

**Wheat Ridge 2020 Candidate Questionnaire 2011**  
**Responses submitted by William J. (Bud) Starker**  
**Candidate for City Council District I**

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

I believe I am the best candidate to represent District 1 in the Wheat Ridge City Council because I have the leadership skills, experience and commitment necessary to be an effective city counselor.

My childhood growing up in an Air Force family around this country and around the world gave me an appreciation for the differences in our human family. It taught me the value of close listening and respect for others. As a young boy I was very active in Boy Scouts, progressing through the ranks to Eagle Scout. I was thoroughly schooled in leadership – the disciplined ability to understand the objectives, gather inputs and organize the group at hand, develop strategies and tactics, motivate the group through obstacles, and achieve concrete results. These early leadership skills have been built upon over the years as I progressed in my professional career. I have demonstrated leadership as an elder in my church; as president and board chair in my professional society; as a public member and current board chair on the State Licensure Board for Architects, Engineers and Surveyors.

I have a good deal of experience in the issues raised at City Council. I have owned by own company since 1983 and have almost 30 years of dealing with government regulation, employment issues, priorities, client satisfaction, making ends meet and the thousands of issues faced by today's businesses. I have been involved in numerous successful development projects and know the subtle keys to getting a successful deal done. I will bring this valuable experience to my work on the City Council. I serve on the Wheat Ridge Building Code Advisory Board and understand some of the internal dynamics of city government. My general understanding of political theory and governmental processes was developed as I received my bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Colorado at Boulder. In addition to city hall, I have experience in state government, having worked several bills successfully through the state legislature.

As a 35 year resident of District 1, I have shown my commitment to stay in my community, build a wonderful life with my wife and family in Wheat Ridge, and plan to stay in this community for the long haul. We have a wonderful city with many great attributes. I look forward to being a part of a team that will move us positively into the future.

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

We need to sharpen our focus on economic development in our commercial sectors and continue our efforts in neighborhood revitalization. We should "deputize" each of our city council members to be "development ambassadors" and work with the city administration on economic development issues. We need to make sure new quality development is made to feel welcome in Wheat Ridge, local regulation is kept to a minimum and that it is logical and predictable.

Our neighborhood revitalization strategy should focus on updating our current housing stock; encourage neighborhood community-building, to include expansion of the Neighborhood Watch program, energy upgrades, and exterior revitalization.

**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?**

Wheat Ridge 2020 has a vital role to play in our city by encouraging economic development and neighborhood revitalization. The city should continue to support this organization with a level of funding that will provide sustainability while encouraging an effort to seek additional resources. WR2020 and the city should work in concert on development issues and developing and marketing a stronger “brand” for the city. We should make sustainability one of the cornerstones of our development strategies, both commercial and residential, and encourage the current on-going efforts in the city.

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

Our best way to grow revenue is to increase the economic activity in our retail sector and derive more sales tax revenue from this increased commerce. We should develop a stronger “brand” for the city to enhance our marketing efforts. As is said, “retail follows rooftops,” we should identify new residential development opportunities, as well as remodeling opportunities, and market these opportunities to builders in our area. We should engage our local realtors, bankers, mortgage brokers and other residential professionals in a dialogue about new ideas to bring new residential activity to our communities.

**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?**

We have made a substantial capital and human investment in 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue and need to continue to work on this commercial corridor. Without inhibiting the volume of traffic being carried on 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue or driving traffic onto adjacent neighborhood streets, I would support measures that would create incentives and opportunities for potential shoppers to park and shop along 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue. I think we should try these strategies out first with low-cost striping; have well designed criteria in-place to evaluate the results; have effective means of measuring the changes in traffic and shopping behavior; and have a thorough analysis of the results before we move to make any permanent changes to the street profile.

**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?**

The most significant issue facing our city is how to generate more sales tax revenue to support our needs as a city. To do this we need to create and market a stronger “brand” for our city and be prepared to advertise the substantial benefits of Wheat Ridge to the larger community; create a fair, balanced, predictable and friendly business climate; work to retain and encourage our current businesses; work with our schools to provide our employees and families for the future.