

**2019 CANDIDATE PROFILE GUIDE**

**OVERLAND PARK CITY COUNCILMEMBER CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Candidate Name:** Fred Spears

**Candidate for Ward #:** 4

**Address:**

12016 Westgate  
Overland Park, KS 66213

**Campaign E-Mail:** Spears4OP@mycci.net

**Campaign Website:** FredSpearsforop.com

**Phone:** 9136810142

**Campaign Treasurer:** Alan Stetson

**Candidate's Occupation:** Retired

**Work History – Last Five Years** (25 word limit):

Until recently I owned and operated Leadership Systems a consulting firm focusing on teaching leadership and soft skills to my clients

**Most Recent Political/Community Experience** (25 word limit):

16 years on City Council, Rotary member and board member, American Cancer Society volunteer, JOCO Developmental Supports Volunteer, MARC Board member

**Are you, or have you been, affiliated with a local or state chamber of commerce? If yes, please list chamber(s) and any leadership positions you have held** (25 word limit):

Yes, Overland Park Chamber for 30 years both through my business and through the Council

**Are you, or have you been, affiliated with any other business organization(s)? If yes, please list organization(s)** (25 word limit):

Yes, Overland Park Chamber for 30 years both through my business and through the Council

**As a candidate, what are your top three policy issues** (25 words per line):

1. Modernizing Zoning. Ensuring our zoning laws are current and changing to adapt to the anticipated changing needs of the City
2. Communication and citizen participation. Removing any barriers to our residents to easily and adequately communicate with Council members and present their positions to the Council and offer opportunities to be involved in our processes
3. Continue to maintain and improve our infrastructure

**At 13.566 mills, Overland Park's tax rate is approximately half of our neighboring communities and remains the lowest of any first-class city in Kansas. Do you believe Overland Park citizens receive quality services and value for their tax dollars? What improvements, if any, would you make to the existing City budget?**

Yes. I would add monies to the maintenance budget for keeping our streets at a higher and more desirable PCI; Additional staffing for first responders and supporting technologies

**What changes, if any, would you propose to the current City budget?**

The current budget, nothing at this time. In the future, utilizing our five year budget planning cycle make necessary increases for anticipated and designed needs to both public works and public safety plus the anticipated increases we will see in technology. As Public Works Chairman I will continue to push for increased spending on infrastructure maintenance and improvements

**What role, if any, do you believe the City should play in economic development to bring jobs and capital investment to Overland Park?**

Both critical and key roles. We need to keep a pro business philosophy that encourages quality businesses to come to Overland Park and grow here. Through our excellent transportation system, excellent quality of life, through our primary and secondary education system provide an educated and skilled population and when appropriate a judicious incentive practice encourage businesses to locate here

**What is your philosophy regarding the appropriate mix of residential, commercial and green space in development and redevelopment projects and the use of incentives for these projects?**

Our residents are enjoying the mixed use developments we are providing and that is the trend of the future so I anticipate more live/work/play destinations around the city. If an infill project, incentives may be warranted due to increased development costs to keep costs down for those areas, for new areas they need to be evaluated on a case by case basis to determine if a need is there for incentives to provide the amenity for the city and residents based on economic viability.

**What do you think the three greatest opportunities are for Overland Park's economy in the next ten years and how would you capitalize on them?**

Commercial development for quality employers providing challenging and competitive positions; Providing leisure time activities and venues. While we offer a plethora now the demand is there for more and a wider variety of venues or opportunities such as a gathering place for post work entertainment; Alternative housing choices. With millennials buying houses later, seniors downsizing from their houses and affordable housing all being needed we need to look how those requirements will be met. Meet by evaluation our zoning laws and determining what changes should or could be made and if incentives are still available determine their appropriateness of use.

**What specific elements of Forward OP's Action Agenda do you consider to be among the highest priorities for implementation?**

Gathering - to get residents more engaged and interactive gathering, entertainment and leisure venues that are convenient and safe for families and or all ages to utilize; Connecting. This includes maintaining a top infrastructure system so residents can travel well and safely but also opportunities to interact and be involved in areas outside of their neighborhoods; Welcoming and Living. What has made Overland Park great is our enviable quality of life. Offering a location and environment where people want to live, work and play will only lead to long term success for Overland Park.

**As the second largest city in the metro, what is your philosophy on the role Overland Park should play in terms of metro-area issues?**

We need to step up and take a greater role of leadership and ensure that we have a greater say on what decisions are made and ensure we are not left out of decisions or actions that will benefit other metro cities greater than Overland Park. We are the leader in economic development, among the top in population growth, and we need to have the correct balance that not only Overland Park but all of Johnson County benefits from metro wide decisions.

**Why are you seeking public office? What do you believe most distinguishes you from your opponent(s) in this race, making you best suited to serve?**

I have lived in Overland Park for almost 40 years and plan on living here the rest of my life so I am heavily invested in the city, its future and success. I know the city and our residents. My 16 years experience on the Council tells me what works and what we need to do in the future. Experience doesn't mean complacency, it means knowing what to do, how to do it and anticipating and planning for future needs. I have significantly greater civic involvement and have been recognized multiple times for my accomplishments distinguishing me significantly from my opponent