

2009 Candidate Questionnaire

SECTION I

BASIC CANDIDATE INFORMATION

1. Name as it will appear on the ballot

First Name	Middle Initial or Nickname	Last Name
Jim	L	Berrios

2. Office sought (include office, jurisdiction, position/district number):

Mayor of Kent

3. Are you the incumbent? Yes No

4. How long have you resided in this district/city?

16 years

5. How long have you resided in King County?

16 years

6. Is the office sought partisan or nonpartisan? Partisan Nonpartisan

7. If partisan, please indicate party:

CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name: People for Jim Berrios

Address: P.O. Box 6454

City/State/Zip: Kent, WA 98064

Campaign Phone: (360) 600-9587

Campaign Fax: (253) 852-9563

Campaign E-mail: heather@jimberrios.com

Campaign Website: www.jimberrios.com

POLITICAL BACKGROUND

1. Beginning with the most recent position, please list public offices you have held. Include positions on appointive boards or commissions.

Public Office	Elective or Appointive?	Dates Held	Leadership Role (if any)
Kent School Board	Elected	2006-2009	President 2008 - 2009

2. If you ran for public office but were not elected, please list those races below:

Office Title	Year of Run

SECTION II

In this section, we are seeking responses that reflect the four ratings criteria: involvement, effectiveness, character, and knowledge. These are defined as follows:

- **Involvement:** What has the candidate done previously in family, neighborhood, community, volunteer work, employment or public life to suggest readiness to accomplish challenging objectives? How do these activities demonstrate readiness for the challenges unique to the office sought?
 - **Effectiveness:** Has the candidate demonstrated promise of being productive in the office sought? Has the candidate shown the ability to work with other people?
 - **Character:** Do the candidate's personal traits show the ability to take on the responsibilities of campaigning for and holding the public office she or he is seeking? Is the candidate a leader, participant or observer? Is the candidate trustworthy, reliable and candid?
 - **Knowledge:** Has the candidate demonstrated the willingness and ability to learn and adapt? Does the candidate understand the duties and challenges of the office sought? Does the candidate have a firm grasp of the issues important to his or her constituency and their potential effects?
-

1. In one page or less, why are you running for this office? (Note: the interview committee will be given a copy of this statement before your interview; at the beginning of your interview you will have the opportunity to expand on this statement in any way you wish.)

I am running for Mayor because our great city needs better leadership in difficult times. Like many cities, Kent is facing significant budgetary challenges as a result of the bad economy, declining revenue, and increased demand for services. I believe that I can do a better job addressing these challenges than the current administration.

My wife Suzanne and I have lived in Kent for 16 years and raised our kids here. We have owned the Golden Steer restaurant on East Hill for the past 10 years, where we've won numerous awards for community service. Previously, I was the Director of Operations at Denny's, where I oversaw a half-billion-dollar budget and 20,000 employees.

As a business leader, I know the importance of fiscal responsibility, which includes being prepared for future challenges. A budget built on the overly optimistic assumption that the situation will improve leaves the city vulnerable to any bump in the road and could eventually result in much more painful cuts.

It's important to tackle potential problems before they develop into crises. To me, that's what leadership is about.

I also believe the Mayor has a responsibility to work collaboratively with all parties to ensure fair and equitable outcomes. When I am faced with a problem, I bring all of the stakeholders to the table and make a decision that is fair, transparent, and effective. That's what I've done as School Board President, and I am committed to taking the same approach as Mayor.

Finally, as a business owner and dedicated community servant, I've learned the importance of good service. As Mayor, I want make sure city government remembers that it is there to serve the people of Kent.

2. Describe your most important personal characteristics or traits as they relate to the office you seek.

Commitment to Community Service. My wife and I have been committed to community service for many years – long before I ever considered running for office. Our restaurant, the Golden Steer, has been recognized locally and across the state for our work in the community, and I have been honored as Volunteer of the Year by the South King Council of Community Services. I've been particularly dedicated to education, chairing the 2006 school levy campaign, volunteer as an assistant track and wrestling coach at Kent Meridian High School, and also serving on the Learning Improvement Team. I've also served on many boards, including the Domestic Abuse Women's Network (DAWN), the Kent Chamber of Commerce, and Building Better Futures.

Leadership. The more I get involved in the community, the more I've seen the difference strong leadership can make. To me, leadership means being open and honest, working collaboratively with all stakeholders, and then implementing a fair, transparent, and effective solution. That approach has served me well in business, and I believe it would serve me well as Mayor.

Responsibility. Responsibility means more than dealing with problems you can't avoid – it means actively searching for ways to do things better and tackling problems no one else is worried about yet. It's far better to avoid a crisis than to deal with one, even if you don't get recognized for it.

3. Please describe, in sufficient detail, one to three accomplishments or contributions of which you are most proud. These examples should illustrate skills and capabilities you think apply to the office you are seeking. These accomplishments may have occurred at any time in your personal, professional, or public life.

- When my colleagues elected me School Board President last year there were major storm clouds on the horizon. Our long-time superintendent was leaving, and we knew the state was going to slash funding for our schools. We didn't wait for the storm to hit – we immediately got to work preparing for it. We worked together as a team and initiated a series of community meetings with parents, staff, and students to determine what our top priorities should be. From there we built a realistic working budget for next year that kept our reserves intact and continued providing an excellent education for Kent students.
- In 2006, I was honored with the Washington Association of School Administrators "Community Leadership" award for my support of the Kent School District – specifically, chairing the 2006 Bond & Levy campaign, serving on the Kent Meridian High School Learning Improvement team, assistant coaching the wrestling and track teams, and for teaching a state-required certification class so that students could sell concessions at Safeco Field to earn money for school programs.
- In both 2005 and 2006, the restaurant I own with my wife, Suzanne, was awarded the "Good Neighbor Restaurant" by the state of Washington, honoring us for our work in the community. Also in 2008 and 2009 our restaurant similarly won "The Best Family Restaurant in Kent" award by the Kent Reporter's reader poll.

4. Please list or describe current and past activities in the community in which you have acquired skills that relate to the office you seek. Include your role in the activity and the year(s) in which you were involved. Involvement consists of many areas such as family, neighborhood, community, employment, or public life.

- School Board 2006 – Present; President 2008-2009
- Chair of School Board Bond and Levy Campaign in 2006
- 2006 received Washington Association of School Administrators “Community Leadership” award
- Kiwanis Club Member, 2000 – Present Board Member
 - i. Received “Distinguished Past President Status”
 - ii. Received “Hixon Award”
 - iii. 2003 received “Kiwanian of the Year” award
- 2006 received Kent Lion’s Club “Community Impact Award”
- 2003 – 2006 served on Washington State Jail Industries Board
- 2003 – 2007 served on board of Domestic Abuse Women’s Network (DAWN)
- Currently serve on Building Better Futures board
- For past 10 years, owner of Golden Steer Restaurant
- Former VP of operations at Denny’s, where I over saw half a billion dollar budget and over 20,000 employees, which I left to spend more quality time with my family.
- Member and board member of Kent Chamber of Commerce.

5. Please describe the duties of the office you seek. Which are the most important duties and why?

The Mayor oversees all facets of city government, as well as providing oversight of all programs and services. The Mayor’s office also serves as the communication link between residents, neighborhoods, City Council, city departments and other government agencies.

The most important duties of the Mayoral office are developing the annual city budget, and ensuring that we stay within our means in doing so, and maintaining our emergency reserves. Besides that, the Mayor is responsible for managing city department and providing them with the needed support and resources to best do their jobs, managing city public works, making sure all citizens have equal access to needed services. Above all else it is the duty of the Mayor to serve the community, looking out for the best interest of all members, and doing so in a fair, equitable and transparent matter.