

**FORT COLLINS BUSINESS COMMUNITY
CANDIDATE ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE
2015 CITY COUNCIL ELECTION**

**Questionnaires are due back to ahutchison@fcchamber.org
by 5pm on Thursday, February 22, 2015.**

**Please note that all questionnaire answers
will be shared with the business community.**

Office Sought: Councilmember	District (If Applicable): 6
Name: Gerry Horak	
Home Address: 123 North Mack Street Fort Collins CO 80521	
Daytime Phone: 970-217-2993	Evening Phone: same
	Email: gerryhorak@yahoo.com
Employment: Horak & Associates	
Length of Residence: In City: 37 years	In District: 6

Please limit responses to approximately 200 words per section.

- (1) Education: BS Towson State University (Economics and Geography)
MA Johns Hopkins University (Resource Economics)
PhD Colorado State University (Wildlife Biology)
- (2) Past and Present Employment/Business Experience:
Over 40 of business experience conducting applied research, managing on-site support contracts at Federal Government installations and providing business development – winning new business. I have managed and hired hundreds of employees, successfully bid and won hundreds of millions dollars of contracts. I know what it is to meet a payroll and make a profit.
- (3) Current Employment and Responsibilities:
Horak & Associates – provide federal contractors in science and technology with business development expertise. For example this past fall I worked with Riverside Technology on a series of US Geological Service on-site support contracts at their science centers throughout the US.
- (4) Specific Qualifications For This Office: I currently serve as the representative from NW Fort Collins (District 6) to the City Council. I have also previously represented NW Fort Collins from 1981-1994. My demonstrated principled problem solving, balanced leadership, and proven dedication to the community will be valuable during these challenging times. I have worked to protect neighborhoods and provide affordable housing. I will remain focused on open,

**FORT COLLINS BUSINESS COMMUNITY
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responsive, accountable and fiscally sound government. I will continue to read and respond to every citizen email, hold bimonthly listening sessions with citizens to learn about their issues at local coffee shops and the Senior Center and meet with citizens.

(5) Why Are You Running For This Office?

Serving on the Council have been some of the most rewarding times of my life because I learned that a well-functioning local government can make a difference in our lives and the future of our community.

Let me give you just one example. I was walking with my family from our home on Orchard Place for the July 4th fireworks in the 1980s and I noticed that families were forced to walk in the westbound traffic lanes of Mulberry due to the lack of sidewalks. It was a dangerous. I worked to solve this problem, getting sidewalks installed along Mulberry next to the Golf Course and City Park. Realizing that problems like this occur across our city, I led efforts to establish a city-wide sidewalk program to ensure safe pedestrian flow.

Fast forward to December 2012 – the sidewalk program had fallen off the radar. I successfully led the effort to again fund the city-wide sidewalk program and made sure that funding was included in the 2015-16 budget to ensure safe routes to everywhere. As a result of these efforts sidewalks were constructed in 2014 along north-side and east-side of City Park so folks do not have to walk in the street.

6. What have you done to prepare for election to this office and how you will you conduct yourself if elected to this office? What experiences have you had that makes you qualified to serve in office? On what City Boards and Commissions have you served? In 2011 I answered your questionnaire - I will work hard, cooperatively, collaboratively, and deliberatively to ensure that we actively listen and engage the citizens and stakeholders in governance. Over the past four years, I have demonstrated principled problem solving, balanced leadership, and proven dedication to the community. I have looked at each issue listened to the community and then make a decision. I have lived in this community for over 37 years and have worked to make it a better place. I have raised a family, built businesses and participated in recreational and community activities. I have never served on a city board or commission; however, I have served on city council for 17 years.

**FORT COLLINS BUSINESS COMMUNITY
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If you are elected, what are the top three accomplishments you want to have completed by the end of your term and how will you get them done? In 2011 I my answer was - To make Fort Collins a better community by engaging and actively listening to the citizens and community stakeholders as well as working cooperatively and collaboratively with other jurisdictions in the region. A better community is a place where folks can and want to live, work, recreate and raise their children and grandchildren. I have worked hard on those and make progress. I will continue this work.

7 What do you think are the top 3 economic priorities the city government should undertake during the next four years? What role should the City of Fort Collins have in economic development? How will you make the economy a City budget priority?

In 2011 I answered - Review of the Economic Agenda for the City of Fort Collins and engaging the community in the discussion of the analysis, ideas and recommendations contained therein. Then considering and adopting policies to implement agreed-to recommendations with a focus on base job retention and creation from organic growth. *If re-elected I will continue to work for a healthy economy and support for local business. The City's support of the CSU Powerhouse, redevelopment of Foothills Mall and the retention of Woodward are examples of my work for a healthy economy.*

Revenue Analysis and a Long Term Fiscal Plan beyond the 10 year tax increase – What is the effect of the current taxation and fee structure? What are the alternatives? How can our revenue policies be employed more strategically and effectively to meet the City's goals and objective outcomes? *This is still a top priority and I have brought the administration and council to seriously develop such a plan.*

Transportation – the transportation infrastructure capital and operation & maintenance requires large yearly expenditures. *We have bit the bullet and increased transit funding with the implementation of MAX and redesign of Transfort to make a transit an option for transportation to work, live and play. The street maintenance tax will again go to the ballot. We have maintained an excellent street network and are working to fund Lincoln from reserves and include an arterial intersection program in BOB2. We have started to fund bus replacements with on-going budget revenues and not just through capital*

**FORT COLLINS BUSINESS COMMUNITY
CANDIDATE ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE
2015 CITY COUNCIL ELECTION**

improvement taxation.

The City's role, first and foremost, is to provide citizens a place where folks want to live, work, recreate and raise their children and grandchildren. This translates to a safe place, reliable utilities with low rates, well maintained street and transportation system, policies that facilitate base job retention and creation, cultural and recreational opportunities, etc.

The economy is always a City budget priority as witnessed, in part, by the yearly budget investment in public safety, infrastructure, roads, utilities, planning, cultural and recreation resources, etc.

8 How will you make Fort Collins a more Jobs Friendly community? Are you willing to engage with business leaders to discuss these solutions? Please explain how you will stay in touch with business leaders. I have walked the talked and worked for primary jobs and engaged business leaders and citizens on a variety of subjects. I have attended many meeting concerning business issues. By meeting with folks and listening to others I learn and expand my information and thinking.

9 What role should the City of Fort Collins have in the region? What do you believe are the top issues facing Northern Colorado in the next several years?

Fort Collins should be a leader in regional cooperation and collaboration. I have worked hard over the past four years to, in part, fill that role. I serve on the Northern Front Transportation and Air Quality Board (MPO), North I-25 Coalition, 287 Highway Coalition, Poudre Fire Authority, Larimer County Open Lands Advisory Board, Platte River Power Authority and Denver Regional Air Quality Commission.

Top Issues - there are many; they include:

- Base Job Retention and Home Grown Creation
- Transportation
- Water
- Environment (including Air Quality and Poudre River)

10 Colorado will continue to grow, including our area. How should the City

**FORT COLLINS BUSINESS COMMUNITY
CANDIDATE ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE
2015 CITY COUNCIL ELECTION**

Council plan for growth, if at all?

The City has a long history of managing growth through agreements and cooperation with other jurisdictions as well as having sound planning and zoning policies with a long-term vision. Through impact fees the City has required new growth pay its way for direct cost that will be incurred by that growth. The City should continue to follow this path always seeking to make the process more transparent, predictable, efficient, and cost-effective. Recently some councilmembers and community folks have suggested that we limit population/building permits, etc. This makes no sense because if we don't uphold an agreement with Larimer County then our GMA will just become the Wellington or Timnath GMA.

11 What are the top two issues facing city government over the next 4 years and why do you believe they are the most important?

There are many issues and it is presumptive to say what are the two most important. I would say that two important overlooked issues are:

- Revenue Analysis and a Long Term Fiscal Plan beyond the 10 year tax increase – What is the effect of the current taxation and fee structure? What are the alternatives? How can the revenue policy more effectively to meet the City's goals and budget outcomes.
- Water – the Halligan Project should make it out of the Corps of Engineer's review in the next four years. This project is critical for drought storage. Also we need to continue to work with the other major water providers for Fort Collins – ELCO and Fort Collins Loveland Water District to ensure long-term water for our citizens and businesses. I have served on an ad hoc committee to work with those two entities to discuss possible consolidation.

12 What economic tools should the City add to their "tool box" of resources to attract key employers?

I am not an expert on economic development. I am open to learn and discuss with those who are.

13 In recent years, the City Council has been prone to push ahead on issues that

**FORT COLLINS BUSINESS COMMUNITY
CANDIDATE ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE
2015 CITY COUNCIL ELECTION**

are clearly not popular with the public. An example would be trash districting. Though public support was absent, the Council pressed forward with the results being significant negative response by the public and hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars spent on consultants and staff time. What would you do to ensure good governance and the prudent use of staff time and resources?

Well this is one I won't duck. You could have used 'Plastic Bags' as the example. I supported Gino on this issue that he placed on the council agenda May 2011. I tried to have a transparent process. However, I recommended and the majority of council accepted (in hindsight) too great a change on second reading of the ordinance. When the citizens collected the signatures and they were certified, I and Gino admitted our error and voted not to place the ordinance on the April ballot.

That said - I have proven track record of providing leadership in open, responsive, transparent, accountable and fiscally responsible government. Elected officials need to conduct significant outreach when considering controversial issues. Openness and transparency are the hallmark of good governance. I will continue to do so.

- 14 The High Park Fire and drought showcased how vulnerable the City is to lack of water storage. What would you do to help the City be better prepared for water emergencies?

My biggest fear during my council service is a prolonged drought. I worked in the 80s and 90s to buy additional water rights and work on the Halligan Water Storage Project. I support this project because our independent storage for drought protection will be more than doubled. Also we need to continue to work with the other major water providers for Fort Collins – ELCO and Fort Collins Loveland Water District to ensure long-term water for our citizens and businesses. I have served on an ad hoc committee to work with those two entities to discuss possible consolidation.

- 15 What are the top three transportation improvements the City of Fort Collins should accomplish? What is your position on the potential renewal of the

**FORT COLLINS BUSINESS COMMUNITY
CANDIDATE ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE
2015 CITY COUNCIL ELECTION**

Pavement Management Sales Tax? Why?

I support the Pavement Management Sales Tax. I believe poor roads are the single biggest feedback to citizens if there government is not working. I don't know if the converse is true but I think it is.

I offer four;

1. Lincoln Avenue (I believe we will fund the central and eastern segments with reserves and place the a portion of the western segment on BOB2)
2. Maintaining existing infrastructure including streets, bridges, sidewalks and curbs, bike trails, etc
3. Working improving connections especially for sidewalks, bike trails, bike lanes, etc (Walking and biking, do your children or you have to walk or bike in the street to get to school, the grocery store, the transit stop)
4. Structural improvements around the CSU campus with or without the new stadium

16 Why would a business person support your election to office?

I too am a business person. More importantly I am an independent decision maker that examines each issue, listens to community input, asks questions and tries to make the best decision for the community.

17 If business groups endorse you, is there any significant information that could come out about you during a campaign that could potentially embarrass you (and them) publicly? (ex: bankruptcy, arrest, conviction, etc.)

No

Signature

Date