



**CONTACT THE
MAYOR'S
OFFICE:**

Phone:
(978) 619-5600

Fax:
(978) 744-9327

Email:
mayor@salem.com

Web:
salem.com/mayor

Facebook:
Kim Driscoll

Twitter:
@MayorDriscoll



**INSIDE
THIS ISSUE**

Safe Halloween	2
North Street Presentation	3
Election Central	3
Harbor Plan Update	3
Highland Avenue Meeting	4
Education Fund Grants	5
School Updates	6

FYI SALEM

VOLUME 6, ISSUE 17

OCTOBER 22, 2020

From the Mayor's Desk



Dear Salem resident,

Let me start by saying thank you for your patience throughout this month. Salem's plan for October, developed over many months of work and it's been intentionally scalable and responsive to what we're seeing on a daily basis.

As you may know, in August we announced Halloween events would not take place this year and that Haunted Happenings events would be cancelled. We have taken this pandemic seriously from the outset. We were an early adopter of mandatory mask zones trying to put in place important risk prevention measures for residents and visitors alike.

In September we froze our reopening at its current phase,

and didn't expand dining capacities or increase allowable gathering sizes, even though we met – and continue to meet – the public health metrics to be able to do so. We cancelled all outside vendors for October, prohibited street performers from the Essex Street Pedestrian Mall and the surrounding area, and instituted our own local traveler reporting requirement. And we suspended paid marketing to advertise Haunted Happenings, and have instead used paid marketing efforts to discourage visitation.

Our approach to October has been pro-active and based on responding to real data and changing circumstances on the ground. Like everything else during this pandemic, we are doing our best to manage risks on a foundation of public health and safety, with flexibility to change and adapt as necessary.

And for the most part, it has worked. Many people are heeding the warnings that this is not the year to visit Salem. While we have less people than a typical Haunted Happenings – it's still a lot of people and more than we'd like given the limitations on occupancies and limited spaces downtown.

Our mask compliance downtown continues to exceed 95% and, to date, contact tracing has not attributed any of our new recent cases to a visitor or a tourism-related activities.

All of this does not guarantee an outcome and circumstances certainly could change in the coming weeks. We are trying to be proactive and as we approach the last two weekends in October, which tend to generate larger crowds and earlier this week we announced several measures we are putting in place for the last two weekends in October aimed reducing visitation in our city. You can read more about these changes on page 2 of this newsletter and online at www.salem.com/safehalloween.

These additional modifications are not being made lightly and we recognize that these changes will entail shared sacrifices and collaboration among businesses, residents, and visitors. We appreciate everyone's cooperation in helping us to get through October safe and healthy.

Kim Driscoll
Mayor
City of Salem

Safe Halloween

In order to protect the health and well-being of residents, employees, and visitors during the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Salem is implementing additional public safety protocols for the weekends of Oct 23rd to Oct 25th and Oct 30th to Nov 1st. In addition to all Salem Haunted Happenings events being cancelled, which was announced in August, businesses will close early and parking and trains will be curtailed over the final two weekends of the month. Visitors planning to come to Salem that weekend should postpone their visit to Salem.

MBTA Train Service

The City has worked with the MBTA to curtail trains to Salem over the final two weekends of Oct. MBTA commuter rail trains outbound from Boston will not stop at Salem station on Oct 23rd and Oct 30th between 7-11:30pm or Oct 24th, Oct 25th, and Oct 31st between 11am-11pm. Visit www.mbta.com/salem for details.

Parking Restrictions

All City garages and lots will close to entering traffic at 2pm on Oct 23rd and noon on Oct 24th, Oct 25th, Oct 30th, Oct 31st, and November 1st. Salem residents with reserved parking spaces or who live downtown and any downtown business employee with proof of employment may enter and park in both City garages at any time at the regular parking rate and subject to available spaces. Exiting traffic will still be allowed. All privately operated parking lots are ordered to close to entering vehicles at these times, as well. The City's "Universal Steel" parking lot at 297 Bridge Street will be closed to all parking Friday, Saturday, and Sunday for the next two weekends. The MBTA garage will have restricted access for local parking from 6-11pm on Oct 23rd and Oct 30th, noon-8pm on Oct 24th, noon-6pm on Oct 25th and November 1st, and noon-11pm on Oct 31st. During these times only commuter/transit users will be allowed to park in the garage. The City is expanding resident parking areas to additional streets during the final two weekends of Oct and will be ticketing and towing illegally parked vehicles. See www.salem.com/safehalloween for a map. Hang tags and stickers will not be issued for the expanded resident parking areas. License plates will be run by police prior to towing in order to check the registered address of any vehicle.

Business Closures

The City is asking downtown businesses to utilize reservations and to close by 8pm on Oct 23 and 24 to help mitigate the evening crowds that are anticipated for this traditionally busy weekend. No lines or waiting will be permitted on the public way after 8pm on both Oct 23 and 24. This includes retail, museums, attractions, walking tours, restaurants, and other businesses that are in the area designated on the attached map. There are mandatory 8pm closures of all downtown businesses on Oct 30 and Oct 31 of retail, museums, attractions, walking tours, restaurants, and other businesses that are in the area designated on the map at www.salem.com/safehalloween. It may be necessary to close or restrict access to sections of the downtown, as necessary, throughout the day.

Traffic Control Points

Police will implement a Traffic Control Plan throughout the City to assist non-residents in exiting the area. Traffic Control Points will be established Oct 24, Oct 30, and Oct 31 between noon-8pm, or as circumstances require. Police will staff each location to redirect vehicles and deter non-residents from parking in residential areas. These areas will be clearly marked. The Traffic Control Plan is subject to change based on actual traffic flow and congestion. Police will restrict pedestrian access to the Pedestrian Mall should crowds reach a level that is considered unsafe. Police may close the pedestrian mall entirely to de-densify crowds, as necessary.

Triple Fines

Salem will again this year triple all City fines for the period of Oct 30th through November 1st, including fines for noise violations, resident parking violations, and public intoxication.

Halloween Night

All the customary Halloween night events in Salem have been cancelled, as was announced on August 4th. This includes all outdoor music stages and performances, beer gardens, and other activities, including the usual Halloween fireworks. There will be no events on Halloween night in Salem. Police will close roads to through-traffic and pedestrians as circumstances warrant.

House Parties

To prevent the spread of COVID-19, residents, including Salem State University students, should avoid gathering for Halloween parties. Salem has previously suspended its reopening and remains in Phase III, Step 1, within which indoor gatherings are limited to 25% of the maximum permitted occupancy and no more than 25 persons in all. Violations may result in substantial fines.

North Street Presentation

City staff and Toole Design Group will present design concepts and receive public comment on proposed improvements to the North Street Corridor to a joint Zoom meeting of the Mack Park and Northfields Neighborhood Associations on Wednesday, October 28 at 6:00 p.m. All are welcome to attend and participate. The online meeting link will be posted on the project website: <https://publicinput.com/northstreet>



Between July and August, over 125 community members shared their thoughts, concerns, and ideas for North Street. A virtual public workshop on July 21, 2020 kicked off the outreach process where the City provided an overview of the existing conditions on North Street followed by breakout sessions where neighbors discussed how North Street works for the wide range of people who use the street. An online survey and online feedback map provided additional opportunity for people to weigh in on their own time. Since then, the City has read all the comments, crunched numbers, and documented the results. This information, project documents, and a recording of the July 21 meeting, are available on the project website.

Election Central

All the information you need about voting in Salem - including early voting, voting in person on Election Day, how to vote safely, and how to look up voting information—can now be easily found under the Election Central tab at www.salem.com.

You can also call the City Clerk's Office at (978) 619-5611 for additional information and help during election season in Salem.

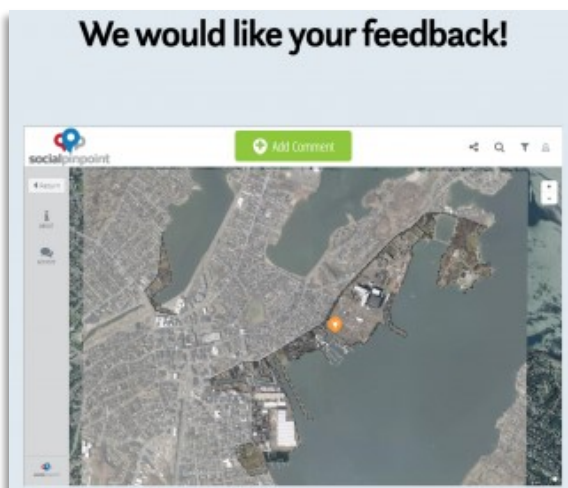


Harbor Plan Update

Salem residents are invited to provide feedback on the City's Municipal Harbor Plan (MHP) Update using a new interactive map tool.

The Salem MHP Update aims to work with the community to create a shared understanding of issues and opportunities along Salem's waterfront, including the historically industrial port area. In order to craft the future of the harbor, we would like your feedback.

Find the map tool online at <https://harborplan.salem.com/we-would-like-your-feedback/> and click the "Add a Comment" button, then use the icons on the map to make note of something you like, an idea or suggestion you have, and leave a comment with more information.





**Wednesday
October 28th
At 6pm**

**Via Zoom
Meeting**

All are invited
to participate

The City is working with a consultant to develop a strategy and action plan that will serve as a guideline for fostering and managing change along Highland Avenue.

The City's consultant will present the market potential of different types land uses (retail, restaurant, office, housing, industrial, etc.) and outline the economic and fiscal implications of the various land uses.

Your input will be requested to help identify the key issues facing the corridor and to strategize on how the corridor should evolve.

There are three ways to join the community meeting on October 28th at 6pm:

1. Enter <https://bit.ly/3dsfkAM> into your browser, or
2. Enter <https://zoom.us/join> into your web browser to open the Zoom website. Enter meeting ID # **897 4773 5329** and password **352862**, or
3. Dial a toll-free phone number at 888-475-4499. When prompted, enter meeting ID # **897 4773 5329** and password is **352862**

Education Fund Grants

The City of Salem's Scholarship and Education Committee has announced that it is now seeking applications for grants from its Education Fund.

Education Fund grants are available to provide supplemental education funding for local educational needs and to provide funding for existing adult literacy programs. Applications are due by November 15, 2020. The average grant award in the past has been \$1,000. Grant funds cannot be used for salaries or stipends. The application form and additional information can be found at www.salem.com/scholarship. Click the "Education Fund Application" button on the left side of the page. If you have questions about the application or to confirm if your project or program is potentially eligible, please contact the Mayor's Office at (978) 619-5600.

"We are pleased to make this grant funding available to local educators, programs, and organizations," said Tyler Carlton, chair of the committee. "We hope that all who are interested in supporting the educational needs of our community will apply for consideration to receive a grant from the Education Fund."

"The success of Salem's schools and support for our students is a community mission," said Mayor Kim Driscoll, who chairs the Salem School Committee. "By again offering this grant program, the members of the Scholarship and Education Committee are demonstrating their commitment to that effort and I would like to thank them for it."



Ryan Brennan Skatepark

The Ryan Brennan Memorial Skatepark at Gallows Hill Park has reopened to the public. In addition to the skatepark, the City has reopened access to the adjacent playground area. The skatepark honors the memory of Ryan Brennan and the Brennan family donated construction services to the project. The park's new baseball field is high school regulation size, replacing the previous undersized field. Sustainable elements of the project include bioswales and raingardens to collect, filter, and manage stormwater. The skatepark and baseball field team areas also incorporate reclaimed granite blocks. The main baseball field is still closed to public use as the grass is still establishing. Those using the skatepark do so at their own risk. Helmets and protective equipment should be worn when skating.



Special thanks to the project's landscape architects Kyle Zick and Rob Barella of Kyle Zick Landscape Architecture, skatepark designer Mike McIntyre of Action Sports Design, general contractor Campbell Construction Group, skatepark contractor Grindline Skateparks, volunteer construction services from Brennan Construction, all the volunteer members of the Gallows Hill Park stakeholders working group, Salem Sound Coastwatch for educational signage about the nature-based stormwater system, the members of the Salem Park, Recreation & Community Services Commission, and all the City staff who worked to make this project possible.

Funding for this project was made possible by the Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities program, Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness program, Community Development Block Grant program, Salem Community Preservation Act, City of Salem capital funding, and The Skatepark Project (formerly the Tony Hawk Foundation).



School Updates

The Salem School Committee has approved the plan to give more students the option for in-person learning opportunities. For kindergarten, first, and second grades, students have the option to return to school five days per week for in-person instruction. The school day for these in-person classes will be reduced by approximately one hour. For sixth and ninth grades, students have the option to attend a hybrid model, with two days per week in school and three days remote. For grades K-2, 6th grade as well as 9th grade, the plan will begin on Monday, November 16th.

PreK, Kindergarten, First and Second Grade: We will invite all students in grades PreK to second grade back for in-person learning five days a week, and any family has the option to remain in fully remote learning.

- The in-person school day will be slightly shorter. We will post tentative start and end times this week and will share information about new homeroom assignments by Friday, October 30th.
- We are working with our after school partners to provide extended day options.

Sixth Grade at Collins: For our students who have newly transitioned to Collins Middle School, we will offer a hybrid in-person model, where students can attend two days per week in-person with three days per week remote (Please see Figure 2 for a visual of the hybrid).

- If you would like your child to attend in-person, they will be assigned to either attend on Monday & Tuesday or on Thursday & Friday. We are hoping to make those assignments by Friday, October 30th.
- If your child is already in-person at Collins five days per week, they will remain at five days, and will get in-person instruction for two of those days while doing their remote learning at Collins the other three days.
- We will still offer a fully remote option for sixth graders.

Ninth Grade at Salem High: For our students who have newly transitioned to Salem High School, we will also offer a half-day in-person hybrid model, where students can attend two days per week in-person. This will keep the high school overall schedule, but shift the daily times for blocks throughout the school. Dr. Meier and the team will be communicating more details.

- We are also offering in-person hubs for our CTE students and extending more invitations to in-person hub labs for some of our students in greater need of support.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs will also be starting on 11/16 in a hybrid schedule with alternating in-person shop times for Automotive, Building & Property Maintenance, Carpentry, Culinary, Medical Assistance. Early Education & Care is not able to conduct in-person training due to COVID-19 regulations. We are evaluating options for the Electrical shop at this time. Look for communication from the Director of the program in your email.

Decision on Third Grade in November: In order to maintain our health and safety standards, including smaller class sizes and six feet of physical distance, it takes more educators to teach each grade level. We want to confirm that we will be able to offer high quality in-person learning for any student who chooses it, which means that we are waiting until November to decide whether we can invite third grade to join us in-person as well.

Grades 3-5, 7-8, 10-12 and grade 6 at Saltonstall: For the majority of our students, we will continue with the same learning model we have today. Students will continue with remote learning, and those who are in-person in hub labs will continue. The day may be shorter for students in hub labs to match the new in-person day for elementary and middle schools. Hub lab students will remain for the full day for high school. Hub connects will continue through Thanksgiving, and will determine how these move forward after that break. We will also collect feedback from the in-person learning that begins in November to help us determine how to move forward and evaluate the possibility of bringing more students back to in-person learning. We continue to be committed to delivering high-quality and supportive remote learning, and will work to improve our remote learning model. We appreciate the feedback we have received.