

Mayoral Candidate Questions from the Greeley Chamber of Commerce

Answers by John G. Gauthiere, P.E.

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1. What do you see as the city's role in retaining business and attracting new business and employees?

The City should provide the basic services to the best of its ability and in a cost efficient manner so that business will want to locate here. Attracting new businesses, as well as retaining old businesses, is greatly facilitated by providing world class basic municipal services and amenities. Keeping taxes and utility rates competitively low while providing incentives to businesses that have a return on investment for the taxpayers is paramount. During my time as Greeley Water's Chief Engineer of Planning and Management, I was able to rebuild infrastructure including all of Greeley's dams and treatment plants and hundreds of miles of pipelines, acquire millions of dollars' worth of water rights, train and retain diligent and hardworking employees of the department. This is the type of activity that will acquire and retain business.

2. How do you plan to ensure a business-friendly environment where businesses can grow and thrive?

See answer #1 above. Perception of quality and dependability is very important in attracting new businesses. The City should not put up barriers to a diverse array of businesses by providing substandard water that has a very high treatment cost and does not have firm yield (Terry Ranch). One example of this from the past is Kodak. When Kodak was in Windsor they required Bellvue water for their processes. Boyd Lake water was too hard for them to use in their processes. (Terry Ranch water is even harder than Boyd Lake water.) Other potential businesses may require high quality water and would avoid a town that provides water from a groundwater aquifer. Anheuser Busch was seriously considering Greeley as the location for their Fort Collins plant because of the quality and abundance of Greeley's mountain water. Political interests, not the quality of Greeley's water, affected their decision to build in Fort Collins.

3. Water is a crucial resource for growth. What solutions can you identify to shrinking water availability for citizens and businesses alike and how will you use your voice?

Water IS crucial for growth. Many businesses require a dependable source of high quality, reasonably priced water. One way to address the issue of shrinking water availability is to make sure that the City's high quality water rights are never sold. In past years, several misguided City Councils sold half of the City's Windy Gap Project water shares without the public's knowledge. A City Charter Amendment (Ballot Question 2G) is needed that would require informed public consent and a vote of the public before the sale of the City's water rights. In 1986, the Water Board proposed the sale of Greeley's high mountain reservoirs to Thornton. With help from a citizen petition drive and a tie breaking vote by Mayor Markley,

the Council saw its way to save those reservoirs for the Greeley citizens' benefit. One of the most important things that has made Greeley special over the decades is its high quality mountain water. In contrast, the present misguided city council, failed to listen to the petitioning public regarding the Terry Ranch ground water acquisition. Instead of informed public consent, the City hid the project for a year and a half. When forced to acknowledge it, they made every attempt to "control the narrative" through propaganda. The result is the acquisition of a supply of water that has no firm delivery and many quality and cost issues that will discourage future businesses from coming to Greeley. Greeley's best bet to rectify this situation is to recognize that Terry Ranch groundwater will not satisfy the perpetual water demand created by growth and that Greeley should diligently pursue reliable, high quality water development.

4. How has your background and experience prepared you to oversee the complexities of the City of Greeley?

I have degrees in Civil Engineering and Environmental Science. Engineers must be logical in their thinking in order to accomplish complex projects that they are tasked with. Also, engineers are solution based. Someone has a problem; the engineer formulates a fix. I have the business expertise to oversee Greeley's municipal services because of my background running a small business for the past 20 years. I ran all aspects of Greeley's Water Department for 22 years including the financial aspects of it. As a Water Department employee, I presented to the Water Board and City Council on a regular basis and know the dynamics of working with city staff.

5. Greeley is one of the fastest growing and most vibrant communities in the NOCO region with citizens engaged in varied interests and pursuits. Will you help set a standard for civility and how?

Will I help set a standard for civility and how? Well after all, I am a "Civil" Engineer. Need I say more? Seriously though, I believe all of Greeley's citizens deserve equal respect and the best, most cost efficient services that Greeley can provide. I intend to inspire my fellow council and Greeley's employees with that attitude. When I worked for the Greeley Water Department, I was known for my "can do" attitude and "always thinking about the future". As part of that "can do" attitude when I was with the Water Department, I put together a dive team to take care of Greeley's underwater assets. The fact that many city employees joined and followed me underwater, attests to the faith that they had in me and my ability to lead and get the job done safely. We completed many successful missions and were able to save Greeley citizens hundreds of thousands to millions of dollars over the years. The employees were inspired to do these jobs and took great pride in their valuable and amazing accomplishments.

With regard to setting a standard for civility, Civil Engineers, by their nature, design and construct the "built environment" that promotes and makes possible the civility so desired in humanity. Think about it. Proper engineering design of the built environment provides the

populace with convenient travel, great basic services, and a quality lifestyle that promotes civility. A lack of engineering judgement in creating and maintaining the built environment results in congestion, traffic jams, poor municipal services and the potential for incivility such as road rage and other symptoms of human stress and discord.

6. What strategies would you pursue to keep the city affordable for residential living and commercial enterprise? How might you address the pressure on housing and homelessness?

What strategies would I pursue to keep the city affordable for residential living and commercial enterprise? The issue between who pays the cost of new development must be balanced so as not to overburden the existing citizens with high taxes and high water rates. New development should pay its own way. Right now, it is not. Water availability is dwindling and is one of the major obstacles to new growth. Realistically, future growth will have to pay more for the water it needs. The cost of water development cannot be loaded on existing customers. Now, water rates are so high that about every third or fourth residence in a neighborhood is not watering their yard because of the cost of water. Many of the once beautiful yards of Greeley are nothing but weeds and many trees are dying. That is not a good look for what is supposed to be a "tree city".

Regarding homelessness, there are many causes for this human tragedy which defy the easy solutions touted in political rhetoric today. The solution is not just one thing but must involve a comprehensive approach. Engineering logic will go a long way in solving this problem. We must begin by first understanding what the real causes are and what can be effective in dealing with this important issue. The approach should be tailored to Greeley.

7. Greeley was built on smart and innovative practices and continues to be forward thinking in sectors ranging from energy and agriculture to arts and culture. What will you do to drive further innovation?

I have shown in my answers above that I am forward thinking and have smart, innovative and realistic ideas and know how to implement them. I will encourage the process that is already in place in respect to downtown renovation. I love seeing the downtown so vibrant and full of art. I want to fix the flooding problem downtown. I love that the Greeley area helps the nation to be energy and food independent. I will encourage oil and gas and the agriculture in the area. Water, Food and Energy are the top three necessities of life.