

**Wheat Ridge 2020 Candidate Questionnaire 2011**  
**Responses submitted by George Pond**  
**Candidate for City Council District III**

**Why are you the best candidate to represent your district? Please relate your answer to your background, qualifications and values.**

I am the best candidate because I bring valuable interpersonal skills, unique professional experience and a commitment to serving Wheat Ridge. I have been serving Wheat Ridge for over five years, first on the Parks and Recreation Commission and currently on the Planning Commission. I am dedicated to actively participating in my community. I not only bring invaluable experience working with the city and stakeholders, I bring unique professional experience that is needed in our community. I am currently the Vice President for Planning and Capital Projects at Denver Zoo. With master's degrees in both architecture and landscape architecture, along with vast planning experience, I have expertise that is ideal for City Council. I have led the execution of the zoo's Master Plan, working with diverse stakeholders and managing multi-million dollar projects to redevelop portions of the zoo and key exhibits. My expertise includes managing numerous complicated projects to successful completion, including the award-winning Predator Ridge exhibit at Denver Zoo, managing complex issues, building consensus among stakeholders and implementing strategic sustainable initiatives and practices at the zoo. I am experienced in navigating the difficulties of working in team environments and I bring expertise in building consensus. I am intelligent and fair, know when to listen and when to speak, and excel at bridging the differences that are always part of complex issues.

**What are your top two policy goals and how should they be addressed?**

Two of my goals are to continue to advance the Envision Wheat Ridge plan and to activate the growth of the city through new residents. I will continue the work I have started with the Planning commission to encourage dialogue, participation, and progress toward the goals of Envision Wheat Ridge. I also want to focus on inviting new people into our community who will engage in our future, increase our tax base, and create a compelling demand for business and economic development. We have a foundation to begin to meet the needs of people looking to relocate in our community, but we need to advance to the next level and do more to attract new residents to our city.

**The role of Wheat Ridge 2020 is to catalyze community and economic development to advance Wheat Ridge as a vibrant and sustainable City. How should the City fund and support that role?**

The role of Wheat Ridge 2020 is critical to moving our community forward as envisioned in the Neighborhood Revitalization Plan. It is also an important part of the infrastructure of community engagement and participation that is necessary to move complex initiatives forward. Many conditions have evolved since the inception of Wheat Ridge 2020; the city and Wheat Ridge 2020 should work together to clearly define the specific function and financial sustainability of Wheat Ridge 2020 moving forward in order to advance the goal of creating a vibrant city.

**What ideas would you promote to strengthen the City's revenue base?**

In order to increase the city's revenue base economic development needs to be pursued on two fronts. First, the demand side of the equation is imperative. We need a city and community with

members who are looking to spend their resources on goods and services close to home. When we compete for these people, we will begin to win the businesses that they demand. The second part is to continue to reach out to the business and development community and make doing business in Wheat Ridge as easy, attractive, and profitable as we can.

**Please comment on the 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor Plan and how you would work to support and advance that plan. Would that support include funding WR2020's role?**

I like this plan. I have had the opportunity to study the plan as a member of the Planning Commission and it is thoughtful and carefully considered. I realize that there are concerns about aspects of the plan, but this is a comprehensive plan to revitalize the street and I will work to build consensus and momentum for this plan. Everyone can agree that we want to bring more people to Wheat Ridge and to 38<sup>th</sup> Ave. and make this a great place for businesses, our citizens, and of course our guests who spend money. I look forward to working on the advancement of this plan and discussions on Wheat Ridge 2020's role moving forward.

**What do you think is the most important issue facing Wheat Ridge over the next two years and how would you propose to address it?**

We are competing for our future as a city and a community: we can and should be better. Every day people are making choices about what community they want to raise their family in and where they want to do business. Those people demand amenities, services, community infrastructure, and an atmosphere that not only meets their standards, but exceeds it. When we as a city meet this demand we will be rewarded with a growing and vibrant community and the necessary revenues to have a sustainable future. We not only need to be aware of this environment, we need to embrace it. I hope to actively participate in projects and legislation that will make our city more competitive in the future.