

Indivisible Benton County — Candidate Questionnaire November 2026 Midterm Election

Thank you for your interest in an endorsement from Indivisible Benton County. **Please complete this questionnaire and return it to voter@indivisiblebc.org by Aug. 12.** Responses will be reviewed by our candidate research committee, and excerpts may be shared with our members.

Please do not use generative AI (artificial intelligence) when completing this questionnaire. We would much rather see grammatical errors in answers that reflect you personally than perfect writing that doesn't originate from your own thoughts!

Please reach out to voter@indivisiblebc.org if you have any questions about the questionnaire or our endorsement process.

SECTION 1: CANDIDATE & CAMPAIGN INFORMATION

1. Full name: **Greg Shiffer**
2. Office sought: **Corvallis City Council, Ward 6**
3. Campaign website and social media accounts (if applicable):
gregforcorvallis.org; www.facebook.com/people/Greg-Shiffer-For-Corvallis-City-Council-Ward-6/61591771494286/

SECTION 2: BACKGROUND & MOTIVATION

4. Why are you running for this office? What do you hope to accomplish if elected?

I'm running for City Council because I love Corvallis, and I'm concerned about its future as a place where working families can afford to live. There are many open seats on the Council this year, and I want to make sure that a progressive candidate with values similar to my own continues to represent my ward.

5. Describe how your prior experiences (such as public service, community organizing, professional expertise, volunteer work, schooling, family responsibilities, etc.) have contributed to the knowledge and skills you will use as a city councilor.

My life experiences and career have been diverse, but three factors have remained consistent: my dedication to public service, my commitment to serving diverse communities, and my advocacy for natural lands. While living in the San Francisco Bay Area in my 20s, I worked as a public transportation planner with a regional transit agency for six years. Here I strove to help create an effective public transit system

that connected the community to employment, healthcare, education, recreation, cultural and civic institutions, and numerous other opportunities. I would use this experience to help the City Council implement improvements to the Corvallis Transit System (CTS).

In my 30s, I relocated to Latin America to explore new cultures and landscapes and to practice my Spanish. I spent four years living in Central America and six years in Colombia, where I owned and managed a small ecotourism business. Living and working in cultures so different from my own upbringing taught me many valuable life lessons that have shaped my understanding of the world and served me well in both my personal and professional lives. Some of those lessons include the need to practice tolerance, patience, and humility and to respect, acknowledge, and listen actively to all people, especially those with backgrounds and life experiences different from my own.

Living in Oregon has allowed me to integrate my passion for public service with my commitment to stewardship of the land. I worked as a seasonal interpretive National Park Ranger at various western national parks, including Crater Lake, Kenai Fjords in Alaska, Mount Rainier, and Yosemite, educating and inspiring stewardship of our nation's most important natural and cultural resources. I have been a part-time member of the Corvallis community since 2021 and full-time member since 2023. My spouse is a long-time Corvallis resident and teacher in the Corvallis School District. We both love living in this community and appreciate the wide variety of civic, cultural, and sporting events available and the easy access to nature and outdoor activities including hiking, bicycling, snowboarding, paddle boarding, and kayaking.

In early 2024, after many years of seasonal work for the U.S. Department of the Interior with little to no benefits or job security, I was thrilled to finally secure a permanent position working for the federal government as an Outdoor Recreation Planner with the Bureau of Land Management in Springfield, Oregon. I was thriving in my new position and beginning to achieve tangible results in improving sustainable recreational opportunities for public lands users in Western Oregon. However, within my first year of employment, the Trump Administration took power, attacked the collective bargaining and telework rights of federal employees including me and my colleagues, and began to decimate the federal workforce. Along with thousands of other newly hired "probationary" employees with very limited job protections, I was given the impossible choice of resigning my position or facing an uncertain future rife with threats, intimidation, unfair and illegal labor practices, and the highly-questionable ethical maneuverings of senior government officials. After several months of internal deliberations and external pressures, I reluctantly chose to resign and give up my career in the federal government, a career path I had been striving towards for seven years. Since then, the Trump Administration's unprecedented corruption, power grabs, warmongering, and attacks on democracy, humanitarian aid,

science, healthcare, the environment, human rights, and much more have motivated me to become more involved in local politics and grassroots social movements.

SECTION 3: ACCESSIBILITY, TRANSPARENCY, & ACCOUNTABILITY

6. How can the City Council and Mayor ensure that the Corvallis city government is transparent, accessible, and accountable to all constituents, *especially historically underrepresented voices*?

In 2021, the City Council adopted the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) framework as the basis for community engagement activities and city staff subsequently developed a comprehensive Engagement Planning Guide based on this framework. The IAP2 framework includes a Spectrum of Public Participation, which defines the level of public input in decision-making processes, and a Public Participation Toolbox, which outlines techniques for sharing information and gathering feedback from the public and describes the pros and cons of each of these techniques. The City Council and Mayor have an obligation to ensure that city outreach efforts and decision-making are based on the principles outlined in these documents and employ the highest level of public participation appropriate for the decision.

I have over 12 years of experience working in public outreach and community engagement at various levels of government, and I have been a strong advocate for social, economic, environmental, and racial justice, human rights, and equality for all people for decades. I have dedicated much of my career to public service, and I am committed to listening carefully to the needs of all members of our community and expanding the city's outreach efforts to engage fellow residents before making critical decisions. I believe that it is important for City Councilors to be as accessible as possible, and for both Councilors and city staff to meet people, especially the most marginalized and underrepresented members of our community, where they are, both literally and figuratively. In this vein, I will commit to attending as many community group meetings as possible to listen to residents concerns and also to inform and educate them about upcoming city decisions and priorities that may affect them, so that they can offer meaningful and timely input.

In addition, if you are running for Mayor: How will you ensure that advisory boards, commissions, and committees are representative of Corvallis' population, range of experiences, and perspectives?

7. How will you approach working with people, both on the Council and in the community, with different political views, personal experiences, or approaches to decision-making than you? If possible, provide an example of a time (at a job or school, or within a community, political, non-profit, or other organization) when you disagreed with someone yet worked together towards a solution.

I believe that it is critical for elected officials to serve as examples and role models for the community by treating all people, colleagues, staff, and constituents, with dignity and respect. As I mentioned previously, living and working in Latin America for nearly 10 years taught me the value of practicing tolerance, patience, and humility and to respect, acknowledge, and listen actively to all people, especially those with backgrounds and life experiences different from my own.

SECTION 4: VALUES & PRIORITIES

8. What are the top three issues you would prioritize if elected? What actions/policies can the City implement to address these issues?

My #1 priority is tackling the affordability crisis. It's a national problem, but we can and must take actions locally to help address it. There are many options to choose from that I would support, but I would focus my efforts on: 1) building more affordable and infill housing, especially in the downtown core, by adjusting and expanding the City's recently-enacted Multi-Unit Property Tax Exemption (MUPTe) and Low Income Rental Housing Property Tax Exemption (LIRPTE) programs, and 2) changing the City's tax and fee structure to make it more progressive. I will ensure that the city budget is not balanced on the backs of working people or the most vulnerable members of our community. This means reducing city service fees, which are regressive taxes that disproportionately burden lower and middle-income families. I believe that we can lower fees and balance the city's budget by developing new payroll and income taxes that target the top 10-20% of residents and non-resident workers in Corvallis.

My second priority is addressing the impacts of decreases in federal and state funding for housing, shelter, and social services such as SNAP benefits and Medicaid. Local officials and housing services experts have described a "precipitous drop-off"⁶ in funding that could cause a "looming public health emergency"⁷. The city must be prepared to invest more resources to help address these funding gaps, and to increase its lobbying, advocacy, and coordination efforts with county, state, and federal elected officials and agencies, nonprofits, and philanthropic organizations to prevent potentially catastrophic cuts to these critical services.

My third priority is expanding the City's investment in climate adaptation and mitigation strategies that focus resources on the most vulnerable members of our community. See more details in Question 14 below.

9. How would you approach Corvallis' current budget gap while honoring the Corvallis Strategic Plan?¹²³

Please see my #1 priority described above.

10. How could/should city government address the trickle-down effects of decreased federal spending?

Please see my #2 priority described above.

SECTION 5: SPECIFIC POLICIES

11. What role do you believe our local government should play in protecting the rights of marginalized or vulnerable community members (e.g., immigrants, LGBTQ+ residents, people of color, people with disabilities)?

I believe that governments need to take affirmative actions to protect disadvantaged and marginalized members of our community from discrimination, harassment, and judgment. Such marginalized groups include, but are not limited to, immigrants, women, racial and ethnic minorities, the LGBTQ2SIA+ community, the poor, the disabled, and the elderly. This issue is particularly important to me personally because my spouse is the child of Colombian immigrants who faced discrimination throughout their lives in the U.S. and continue to feel threatened by the shameful rhetoric of the Trump Administration. City policies should reflect an active commitment to protecting the rights of these targeted groups through hiring practices, sanctuary city declarations such as Resolutions 2025-13 and 2026-11, and prioritization of city resources.

I support strong citizen oversight of police practices, and I will work to ensure that local law enforcement and all city agencies strictly limit cooperation and coordination with federal immigration agencies in accordance with state laws, especially at local jails and schools. I have attended “know your rights” trainings sponsored by immigrants’ rights groups, and I would promote these and similar events to members of the community. I have delivered groceries from food banks to families in Corvallis scared of leaving their homes for fear of overly aggressive immigration enforcement actions, and I would continue to support and promote these types of programs. I have participated in many local street protests condemning inhumane actions and killings by federal agents and would continue to do so as a City Councilor. I would support

¹ <https://www.klcc.org/politics-government/2026-06-17/corvallis-city-council-still-considering-new-taxes-weighs-other-options>

² https://gazettetimes.com/news/local/government-politics/article_21949038-0be4-5f95-856b-f76dc7b80de1.html

³ <https://www.corvallisoregon.gov/mc/page/strategic-plan>

using city resources to fund legal counsel for immigrants in detention and deportation proceedings, pressure state and federal officials to investigate and respond to cases where local residents are unjustly stopped or detained, and help organize and attend media and/or protest events to bring attention to unjust federal immigration and law enforcement actions.

12. What is your position on data center development in the Willamette Valley, including considerations like energy and water use, tax incentives, and community input in the permitting process?

I am extremely concerned about the rapid expansion of data center construction proposals nationally, in Oregon, and especially in nearby communities such as Salem. Large data centers often consume huge amounts of energy and water and can tax local utility systems that are already aging and in need of upgrades, and their development can significantly drive up energy and water costs for residential consumers, schools, nonprofits, governments, and other local businesses. The job creation associated with the construction of data centers is often temporary and few permanent jobs remain after construction is finished. The current City of Corvallis Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code do not adequately consider the potential impacts of these large data centers and must be revised to address them. In the meantime, I believe that the City Council should enact an immediate moratorium on new data center development applications, similar to the one recently enacted in Hillsboro, Oregon, until these code changes can be implemented. I also strongly oppose any tax incentives for large data centers.

13. Albany recently canceled its contract with Flock for Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs). Proponents of ALPRs, and other forms of mass surveillance technology, focus on public safety benefits such as solving crimes and finding kidnapping victims. Opponents emphasize the potential for, and history of, harms due to errors and misuse of data. What is your position regarding use of ALPR's and/or other forms of mass surveillance by the City? Should the City regulate use of this technology by private residents and companies within city limits?

As mentioned previously, I have been a lifelong advocate for human rights and social justice. I believe that public safety can be enhanced by increasing trust and accountability in law enforcement actions, which increases the willingness of citizens to report crimes and provide valuable evidence and testimony in criminal cases. I support strong citizen oversight of police practices, comprehensive prison diversion programs, and robust addiction and mental health treatment and rehabilitation programs. I support community responder and violence intervention programs that proactively dispatch trained civilian social workers and mental/behavioral health professionals to certain conflicts, incidents, and areas. These programs can help build community trust, prevent violence, reduce the burden on law enforcement, and

produce better outcomes. I also support investments in community services that address the root causes of crime, such as youth after-school programs.

I strongly oppose the use of mass surveillance technologies such as ALPRs and “Stingray”-type cell phone signal interceptors by governments and private companies and I have attended Albany City Council meetings to support local residents who came to testify against their use. Numerous cases of local law enforcement officials utilizing these technologies to illegally track or stalk individuals for personal reasons or share data with federal immigration agents without authorization have been documented. I have been working with various community members and groups to draft legislation to ban or strictly limit the use of these types of technologies in Corvallis, and I would sponsor this legislation as a city councilor.

14. What role, if any, do you believe local government should play in addressing climate change (e.g., emissions reduction, sustainability planning, enhancing resilience to extreme weather)?

Addressing core issues surrounding environmental justice has been a key component of my value system for many years. We cannot create resilient communities that confront the existential threats of climate change together if we are leaving the most vulnerable members of our community behind. Home energy costs are likely to rise dramatically in the near future due to climate change, AI data center development, cryptocurrency mining, and other factors. Heat waves, droughts, wildfires, and other extreme weather events are occurring with more frequency, intensity, and duration. Wealthy, single-family homeowners are well-positioned to mitigate these risks by hardening their homes, installing clean energy alternatives such as rooftop solar panels, and installing energy efficiency upgrades like heatpumps, appliance upgrades, and insulation improvements. But lower-income homeowners, renters, multi-dwelling unit residents, and marginalized community members without stable housing generally lack these options and frequently lack air conditioning or any space to keep cool and hydrated. Local governments must implement climate actions that address these gaps in access to mitigation options through subsidies, education, community outreach, and resiliency program coordination. I would prioritize these types of actions at the City Council and increase funding for climate mitigation programs such as cooling/clean air centers and urban forestry expansion. Subsidizing and incentivizing climate friendly home efficiency upgrades, sustainable transportation infrastructure improvements, and higher density affordable housing development can address climate goals while simultaneously creating well paying, stable employment.

15. Based on January 2025 "Point in Time" data, Benton County had a total homeless count of 550, with 244 unsheltered in Corvallis. What is the City doing right to reduce homelessness and/or its impacts on the City? What could the city be doing differently? ⁴

The State of Oregon, Benton County, and Corvallis governments, as well as numerous community partners, have been making much needed investments in transitional housing, housing services, inclement weather shelters, case management, physical, mental, and behavioral health services, resources for substance use disorders, and other social services in recent years, through collaborative efforts such as the Coordinated Homeless Response Office. Projects such as the future Third Street Commons Permanent Supportive Housing Project are notable and important local achievements.

But more permanent supportive housing projects are needed, and the City can and should help organizations like Corvallis Housing First develop the additional technical skills and capacity needed to ramp up nonprofit housing production. As indicated above, one of my top priorities is to address the impacts of reductions in federal and state funding for housing, shelter, and social services such as SNAP benefits and Medicaid. The city must invest more resources to help address these funding gaps, and increase its lobbying, advocacy, and coordination efforts with county, state, and federal elected officials and agencies, nonprofits, and philanthropic organizations. I also support expanding the city's microshelter program to address transitional housing needs and the development of a pilot project for government-owned social housing. Additionally, to help keep residents in existing housing in times of financial stress, I support stronger tenant protections, rent stabilization legislation, and increased housing subsidies for low-income residents.

16. Corvallis voters will be deciding on reforms to the City Council in November. Do you support or oppose these reforms, and why? ⁵

I believe that there are good arguments on both sides of the debate over these reforms, and I trust the judgment of Corvallis voters in making this important decision. Personally, I support the proposed reforms for several reasons. A six-member Council representing six separate wards will put Corvallis more in line with

⁴ <https://communityservices.us/2025-point-in-time-count-shows-shifting-trends-in-tri-county-homelessness/>

⁵ <https://www.klcc.org/politics-government/2026-07-22/corvallis-ballot-measure-city-council-terms-seats>, <https://corvallisadvocate.com/corvallis-voters-to-decide-city-council-reforms-this-november-heres-a-deeper-look/>

⁶ Comment by Ryan Vogt, Executive Director of the Community Services Consortium at the 08/03/26 Corvallis City Council meeting.

⁷ https://gazettetimes.com/opinion/column/article_55145f9c-01dc-41ac-8d5f-2652eafdc80d.html

the vast majority of city government structures in Oregon. As evidenced by the number of candidates running unopposed in this election cycle, candidate recruitment for volunteer City Council positions is difficult, and the atypically large number of wards results in less competition for seats, which I believe is less democratic. With nine members, discussions at the City Council frequently drag on for hours without resolution, resulting in an inefficient and often dysfunctional decision-making process that cedes power to city staff. I believe that the proposed changes will increase the accountability of city government to its citizens, because it is easier for a smaller number of councilors to exercise strict oversight of city officials, especially the City Manager, thereby shifting power from an unelected official to an elected body.

In the debate over term lengths, it is important to note that Corvallis is one of the only cities in Oregon that has two-year terms for its city councilors, and this has contributed to a high turnover rate for councilors that results in additional inefficiencies for city government. Increasing the term lengths to four years will give new councilors more time to properly learn the job, make difficult decisions, and focus on long-term projects and policies before having to campaign for re-election. Regarding term limits, opponents of the measures argue that term limits are unneeded given the high rates of turnover in the City Council seats, and this is probably true, but term limits have few downsides and can help alleviate citizen concerns about the accumulation of power by incumbents, especially with longer terms.

SECTION 6: YOUR CAMPAIGN

17. What volunteer support would be most helpful to your campaign between now and November?

Volunteers to help canvass (door-knock or drop literature) in my ward to share my vision for the city would be the most helpful way to support my campaign.

SECTION 7: CLOSING

18. Is there anything else you'd like our chapter to know about your candidacy that wasn't covered above?

No.

As a candidate in the race for city council in the city of Corvallis, 2026, I pledge to run a positive campaign, without resorting to negative attacks against fellow candidates.

Candidate signature: _____ Date: _____

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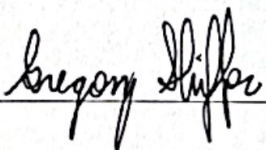
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