

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: **Tarsa Weikert**
2. Office sought: **Corvallis Ward 2 City Councilor**
3. Campaign website and social media accounts (if applicable):

Website: <https://votetarsaforward2.com/>

Instagram: @tarsaforward2

Facebook: Tarsa Weikert for Corvallis City Council Ward 2
<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61590728991407>

SECTION 2: BACKGROUND & MOTIVATION

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

I am running for city council because I believe real change happens at a policy level. Like many of my neighbors, and yes, even you reading this, I know that at some point all of us have felt disconnected from our government, from the policies, rules and regulations that impact us. I want to be able to bridge the political divide between engagement and results. This campaign is not about me, it is about you. Ensuring your voice is heard, encouraging your participation. I believe that all of us together can make Corvallis into an example for the rest of the world but it takes you to get there. We cannot do it without you. So, the main reason I am running for office is also a top

item I want to accomplish. If I can get more people engaged in their community and increase opportunities for their voices to be heard at meetings I would call that a win.

Ontop of community engagement, I want to support policies that encourage more affordable housing and more diverse housing options, I want to see Corvallis have more diversity in the types of businesses that are here. I specifically would LOVE to fix the intersection of Harrison and NW Kings blvd where the one way turns into a two way. I almost see head on collisions there and have almost been hit as a pedestrian walking my dog. There are lots of items I would like to accomplish if elected. However, these are my top goals 1. A more engaged community 2. Economic Development 3. Safer Streets 4. Affordable Housing. 5. Oh yeah, and helping fix the city's multi-million dollar budget gap.

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 has built towards me running for office. Born and raised in Iowa where I was a first generation student whose family lived off government assistance for my whole life. The government was a necessary component for my families survival and that's when I realized what it could do. I got older, went and got my AA at Muscatine Community College where at some point a few classmates and I started our own Independent Newspaper called the spotlight where we wrote investigative pieces about issues facing the city, sparked by our community college violating our first amendment right (we were publishing news pieces they didn't like).

At that time I fell in love with philosophy and after suing our college for limiting free speech, I went and pursued a bachelor's in philosophy at Northern Arizona University. There, I learned how to question authority, policies, decisions, theories and thoughts themselves. I cultivated a skill in understanding why and how the world works. Somewhere between my education in Arizona and teaching elementary school kiddos in Oregon, the insurrection happened. I saw a situation that I wanted to help solve. I wanted to solve the inhouse fighting of the democrats and also stop a group of people from feeling so unheard that they decided to storm the capital. So, I went and got my masters in applied ethics from Oregon State University where I studied policial, social philosophy and the systems in placed that cause harm and prevent and cause a lack of engagement from politicians as well as voters and how we can fix it. Once I established that theory I started participating in Corvallis politics and working at a local law firm. I worked on the PAC for Measure 2-140 the bond for the jail, in addition to Measure 2-141 the local livability levy that supports our library and other resources. I started supporting local campaigns, joined the planning commission and honed my skills as a trial paralegal. I believe that all of this combined, my experience as an everyday human raised in America, my education journey, my skills in law, my love for

justice and for standing up for what is right all make me a prime candidate for city council.

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*?

Increase opportunities for voices to be heard, recognize if you are inviting people into a room you are already excluding people. Go to people who are underrepresented and do not make them go to you. Solve the barriers that prevent people from showing up like providing a volunteer childcare network where kiddos get to be watched while their mom attends a city council meeting, go to an impoverished neighborhood after the work day is over and ask for their opinions. Education initiatives to help inform people because not everyone as the time or understands what is even being freely put out into the community. These are just a few ideas for how to not just put information out into the world and hope the public sees you as transparent. It's a step further and that's what accessibility is.

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?

Though I am not running for Mayor, I would like to see more effort from the city itself to do more outreach and promotion of these positions when open. Posting online and hoping someone tells their friend about it is not enough. The city should go speak for 15 minutes at highschoools, colleges, businesses and other local events to remind people of the importance of these positions and what they do for Corvallis.

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 always start off by hearing the other person's point of view. Then I follow up with a lot of questions. Maybe too many questions. Then I start to evaluate what the goal is, what barriers are there to achieving the goal based off of the different view points held when looking at the goal as a collective. Then I try to chart a pathway to achieve our goal while also making everyone as satisfied as they can be. However, personal experiences and bias should not be considered when making decisions on behalf of the City of Corvallis.

An example of when I disagreed with someone but we worked together towards a solution would be during a case I helped prepared for trial. The client wanted to go to trial but I did not fully believe in the case. The economic damages were low and they were claiming very high non-economic damages with potential overtreatment of injuries. AKA not the best case. At the end of the day it was still our goal to make present a valid and convincing case that accomplished the clients goals while attempting to obtain justice for them. This is a prime example of having bias and disagreements along the way but still getting the job done and achieving the goal you set out to accomplish.

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?

I would like to prioritize Economic development. The first step I really think is to making it easier for businesses to come to Corvallis and encouraging policies that do that. Now, I have already mentioned it but a solid win for me as councilor would be to make Harrison safer and specifically Harrison and the intersection of NW Kings blvd. People have been hit crossing Harrison, people speed on it, people go down the one way incorrectly regularly. It is a dangerous road and in ward 2. Lastly, is creating more engagement from elected officials, staff and community members. This would be by increasing opportunities for community members to talk to council, increasing more diverse outreach attempts, increasing education access so people are more engaged and reducing barriers to the lack of participation.

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

I think we need to put it to the voters all as separate options for increasing taxes or adding fees. Show people the data behind what is going on with our budget issue and it is reasonable that people would be more inclined to support these taxes/fees if separate. However, I believe that truly making it easier for businesses to come to Corvallis would help the economy which thus could help ease our budget issue. We need to really look deep at the way our budget is structured and see if there are any inefficiencies that can be identified. Furthermore anything we do to solving the budget gap supports the strategic plan.

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>

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

Promote economic growth within the city, create a better forward thinking budget plan knowing federal spending is decreasing under the current administration, create task forces to help identify other solutions to this issue, ask the community for help.

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)?

Our government should always support and work to protect the rights of marginalized and vulnerable communities. It is the duty of the government to represent its people, which is a diverse population. From old to young, poor to rich, every person deserves the right to feel safe within their city. The least a city can do is make its people feel at home.

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?

Data centers are provable not good for the environment and create a lot of waste and pollution. If one gets put I would encourage increasing its taxes, and the community should be considered in the development of such a facility. Furthermore, this is a perfect opportunity to talk about how we all to a degree contribute to data centers needing to be built and we may need to start considering our own contribution to the problem rather than just blaming a data center for popping up.

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?

Flock cameras should stay out of Corvallis and I would work to ensure that to occur. However, I do not see this as a top priority since we have none here and have hope that they will not be coming to Corvallis in the Future.

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)?

Local government should encourage policies that reduce carbon emissions, waste and support sustainability while preparing for future inevitabilities like increased wild fires and smoke exposure. While we may not see the full immediate impacts its time to think and act in regards to the future and taking actions even small ones towards cultivating an environmentally green city.

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

I want to start by congratulating organizations in Benton County like Unity Shelter for hiring for positions such as Community Health Workers to help increase the number of sheltered individuals. The city could be helping dedicate more effort and energy towards solving the unhoused situation. Give these organizations enough money, help upgrade facilities and you can further increase the amount of individuals sheltered and create more temporary transition housing for a theoretical knowable number of unhoused people in Corvallis. If this article is correct there are only 550 lives we could change. That's a limited tangible number. The city should target that more.

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

Yes, I am in support of reducing the number of wards and city councilors. Regardless people will still be voting for who they want to elect, so in my opinion the math literally still maths. The votes always decide who is elected, no lack of representation is occurring here. I am also in support of extending term years. 4 years should be the norm.

SECTION 6: YOUR CAMPAIGN

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

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/>

I could really use help with door knocking, distributing literature, passing out flyers, writing letters to the editor and spreading the word about my campaign! Furthermore, a donation to help keep my campaign going is also appreciated!

SECTION 7: CLOSING

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

Only that it is time to evaluate how we select and decide to vote for candidates. Too often we default to incumbents or people we know, when often they don't actually possess the skill necessary to get the job done. I believe that this race is a good opportunity to evaluate who we want to vote for and what we actually value.

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: Tarsa Weikert Date: 8/12/2026