

# **BikeABQ**

## **Candidate Survey**



# Jeff Hoehn

District 6

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**1. Albuquerque has the second deadliest streets of any city in the US, with approximately 110 people killed by vehicles each year while walking, biking, or driving, and another 6,500 people injured. How important is it to you that Albuquerque maintain and act on its commitment to the Vision Zero goal of zero fatalities from traffic violence?**

Public safety is my campaign's top priority. The fact that our city's extensive infrastructure, with all its multi-use paths, bike lanes and sidewalks, does not translate to safer streets is extremely alarming. It's both a small picture and a big picture issue. In the small picture we have to look at adjusting the existing infrastructure and using all available technology to make our environment safer to navigate. We have to talk to the people who are most vulnerable in our streets. We need to determine what technical and structural issues exist. There are changes we can make to slow car traffic down, and to reduce

pedestrian-vehicle interface.

We can look at the statistics a little more closely and pinpoint where and how the fatalities are occurring. When we do that, we have to look at the big picture. Driver and pedestrian behavior must be seen in the context of overall issues that Albuquerque is facing: inequality and poverty, substance abuse, crime, and homelessness. A city's poor public safety easily translates to more traffic-related violence and vice versa. Those are the main issues that I will be focusing on as a City Councilor. It is my number one goal to make our city safer, and eliminating traffic violence will be a great step in that direction. It is very important to be that our city maintain and act on its Vision Zero commitment.

**2. In 2019 Albuquerque updated its Complete Streets Ordinance to support safe and efficient street design for all users. What are the biggest remaining barriers to getting people to choose walking, biking, or public transit instead of personal vehicles, and what would you do to address these impediments?**

Inadequate and underutilized public transit is a chronic issue in our city. Folks that want to take the bus to work or school want safety, consistency, and punctuality. Our current transit system is lacking all of the above. As City Councilor I will do my best to

make sure that our transit system caters to its users' needs. Schedules, frequency, and routes must all be planned with the ones who use the bus in mind.

Beyond this though, people don't necessarily feel safe in general being outside in our city. Public safety is my top priority. We have to bring Albuquerque Community Safety (ACS) and APD to the most vulnerable areas BEFORE citizens have to make that phone call. Unfortunately, some of those vulnerable areas are our bus stops. There are also spots along our bike paths that feel unsafe due to criminal activity, drug use and public intoxication. We cannot just worry about those spots during Balloon Fiesta. Commuters commute year round. I have extensive plans to improve public safety, and I believe that making our streets safer will make commuting without a personal vehicle a lot more appealing. Problems with general bike path and lane design such as lack of continuity, poor repair, etc. can also be a deterrent for potential commuters. I will make it a point that cyclists have representation when decisions on infrastructure improvements are made.

**3. ABQRide remains severely understaffed, with motorcoach operator vacancies more than double their pre-pandemic numbers despite severe reductions in service. Other facets of our transit system, including mechanics and stop maintenance, are also**

## **understaffed. What is your plan for filling the staffing shortage at ABQRide?**

I will look at what our transit system's budget is and see how we can improve it by utilizing federal or state grants, or other funding sources. Clearly, all city employees deserve a raise, in particular transit workers. I will also try to find ways to motivate the existing work force to stay and to offer incentives to potential new transit workers. Inadequate safety is a big deterrent to potential bus drivers, so making our buses and bus stops safer is urgently needed.

The best incentives of course are financial ones so let's look at the revenue side. One thought on re-introducing a bus ticket would be to have companies or schools buy passes through package deals for their employees. I am excited to tackle these ideas, have big conversations and put in the long hours of work that it will take. Our public transportation system has to be viewed as a subsidized business. It has to be managed professionally without losing its focus on serving the public. I have years of experience operating two large and successful non-profit organizations. I know how to balance operational efficiency with a focus on the human side. I believe I can apply my experience in helping transform our current transit system into a more efficient and independent entity of our city.

**4. What is your plan for increasing housing supply in Albuquerque, particularly along useful transit corridors and near popular amenities? How do you plan to increase housing availability without requiring the occupants of those houses to own a car to participate in most aspects of city life?**

When we think of Albuquerque and the surrounding areas, we think of plenty of open space to expand into. I believe that this is a misconception. Spreading out does not translate to sustainable communities. The opposite is true; building further and further out stretches our resources and can waste a lot of energy.

Albuquerque is experiencing growth similar to what other American cities have experienced in the past. As a City Councilor I will visit those cities, and learn from their achievements as well as from their mistakes. Then I will try to apply the good ideas to our city, being mindful of each neighborhood's special needs and history. This can be achieved through constant communication with the neighborhood associations.

I believe that there are plenty of pockets within the city where we can add affordable housing and create dynamic neighborhoods with great access to our public transportation and multi-use path systems. We will find ways to incentivize developers and shift their focus to sustainable urban development. This can be done by utilizing every federal or state resource we can apply for, as well as by creating tax benefits,

with special focus on units that are meant to be privately owned rather than rented out. Home ownership will enhance our communities.

**5. Albuquerque's urban areas have limited space on streets. In order to increase safety and improve mobility, some modes of transportation must be prioritized over others to make the most of this limited space. Please rank how you would prioritize different modes of transportation on city streets, using numbers 1 through 7:**

1. Public Transportation
2. Walking & devices that aid people with a disability
3. Bicycles and Scooters
4. Freight and Delivery
5. Personal Automobiles
6. Ride Hailing Services (Taxi, Uber, Lyft)
7. Parking

This is a good but tough question. I am certainly open to being further educated, but I have ranked my current priorities above. I am currently looking at initiatives such as "Strong Towns" that promote high quality of life environments with financial prosperity. The idea of replacing car spaces with open, walkable areas is very appealing to me. I live in Nob Hill, a relatively

dense area with good accessibility and with plenty of open space for walking and cycling. 'Microclimates' like this can be created in other parts of town. However, as we learned from the ART project, changes have to be made mindfully, with an eye to efficiency and common sense, otherwise the result can be opposite of what was originally intended.