



Bend City Council Candidate Questionnaire

Deadline for submission: 5:00PM PDT, October 4, 2024

The City of Bend has a vibrant business community, comprised of small, medium and large businesses. As a City Council member, you will play a crucial role in supporting and fostering its growth through the policies you adopt.

To help Chamber members understand your stance on business-related issues and Chamber priorities, we kindly request your responses to the following questions. **Please limit your answers to 250 words per question.**

Completed questionnaires will be posted on the Bend Chamber website in PDF format for both Chamber members and the general public to view.

Bend Chamber Priorities and Policy Principles

Whether reviewing local city and county ordinances or weighing in on legislative proposals in Salem, the Chamber has an active and effective advocacy program.

We are a 501(c6) organization and engage in direct advocacy at all levels of government. Our guiding policy principles, set by the Chamber Board of Directors, include:

- Re-build a state where businesses thrive in our community and ensure sustainable funding sources absent additional impacts on businesses
 - Increase the supply of attainable housing, prioritizing workforce housing at 80-120 percent AMI
 - Promote economic vitality, workforce development and innovation for a vibrant business community
 - Support for transportation and infrastructure projects to alleviate traffic congestion and plan for future growth
 - Increase access to affordable, high-quality childcare; and ensure adequate funding for K-12 public education
 - Advocate for a thoughtful balance between environmental sustainability and economic health
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Please provide your name and answer the questions under each of the categories.

First / Last name*

Economic Development & Small Business Support

1. What specific strategies do you propose to attract and retain businesses in Bend?*

My number one priority in serving on Council is to shift our City away from a suburban, sprawling development pattern with congested streets, to one of complete neighborhoods with walkable and bikeable streets and neighborhood scale businesses. This is a strategy to recruit and retain businesses in Bend because it's it will increase the supply and diversity of housing types, reduce congestion, and open more space in residential neighborhoods for small businesses to locate and hopefully thrive. I believe traffic congestion is an expensive but difficult to quantify problem for businesses. The Chamber obviously already understands that housing is a barrier to business health and growth. I believe I have the focus and knowledge to push our City to address the issue at its root cause and make no and low-cost investments to help people switch from single-occupancy vehicles to different modes. In addition, I am fully supportive of traditional economic development activities such as workforce training, storefront improvement grants, small business loans, recruitment efforts, etc., create living wage jobs and improve the health of our local and regional economy.

2. How do you plan to incorporate business issues into the biennial Council Goals?*

I'd like to hear from businesses regarding the question of Council Goals. I know housing and the Central District are top priorities, which I share, and I've heard from minority communities that minority-owned businesses are oftentimes left out of conversations as well as investment programs, which must be corrected. In the current Council Goals, business issues appear to be captured under "Shared Prosperity," but they haven't advanced much. I'm sure some things have been accomplished and just not accounted for, but I do look forward to working with the business community to ensure Council Goals and in general our local government is focusing on the most impactful issues and ensuring that our entire community prospers.

Workforce Housing & Growth

1. What specific policies do you propose to accelerate housing development for Bend's workforce?*

Our code and permitting process are stopping exactly the kind of housing our community needs and it's a significant problem. I've heard of over 120 units and counting of ownership and rental housing that would have been in construction right now in closer-in neighborhoods entirely funded with private capital, that are not moving forward due to challenges with the City. The good news is that we have over 2000 acres of un- or under-developed land within the UGB that we can build on tomorrow. I plan to remove the simplest barriers quickly in code language as well as in permitting processes and work on a 2-yr goal of revamping our development code to make it easier to build needed housing within walkable, bikeable neighborhoods.

2.How do you plan to encourage development in the Central District, specifically mixed use commercial and residential development?*

In the Central District, the City needs to step forward with infrastructure investments – Franklin Ave and sewer interceptor to name two. The Central District is challenged with small and varied lot sizes that make development more challenging, so I think we need to look at ways to help developers overcome that challenge. I have some ideas and I'd like to speak with the land owners and developers who have already made investments to hear what further steps the City can take to encourage the Central District to take off.

Regulatory Environment

How would you streamline bureaucracy and reduce regulatory burdens to make it easier for businesses to operate in Bend?*

Reducing barriers to permitting is my top priority for housing and I intend to also reduce barriers to commercial construction. When a business makes an investment that creates jobs or improves a storefront, they should not have to also make expensive and unrelated infrastructure improvements. When a business is flooded, has to close for a month, replacing all finishes and fixtures, they shouldn't have to do anything more than fix what was damaged. Unfortunately, I know of too many businesses who could not get CO due to inspectors making unreasonable requests. As far as licensing or other regulatory barriers businesses may face, I'd love to hear how I can help as one of your next City Councilors. My hope is that I am known to the business community as a Councilor whose door is always open to talk about issues that help strengthen our local economy.
