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Fixing crime and homelessness require proven leadership

By Jeff Hoehn / Albuquerque City Council candidate, District 6

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Jeff Hoehn

Jon Austria / Journal

I am Jeff Hoehn, and I am running for City Council for District 6.

I view this election as a call to action. We need genuine leadership on City Council because our city is at a crossroads where crime and homelessness are threatening to define us. I know that we can do better as a city.

I have lived in District 6 for 21 years and have a master's degree in public administration from UNM. This degree has equipped me with the knowledge and skills to analyze data, manage budgets and measure results.

More importantly, though, I am a proven leader. Over the last 10 years I have led two well-respected nonprofit organizations. I am currently executive director of Cuidando Los Niños, a nonprofit that helps homeless children and their families. Under my leadership over the last five years, Cuidando Los Niños has grown from a \$800,000 per year to a \$4 million per year budget. We have expanded pay and benefits for our employees. Most importantly, we have increased our programs and expanded the number of homeless families served from 40 to 225 a year. This is what real community impact looks like.

Seeing homelessness firsthand every day, I know that we can do better. The Gateway Center is a good start, but we can do more. I advocate for smaller site shelters that serve specific populations with tailored services.

We have a growing population of chronically homeless individuals, many of whom are choosing to live on the street. We cannot tolerate unsanctioned tent cities any longer. Tents and panhandling reduce our quality of life and they are dangerous for the people on the street. We must have compassionate

outreach by nonprofits and by the city's Community Safety department.

We also need more funding for substance abuse treatment. As a social scientist, I will look at what the data shows and ensure that we maximize public resources.

The city must fund eviction prevention programs that help pay a month's rent or an overdue utility bill. With a very small investment, we can prevent folks from becoming homeless in the first place, while ensuring that landlords receive the rent that is owed.

Crime is the other major issue affecting our quality of life and holding back economic development. We must acknowledge that we are still far off our target of more police officers so we must maximize the police resources that we have.

I propose placing mobile police command units in high crime areas to disrupt the cycle of criminal activity. We know where crime is happening and emanating from; we need to put our resources there.

The time for change is now. Elect a proven leader who can move our city in the right direction. It will take determination, leadership, building coalitions on the City Council, and working with the mayor. It will also take really listening to constituents.

I am the right candidate for the job. Vote for Jeff Hoehn for the change that we need.