

Bountiful City Council Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate: Aubry Bennion

1. Why have you submitted your name for consideration?

I chose to run for a council seat this summer after a few seasons supporting and volunteering for candidates who ran for other political offices. I went into the campaign this fall with a clear understanding that I was an outsider to more established political contributors to the City but confident that my professional experience and qualifications would bring a unique perspective to the council. Professionally, I've worked with administrations and elected officials across the state of Utah for over 20 years to help community members understand the benefits and impacts of infrastructure improvements funded by their tax-paying dollars. My experience working with various city staff and electeds has given me an abundance of lessons learned about how they operate, both with their constituents and between admin/council that I can bring forth to the City. Two months post-election, I'm very grateful for every person who stops me at the grocery store and around town to tell me they voted for me and supported my campaign.

Throughout September and October, I knocked on over a thousand doors to meet residents and learn about their loves and worries for the city. I learned that people are passionate about living here, they care about Bountiful and are fearless in sharing their opinions. I understand there is not a policy or decision that is universally supported. It's a public servant's responsibility to - with information provided by our excellent city staff - act in the best interest of the city, even when decisions may not be popular. My experience in public outreach has taught me that community members' tolerance for decisions grows when they are respected, educated, and informed. I would like to apply my professional experience to Bountiful, this place I've chosen to call home and love so much.

2. If appointed, what legislative issues/priorities are you most interested in pursuing?

I'm excited that the existing council approved the draft General Plan and the city will move into the implementation stage. I understand that elements of the plan will move forward when initiated by internal and external parties, at varied timelines. Successful growth and development within Bountiful will happen when the city is responsive to opportunities that

arise, when interested parties are met with possibility and flexibility more so than stalling out in process. I want to help Bountiful be a place that maximizes opportunities.

Additionally, the city thrives by hiring and retaining the right people for the right positions who can be trusted to make wise choices on behalf of the city and its residents and businesses. Finding good talent, building the city's bench of talent and skill, and developing a solid succession plan for department heads - particularly ensuring that its core departments are well positioned - are important to me. It's important to maintain the resilience and long-term strategic planning for critical infrastructure - power, water, roads, etc.

3. Please share your past service to the city as volunteer, community project participant, or other capacity.

I have a reminder that alerts me at 9 a.m. this morning to consider "who needs me today?" - and I look to help, support, and lift those in my orbit every day. I was raised by parents who taught me to lift where I stand and who are first in line to show up for others. Much of my service has been on behalf of neighbors. Beyond the baked-in service opportunities that have come through leadership at church, serving the women and teen girls for much of the last 8 years that I have lived in Bountiful, I have participated in the 9/11 day of service every year since its inception. My favorite activity was the year our neighborhood replaced the landscaping for the First Baptist Church on Orchard Drive and 1800 North. Interfaith support and bridge-building is something I grew up participating, thanks to my parents. I support an annual fundraiser with my neighbors to benefit the Bountiful Food Pantry. Very unconventional, but a few years ago, I met a friend at church who had freshly been released from Davis County jail. She didn't have a driver's license and I was interested in helping her return to her "normal" life as quickly as possible, so I joined her in completing 100 hours of community service at the food pantry, including a feminine hygiene product drive to address the needs of the lesser-donated items that were still in critical need. I have also supported our neighborhood with a float and booth for Handcart Days in recent years.

Many of the earnings I collect from the work I do on social media goes to charity and support of other people. The earnings have silently paid the bills for fellow patrons at the mechanic, tire shop, and at restaurants. These are small ways I look out for "who needs me

today". They're not grand gestures with attribution, but they are the most impactful and rewarding to participate in.

4. Please discuss your ability to dedicate sufficient time to this position of service.

As a single woman, I do not have any family commitments that would tug me in other directions, particularly in the evening hours for council meetings, work sessions, and committee meetings. I have the full support of my employer to dedicate the time necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of a council member. They are supportive of and see the value in contributing to my community in this way. As the manager of my department and local office, we have plans in place to meet the needs of our clients for after-hours meetings that I have participated in previously - those very meetings that have prepared me for and led me to my interest in serving on the city council.

I am wildly deliberate about how I plan and maximize my time. I plan each day and prioritize my tasks and necessary accomplishments. I am often met with amazement that I fit so much in my day. I have the ability to shift and reprioritize existing tasks and activities as needed as assignments arise on my own. I have always said yes to opportunities, which has both made my life very full and taught me to be adaptable.

Most of all, I promise to come prepared to each meeting having read the council packet, prepared to discuss and make decisions.

5. What is your fiscal philosophy and under what circumstances would you consider a tax and/or fee increase?

As a tax paying resident, I recognize and appreciate that Bountiful runs lean. I also recognize that we are subject to inflation like the rest of the country with the cost of materials, particularly in regards to aging infrastructure, as well as cost of living and competitive wages. I work in an industry that's viability to move projects forward is dependent on the cost of materials and projects are completed as funds are available and budgets allow.

I would consider a tax increase for the maintenance of infrastructure, public safety, and to maintain our competitive edge with professionals - the essentials that benefit the entire community and keep the city from falling behind on planning for capital expenditures. It's much more fun to spend money on things like new trails or nice-to-haves, but I recognize that maintaining what we have is the best, albeit very un-sexy, use of taxpayer dollars. Personally, I would rather see incremental tax increases than occasional larger leaps.

6. List relevant work experience that you believe would help you fill the role of city council member.

For twenty years, I have been trusted by state and local governments to explain complex, lesser-understood, and technical concepts to the communities who are impacted by improvements they make on their behalf. I am always in pursuit of enhancing reputations through transparency and education in a simple fashion. I communicate the benefits and impacts of improvements to the basic services taxpayers expect to work when they wake up in the morning like running water, sidewalks, and internet. I am a professional communicator who forms trusted relationships with the public by providing accurate information and helping them understand that the city/state/agency is working on their behalf to enhance their lives.

Personally, I am a celebrator and a gatherer. I use my influence to share happiness and celebrate the goodness around me. I look forward to using the skills I've gained to celebrate the things I love about Bountiful, further open communication channels, and connect the community.