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District 6: Candidate Questionnaire Jeff Hoehn

The candidate
Oct 20, 2023



Name: Jeff Hoehn

Jeff Hoehn
Jon Austria/Journal

District: 6

Political party: Democratic

Age: 49

Education: Master of Public Administration, University of New Mexico

Occupation: Nonprofit executive director

Family: Charlotte Itoh, one child

How long have you lived in your district?

21 years

What would you say the biggest issue is facing your district, and how would you combat it?

Crime is our biggest challenge. I advocate short-term mobile APD command units in high crime areas. A dedicated team of officers can embed with the community, build trust and make the area unfriendly to criminal activity. This is how we disrupt the cycle of crime in our city.

What would you do to combat homelessness and the housing crisis in the city?

Fund smaller, population-specific shelters that are attractive and safe for those who want help. The Albuquerque Community Safety Department should be a proactive force that is on the streets every day, all day actively encountering individuals who are homeless so that they accept help or choose to relocate.

Would you support additional funding for the Gateway Center? If not, how would you ensure the success of the project?

I would support auditing the Gateway Center's annual operating budget to ensure that taxpayer dollars are being spent on programs that are lifting people out of homelessness. If Gateway is working, then yes, I would support increased funding. If not, then I would not support additional funding.

What, if anything, can the Council do legislatively to reduce crime?

Enforce existing ordinances that address problem properties and shoplifting. Implement zoning regulations that discourage or limit the establishment of businesses associated with higher crime rates in high crime areas, such as liquor stores. Pass ordinances that regulate the sale and possession of firearms to help reduce gun-related crimes.

What in the city's current budget, if anything, do you believe should have more or less funding or why?

Increase funding for eviction prevention programs to pay one month's rent for those who qualify, so people don't become homeless in the first place. By doing so, we would realize significant savings by not rehousing individuals in 12-month rental assistance programs. Savings could be reallocated toward workforce development.

Do you think Albuquerque buses should be free? Or should changes be made to the zero fare program?

We need to know who is riding the bus, to what parts of the city and at what times. With data, we can make an informed decision about whether our buses

should be free. We do know that the best public transportation is used by people of all income levels.

What is your top idea for boosting the economy?

A strong economy starts with a city that is clean and safe for residents and businesses, and welcoming to tourists. Fighting crime is the best way to boost the economy, by significantly increasing tourism and attracting work-from-home professionals seeking a lower cost high quality of life.

The city has struggled with hiring. What ideas do you have to increase staffing at city agencies?

Our city employees deserve a raise. While city employees receive good benefits, they can't pay rent or utilities or buy groceries with a benefits package. We need a compensation study that includes input from city employees and considers our local economic pressures, such as rising rents and inflation.

Under what circumstances, if any, would you support raising taxes?

I would consider raising taxes only in the event of a true emergency. With a city budget of almost \$1.4 billion, I would always seek to reallocate existing funding, redeploy unspent funds or cut unnecessary expenses to balance our budget before raising taxes on citizens and businesses.

Would you support the leasing of public land at Balloon Fiesta Park to New Mexico United to use for a soccer stadium?

Public input is critical in making such big decisions. I would want to hear from residents, businesses, and community organizations before making such an important decision on behalf of our city. Considerations such as parking, business development around the stadium and impacts on local traffic should be considered.

What large infrastructure projects would you push for as a councilor?

I would support affordable housing developments to address housing shortages and housing for low-income residents, and significant investment in renewable energy, including solar panels, to reduce the city's carbon footprint. Additionally, I would advocate for improved lighting across the city to increase public safety in residential and business areas.

How would you improve quality of life for residents in your district?

My primary focus will be the International District and the neighborhoods east of San Mateo. I would ask other city councilors to spend time with me in this area, and then go back to City Council and craft a comprehensive plan that includes economic, environmental, and social justice.

Albuquerque experienced an intense heat wave this summer. How would you legislatively plan to mitigate “heat island” effects and ensure a sustainable water supply?

We need to plant more trees in the city, especially in parts of town like the area east of San Mateo that are heat islands. I would advocate for water conservation measures such as encouraging xeriscaping, and aquifer recharge

projects. We must ensure cleanup of the Kirtland fuel spill.

Name one issue not mentioned in the questions above that you would plan to tackle as a councilor.

We need to improve bicycle, pedestrian, and vehicle safety in Albuquerque. I would support launching a more robust educational campaign targeting drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians to raise awareness of road safety rules and the importance of sharing the road. Also increase penalties for those who endanger others on the road.

Have you or your business, if you are a business owner, ever been the subject of any state or federal tax liens?

No.

Have you ever been involved in a personal or business bankruptcy proceeding?

No.

Have you ever been arrested for, charged with, or convicted of drunken driving, any misdemeanor, or any felony in New Mexico or any other state?

No.