

Jefferson County Horse Council Commissioner Candidate Questionnaire

Tracy Kraft-Tharp

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:

As people feel ownership, a culture of community responsibility develops. Organizations such as yours help to promote that feeling of ownership. I wasn't aware of your organization and encourage you to educate JeffCo residents at festivals and food markets around the county. The agi-culture is important to JeffCo and as our population grows, there is a need to educate our new residents.

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:

It seems that members of the different user groups need to work together to promote accessibility along with safe interactions and common courtesy.

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:

Organizations such as yours could reach out to educate JeffCO residents through festivals and fairs and food markets. Our schools have taken on some of this role with students with programming such as outdoor lab.

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've been very concerned about the preservation of the Fairgrounds considering the County budget situation and the loss of the debrucing initiative. The Fairgrounds is part of our culture as well as a needed resource. JeffCO residents need to make tough decisions and fairground advocates need to help with those tough decisions.

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:

The JeffCO Comprehensive Master Plan outlines the process for, and considerations of, land use decisions.

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:

The JeffCO Comprehensive Master Plan outlines the process for, and considerations of, land use decisions. I agree with the benefits, including the preservation of our culture in JeffCO.

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

Please type reply here:

I'm not aware of potential property tax increases that impact agri-business.