



Staff Report

File #: 22-334
Version: 1

Date: 7/25/2022
Item #: 7.2a.

TO: Mayor and City Council
THROUGH: Kristin Retherford, Interim City Manager
FROM: Norman Wright, Community Development Director

SUBJECT:

Our Salem Project - Updating the Salem Area Comprehensive Plan.

Ward(s): All Wards
Councilor(s): All Councilors
Neighborhood(s): All Neighborhoods
Result Area(s): Environment Stewardship; Safe Community; Safe, Reliable and Efficient Infrastructure; Strong and Diverse Economy; Welcoming and Livable Community.

SUMMARY:

Engrossed Ordinance Bill No. 9-22 updates the Salem Area Comprehensive Plan to guide future growth and development in Salem.

ISSUE:

Shall City Council engross Ordinance Bill No. 9-22 and pass Engrossed Ordinance Bill No. 9-22?

RECOMMENDATION:

Engross Ordinance Bill No. 9-22 and pass Engrossed Ordinance Bill No. 9-22.

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

Engrossed Ordinance Bill No. 9-22 (**Attachment 1**) updates the Salem Area Comprehensive Plan (Comprehensive Plan) to guide future growth and development in Salem. The proposed update is included as **Exhibit A** of the engrossed ordinance.

The draft Comprehensive Plan would update the existing Comprehensive Policies Plan, revising the goals and policies in line with the community's priorities and vision for the future. The draft plan covers a broad range of topics, including community engagement and equity, housing, economic development and employment, land use and urbanization, parks and recreation, natural resources and the environment, climate change and natural hazards, Willamette Greenway, transportation, public facilities and infrastructure, and community services and historic resources. Staff is recommending that the ordinance be engrossed to revise the description of the Willamette River Greenway Boundary in response to public input and to correct a scrivener's error (e.g., "Multiple Family" to "Multi-Family").

For each topic, there are proposed goals, which are board in nature and support the community's Vision Statement: *Salem is a livable, equitable, carbon neutral city where everyone has access to affordable housing and safe mobility choices, families and local businesses are thriving, diversity and culture is celebrated, and open spaces and the environment are valued and protected.* For example, the goals highlight the community's desire to strengthen Salem's economy, promote housing affordability, provide interconnected recreational opportunities, protect natural resources, and provide an integrated multimodal transportation network.

Many of the proposed goals - and related policies - do not exist in the current Comprehensive Plan but instead reflect the community's priorities today for the future. There are many proposed policies, for example, related to equity and broadening community engagement. One such policy emphasizes the community's desire to ensure that the City expands opportunities for communities of color, low-income residents, and other underrepresented groups to participate in planning and investment decisions. Policies that promote equitable outcomes are also included throughout the draft plan.

There are also proposed goals and policies that aim to build community resiliency and help reduce greenhouse gas emissions to meet the City's goal of being carbon neutral by 2050. The proposed policies align with the strategies in Salem's Climate Action Plan. For example, one proposed policy supports the development of a robust network of infrastructure needed to facilitate wide-scale adoption of electric vehicles, and another proposes implementing programs and practices that reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills and incinerators.

The proposed goals related to transportation and parks are included in the draft Comprehensive Plan; however, the related policies will be included in the TSP and Salem Comprehensive Parks System Master Plan (CPSMP). Both documents are expected to be updated with detailed policies following adoption of the updated Comprehensive Plan.

The draft Comprehensive Plan also includes new benchmarks that align and advance the proposed policy to facilitate and support changes in land use patterns and the transportation system to reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips and greenhouse gas emissions from transportation. The benchmarks generally aim to encourage and focus new housing units in mixed-use areas downtown and near Cherriot's Core Network. (The Core Network is a network of bus service corridors where frequent service is prioritized.)

In addition, the draft Comprehensive Plan includes an appendix that lays out implementation steps that the City plans to undertake after the Our Salem project is complete and the updated Comprehensive Plan is adopted. Those steps include:

1. Update the Transportation System Plan to align with the updated Comprehensive Plan
2. Update the Comprehensive Parks System Master Plan to align with the updated Comprehensive Plan
3. Coordinate and implement strategies in the Climate Action Plan
4. Conduct a new Economic Opportunities Analysis
5. Conduct a Goal 5 inventory
6. Develop a Housing Production Strategy

Findings demonstrating the proposal's conformance with the applicable approval criteria are included in **Exhibit B** to the engrossed ordinance.

BACKGROUND:

The City Council funded the Our Salem project in 2017. The funding followed the strategic planning process when the community identified the need to develop a vision for growth and development. Salem's portion of the urban growth boundary is projected to continue adding residents and jobs through 2035, and the Our Salem project provided the community with an opportunity to guide how and where that growth occurs.

The City started the Our Salem project in the fall of 2018, working with a consultant team led by Fregonese Associates. The multi-year project has resulted in a proposed update to the Comprehensive Plan as well as proposed changes to the Comprehensive Plan Map, zoning map, and zoning code.

Eunice Kim
Long Range Planning Manager

Attachments:

1. Engrossed Ordinance Bill No. 9-22