

Application Form

Profile

Marissa _____ C _____ Theve _____
First Name Middle Initial Last Name

Email Address

Home Address

City

Suite or Apt

State

Postal Code

What Ward do you live in? *

Ward 1

Primary Phone

Alternate Phone

Agriculture- Natural
Resources Conservation
Service _____
Employer

soil scientist _____
Job Title

soil science _____
Occupation

Which Boards would you like to apply for?

Salem Planning Commission: Submitted

Which of the following City of Salem Board or Commission meetings have you attended? *

- Downtown Advisory Board
- Salem Planning Commission

Interests & Experiences

What do you feel you can contribute as a board or commission member?

As a federal employee, I am not afraid of wading through code and policy to gain understanding of an issue. I know how to then apply policy without injecting my personal preferences. I care a lot and am willing to donate my time to work towards a better city. As a scientist, I can see the big picture and the benefits to the greater good in land use decisions, while appreciating how the smaller details can support the larger goals. I can provide a data-focused environmentalist voice that understands how and why Urban Growth Boundaries work as in a previous position, I helped generate the soil data that guide that land use system in Oregon. As a millennial, I understand that we have a severe housing shortage that will be felt for decades to come, disproportionately by our lower income population and younger generations. I appreciate the wide-open opportunity to work towards environmental justice in Salem as we are just beginning to acknowledge how previous planning in lower income areas has stifled tree canopy, pedestrian safety, and small business development, among many other disadvantages. I am willing to look hard at the reasoning behind city code and work to make sure that the intent matches the impact. For example, "safety" is too often used as a catch-all reason to do something that might make it safer for one demographic or property, but less safe and livable for others as with excess lighting and parking requirements.

[Upload a Resume](#)

What prompted your interest in applying to serve as a board or commission member?

I first visited Salem in September of 2015 for a two-week soil mapping work detail and I remember driving around my rental car and just grinning at the beauty that lay between two mountain ranges. Since 2016 I have been lucky enough to call Salem my home and was fortunate enough to purchase a home in 2018. Lately I have noticed that while my neighborhood association continues to be a source of community for me, the values there do not often reflect my own. There is a serious sense of mistrust which leads to very slow progress or none at all. I regularly hear folks put their own desires and benefits before the needs of the greater community which can be disheartening. There are bragging rights and a virtuousness associated with how long you've lived here. I see directly volunteering for the City as a way to have a greater impact and get more done than I can by sitting on a neighborhood association board that seems to work mainly towards stifling change. We have a fast-growing population which our neighborhood association program often fails to engage with, leaving the same long-term homeowners to be the voice of these groups, when we know from Our Salem that renters comprise nearly half our population. The reason I became interested in the Grant Neighborhood Association and ultimately joined the board was because I saw a land use notification sign outside Evergreen Church during a dog walk. I later read in the news about how a non-profit was trying to turn the building into permanent supportive housing for veterans experiencing homelessness and how GNA was fighting their rezoning efforts in the name of on-street parking and intangible things like 'historical feel'. This is unacceptable to me and did not reflect my values.

Please explain how your education, professional, personal, or volunteer experience and knowledge qualify you to serve on the board(s) or commission(s) for which you are applying.

In the first question I explained how my perspective and bureaucratic patience can be of use. In my previous position, I worked for 6.5 years out of the Bureau of Land Management collecting soils data and authoring National Environmental Policy Act reports for soil science issues. As a federal employee I understand red tape and how different levels of government interact- sometimes not in the most ideal ways for local governments. I understand through my outreach work around Dark Skies and Quiet Clean Salem that collaboration and finding common ground is key. I have networked with neighborhood associations, Salem Audubon, the planetarium at Chemeketa, and others to help spread the message on these issues- on the surface these may seem like unlikely allies for a livability activist.

List any experience you have with volunteering for the City of Salem or other organizations.

I have served on the board of the Oregon Society for Soil Scientists for the last 7 years as well, similarly, updating the bylaws and serving in most of the board positions including president in 2021-22. I lead a volunteer effort called Clean Quiet Salem, attempting to curb noise and emissions from small off-road gas-powered engines like leaf blowers. We are presenting to neighborhood associations, fielding questions, and collecting endorsements at this time to raise awareness and support for this livability issue. Similarly, I have presented to 7 neighborhood associations about light pollution and Dark Skies and Salem's role in reducing valley sky glow and light trespass. I have planted trees in the Highland Neighborhood with Friends of Trees. I participate in Strong Salem-Keizer discussions and have attended 350 Salem events. I canvass to turn out the vote in my neighborhood as a Neighborhood Leader but as a federal employee, I am prohibited by the Hatch Act from fundraising. I regularly provide public testimony on things like the Climate Action Plan, parking reform, and land use decisions.

Briefly explain any experience you have working with your neighborhood association or other public bodies or committees.

I am the Co-chair of Grant Neighborhood Association and have been involved with that program for at least 4 years, serving on the board for the last 3. In the last year I have led a bylaws committee to modernize the group and make it more inclusive, including adding email voting rules, adding officers like Land Use Chair and clarifying officer duties, and am working on better onboarding protocols with the Outreach Chair while collaborating with other NAs like Highland and Northeast Neighbors.

Can you commit to attending a minimum of 75 percent of scheduled meetings? (Please refer to the City's website for the meeting schedule. Failure to meet the attendance requirement may result in removal from office.)

Yes No

Please list up to three (3) references whom we could contact to learn more about your qualifications (name/email address or phone number/relationship).

Virginia Stapleton- city councilor for Ward 1 503-689-5228 vcstapleton@gmail.com; city councilor Susan Napack- Grant Neighborhood Association outreach chair 973-632-3005 napstudio@mac.com; serve on GNA together Paul Tigan- Planning Commission member 303-845-2449 paultigan@hey.com; served together on Grant Neighborhood Association together, former colleagues at the Bureau of Land Management

Question applies to Salem Planning Commission

The Commission strives to make decisions that implement the Salem Area Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code. Please describe your affiliations within the community that could affect your ability to participate in land use decisions if you are appointed to the Planning Commission (i.e., familial or financial relationship with developers, builders, land use attorneys, land use consultants, etc.).

I do not have familial or financial relationships with any of the community member types listed here, besides my work on the GNA board with Aaron Terpening (GNA land use chair and architect for CB Two) and gathering and sharing information from Trent Michels of the Cannery/ Truitt property to our board and general membership. I am a single-family homeowner within the UGB.

Question applies to Salem Planning Commission

Please state your profession

soil scientist

Demographics

Some boards and commissions require membership to be racially, politically or geographically proportionate to the general public. The following information helps track our recruitment and diversity efforts.

Ethnicity

Gender

Question