



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:** Sally Russell

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

I am deeply committed to the well being of current and future residents of the City of Bend, and setting firm, solid groundwork for keeping the underlying "soul" of the city intact.

Overall, I think we have a good, friendly, respectful and inclusive community. The "Be A Local" campaign has the right approach: "Warmth, Generosity, Acceptance, Keep It Going." I hope you read it.

I welcome listening to different viewpoints, unravelling community issues from all sides and looking for the intersections, as well as differences. There are great solutions with often simple, but sometimes difficult, answers.

My top 4 priorities are:

1. Strengthening Bend's Economic Resiliency.

Focusing on supporting development of jobs that provide living wages.

2. Livability – Keep Bend "Bend".

It's important to keep the "soul" of Bend intact. Granted, that means something different for every person: clean air, quiet nights, moving easily through the City, open spaces, respectful neighbors, living wage jobs. We have to continue to work on identifying solutions that take care of our diverse residents and businesses.

3. Accelerate Affordable Housing.

With my vote, Bend's Council just passed six policies to speed up new housing for people who work in Bend. I am looking for the next ideas in this important work. It's critical that people who work here can live here, too.

4. Prioritize Transportation and Sewer Infrastructure work.

Funding for core infrastructure projects, keeping rates fair and equitable, is very important to me. During my four years on Council I have continuously advocated to increase street maintenance funding without taking away from other key City services.

For more information visit: SallyForBend.com

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?

I have broad and solid work experience, both as an employee and as a leader. My eight years on the Bend Planning Commission lead to a solid background and understanding how to create effective policy for our City within the confines of the democratic system. Planning Commission work also included envisioning and creating next steps for a healthy, vibrant community. I have worked through three economic cycles in Bend, and know how to keep priorities straight while riding the up and down swings of the economy. Finally, during my career I have worked with people from different walks of life; I am open to listening to different viewpoints.

Finally, I enjoy learning and understanding issues that come to the City. I have found out that the best solution is not always the first to come forward, and that understanding and unravelling the problem, listening to community voices, often leads to stronger, long lasting solutions for us all.

My opponent has worked in a specific job his entire life, and lacks the broad perspective that I have, professionally and personally. It's not clear how he can find the time necessary to contribute meaningfully on Council, given the work ahead.

And I listen!

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.

"Livability" is embedded in so much of our every day lives. Granted, that means something different for every person: clean air, quiet nights, moving easily through the City, open spaces, respectful neighbors, living wage jobs. We have to continue to work on identifying solutions that take care of our diverse residents and businesses.

The most valuable asset in an elected Councilor is to understand the needs and issues well enough to sort through viable solutions, suggest and guide solutions appropriate and creative to address the issue. I am that councilor.

The role the City of Bend should play in keeping Bend livable is to be aware and informed of impacts, intended and unintended. Every decision made by Council can impact some aspect of "livability" in our City. The Bend 2030 Livability Conference brought leaders from outside of Bend to begin to create a new set of ideas for Bend's future. I look forward to exploring how to be creative in implementing new ideas without necessarily going through the burdensome ordinance and/or code development process.

One idea I hope to see explored further is implementing specific overlays to incentivize uses close to specific centers. For instance, the OSU Cascades Campus should have an overlay zone that allows more housing, commercial services, transporting choices, etc. next to the campus. (I understand that a "white paper" is being worked on that may provide the vision framework on this.)

For instance, the bulk of the sound issues for neighborhoods adjoining commercial areas can be addressed through: a) monitoring decibel levels (perhaps purchasing a monitor that belongs to the Neighborhood Associations?); b) time curfews for outdoor events (which is now in place, but could be moved earlier for Fall/Winter/Spring events?); c) monitoring bass levels — a new technology, but Bend could lead with some help from the NA's.

Part of Livability is cultural - the actions of the people who live here or visit here. This is more of a social campaign -- for instance the new Visit Bend campaign, "Visit Like a Local". Or the grassroots campaign, "Be A Local".

Bend's Parking Study, now underway, has the potential to understand patterns throughout the Downtown and areas close-by, many of which experience the impact of the 20,000 additional visitors during the Summer months.

Improved transportation choices reduces the inherent parking problems that many neighborhoods are facing. Even though neighborhood parking permits could be a solution for residents, it only goes so far in addressing a larger issue, which is people don't culturally choose to walk in Bend when in other places they would. And there is no parking plan for most of the commercial areas in our City -- this can be addressed by both code, and strengthening Bend's transportation systems, trolley, bus, bike safety, street crossing safety, etc.

Livability is also being conscious of how businesses, and their suppliers/delivery, interact in areas next to residential areas throughout the City.

As you may be aware, I have been working with the garbage franchisees in Bend to ensure that their actions have as little impact on neighbors as possible. Through our conversations, they have identified ways to diminish unwanted noise at early hours. No ordinance needed. Just identification of problems, and willingness by a Councilor and by the City to enter into a two-way conversation to a) identify the problem; b) identify and prioritize solutions, and c) implement solution(s).

Looking forward, developing City codes to maximize the value of the Efficiency Areas identified in the new Urban Growth Boundary Plan will impact Livability issues positively. Having services that are close by reduces the need for people to travel distances throughout the City, and also allows for adding a variety of transportation alternatives that cannot yet be supported today in Bend.

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?

There are several public engagement projects underway today led by the City of Bend. To fully understand which solutions will be effective, we first must understand the underlying issues at hand.

- ** Bend Urban Area Plan
- ** Bend Downtown Parking Study
- ** Central Westside Plan
- ** Galveston Plan

I am looking forward to future conversations to form solid policy and/or codes informed from these robust community engagement processes, much of which can protect the quality of life in Bend's residential neighborhoods.

Upon the completion of the 25 year old software platform at the City, up-to-date data and citizen interface platforms will create greater capacity to respond from our small code enforcement team. I have supported this work, as well as increasing the code enforcement personnel.

The on-the-ground work I have done with the garbage companies in response to citizens' requests, has already resulted in the replacement of backup beepers, replacing many of the metal containers with plastic ones, and changing pick up times later to lessen impact on residents adjacent to commercial areas. Longer term, we are all looking at ways to allow for the most sensitive and efficient location of collection locations for any new construction.

This is a small example of the work I do as a Councilor day to day.

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)
Disagree somewhat
- c) Shifting responsibility for enforcing the noise ordinance from the police to a sound technician
Disagree somewhat
- d) Requiring that noise and event permits be spread out in terms of frequency and location
Disagree strongly
- e) Requiring that event permits have a community focus, rather than a private commercial focus
Disagree somewhat

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 strongly
- 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)
Disagree somewhat
- c) Establishing a university district to concentrate campus-related development in adjoining mixed use zones, while protecting the character of nearby residential neighborhoods
Agree strongly
- d) Terminating the ability to transfer non-conforming short term rental permits on sale
Disagree 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
Agree strongly
- 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
Disagree somewhat
- 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
Agree somewhat

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?

First, Councilors need to do their homework and be prepared going into the work sessions. If you don't have Councilors doing their homework ahead of time, they can't make informed decisions and understand the context of a decision in front of them.

Since I came on Council I have always asked for work sessions before any issue comes before Council. This was NOT the normal practice when I came onto Council. Moreover, and preferably, an opportunity for community input before the final decision comes before Council is important.

In my experience, often viewpoints or fact arise during the work sessions which lead to formation of the final policy. It also precludes a scenario coming before Council that hasn't included input from diverse members throughout the community.

Paying attention, listening, and doing research ahead of time contributes to a quality decision by Council.

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 will be very interested to look at the results from the two Bend 2030 Charter Review forums. Ultimately, this has to be a robust community conversation. And it is just beginning.

In my opinion, a smaller Council — 5 — makes more sense: 3 seats would be "area specific", and 2 would be City-wide.

Whether the Mayor should be elected and have greater responsibilities? There are significant pros and cons to this structure.

Whether Councilor pay should be increased from \$200.00/month? Given the responsiveness and responsibility our residents expect from Bend's City Councilors, and the amount of time to do the job well and responsibly, I believe compensation should be looked at carefully.

Fewer people threw their hat into the ring for City Council this year. I see this as recognition of the personal investment needed to do a good job for their City, and the relatively tiny compensation.

Personally, I work between 15 and 60 hours a week. I do my best to understand issues and community values and viewpoints thoroughly before I sit on the council dais and make a decision.

I look forward to future discussions on this issue.