

Paul Woods
Candidate for City Council, Ward 7

Please review your background and describe the leadership qualities and experiences you bring to this office and why you want to serve.

I'm a native Oregonian, moving to Corvallis from Medford in 1994 to work for HP as an electrical engineer, where I worked until 1999. Since then I've worked for a series of spin-off companies and am currently with Aptina, LLC on Research Way. I've been married for 23 years and have four children. All four have been, and two still are being, educated in 509J schools. I have done substantial volunteering work (mainly through church) and for several years was Director of the Family History Center with a staff of over 20 fellow volunteers.

I appreciate the unique quality of life we enjoy in Corvallis, but am worried for its future because of the loss of jobs and tax revenue of recent years. I want to use my experience and perspective to help address these problems and maintain and enhance that unique quality of life.

1. Oregon State University and Linn-Benton Community College are key partners of our local economy. What role do you think these institutions should play in economic development in our region?

Higher education is a major component of life in Corvallis. OSU especially plays a crucial role in my vision for repairing our tax base. As HP's major contribution has decreased, we need to replace those jobs and taxes by fostering the start-up companies that grow out of OSU innovations.

2. How do you see yourself working with the business community?

Business doesn't like uncertainty; there is enough of it in the market. The City should not add to that through ambiguous zoning and overlay policies. Further, the City needs to be fiscally stable so that businesses get the message that essential services will be reliably provided and that the City will not be constantly devising new taxes and fees in order to balance the budget.

3. With the departure of HP & Evanite, Corvallis/Benton County has lost a substantial number of jobs. Those two businesses accounted for 10% of our collective income over the last 30 years. What would you do to replace that income? If you believe we don't need to, what would you eliminate to cover what we have historically paid for?

Please see answer 1, above. Also, we need a diverse set of companies so that we are not dependent on just a few or one major source of jobs and tax revenue.

4. From your perspective, what is the largest problem Corvallis & Benton County have, and what do you plan to do about it?

Corvallis' cost of providing services is increasing faster than revenue. This gap must be closed by either 1) cutting services further, 2) raising taxes and fees, or 3) increasing the tax base. I prefer option 3 and am confident this can be done by encouraging home-grown businesses.

Another problem is the lack of housing for the burgeoning enrollment at OSU. The vacancy rate is less than 1% in Corvallis which is creating competition for housing and pushing out young families whose children would be attending 509J schools if they could afford to live here. Enrollment in 509J schools is down 10% since 2002. More housing is needed to meet the demands of new OSU students.