



CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES 2016

The Bend Neighborhood Coalition asked this year's candidates for City Council to address important issues affecting neighborhood livability. We thanked them for their time and thoughtful attention to the following questions, and said we would circulate their answers, as written, to our members and other interested citizens.

1) **Name:** Wade Fagen

2) **Why did you decide to run for City Council? What are your priorities?**

I've lived in Bend my whole life, and I've successfully raised a family and continue to operate the same business for decades. I want to see Bend have more diverse city council representation including more people with industrial and private-sector backgrounds, and more people from east-side neighborhoods. I am sick of seeing waste by the city government, waste of time AND taxpayer money, while our infrastructure overhang continues to rise. Bend can grow and preserve its quality of life at the same time, and someone like me who truly understands Bend's heritage and history, is best for the job.

My major priority as a city councilor would be to promote affordable livability for all neighborhoods; we need to implement a development and zoning model that allows working families to afford our city while keeping our traditional ways of life in established neighborhoods.

3) **How do you differ from your opponent (if you have one)? If you were the second to file for the position, how did you decide to challenge the person you are opposing?**

Unfortunately Sally Russell has not met the standards the city hoped for over the last four years. Bend's city council is stuck and not addressing our most pressing issues. As a lifelong native and business owner I think I would bring a more local and engaged approach to the city's operations. I know how to get results, save money, and balance competing interests while on my job sites, and I think such real-world skills are missing from our current council.

4) **Some city officials have said that livability is hard to define or that everyone has a different definition, making it difficult to do anything to improve livability. What role do you think the city should have in keeping Bend livable? Please list specific areas of city policy that you feel apply.**

While it's clear that due to both the current regulatory and economic environment, Bend needs to become denser and taller as a city, we need to take easy steps to make sure our community charm is maintained. Mixed use, higher density developments need to be focused along major roads and transit corridors while existing residential areas should keep their historical character. Livability and affordability are not the same as speculation and exploitation; it is time the city finds a way to reduce or mitigate the negative neighborhood impacts created by short-term rentals and over-promotion of the city's brand.

5) With more density on the horizon, what changes in policies or code enforcement do you think would help protect the quality of life in Bend's residential neighborhoods?

As we are all aware, Bend's current tourism and real-estate priorities are focusing growth in neighborhoods that increasingly cater to visitors. Affordability and opportunity for the rest of the city concurrently suffer. There are numerous tools, both traditional and innovative, that we can use to increase livability in core areas while spreading these development benefits (and impacts) across the wider city.

- A. Zoning and permitting modernization will allow more access to affordable housing (like "tiny" homes) that promote neighborhood character, while working to solve our housing crisis.
- B. Parking and short-term rental requirements could be tightened to implement a wider dispersal of mixed-use commercial districts across the city.
- C. It is also time to reconsider how the city spends tourism-promotion funds, as we have already reached a point of demand-saturation in the city and further advertising might not be meeting the goals of our citizens.

6) Regarding the noise ordinance and special events, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following:

a) Reducing decibel levels in the noise ordinance to more closely match other cities

Neutral

b) Requiring a permit for outdoor music venues (including restaurants and pubs)

Neutral

c) Shifting responsibility for enforcing the noise ordinance from the police to a sound technician

Neutral

d) Requiring that noise and event permits be spread out in terms of frequency and location

Agree somewhat

e) Requiring that event permits have a community focus, rather than a private commercial focus

Neutral

7) Regarding these land use issues, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following:

a) Establishing parking districts in areas where nearby uses (commercial, educational, etc.) create excessive demand by non-residents

Agree somewhat

b) Creating neighborhood compatibility zones to buffer residential areas from the offsite impacts of adjoining commercial and mixed use areas (through a step-down in permitted uses)

Neutral

c) Establishing a university district to concentrate campus-related development in adjoining mixed use zones, while protecting the character of nearby residential neighborhoods

Neutral

d) Terminating the ability to transfer non-conforming short term rental permits on sale

Agree strongly

e) Planning for one or more entertainment districts where outdoor amplified music and late-night entertainment is concentrated and allowed to operate under more relaxed guidelines

Neutral

f) Directing staff to encourage property owners and developers to plan projects in line with the comprehensive plan and development code, and to reduce spot-rezoning and variance requests

Neutral

g) Adopting an occupancy limit or high occupancy permit as a means of avoiding single family homes being used as rooming houses or stealth dorms or mini-dorms

Neutral

- 8) City staff frequently bring the Council a single solution or preferred scenario or final draft for discussion and an up/down vote. Critics charge that this dilutes the Council's role as a policy-making body, and that staff should instead present alternatives, with an analysis of pros and cons. What is your view on whether the Council should insist on practices that strengthen its policy-making role?**

I think the city staff do play too large a role in guiding the city councilors and letting the "tail wag the dog." Our current city council does not have the operational and intellectual strength to penetrate staff inertia at city hall, and this is exactly why I want to bring some professional and geographic diversity to Bend's government.

- 9) Momentum is building for a charter amendment to change the form of governance in Bend to one like other similarly-sized cities. As a leader in the City, what changes in the governance structure do you believe are needed as Bend continues to grow?**

I would agree with the idea of allowing the city council to be elected by district or ward. Using the existing neighborhood association boundaries to group city council districts would be a smart way to increase the engagement and visibility towards these neighborhood associations, which the city works so hard to organize.