

City Council Candidate Questionnaire

Name: Don Sefouring Position Sought: CC Ward 1

1. Please describe why you are seeking the position of City Councilor.

*I wish to represent the people in city government. I was asked by many friends to apply, so after researching the position, I did so.*

2. If elected, do you have any specific things you would like to accomplish during your term on the City Council?

*I would like to focus on the future of Grants Pass by sticking to the goals and vision statement for the city.*

3. Please provide us with a listing of your prior community and civic involvement in Grants Pass (or other communities).

*I have no prior political or government service experience, I have not worked for any branch of government. I was a member of the Oregon Caveron, G.P. Active Club. My involvement with these organizations and the events they promote, brought me in contact with various agencies.*

4. Please tell us your understanding of the role of Economic Development and what you believe should occur with Economic Development during your term.

*With Today's economic situation this is a tough call. I feel the council should give the Economic Dev. Director all the tools he needs to promote Grants Pass.*

5. What role do you believe Tourism promotion and the Tourism program should play in Grants Pass over the next four years?

*Tourism is very seasonal in Oregon due to weather conditions therefore it is important to "make hay" in the summer months. I feel it is very important to promote events and activities in our community using resources controlled by government to their fullest. In some cases, restrictions on these events, discourage participation, rather than encourage it. The event needs to be able to expand if warranted.*

6. The decisions on the Urban Growth Boundary will be made in the next couple of years. Please tell us your understanding of the purpose, and your views on the extent (if any) that the Urban Growth Boundary should be expanded.

I feel that growth is inevitable. Some residents in the growth boundary are skeptical of that growth. The city needs to present those people with the features and benefits of joining the city. I feel a five year pro-rated tax structure should be in place to "soften" the blow of increased tax obligations.

What is your position on signage for local businesses (i.e. it should be expanded, reduced, regulated, unregulated, etc.), and why?

All need to research this issue further - Business need signage to promote their business. We don't need a Reno/Las Vegas format nor do we need to suppress signage to the point that it is no longer effective.

8. The community survey annually asks about how citizens perceive growth and the impacts of growth on the community. Please describe for us your position on community growth.

Community growth is greatly affected by business moving into the area or present business expanding their operations. At present, with the economy the way it is, we need to help business grow and encourage new business to locate here. Raising fees and charges only discourages those decisions.

9. This City is actively evaluating parks and recreation plans. What is your position on the proposed park plan, and to what extent do you believe that parks should be directly funded by local taxing efforts?

The Master Plan was approved by the city council. I believe it was a good plan with one exception. The River Road Reserve is a very controversial issue that I felt was not "sold" to the people. Given the current economic situation, I think we put all expenditures under the magnifying glass.

As for funding, the jury is still out with me. Grants and matching funds etc. all come from one branch of the government or another. I also pay state and federal taxes.

10. Please let us know your position on the funding of Public Safety (fire, police, building enforcement).

The present levy system of funding has its pros and cons. Cons - it requires a vote of the public periodically, "a 'you bet your job' situation that is always uncomfortable however, it also lets the public weigh in on the departments performance. We have a top notch public safety department, lets keep it that way.

11. Do you believe taxes and fees in Grants Pass are too high, too low, or about right, and to what extent do you believe these should be changed?

There are some fees (SDC's) that seem on the surface to be high. I'm researching the different charges as I get more involved. I feel we have a very good water and sewer system in place and at a very reasonable cost. I can get up in the middle of the night and draw a glass of city water without turning on the light because I "know" it is clean and safe to drink.

12. In your opinion, what role does the downtown play in the future of Grants Pass?

Downtown areas are what make towns like Grants Pass attractive. Grants Pass has always had a hometown feel to it and part of that is due to the money the downtown merchants spend to keep it that way. It is, and should be, a place for community events.

13. Please provide us with any other information you believe makes you the best candidate for the City Council.

I'm just a concerned citizen that wants representation for the people