

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PLANNING COMMISSION CANDIDATE

**CANDIDATE:** Jordan Truitt

**PLEASE RESPOND IN WRITING BY:** Wednesday, July 1, 2020, at 5 p.m.

PLEASE SEND TO: Lynda Rose  
Assistant to Mayor Chuck Bennett  
VIA EMAIL: lrose@cityofsalem.net  
OR VIA FAX: 503-588-6354

1. Please explain your understanding of the role and responsibilities of the Planning Commission.

*In my recent works with the City of Salem concerning planning and zoning, I have gained an insider's perspective of the Planning Commission's role as it relates to growth and development in Salem. Using the Salem Area Comprehensive Plan as a road map, it is my understanding that the Commission's role exists to guide progress through compliance, recommending to City Council the Commission's decisions on potential actions. As we are all aware, Salem is a thriving and developing city with endless potential; as developers, landowners and individual communities consider expansion, the Commission's responsibility is to ensure each request for adjustment and/or variance is thoroughly evaluated and in the best interest of the community as a whole.*

2. What skills, knowledge and perspectives do you possess that will enable you to be an effective member of the Commission?

*My background as a lifelong Salem resident, business owner, and Real Estate professional combined with the skills and knowledge I have acquired as a driven and energetic individual, lay the groundwork required to fill such an important role for the Commission and our community.*

*As a Commercial Real Estate Broker, it is my responsibility to possess a deep understanding of the planning process to better represent my clients and the City in which they reside. To effectively do my job for all involved, I must convey an intricate knowledge of all aspects concerning planning, zoning and development requirements, and must be equipped to handle opposing opinions while striving to accomplish the highest and best use for the city and each individual. While I may not be an expert in each individual aspect of the Planning Commission's responsibilities, I am actively engaged in the topics surrounding Salem and its development into the future. By proactively engaging myself in the areas of Planning, I feel that I may be able to provide additional resources to the Commission and our City for continued progress.*

*In addition, my appointment to a State of Oregon Commission has prepared me for the challenges of the Planning Commission. Appointed by Governor Kate Brown and approved by the State Senate, I hold a seat on the Energy Facility Siting Council within the Oregon Department of Energy. We evaluate many of the state's largest and most controversial energy projects as they relate to new and existing facilities. Using OAR's and ORS's as guidelines, we frequently evaluate these standards with local municipality zoning and planning codes to establish regional and state-wide compliance within multiple jurisdictions. As a member of this council, I work alongside some of the states most accomplished city and county planners to oversee projects which extend across county lines, consuming tens of thousands of acres. We cover a wide range of issues including but not limited to zoning, setbacks, impact studies, public notification and compliance while working with multiple local, State and Federal agencies.*

*With the ability to view each individual case through a variety of lenses, I am equipped to field a wide range of issues. Using this as the backbone of my desire to participate, I have created a platform for meaningful and substantive contribution for the benefit of the Salem Planning Commission and its participating citizens.*

3. One of the most common application types you will hear at the Planning Commission is a Comprehensive Plan Change and Zone Change, where an applicant wants to change their zoning to facilitate a development proposal. What is your perspective regarding responding to the current market versus maintaining a long-term vision?

*Keeping the long-term vision for Salem in mind, I feel it is critical to carefully consider any changes for the future needs of Salem. As part of my job, I typically field questions specific to a particular zone or area and its permitted uses on a daily basis. A portion of these requests concern the likelihood of a proposed zone change to meet the development needs of the end user. In some cases, zoning requests would positively affect the community by helping to offset the imbalance of single-family versus multi-family land, or the deficit of commercial versus industrial land. However, not all requests relate directly to these imbalances but still pose a significant impact upon those involved.*

*I believe the Comprehensive Plan and local zoning should, within reason, be amenable to change. However, I also believe that the Master Plan and its principles for Salem's growth must be thoroughly considered in an effort to maintain cohesion for sustainable, long-term growth. This will ensure a viable, livable and thriving city for everyone involved.*

4. What are some examples of how you believe Salem has done a good job of land use and transportation planning? What are some areas for improvement?

*One example of how Salem has done a good job of land use planning relates to the recent adaptation of changes to development codes for multi-family housing. The changes are intended to give developers more flexibility on how design standards are met, with new standards for small multi-family housing projects. This has in turn simplified regulations and reduced parking requirements for various housing projects.*

*An additional example of quality planning are the zone changes near the Oregon State Hospital. With an ever-increasing need for not only single-family housing, but also multi-family and mixed-use land, this request will provide Salem with new alternatives as we continue to see demand exceeding capacity. Coinciding with the effects of the recent pandemic, businesses and families are being forced to restructure their daily lives, altering how they live, work and play. In that light, this will raise to the surface valuable new resources as we adapt to a changing environment.*

*A common topic for improvement surrounds the hot-button issue of traffic and congestion. While the polarizing subject of a third bridge divides many of us, it highlights the issues we face on a daily basis in the core of downtown and West Salem. These two communities are interconnected despite their separation. I believe in part, that it will come down to how and where development takes place, to begin pulling people from core arterials to new pockets of the city. Part of developing a significant project would require an impact study of the surrounding traffic patterns, helping to spotlight main areas for concern, and where to alleviate troublesome flows. This could eventually trigger a measure to address those issues by gathering public input.*

*We need to be careful however, not to mimic our neighboring cities in an effort to reduce traffic by forcing costly alternative modes of transportation. Salem could be considered by some as a microcosm, encapsulating something perceived to be much smaller than it truly is, with characteristics of a larger city. Our solutions need to be homegrown and based upon the growing nature of Salem.*

*In closing, I am proud to be a longtime Salem resident who grew up in this wonderful place. Although it is part of my job to understand the inner workings of growth and development, I care deeply about Salem's progress and that it happens in a well-considered manner. Ultimately, I see my contribution to the Planning Commission as a positive step in ensuring we have adequate land, zoned appropriately for that growth.*

*I appreciate your consideration and look forward to rolling up my sleeves!*

*Thank you,*

*Jordan Truitt*