

Overland Park City Council 2021

Response ID:32 Data

1. Candidate Information

1. Candidate Name

Sheila Rodriguez

2. Address

Street Address/Apt/Suite : 12223 Hemlock St

City/State/Zip : Overland Park, KS 66213

3. Phone Number

913-226-3375

4. Email Address

SheilaforOP@gmail.com

5. Campaign Website

SheilaforOP.com

2. Candidate Background

6. Occupation/Work History (last 5 years - 25 words or less)

I've held a variety of senior positions with T-Mobile HQ (previously Sprint HQ) since 1996 (Business Development, Corporate Development, Product Development & Management, Sales Strategy/Operations)

7. Please list political, community and business organizations with whom you have been affiliated and any leadership positions you have held.

- T-Mobile HQ: Presidents Club, PEAK Achievement Award, Winners Circle
- Keep the Spark Alive Foundation: Golf Tournament Auction Chairman
- HOA Board of Directors: Vice-President
- HOA Chairman: Mom's Council, Welcome Committee
- Christmas in October: House Captain
- Blue Valley School District: Yearbook Chairman/Editor, Community Service Committee Chairman, Project Graduation Chairman

3. Issues and Policy

8. List your top three policy issues? (100 words or less)

N/A

9. What are your views on the services and value the City's citizens receive for their local tax dollars? (100 words or less)

I want to ensure Overland Park is an exceptional city that residents and business owners are proud of. I believe the over-abundance of new commercial development over the last few years is beginning to erode the quality of life for residents. The over-abundance of tax incentives provided to commercial developers has negatively impacted our budget and is becoming detrimental to the financial health of our city.

10. Regarding the City's budget, a 1-mill property tax increase to fund the recommendations of the Mental Health Task

Force has been proposed for 2022. Do you support the task for recommendations? Do you support increasing the mill levy for this purpose? Discuss why/why not and how you would fund the recommendations if you support them but not the mill levy increase. (100 words or less)

N/A

11. What changes, if any, would you like to see in the City's proposed budget for 2022?

I'd like to see a greater investment in our core infrastructure and public service/amenities and less tax incentives provided to commercial developers. There should be a sufficient amount of funds to staff a adequate amount of first responders for a city of our size, replace chip seal on our residential streets with a higher quality material, repair our curbs/sidewalks and add additional traffic lights where needed. Our basic needs and quality of life MUST be a priority in the 2022 budget if we are going to retain residents.

12. What role, if any, do you believe the City should play in economic development to bring jobs and capital investment to the community? (100 words or less)

Overland Park is clearly attractive to new and expanding businesses. I believe most commercial development will happen organically and without the gift of a tax incentive or making a capital investment. I'm not against tax incentives if they are part of a larger strategic plan to revitalize an area of the city that needs revitalization, but I am against making capital investments when it's at the expense of our residents and basic needs.

13. As the City considers future development and redevelopment projects, describe your views on how the City should best manage and balance growth? (100 words or less)

N/A

14. What do you believe are the greatest challenges the City faces over the next ten years and how would you address them? (100 words or less)

Because of the tremendous growth we've experienced over the past few years, we have several challenges ahead of us. It'll be critical that our city's governing body demonstrates a willingness to listen to residents, be responsive to concerns, restore trust amongst residents and foster stronger collaboration amongst City Councilmembers, City Management and Committees.

15. Do you believe the current city manager form of government we have is appropriate for Overland Park or would you favor a "strong mayor" form of government? (100 words or less)

N/A

16. It is estimated that replacing chip seal road resurfacing with a method similar to surrounding cities will cost more than \$20 million per year. Do you favor eliminating the chip seal process, and if so, how would you pay for the increased cost? (100 words or less)

YES! Since my neighborhood streets were resurfaced using chip seal in 2014, I have been a crusader for eliminating this cheap material due to the risk of personal injury and car/motorcycle damage. When you compare the cost of resurfacing an average of 151 residential lanes per year with chip seal for \$2.9M with UBAS for \$5.5M, it's a difference of \$2.6M (not \$20M). I'm confident \$2.6M could be reallocated in our \$300M annual budget to absorb this incremental cost and replace chip seal with a better, smoother and safer material. We deserve better than chip seal.

17. What specific proposals do you have to support the goal of providing access to affordable housing throughout the City? (100 words or less)

Zoning changes may provide a greater variety of housing types (single-family homes, patio homes and/or townhomes). We have higher demand for more neighborhoods with single-family homes than we do for more luxury apartments. I also believe it's important we explore creative solutions which would increase the availability of affordable housing options for young adults, as well as residents with a fixed or lower income. I'd like to collaborate with developers to renovate large, existing, vacant properties into additional housing. I'd rather see a property repurposed, than to sit vacant year over year (i.e., Wright Career College at I-435 and Metcalf).

18. Since its founding in 1960, Overland Park leaders have had a long history of visionary planning. What do you believe the City should do today to ensure the City's prosperity for the next 60-years? (100 words or less)

N/A

19. Do you believe the City of Overland Park is headed in the right direction?

N/A

20. Do you believe the City of Overland Park City Council is responsive to the needs of the community? What is your approach to governance?

Over the past few years, I believe our City Council has become less willing to seek input and less responsive to resident's needs. Recent decisions about chip seal, Hwy69 toll and large multimillion dollar developments have captured the attention of residents who previously didn't feel they needed to pay close attention to our local governing body. Residents are now looking for transparency and accountability as to how their tax dollars are being spent. Knowing that the City Council is making informed and prudent decisions will strengthen their confidence and trust. That should be a top priority.

21. Why are you seeking this public office?

I'm running for City Council because I believe that elected officials should serve the people they represent. They should invest their time proactively seeking input, listening to those on both sides of an issue and advocate for the majority's interest regardless of whether it aligns with their personal opinion. I didn't see this from most of our City Council so instead of continuing to complain, I decided to become part of the solution and influence positive change.

22. What do you believe makes you uniquely qualified to serve in this position and most distinguishes you from your opponent(s) in this race?

I've been a leader in our community for more than 25 years with an impressive track record for achieving results. Whether I'm serving in a leadership role in my company or with a non-profit organization, on our HOA Board of Directors, as a PTO committee chairman or on a community service project, if it's worth doing, it's worth doing right. I believe the abundance of professional and community experience I have in collaborating and creating solutions would be an asset to City Council.
