



FYI SALEM

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From the Mayor's Desk



Dear Salem resident,

Thank you for reading the FYI Salem newsletter!

In this issue we have two exciting road-related updates. The first is the publication of our dynamic and user-friendly online map showing the "road surface rating" for every public street in the City. You can use this new tool to look up the rating for any road segment in Salem and also find out the recommended repair or repaving plan, if any for that particular road segment.

The second announcement is that the City of Salem has received our second Complete Street Grant from the state. This \$400,000 grant award will be used to help us carry out the designed improvements to the street and sidewalks on

Essex Street between North Street and Washington Street. This busy corridor is in need of an upgrade and, thanks to this grant, it will now be possible!

Speaking of awarding funds, we were very pleased this week to close on a \$50,000 small business loan with The Artful Life, a counseling center that is planning to relocate to Salem to expand their business. Our small business loan program helps create good jobs for low and moderate-income residents. Find out more about The Artful Life and our loan program in this issue of the newsletter.

We were very excited to announce a new initiative through the Salem Tree Commission earlier this month. The Century Tree Program invites residents to recommend locations for heritage or "century trees" - long-lived and ecologically significant, we're hoping to plant the next generation of these special trees in the lead-up to 2026, the 400th anniversary of the founding of Salem. Read more in this issue of FYI Salem.

The last page of the newsletter is devoted to a couple of noteworthy updates from the Salem Public Schools, so be sure to

check it out and find the latest news and updates from our schools online at www.salemk12.org.

On the most recent FYI Salem podcast of 2020 you can catch my conversation with the new City Council President, Ward 1 Councillor Bob McCarthy. We talk about the challenges and the opportunities facing Salem in the year ahead. Find it at <https://www.salem.com/mayors-office/pages/fyi-salem-podcast> or subscribe on Apple podcasts, Stitcher, Spotify, TuneIn, and Soundcloud. Also from the FYI Salem podcast, we're proud to launch the Snapshot series—brief news updates and announcements from the City of Salem.

As always, thanks for reading the FYI Salem newsletter! Please encourage friends and neighbors to subscribe at www.salem.com/subscribe.

With best regards,

Kim Driscoll
Mayor
City of Salem



Century Trees

Mayor Kim Driscoll and the Salem Tree Commission have established the Century Tree Program, an initiative tied to Salem 400, Salem's quadrennial celebration, which aims to plant the next generation of heritage trees at suitable locations throughout Salem for future residents to enjoy.

Salem residents are invited to submit their suggestion for potential sites for Century Trees by emailing the location to centurytree@salem.com. The City's Tree Warden will review the proposed locations to select the most appropriate ones for plantings that will grow and flourish throughout the 21st century and, potentially, beyond. Each Century Tree will be designated with a plaque commemorating its planting.

A heritage tree is recognizable by its age, rarity, and size, as well as aesthetic, botanical, ecological, or its historical value. Salem is planning ahead and identifying now sites where residents may enjoy seeing a grand tree growing through the 21st century. When suggesting a location, make sure the site is visible from the road or sidewalk, clear of overhead wires, open for the roots to grow, full of sunlight, and accessible to water.

"From our recently completed City-wide tree inventory and maintenance plan, to the new tree ordinance and commission, to the nearly 5,000% increase in our tree planting budget over the last four years, Salem is committed to our public trees as a critical part of our climate change mitigation strategy, our beautification efforts, and our historic legacy as a green city," said Mayor Driscoll, in announcing the new program.

Paving Map

A new interactive online tool allows residents to look up and view the road surface rating condition and recommended paving plan for any segment of the City's nearly 100 linear miles of public roadway by clicking on the road segment. The new map can be found at www.salem.com/pavingmap and follows on the City's publication starting in 2016 of an online map showing paving work that has been completed each year.



Salem began evaluating the objective conditions of roads in 2010 and, with the engineering firm BETA, continues to update road surface ratings and monitor conditions. Road surface ratings are from 0 (the lowest) to 100 (the highest) and inform the City's annual multi-million dollar paving plan. They allow the City to set a realistic paving budget based on the repair type necessary for the road's condition. Starting in 2019 the City began to also evaluate Salem's 148 linear miles of public sidewalks. To date, about half of all sidewalks and all 692 pedestrian crossing ramps have been inventoried and incorporated into the plan. The goal is to complete the remainder of the sidewalk inventory work in 2020. That study guides investments in sidewalk repairs, reconstruction, and accessibility improvements.

"The City has worked hard to keep up the condition of Salem's streets and sidewalks," said Mayor Driscoll. "We rely on the pavement management plan to help determine which roads to repave and the manner of the repaving work that will be done. By putting the data online in an easy to use, graphical format, our hope is that residents will gain a greater understanding of the nature of work required to keep our streets in good repair and the magnitude of the investments already made to that end."

Complete Streets Grant

The City of Salem has received a \$400,000 complete streets grant from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, the second complete streets grant that the City has received since adopting its nationally recognized complete streets policy in 2014.

This funding will be applied toward the reconstruction of Essex Street, from North Street to Washington Street. The \$2 million project – one of 28 accessibility projects in the FY20 capital plan – includes an entirely new road surface, new and, in places, wider sidewalks with safer and more accessible pedestrian crossing facilities, and new lights, street trees, and benches. The design was developed through a community stakeholder process, incorporating input from businesses and residents along the road, as well as feedback from the Traffic and Parking Commission, Bicycling Advisory Committee, and others.



With funding now in place, the City Engineering Department plans to bid the contract for the project in February, with the goal of the selected contractor commencing construction in mid-April.

"This \$400,000 grant represents the final component of the funding necessary for this project to move from design to construction," said Mayor Driscoll. "This project maintains our commitment to streets and sidewalks that serve and are fully accessible to all of our residents, businesses, and visitors by all modes of transportation."

Small Business Loan Awarded

The City of Salem has closed on a \$50,000 loan through its Small Business Loan Program with The Artful Life Counseling Center & Studio to support the business' expansion and move from its current location in Beverly to its new location at 142 Canal Street in Salem. It will specifically assist with the purchase of new furnishings for additional clinical offices, waiting rooms and studios, art supplies, and working capital.

The Artful Life, founded in 2016, specializes in expressive arts therapy for individuals of all ages throughout the North Shore region. As the only group practice on the North Shore that specializes in expressive arts therapy, demand for The Artful Life's services has steadily increased, leading the business to seek a larger space.

The City's Small Business Loan program supports economic development activities and the creation of jobs for low- to moderate-income individuals. Over the past decade, the City has provided over \$435,000 to local businesses through this program, resulting in the creation of more than 60 new jobs.

"Thanks to our Small Business Loan Program, we are able to support our local business community and create new job opportunities right here in Salem," said Mayor Driscoll. "The Artful Life provides an important service to the North Shore region and I look forward to welcoming them to Salem this spring. I also want to thank our staff who oversee the loan program and work closely with our business community and prospective business owners, to give them the support and guidance they need to succeed right here in Salem."

Schools Update

Salem High School Principal Search

The official search for a permanent principal for Salem High School is underway. Our intention is to have an open process that provides stakeholders varied opportunities to participate.

Currently, a survey is available to gather broad stakeholder input. The survey can be accessed here: <http://bit.ly/SHSPPrincipalSurveyEnglish>. Students, staff, parents, and interested community members are encouraged to share their thoughts and ideas on the survey. Responses will be used to guide the screening and interview process.

A screening team will be formed that will review all applications and conduct initial interviews. Andre Ravenelle, Executive Director of Teachers21 and a former Superintendent, will be facilitating the screening team.

The screening team will forward a group of finalists to the Superintendent and the executive team for second interviews and performance tasks. Each finalist will also visit Salem High School and meet with stakeholder groups.

Superintendent Search

As we move forward with the Superintendent search, we'd like to inform you in advance of another opportunity to be involved in the process.

Next week, Monday-Thursday (February 3rd-6th), we will be hosting events each evening to meet the finalists in a community forum from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. in the Saltonstall School auditorium. Interpretation and childcare will be available each evening.

The Superintendent Search Committee will identify finalists for this important district position this week. On Friday, we will be able to announce who these finalists are and will post their resumes.

At that time we will be able to be more specific information (for example, if there are only three candidates, we will cancel one of the evenings) about the schedule for next week's community forums.

Stay tuned, and we hope you'll join us to meet the candidates for Superintendent of Salem Public Schools.

