

Kris Woodburn
Ward 4B

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

Grants Pass has been my home since I moved here in 1998 to become a prosecutor for the Josephine County District Attorney's office. I was appointed to the Grants Pass Redevelopment Agency in 2001 and elected to the City Council beginning my service in 2002. It was a positive experience that taught me a great deal about the City and local government. I care a lot about Grants Pass and would like to be a part of a group that works toward keeping it a great place to live, work and raise a family.

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 see the Council and Mayor focus on maintaining the current service level for Public Safety, planning for and providing necessary infrastructure and facilitation of job retention/creation by private businesses.

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

Grants Pass Redevelopment Agency, Grants Pass City Council, Greater Grants Pass Rotary Club, Reaching Our Community Food Pantry Board Member, Friends of the Oregon Caves and Chateau Board Member, Member of the Elks, Paint your Heart Out Volunteer

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

Under the current economic conditions, Economic Development (and specifically job retention and creation) takes on a more crucial role than ever. Economic Development within the City is currently assisting local businesses with information, issue research through involvement with the local Business Retention and Expansion Group and some limited financial resources such as the Industrial loan fund and System Development Charge grant program. I would like to see this type of involvement continue and also consider additional efforts to help private businesses retain/create new jobs. One potential example would be a micro lending program to work in conjunction with the training currently provided through a block grant by the RCC business development center.

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

Tourism provides a positive financial impact for local businesses and accounts for a significant number of jobs in this community. Tourism promotion is another avenue for the City to assist private business in the retention/creation of new jobs. The City tourism program should focus on the area's natural attractions as well as downtown and the growing local art community.

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.

In Oregon, municipalities must have 20 years of buildable inventory for future growth within their Urban Growth Boundary and Grants Pass no longer has that inventory. It makes sense to have future plans that reach 20 years into the future in order to more efficiently provide services and appropriate infrastructure for the citizens. Well planned development can reduce costs for new roads, water and sewer lines and storm drain facilities. It can also help alleviate future traffic issues. Expansion should be based on accurate projections of population growth in conjunction with an appropriate mix of residential and commercial zones.

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

The current sign code provides about the right amount of regulation. Occasionally, gaps and unforeseen circumstances arise which may need to be addressed with discretionary application and/or minor changes to the code. Too much regulation overly restricts the ability of a business to advertise and be found. Too little restriction could cause signage which would destroy the hometown feel of Grants Pass or allow larger businesses who can afford larger, more elaborate and technologically advanced signage to eclipse smaller businesses.

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.

Grants Pass is a great place to live and people want to enjoy the same natural beauty and positive community aspects that we do now. It is too nice in Grants Pass to think that people will not continue to move here. Our community should make sure we have the necessary master plans and tools to accommodate growth in a manner that is fair to existing residents and newcomers.

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?

Long-term plans are a necessity for every well organized city and the Parks master plan is over 20 years old. I support the current Parks master plan. There have been significant efforts to gather and include citizen input into the plan. Any City expenditures on projects in this plan would have to be approved through the budget process. It is my understanding that direct funding of these projects is not proposed at this time. As much as I believe parks are important for long-term livability and ultimately necessary for a healthy community, I would not support financing park projects right now unless they heavily leveraged outside funding and put local people to work.

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

Public Safety has to be the number one priority. I have volunteered my time and personally donated to the public safety levy campaigns over the last eight years and will continue. It would be my preference to find a more stable source of funding for public safety.

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?

For the most part, I agree with our current levels of taxes and fees. However, SDC's which were appropriate during previously good economic times should be revisited under the current conditions in order to encourage private economic activity.

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

A healthy downtown is critical to the economic and cultural future of Grants Pass not to mention preserving our sense of community. It is a core for small business and key to our tourism. When family or friends come to visit, we always end up walking around downtown to enjoy the atmosphere.

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

I am an independent thinker who will listen to people and take a balanced approach to decisions.