

Shane Alderson

My name is Shane M. Alderson. I am 40 years old. I'm a professional photographer, and have worked as a backcountry guide and a field researcher for West Virginia University. I have lived in Baker City all my life.



Personal
Limit: 75 words

In 1998 I started volunteering with the Baker County Sheriff's Posse and Search and Rescue. These experiences led me to become a First Aid and CPR instructor and a Disaster Services Volunteer for the American Red Cross. During Hurricane Katrina in 2005, I helped to coordinate services and emergency communication. I have also worked with Baker County Emergency Management on shelter preparedness and disaster planning.

Police and fire department budgets will need to be a main focus to overcome the past couple of years. Baker City has seen an increase in crime, poverty, and drug use. A global pandemic has exacerbated this problem. More and more, our residents are dealing with the issues of property abatement, higher rates of theft, and visible drug abuse on the streets. Resources to local police are currently insufficient to allow officers to do the job they strive to do. Our fire department must continue training firefighters, paramedics, and EMTs, while also maintaining an aging fleet of vehicles and equipment. I'll work with the City Council and Baker County Commissioners to make budget increases that will ensure a safe and healthy community for us all.

Another important issue that will need to be addressed is the success of small local businesses. COVID-19 has brought hardship to local business owners and our entire economy. It is essential that we, as a City Council, take every opportunity to ease this burden. We must work hard to bring back local events and the tourist industry that has supported our economy for so long.

The first goal that I would like to pursue as a City Council member is to bring size-appropriate industry back to Baker City. Our county's poverty rate is currently above 15%. I believe that it is time to take a proactive approach in encouraging companies to consider Baker City as a prospective location. As better jobs become available to low-income families, we will see our community prosper. I believe that we can entice manufacturing and natural resource development that will reflect our small town values, ethics, and respect for our environment.

Secondly, I believe it is time to recognize that tourism and outdoor recreation is an industry that Baker County has yet to fully tap into. In 2006, an estimated 505,000 people visited the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest. That number has continued to increase by 100,000 people per year. This growth will continue to come whether or not Baker City is in a position to capitalize on it. As a City Council member, I will support Baker City Downtown programs that promote tourism and will help businesses prepare for this inevitable growth. I want to work with Baker City Art Guild and Oregon Parks and Recreation to make Historic Baker City an inviting destination for both tourist and outdoor recreation enthusiasts.

Discuss 2 issues that you think will be vital for the City Council to deal with during the next 2 years.

Limit: 250 words

Discuss 2 goals you would like to pursue if you're elected.

Limit: 250 words

Arvid Andersen

Arvid Andersen, 67, BS degree in Forest Resource Management, University of Idaho, professional forester with private industry 21 years, self-employed as consulting forester 24 years, resident of Baker City since January 1990.



Baker City Council member since 2017

Maintain full community support for Baker City law, along with Baker County Sheriff, and Oregon State Police, enforcement and Baker City Fire Department. We do not want to be like Portland or Seattle! Continue to work with and encourage Public Works Department for upgrade water delivery system and wastewater disposal.

Search long-term resolution of PERS.

Continue to partner with Wallowa-Whitman National Forest and Whitman Ranger District to launch a full-fledged operation to restore forest health and reduce excessive fuel loads in Baker City Watershed.

Doni Bruland

I was born and raised in Baker City. I left long enough to get some additional education and to realize that this is where I wanted to raise my kids. I have over 50 years of living in this outstanding community. I am the County's Natural Resources Coordinator. As such, my responsibilities include working, and partnering with, state and federal agencies to ensure our community has a voice on public land management. This a public service that I take very seriously.



Current Baker City Councilor (2) years; Current Baker County Natural Resources Advisory Committee Chair (6) years; Current Baker City Covid Relief Fund Committee Chair; Past experiences on the Baker County Planning Commission and the Baker City Parks Board

City Manager: It is vitally important that the Council engage with the new city manager to facilitate a good working relationship that focuses on community needs. The Council is responsible for health, safety, and economic viability of the community. The city manager is responsible for getting it done. Therefore, building trust between the manager, Council, and community is critical to the overall success that allows a city to function.

- Community safety and protection: Law enforcement must be given ordinances that can be enforced. This does not mean new laws must be written, rather, existing laws must be reviewed and amended to better serve today's community needs. The ambulance service and fire department must be able to respond to emergencies and prioritize the citizens of Baker City. This is going to require a new system to keep the first responder fleet in top working order without raising taxes or increasing fees.

As a public servant, my goals are to listen to and serve the community to provide the best available protection, safety, maintenance, and enhancement of the unique environment, lifestyle, and customs and culture of our City. This includes upgrading and maintaining our streets, improving enforcement of our current codes and ordinances, promoting our local businesses, and continuing to work with our partners to protect the municipal water supply.

Thank you for your consideration. I am always happy to stop and visit with folks and listen to new ideas and needs. I look forward to continuing to serve you.

Joanna Dixon

My name is Joanna Dixon. I am 71 years old and have lived in Baker City my entire life. I previously worked at Inland Empire Periodicals (Leo Adler) where I first learned computer operations and data processing. I also worked at Pioneer Bank then First Bank when they took over Pioneer, where I started as a teller, then transferred to data processing where I continued adding to knowledge of computer operations and data processing. I operated a ceramic shop for 4 years before finally retiring.



I was appointed Precinct Committee Person for Baker County Republican Central Committee in September 2018 and then elected to that position in May of 2020. I was appointed treasurer in January of 2020 and elected to that position in February of 2020.

I am not a politician, I am an ordinary citizen that loves the community that I have spent my entire life living in and want to work to keep Baker City a great place to live and raise a family.

We have to address the drug and crime issues in our city. There will, unfortunately, always be crime, but not to the extent that we have now. One of the first steps to reduce crime is to reduce the amount of drug activity. Where there is drug usage, there is an increase in crime in order to support their habit.

We also need to work on affordable housing. People cannot adequately provide for their families with skyrocketing housing costs, especially if their only source of income is minimum wage service industry jobs. Being a tourist destination and showing off the wonders of our county is all well and good, but that only provides minimum wage jobs. We need jobs where a worker can support their families.

One of my goals would be to review all contracts and memoranda of understanding to see where cost savings can be made. We need to make sure that the taxpayer dollars are being spent in the most effective way. Just as an example, my monthly water/sewer bill is now as much or more than that bill was 15-20 years ago for 2 months.

I would like to work to increase the numbers of jobs in Baker City where a worker is able to provide their family with a good home, plenty of food without having to resort to EBT cards. Where they can get medical care without relying on OHA for help.

Kerry McQuisten

I'm Kerry McQuisten. I'm a 7th-generation Baker County resident, raised on a cattle ranch. After living in Spain, Japan and the Seattle area, I decided it was time to come home to Baker City. I formed Black Lyon Publishing, LLC here in 2007, and was once named Baker County Entrepreneur of the Year. I'm the mother of two beautiful girls — one away in college, the other in fourth grade. I also hold an Oregon Private Investigator's license.



I've served as an elected Precinct Committee Person for the Baker County Republicans for many years. This is a volunteer office, the most grassroots level of any party, for which I have helped register voters and point citizens toward their elected officials for help. As a result of this position, I'm comfortable with the ins and outs of how all levels of government work in America, from state statutes to local ordinances — to even Robert's Rules of Order for conducting public meetings.

Community safety is clearly an immediate issue. I can't even count how many citizens have reached out to me expressing fear for their safety and that of their children in our city parks. We're also seeing increased theft, trap houses, and other drug-related crimes. Residents say they can no longer leave anything that could be carried off in their pickups, on their porches, or even within their fenced backyards. Two homes on my block were recently burglarized. People are incredibly frustrated when they see criminals only cited and released instead of jailed. Some of the reasons for the shift we're seeing inside the city extend into county issues such as a jail left half-empty, and state issues such as decriminalizing behaviors that were once serious crimes. This present dynamic can leave city law enforcement hamstrung. We need to find ways to support our police and address this.

The second present issue is getting a new city manager in place. I'm concerned, as are many citizens, about why we have an outgoing Council interviewing and hiring a new manager just 2 months before an entire newly elected Council will be sworn in. The new City Council will oversee the new city manager, and that creates the potential for the new manager and new Council to be put at a disadvantage should voters choose representatives with different goals from this outgoing Council. I would prefer to see the hiring process put on hold until early 2021, and handled then.

Having a business development background myself, I'm clear how those efforts can quickly become a smoke-and-mirrors, glad-handing program in which the only item being developed is the business developer's own bank account. I would like to change how business development is approached locally, with several goals beneath that umbrella. The City should never focus on an expensive middleman to point potential businesses toward resources that, frankly, entrepreneurs already know how to find! I'm typically against a municipality directly involving itself in new local business coalitions. I advocate leaving the business of operating businesses and forming marketing coalitions to those business owners themselves. We have the Baker County Chamber of Commerce, which exists to support all member businesses, and is the go-to place for businesses and visitors to begin business research.

Let's focus on minding the business of the city with actual incentives such as tax breaks, fee waivers, quicker permitting processes, low crime and a solid infrastructure, which will all attract businesses. That is the heart of true business development. Quite a bit of COVID money recently came into the city. How about a grant program for existing businesses to market or expand themselves as they see fit? We want living-wage jobs; let's not absorb that money into local government or hand it out to community organizations. Why are free social media communications tools underutilized when they could benefit residents? Why do website updates to cheaply market the City as a whole take years to complete rather than weeks?

Six of seven seats on Baker City Council on Nov. 3 ballot

By Jayson Jacoby
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The section of the Nov. 3 general election ballot for the Baker City Council is unusually long.

Not only are six of the seven City Council seats on the ballot, but 13 candidates are vying for a position.

Typically just four Council seats are up for election every 2 years. But two councilors resigned earlier this year and their replacements, Larry Morrison and Jason Spriet,

who were appointed by the remaining councilors, are serving temporary terms that end Dec. 31.

Lynette Perry is the only councilor whose term continues into 2021. She was elected in 2018 to a 4-year term.

Of the six other councilors, two — Mayor Loran Joseph and Randy Schiewe — are not eligible to run for re-election due to the term limits clause in the city charter.

Morrison did not file as a candidate.

Three other current councilors are on the ballot: Doni Bruland, Arvid Andersen and Spriet.

Among the top six candidates in the Nov. 3 election, the top three will serve 4-year terms. The three others will serve 2-year terms.

Two candidates who are on the ballot — Annie Croucher and James C. Thomas — did not respond to multiple requests, by email and phone, to submit answers to the Baker City Herald's questionnaire.