

**PLACE 4: KELLER CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATE RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS
FROM HIDDEN LAKES RESIDENTS**

Responses left to right based on order received.

Jim Thompson	Jim Carson (incumbent)
<p>1. Basis of Decisions: Do you think your job as a member of the city council is to do what <u>you</u> think is best for Keller OR do you think your job as member of the city council is to determine and implement the wishes of the Keller citizens?</p>	
<p>Both. Serving on the City Council is analogous to being on the Board of Directors of a public company. In this case the company is the City of Keller with a \$67,000,000 annual budget and the stock holders are the citizens. My job is to protect the interests of all the citizens. I know that the best interests of <u>all</u> the citizens will not always benefit each of the citizens. You are hiring me to use my best judgment to make the best decision.</p>	<p>I think my job is to do what I think is best. Representative government works best when candidates for office fully and honestly expose their principles and reasoning for the voters to choose, and when elected, uphold those principles with sound reasoning.</p> <p>At the other end of the spectrum, the office-holder who "determines and implements the wishes of citizens" will usually fail to do so in a city of 38,000 people. Inevitably, the special interest noses get counted, and the general interest noses do not.</p> <p>By electing officials who act in accordance with well-defined principles, voters can get on with their lives. The people of Keller would rather spend their time raising their families or enjoying their retirements, not lobbying city councilmen.</p>
<p>2. Vision: What is your long-range <u>vision</u> for Keller? How will you work toward that vision, involve the community to reflect the voice of the majority of Keller citizens, involve fellow Council members, and communicate it to all citizens?</p>	
<p>When we moved to Keller there were just over 10,000 people, now there are almost 40,000. This growth will not last forever, we will reach build out. When that happens, we want the City to have the best possible mix of residential, retail, restaurant, commercial, parks, streets, etc.... that we can have. We will not get a second chance. That goal requires leadership, planning, and management. I invite all comers to help with that vision.</p>	<p>Unfortunately, <u>vision</u> is a term which has been co-opted by self-aggrandizing busybodies who measure their self-worth by their ability to make other people live as they see fit. To me, there is a chasm of difference between the vision of private developers risking their own money on plans for their own property and government planners risking YOUR money on plans for OTHERS' property. To illustrate the point, we need only contrast the spectacular success of Hidden Lakes, and the dismal failure of Town Center.</p> <p>My vision for Keller is a harmonious balance between the freedom and property rights of those considering development, and the freedom and property rights of those affected by those developments.</p>
<p>3. Principles/Strategies: What principles or strategies do you think should guide city government and how would that be put into practice?</p>	
<p>My principles center on good leadership focused on Community, Integrity, and Commitment. We need thoughtful, responsible, organized progress toward the eventual build out of Keller. We will only have one chance to get the build out right, and the results of our work will have an effect for decades to come. We need to be a good neighbor to other cities around us. The NE Tarrant region is larger than just Keller, and working together with other Cities gives us a stronger position and louder voice on regional projects that will affect all of our quality of life. Regional Transit, and clean air initiatives are recent examples where we need to work together.</p>	<p>As Keller nears build-out, we need to get a clearer picture of our finished infrastructure needs, and how much it's going to cost.</p> <p>We need to better manage personnel costs, making sure that these costs increase more slowly than tax revenues.</p>

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<p>4. Long Range Planning: How do you view the importance of long range planning for Keller, such as economic development? How would you improve long range planning?</p>	
<p>Long Range planning is critical, and by definition it started a long time ago. Our responsibility is to refine the vision and improve the execution. The next 10 years in the life of Keller will determine the kind of City we are for years to come.</p>	<p>'Long Range Planning of Economic Development' sounds a lot like 'Planned Economy,' which sounds a lot like socialism. I prefer free enterprise, operating under clear rules which apply equally to everyone.</p>
<p>5. Retail/Business Master Plan: What is your position on a detailed retail/business office master plan? How would you incorporate citizen input and communicate that input to the citizens and potential businesses? What specific experience do you have in this area?</p>	
<p>Commercial, retail, dining, residential, these are all part of any good master plan. Another label for this is Economic Development. The role of the City is to provide fertile ground for the type of development that is best for the community. It is important to get the best advice from the best people when developing, reviewing, and executing any plan. Input from our citizens is a critical part of the process. There are other critical parts to the process. Keller and her citizens may want a certain type and style of development. Wanting something and getting something are different things. Development projects, good or bad, are not constructed by the city. The Developers, Financiers, and Builders who do create these projects have to be a part of the process.</p>	<p>Private master plans of one's own property are terrific. Government master plans of someone else's property are bad. Current zoning and development codes, with respect for property rights & free enterprise, are all that are needed.</p>
<p>6. UDC: What is your opinion of the current Keller Uniform Development Code? What, if any, changes would you advocate?</p>	
<p>The UDC is a necessary consequence of the small town of Keller growing into a City. The days of running the business of a city out of a shoebox in the back of a volunteer fire station are way behind us. There is pain involved with change and growth. Sometimes a bureaucratic tool like a "Unified" code is difficult to work with. But it is a necessity. I firmly believe that the UDC needs to be a living document and go through continuous improvement. The process of continuing improvement needs to be thoughtful, and not impulsive.</p>	<p>In general, the UDC is fairly good. However, in some cases it is written too strictly, with the expectation that variances will be granted on a case-by-case basis. That has the effect of undermining the Rule of Law, and should be avoided if possible. Some desirable developments never happen because the developer reads our rules and decides Keller isn't worth the (political) hassle.</p>
<p>7. Davis Blvd Master Plan: Is there a specific master plan for the development of the Davis Blvd corridor in Keller? If not, what would you like to see happen there?</p>	
<p>I do not know enough about the development of the Davis corridor to give a complete answer. I think planning is better than reacting. If there is not a good Davis Master plan, then we should look at how we can best develop the plan.</p>	<p>There is no master plan for Davis Blvd. Current zoning and development codes, with respect for property rights & free enterprise, are all that are needed.</p>

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<p>8. Citizen Input: What role should citizen input have on proposed and existing projects? For new development proposals, how would you weigh the developer's plans versus significant expression of citizen concerns? Would you try to increase resident involvement and if so, how?</p>	
<p>Please see my answers to all the other questions. The theme of citizen involvement and working with developers to find mutually acceptable solutions is central to all my answers.</p>	<p>Citizen input is critical, but it needs to happen much earlier in the land use/development process. It is unfair to property owners to change the rules on what is permissible <u>after</u> they've spent thousands of dollars on a plan which fully complies with the law.</p>
<p>9. New Developments & Citizen Input: Please explain your opinion on projects that elicited a large citizen response such as the Quiktrip that was recently built at Bear Creek and Davis, or the Keller Station proposal last year. What are your views on Council decisions in opposition to an overwhelming citizen turnout concerning a particular project?</p>	
<p>The politically correct answer here is to say "Of Course, I will agree with what ever the crowd immediately around me wants." But that is not what being a leader in the Community is about. You want a council full of leaders who are able to look at everything, and make good decisions for the community. That does not mean that everybody will agree with a decision. I was not involved or around the Quiktrip project, so I cannot give personal testimony. But, I do know a lot of people had some strong opinions. I would encourage everybody to look at how the project has turned out and give it a fair evaluation.</p>	<p>I voted in favor of QuikTrip, as explained in the prior question and on my website, www.kellercitylimits.com/?cat=8 . Keller Station was stopped, in part, by that same website. It was finally denied after a grassroots coalition, including candidates Bob Welch and Kevin Jerome, with my help on researching city ordinances, convinced our new city manager that multi-family is <u>prohibited</u> in Town Center. (Arthouse notwithstanding.)</p>
<p>10. Housing: How do you feel about multi-family housing and low cost housing projects in Keller in the foreseeable future?</p>	
<p>See response to Q 12</p>	<p>According to our existing zoning, there is almost no land which can be developed multi-family, and <u>none</u> of it is in Town Center.</p>
<p>11. Apartments: What is your understanding on how the majority of residents of Keller feel about additional apartments in Keller? What is your source of information?</p>	
<p>See response to Q 12</p>	<p>I am confident that the vast majority of Kellerites are opposed to apartments because they dilute the value of our homes, and ultimately our community. Ownership is critical to civic virtue.</p>
<p>12. Apartments: How would you vote concerning new apartments in Keller? What factors would you consider? Would you consider a moratorium for future apartments?</p>	

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<p>Response to Qs 10-12:</p> <p>The answer to these questions requires a lot more information and understanding. They are not simple questions and they are not simple answers. Taking a blatant and contentious negative position on a project may not lead to the best result. The continued development of Keller is coming, we can not stop it. We cannot just say, we close the borders of Keller. If, after our family moved to Keller almost two decades ago, the city had said, minimum lot size must be an acre; Hidden Lakes would not be here now. But the City of Keller did not make that restriction, and Hidden Lakes was developed, and it is a great place to live and a big asset to our community. Our job is to manage our growth and get the absolute best results possible. Apartments in Keller have been a hot issue for years. There have been lawsuits settled, promises made, zoning challenges, and organized opposition for just about every project that comes up. I will consider all of these things, and make the best decisions for the community. These decisions will be thoughtful and reasonable. Do not trust anybody who makes you a promise just to get elected.</p>	<p>If an application for apartments came before council which was fully in compliance with existing law, I'd vote for it. I would consider a moratorium, but currently doubt that one is needed.</p>
<p>13. Keller Station: How would you have voted for the Keller Station development as presented last year? Why?</p>	
<p>This is a hypothetical question; the project was never fully presented. We do not know what the developer's flexibility and accommodations to the community could, and would, have been. The best choice is to find a mutual solution. If this question is asking: "Did I think there was more work to be done on the project before it could be considered for approval?" The answer is yes.</p>	<p>I would vote No because, as I discovered while researching our UDC, new multi-family is <u>prohibited</u> in Town Center.</p>
<p>14. Town Center Plan: Briefly, what is your understanding of the existing Town Center Plan and do you plan to vote to stay with the retail to residential ratio?</p>	
<p>The Town Center Plan and the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) that made the project possible have been successful, and that has not always been the case. Economic slumps and development slow downs have made the history of the Town Center a little rocky. The current progress of Town Center is good and getting better. Some of the original concepts have not turned out as first thought. The residential/retail mix is one of those. Any good plan needs to be updated and continually improved, and that is also true for the Town Center Plan.</p>	<p>Unlike prior councils, I intend to uphold it. The residential ratio cannot ever achieve the original goals, but we can wait as long as we need for retail/office uses.</p> <p>I was the only council member to vote against <u>all</u> residential development in Town Center in the last two years.</p>

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<p>15. Communications: If you are elected, what are your plans for ongoing communications with the citizens of Keller?</p>	
<p>Communication is always a challenge, and it is not a solo sport. I have always learned more about something from listening to people than from talking to them. So a big part of citizen communication for me, is listening. The city does have a responsibility to inform, and we can improve some of those tools. Website and newsletters come to mind. But it is also important that we have good pipelines of communication from the community back to the city leadership.</p>	<p>If elected, I will continue to use my website to comment on Keller government and politics. I'll even try to make it sound interesting.</p> <p>I've been working with staff to provide council meeting video in computer-friendly formats, separated and indexed by topic, thus making council-watching short and boring instead of long and boring.</p>
<p>16. Public Art: How do you feel about using taxpayer dollars to support public art activities/projects in Keller?</p>	
<p>How to finance Public Art is an issue that many want to make central to this election. It is not. Anybody who runs, or votes, for a City Council Seat based on a single issue is setting themselves and the people around them up for disappointment. The job of a City Councilman is bigger than any single issue. Let me ask the bigger question: "Do I support Pubic Art?" As an individual, yes I do. The question of how to finance it needs to be revisited. The options run a full range of 100% private funding to 100% public money. Some of the ideas that fall in between include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Matching grants where the city may have a defined budget amount that can be given in the form of grants to match private money. This plan can have flexibility by varying the ratio of grant money to private funding. This also challenges the community to get involved and put up money. This option can give some budget planning and stability to allow for long term projects. II. The City occasionally finds windfall revenue. The rent income from the Cell Tower is an example. Future examples may include gas well royalties from city properties. There may be some restrictions on where the money can be spent, but improving the parks with public art might be an option. III. Impact fees can be charged on new developments. This plan has a limited life, because we will run out of places to build new developments. But, by the time that happens, there might be other private solutions to support the arts. IV. I am sure there are other good ideas out there. I am willing to hear them. 	<p>I will never vote to purchase art with taxpayer dollars. Never.</p>

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<p>17. Infrastructure Maintenance: What exactly are your plans to provide for ongoing maintenance and improvements for the city infrastructure (potholes, streets, sidewalks, curbing, drainage issues)?</p>	
<p>I expect the City Manager and his staff to do their jobs. My job is not to be out filling pot holes or painting stripes on the streets. If we are having a problem in getting those things done, then my job is to get the right people in the right places to get the job done.</p>	<p>As our tax base grows, I intend to use every additional dollar for the infrastructure above, plus fire stations, sewers, parkland and trails. To do this, I plan to keep personnel and other operating costs to a minimum. Gas well revenues will help.</p>
<p>18. Crime: What plans do you have to maintain the low crime rate in the City of Keller?</p>	
<p>Continue to support our outstanding police department. The Keller PD is nationally accredited, a distinction that only 3% of police departments in the country can claim. We need to continue good working relationships with our neighboring cities. That is a win for everybody. Encourage good management of the Crime Control District resources.</p>	<p>The way to keep crime low is to keep good schools in, apartments out, and hire and retain terrific officers.</p>
<p>19. Keller HOAs/City Synergy: Since a significant number of Keller citizens reside in HOAs, what are your views how Keller HOAs can work more closely and effectively with the City Council to better understand citizen concerns before making decisions? If so, how?</p>	
<p>I am not sure of this question. There are also a number of Keller citizens who do not live in HOAs, and they also deserve to be heard. HOAs are a great way to organize people and share information. That is what we need. I would encourage HOAs to work with each other. I would encourage HOAs to work with the city. Sometimes HOAs can highlight a localized issue and perspective. Can we develop some special channels to funnel the HOAs information to and from the City of Keller? I think so.</p>	<p>With due respect to Hidden Lakes well-managed HOA, this is something which needs to work its way from the bottom up. If the people of Keller wish to create and empower HOA's to communicate with the city on their behalf, we're eager to meet with them on how we can help do that.</p>
<p>20. Bear Creek Parkway Safety: What plans do you have to ensure safety along Bear Creek Parkway between Keller Smithfield and Davis Blvd?</p>	
<p>I plan to keep Bear Creek Parkway safe; I plan to keep all of Keller safe. I do not yet have enough information and knowledge to give a comprehensive and specific answer concerning Bear Creek Parkway. My style is to understand the issues before making decisions. I need to understand the exact issues of concern.</p>	<p>I lobbied hard for a pushbutton-activated red light at the clubhouse, and perhaps another at Preston. What we got was an experimental flashing yellow light, to be installed soon. If this light fails to provide adequate crossing safety, I will begin anew my efforts to secure a RED light.</p>

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21. Priorities: What will your priorities be if elected?	
<p>Quality of Life. This might sound simple, but it is comprehensive. Think about what it is that makes Keller great, and why our citizens are so passionate about our town. It includes many things: public safety, good schools, good parks, roads, water, and sewer. It includes thoughtful development of the resources that we have. It is most important that we do this professionally, and in a manner of personal and business interaction that is responsible and civil. We need to be proud of who we are and who are leaders are.</p>	<p>Roads, sewers, fire stations, parkland & trails.</p>
22. Contributions: Which contributions to Keller over the past two years are you most proud of?	
<p>Keller is over 100 years old. The pace of change is accelerating. Two years might seem like a long time, but it is a blink. I have lived in Keller since 1990 and have been involved in many things that I am proud of. We were part of the original Core Group that built the PACT Playground on Johnson Road. We have been a part of schools, scouts, community groups and Church as long as we have lived in Keller. The two projects, that I am most proud of are: Chairman of the Building Committee that dedicated a \$3 million, 800 seat sanctuary (FUMC of Keller at Johnson Rd across from Keller High School); and Chairman of the Keller Veteran's Memorial Park at the corner of 1709 (Keller Parkway) and 377 (Main Street). I invite everybody to go and see these projects.</p>	<p>Keller's government is much more honest and open today. I played a not-small role in this achievement.</p>