



Staff Report

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TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Keith Stahley, City Manager

SUBJECT:

Update on priorities in the 2022 City Council Policy Agenda, report on Community Satisfaction Survey findings, and initial consideration of priorities for 2023 City Council Policy Agenda.

Ward(s): All Wards

Councilor(s): All Councilors

Neighborhood(s): All Neighborhoods

Result Area(s): Result Areas - Good Governance; Natural Environment Stewardship; Safe Community; Safe, Reliable and Efficient Infrastructure; Strong and Diverse Economy; Welcoming and Livable Community.

SUMMARY:

Through its annual Policy Agenda, City Council makes its priorities for action clear to staff and the community and provides direction on aligning resources towards the Strategic Plan Policy areas through the City's budgeting process. Each fall, City Council develops a framework for its policy priorities and considers progress achieved on earlier priorities, community feedback from the Community Satisfaction Survey, and updates on major initiatives in an annual Community Report.

On March 14, 2022, Council adopted its policy priorities for the 2022 Policy Agenda. For this year, Council Policy Agenda priorities are concentrated in four areas: (1) responding to our sheltering crisis; (2) planning for our future; (3) engaging our community; and (4) sustaining infrastructure and services. City Council received an interim progress report on July 28, 2022.

This is an opportunity to consider progress (Attachment 1: 2022 Community Report), community satisfaction with City services (attachment 2: Community Satisfaction Survey Report), and to adjust priorities, identify additional priorities to consider in developing the 2023 Policy Agenda. Staff will return with proposals for how to achieve City Council priorities at the January 17, 2023 City Council Work Session.

ISSUE:

Update on priorities in 2022 City Council Policy Agenda and initial consideration of policy priorities to guide 2023.

RECOMMENDATION:

Information and discussion.

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

Policy Agenda Progress

The 2022 City Council Policy Agenda priorities are concentrated in four areas: (1) responding to our sheltering crisis; (2) planning for our future; (3) engaging our community; and (4) sustaining infrastructure and services.

Most activities are underway and several major initiatives have recently been completed including passage of the 2022 Community Improvement Bond, the Our Salem comprehensive plan update, and the launch of the City's new website. Construction has started at the Salem Housing Authority permanent supportive housing project at Sequoia Crossings and is nearing an end at Yaquina Hall, with plans to open this winter. Also opening this winter, the low barrier Navigation Center and the young adult micro-shelter village serving those 18-24 years old. Salem also launched the seven-member SOS Response Team to respond to public health and safety concerns in areas of concern by being active in the community, providing referrals, responding to criminal complaints, collecting garbage, and removing waste.

City Council has also received detailed updates on key initiatives including policy options to lower traffic speeds on neighborhood streets; on work to put equity in action through the diversity, equity and inclusion initiative; and the possibility of restarting commercial air service at Salem Municipal Airport. Also underway, Salem's new Customer Service Center will open in spring of 2023. In anticipation of the new one-stop-shop place to do business with the City, Salem has launched a new central information hub (503-588-7272) and email info@cityofsalem.net <<mailto:info@cityofsalem.net>> for questions about City business and operations.

The 2022 Community Report describes progress on 2022 Policy Agenda priorities in detail, noting the City's primary role(s) for each activity:

- DOER: The City's primary role is to execute the activity.
- PARTNER: The City's primary role is to partner with external parties and/or provide funding to support the activity.
- CONVENER: The City's primary role is to bring together external parties to advance the activity via collaboration.

Priority 1: Responding to our sheltering crisis. The Salem City Council recognizes homelessness as a critical problem in our community. This issue is the most important issue to many of our residents. With the support of partners and other agencies, efforts are underway to help

prevent homelessness, manage homelessness, and end homelessness. Services and activities that are available to manage homelessness include things like triage and connection to services, health and mental health care, other basic needs, safe and secure outdoor shelter, and temporary indoor shelter. Services and activities for ending homelessness include services available to support transition to housing, like navigation services and permanent supportive housing, as well as providing incentives for and constructing affordable housing.

The service network in Salem is designed with the goal of transitioning participants to permanent supportive housing or other appropriate housing. The majority of activities led by the City are focused on managing and ending homelessness. Prevention activities tend to be the purview of regional efforts. The City also offers some relief for qualified households from monthly bills, like utility bills or garbage bills, that may help some retain housing. The City expends resources managing the impacts caused by living outdoors, funding alternative shelter, and adding housing and support services to end homelessness.

Salem's City Council has allocated \$23.33 million in one-time resources during FY 22 and FY 23 to expand sheltering options and manage health, safety, and livability concerns in our community. The one-time resources include almost one-third of Salem's ARPA allocation, and State sheltering resources received in recent Legislative Sessions.

The following is a complete listing of *Responding to our Sheltering Crisis* policy priorities included in the 2022 Policy Agenda:

Managing Homelessness

- A. **Respond to community complaints for clean up at scattered unmanaged tent, car, and RV camping sites, and clean up accumulated trash.** Work with area non-profits and new staff team to coordinate clean ups.
Doer/Partner/Convener
- B. **Complete construction and open Navigation Center.** Secure funding to cover gap, construct, and open Navigation Center.
Doer/Partner/Convener
- C. **Site and operate micro-shelter village communities.** Continue to identify properties for future use as micro-shelter community villages.
Doer/Partner/Convener
- D. **Continue to develop local partnership and funding support for sobering center.** Provide a safe, clean, and supervised environment for acutely intoxicated individuals to become sober and eligible for further treatment.
Partner
- E. **Continue to develop local partnership and funding support for mobile crisis response.** Identify partner to provide mobile crisis response (low acuity basic health triage paired with trauma-informed behavioral health care) in the field.

Partner

Ending Homelessness

- F. **Transition more households into supportive housing.** Through HRAP and with Legislative funding to assist households and families in transitional housing until systems recuperate from effects of COVID Pandemic.

Doer

- G. **Build more permanent supportive housing.** Complete construction of Salem Housing Authority's Sequoia Crossings (60 units) and Yaquina Hall (52 units) properties. Continue to offer incentives for affordable housing through tax exemptions, management agreements and Urban Renewal grants.

Doer/Partner/Convener

- H. **Support regional efforts: Mid-Willamette Valley Homeless Alliance.** Invest in Mid-Willamette Valley Homeless Alliance to develop regional capacity for those who are un-housed.

Partner

Priority 2: Planning for our future. Following the adoption of the Our Salem Comprehensive Plan update, we are planning to carry this vision into other plans. The largest component of this work is the Transportation System Plan. This piece alone is anticipated to require additional funding for the next three years. Other plans tied to the Comprehensive Plan are updates to the Comprehensive Parks System Master Plan, Goal 5 Inventory for Natural Resources (recommended by the Planning Commission), Housing Production Strategy, and Economic Opportunities Analysis. Implementation strategies to support the Climate Action Plan are also linked to the Comprehensive Plan. All this future work will be informed by the rules from the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development's Climate Friendly and Equitable Communities rule-making process.

The following is a complete listing of *Planning for Our Future* policy priorities included in the 2022 Policy Agenda:

- I. **Complete adoption of Our Salem mid-2022.** Completion of the Our Salem comprehensive plan update adoption process is underway.

Doer

- J. **Fund Transportation System Plan update.** Begin follow on work to Our Salem. The Transportation Systems Plan is a major undertaking and includes substantive community outreach. Funding for this work is expected from Transportation System Development Charges. Work is underway on an interim priority, **Lower traffic speeds on neighborhood streets**, to implement traffic slowing initiatives like: speed hump requests, 20 is Plenty, and stop signs.

Doer/Convener

- K. **Launch riparian inventory for natural resources.** Beginning in Q4 of 2022, we will initiate a riparian inventory (also follow on work from Our Salem). As the majority of this work is creek-related, funding is anticipated in the FY23 Budget from the Utility Fund.

Doer

- L. **Further Climate Action Plan.** Support briefings of Council Committee to prioritize actions in Climate Action Plan. Work is underway on an interim priority, **development of a solid waste policy**, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the collection, transportation, and disposal of solid waste are considered within the Climate Action Plan.

Doer/Partner/Convener

Priority 3: Engaging our community. For the last several years, increasing transparency and trust with the community through communication and engagement has consistently been among the priorities of City Council. The City is making continual improvements to its communication, accessibility, and sharing of our shared story.

We also connect with our community through the media, social media (Facebook, Twitter, NextDoor, Instagram), video content, weekly e-newsletter, neighborhood association engagement, outreach to stakeholders and civic organizations about on-going and Policy Agenda-related projects, programs, and initiatives like Our Salem; bicycle, pedestrian, and vehicle transportation projects to improve safety; parks planning; and volunteer opportunities. Emergency information is shared through the Community Alert System for member-defined locations to their phone or email. Staff meet quarterly with community, civic, and cultural organizations to share information for cross promotion opportunities; other governments and agencies; and our media partners.

The following is a complete listing of *Engaging our Community* policy priorities included in the 2022 Policy Agenda:

- M. **Launch new City of Salem website.** Update the City website to improve accessibility, search and site navigation, and the overall customer and user experience.

Doer

- N. **Share performance measures and metrics.** Launch a new web-based budgeting and performance measure resource to gauge how the City is doing on Council and community priorities.

Doer

- O. **Finish plans and start construction of Customer Service Center.** Improve the customer service experience at City Hall.

Doer

- P. **Expand neighbor to neighbor communications.** Build communication strategies with Neighborhood Association Boards to expand engagement and recruit additional members.

Doer

Priority 4: Sustaining infrastructure and services. Actions taken by Salem's City Council helped speed the City's recovery from the 2008 recession. Strengthening the City's long-term financial position to ensure ongoing provision of core services to all residents has remained at the

forefront of City Council priorities since that time. In addition to concerns about funding day-to-day operations, the City of Salem has pressing needs for fire engines and equipment, for improvements to streets and sidewalks, for parks, for affordable housing and shelter, and other projects to improve the community. In Fall 2020, the City Council formed a Steering Committee to guide development of a proposal for a Community Improvement Bond - without increasing the City's property tax rate - for the November 2022 ballot.

The following is a complete listing of *Sustaining Infrastructure and Services* policy priorities included in the 2022 Policy Agenda:

- Q. Pursue Community Improvement Bond.** Pursue \$300 million Community Improvement Bond in November 2022.
Doer/Convener
- R. Explore opportunities to lower expenses.** Continue to evaluate shifting services to non-profits or private-sector service providers.
Doer
- S. Explore opportunities to increase revenue.** Revisit 2019 Task Force revenue options to help stabilize the budget in FY24
Doer/Convener

2022 Community Satisfaction Survey

This year's statistically valid Community Satisfaction Survey poll was conducted by DHM Research from September 7 through September 13, 2022 (Attachment 2: 2022 Community Satisfaction Survey). The survey was administered in both Spanish and English, and captured responses from 400 residents via phone-both cell and land lines, with an option to do the survey on-line. The purpose of the survey was to assess residents' satisfaction with City services, to gauge emergency preparedness following the 2019 launch of a preparedness campaign, and weigh opinions of fairness within the City of Salem. The survey is one of several data sources City Council considers as the Council begins to consider priorities for the 2023 City Council Policy Agenda. At the Work Session, John Horvick, Senior Vice President at DHM Research, will present key findings from this year's survey.

2023 Policy Agenda Priorities

The 2022 City Council Policy Agenda priorities are concentrated in four areas: (1) responding to our sheltering crisis; (2) planning for our future; (3) engaging our community; and (4) sustaining infrastructure and services. City Council may consider adjustment to these priorities, and may identify additional priorities to consider in developing the 2023 Policy Agenda. At the Work Session, Colleen Rozillis, Partner at Moss Adams, will facilitate the conversation. Staff will return with proposals for how to achieve City Council priorities at the January 17, 2023 City Council Work Session.

BACKGROUND:

Each year, through its Policy Agenda, the Council provides policy direction and develop a set of specific actions designed to move the City towards achieving each objective.

Revenue forecasts indicate that continuing ongoing expenses at current levels is unsustainable. Addressing this funding gap will be a critical consideration in the 2023 Budget Process.

Courtney Knox Busch
Strategic Initiatives Manager

Attachments:

1. 2022 Community Report
2. 2022 Community Satisfaction Survey Report