten years. In this alternative, Wards 5, 6, 7 and 8 are all below the target population. Ward 1, at 3.9 percent is the closest to the 5 percent over target population threshold. If downtown and north downtown have significant residential redevelopment in the next decade, as planned for, Ward 1 may very likely exceed the 5 percent target in 2030 under this alternative.

Highlights of the changes in Alternative 3 are listed below. Please refer to the attached map to see all the proposed changes (**Attachment 3**).

- Ward 1 expands north up Wallace Rd NW to Glenn Creek and west to Kingwood Dr NW;
- Ward 2 expands north to State Street in downtown, expands west of Liberty Rd S south to Hansen Av S, contracts from D Street NE to Center Street NE, contracts east from 21<sup>st</sup> St NE to 24<sup>th</sup>/25<sup>th</sup> St NE on the north side of State Street, contracts north to Vista Ave SE and McGilchrist St SE and expands north of Highway 22;
- Ward 3 expands west to Liberty St S at Hrubetz Rd SE, expands south of Kuebler on the west side of Interstate 5, expands northeast to Airway Dr SE and contracts north of Highway 22;
- Ward 4 contracts with Lone Oak Rd SE becoming the new western boundary and Interstate 5 becoming the new eastern boundary and Holder Ln SE and Davis Rd SE becoming the new southern boundary;
- Ward 5 contracts south of Sunnyview Rd NE and expands south to Highland Av NE and west to Cherry Ave NE, shifting Center 50+ from Ward 1 to Ward 5;
- Ward 6 expands north to Sunnyview Rd NE and south to Center St NE on the west side of Interstate 5 while contracting its western boundary from 23<sup>rd</sup> St NE to Evergreen Ave NE and 25<sup>th</sup> St NE;
- Ward 7 contracts with the residential areas west of Liberty Rd S, north of Hansen Av S moving to Ward 2, the area north of Hrubetz Rd SE between Lone Oak Rd SE and Liberty Rd SE moving to Ward 3; Ward 7 expands east to Lone Oak Rd SE and Liberty Road S;
- Ward 8 contracts along Wallace Rd NW to Glenn Creek and on the southeast to Kingwood Dr NW.

#### Next Steps:

Upon Council's selection of a ward boundary alternative, an ordinance will be presented for Council's consideration to codify the new ward boundaries.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

In December 1975, Congress passed Public Law (P.L.) 94-171 which requires that the federal Census Bureau make special preparation to provide redistricting data. The P.L. 94-171 data is used by each state to redraw legislative district boundaries and by local governments to redraw ward and/or election district boundaries. This equalization of representation or balancing between ward and/or election districts is known as reapportionment.

Ward boundaries are required to follow census block boundaries. Census blocks are the smallest unit of census geography. In addition to population per census block, the Census Bureau releases demographic information covering population by race, ethnicity and age. This demographic information for each alternative is included as **Attachment 4**.

Lisa Anderson-Ogilvie, AICP  
Deputy Community Development Director and  
Planning Administrator

**Attachments:**

1. Alternative 1 Ward Boundary Map
2. Alternative 2 Ward Boundary Map
3. Alternative 3 Ward Boundary Map
4. Demographic Information for Alternative Ward Boundary Maps
5. Public Testimony