

## Jefferson County Horse Council Commissioner Candidate Questionnaire

1. What are your ideas for promoting a culture of community responsibility for Jefferson County residents? We would consider this to include:
  - a. Stewardship of our public lands and trails
  - b. Personal responsibility in the face of pandemic conditions
  - c. Culture of tolerance and concern/respect for other people and activities

Please type reply here:

I've lived in Jefferson County since the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and have lived and/or worked in Lakewood, Arvada, Wheat Ridge, Conifer and unincorporated Jeffco. I covered the county as a newspaper reporter; worked for the City of Lakewood and St. Anthony Hospital, currently own a business here, work/worked with dozens of small businesses located in Jeffco, and been part of numerous non-profit organizations and chambers of commerce here. There's one thing that has been a constant for all of these years, it's the type of people who live here. Until recently we've been able to put our political differences aside and work on projects and issues for the betterment of the community. I've seen intolerance begin to creep into Jefferson County. It's one of the reasons that I've decided to run. I have a reputation for being able to bring people together. You can see that in the endorsement comments on my website. I'm known to be a unifier. I have strong support across the political spectrum, treat people with respect and am direct and honest. I believe in leading by example.

There is still a touch of the Old West in Jefferson County. People love and appreciate our parks, trails and outdoor areas and if you love them, you will take care of them. That is why we have such a strong Open Space program today, with dedicated funding and a good strategic plan for continuing to preserve and protect our outdoors areas.

Regarding the pandemic. I work with so many small businesses and I can tell you, without a doubt, that not one of them wants their customers, clients, or their staff to get sick. Each has the ability to establish protocols that make sense for their business and that will keep their businesses flourishing, while reasonably protecting the health of the community. I trust in them to do that. I believe that government has gotten too heavy handed in its approach. I trust people to be honorable and hold themselves to high standards, especially in our community.

2. Given the popularity of our outdoor spaces and trails, and the wide variety of different user groups, what is your vision to promote accessibility along with safe interactions and common courtesy for all user groups, especially those who may be lesser users?

Please type reply here:

There are many different types of outdoor spaces and trails in Jefferson County, some with very specific designated uses. I sense that the writer of this question had a specific

issue in mind and without knowing what that is, it's difficult to answer. I'd like to learn more about it. I will say, however, that I think Jefferson County Open Space does a very good job of providing balance and numerous opportunities for a wide variety of users.

3. What is your vision for education of people on their personal role toward preservation of ecology and wildland habitats, as well as sustainability and soil health, within Jefferson County that balances with the increasing pressure for outdoor recreation?

Please type reply here:

I believe that helping people to understand how our eco systems and wildland habitats integrate is beneficial. But we can't make people learn about it. We can only establish guidelines for use of our trails, etc. We need to be cautious, though, that we don't get so heavy handed that we inadvertently take away from the experience of being outdoors in nature. I am reminded of a time when my daughter was walking on a mountain trail (not a Jeffco park) and it was Mother's Day, so she innocently picked a handful of wildflowers to bring to me. She was approached by someone who yanked them out of her hands, threw them on the ground (not very respectful of the flowers either) and yelled at her for damaging the environment. My young daughter had no idea what she had done wrong. She thought the flowers were pretty and just wanted to bring some home for me. (Where they would've been proudly displayed in a vase instead of stomped onto the ground.) This wonderful, awe-inspired nature walk turned into something ugly. We have to be good stewards without discouraging people from enjoying the outdoors.

4. What is your vision on preservation of the Jefferson County Fairgrounds as a space available for youth, agriculture, and equine as well as an emergency evacuation center that can accommodate large animals? The Fairgrounds is a community hub that allows for meeting spaces, recreation spaces, and event venues (especially for nonprofits) that is safe and centrally located with easy freeway access. If the Fairgrounds is lost, where do you see cowboys, farmers, ranchers, 4-H'ers, FFA, rodeo groups, and horse associations finding areas to continue to work, play, and ride in Jefferson County?

Please type reply here:

I like the fairgrounds. I live near the fairgrounds, have been to many an event there, and love watching the Westernaires practice, and the horses graze, and appreciate the CU Extension services. That said, the County does still have to cut a lot of money out of its budget and no program is completely exempt. I still think the Fairgrounds can be almost self-sustaining with the creation of a strategic business plan to do so. As a business consultant, creating viable business plans is part of what I do for a living. It cannot continue on as is, but key programs can be saved, parts of the property can be

transferred into the Open Space program, some cuts in expenses can be made, and agreements can be reached with the equestrian community and other users to help develop a plan to bring in more business. This might mean schedule adjustments, venue pricing changes to make us more competitive, marketing for new venue uses, etc. I would love to help work this out. I think it can be done.

Maintaining the Fairgrounds as an evacuation site for animals is very important to me.

5. How will agriculture, including horse ownership and our Western heritage, be sustained in Jefferson County with the continued pressure for “growth” given the concurrent increase in population and demands for water with zoning changes that are promoting higher population densities?

Please type reply here:

When proposed development comes before me, as a commissioner, I will use the following matrix in my decision-making. 1) How is the property currently zoned and is this a use by right? 2) How does this fit within the Comprehensive Plan? 3) Is there a need for this use? 4) Will this negatively impact neighboring properties – will it take away the neighboring property owners’ ability to use their own property for that which it is zoned and in use; will there be an adequate supply of water, and if so, for how long. 5) Will the local fire protection district be able to handle the increased volume and, if not, what resources would they need to do so. While I can’t tell you how I would vote on any particular issue, I think it’s valuable for me to share my decision-making process.

6. What protections for agricultural property that is being surrounded by development can you envision? Agricultural property benefits the community as a whole by providing:

- a. Buffer zones between communities
- b. Locally sourced agricultural products
- c. Educational opportunities
- d. Tourism opportunities
- e. Preservation of Western heritage
- f. Animal therapy opportunities – as scientific studies are increasingly demonstrating the benefits of animals such as horses as support animals for treating a variety of health conditions, including autism, PTSD, physical disabilities, mental health issues, etc. This requires space for the horses and the necessary work.
- g. Economic benefits – noting that the impact of the horse industry alone adds a \$1.8 billion total value to the Colorado economy [per attached 2017 infographic by the American Horse Council]

Please type reply here:

Ag properties would be protected if I apply the above-referenced decision-making matrix to any future land use decision. Any proposal would have to pass the #4 Q referenced above.

7. What are your thoughts regarding potential property tax increases that impact agri-business?

Please type reply here:

I am generally against any property tax increases, with very few exceptions.