



NEW MEXICO BUSINESS COALITION

Q1

Candidate Name: (As it will appear on the ballot)

Eddie R Varela

Q2

In what quadrant of Albuquerque do you reside?

Albuquerque NW

Q3

How long have you lived in Albuquerque?

Born and raised in Albuquerque

Q4

Email address

Eddierayvarela26@gmail.com

Q5

Phone number for voters to reach you.

505-249-2422

Q6

Other Information

Campaign Website

<https://EddieVarelaForMayor.com>

Social Media

Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok

Q7

Economic development: Albuquerque business owners have reported that getting permits can take 6 months or longer, and needless 'red tape' stifles efforts to open or expand. What will you do to speed up business permits and other business requirements to encourage economic development, business expansion, and new businesses?

I'd like to highlight a significant issue that perfectly illustrates the need for change within Albuquerque's permit process. Both Dutch Brothers Coffee's Albuquerque and Rio Rancho construction permits were submitted on the exact same day. However, the stark difference in outcomes speaks volumes about the efficiency of our systems. Rio Rancho's facility was operational and serving the community within the same year, while Albuquerque's permit process lagged, leaving the project incomplete and stalled. This discrepancy is a clear indicator of the urgent need for reform in our city's permitting procedures. Such delays are not conducive to business growth or economic development in Albuquerque. It's imperative that we address and rectify these inefficiencies to foster a more business-friendly environment that encourages growth and prosperity.

The Code of Enforcement division and the Planning Department will undergo a comprehensive reorganization from top to bottom. This initiative will involve city employee advisors, including the mayor, contractors of all sizes, and both large and small developers. The restructured organization will prioritize fast-track permitting and planning processes. Currently, Albuquerque is facing a stagnation in economic growth, and this reorganization aims to catalyze development. The end goal is to create a system that is both user-friendly and efficient. We are committed to ensuring that all phone inquiries are met with a live response, and upon visiting our offices, individuals will be personally greeted and guided, rather than being directed to a website. Having owned a family business for 23 years, I deeply understand the challenges and frustrations of navigating city processes. Making these improvements will be a key focus of my administration, as we work together to foster growth in our city.

Q8

Oppose

Homelessness: Albuquerque's homeless population has grown exponentially in the past few years and is creating problems for both the homeless and the residents of the city. Please answer the following questions: Do you support or oppose expanding legal 'safe outdoor spaces' for camps around Albuquerque?

Q9

What is your plan to deal with illegal encampments in the city?

To tackle the challenge of illegal encampments in our city, we are adopting a detailed and humane strategy that emphasizes safety and resolution. Our approach includes the deployment of armed private security personnel who will patrol on foot in areas where the homeless are primarily located. These security officers will be outfitted with body cameras, ensuring that all interactions are conducted with transparency and accountability. The initial step for these officers is to engage with the homeless community, aiming to understand each individual's circumstances and identity. After this engagement phase, the city will proceed to determine the origins of these individuals. Following the collection of this information, we will issue citations for any violations encountered. These citations will then be forwarded to local judges for adjudication. Should a homeless individual be found guilty of a violation and fail to appear in court, a warrant for their arrest will be issued. At this juncture, the individual will be presented with a choice: face jail time or leave the city. For those who opt to leave, we will provide complimentary bus tickets to their hometowns. This policy is crafted to address the pressing issue of illegal encampments while also offering a means for those impacted to reconnect with their communities and access additional support.

Q10

Oppose

Do you support using taxpayer dollars for homeless programs? If you support, what kind of programs would you seek to fund?

Q11

Cooperate

Will you cooperate with or oppose federal agencies regarding the deportation of those who have entered the U.S. illegally and are a threat to society?

Q12

Crime: Albuquerque is in a crime crisis, and is one of the most dangerous cities of its size in the U.S. Please answer the following: How would you empower the Albuquerque police force to better address this situation?

To effectively combat the crime crisis in Albuquerque, which ranks as one of the most perilous cities of its size in the U.S., I propose a comprehensive crime prevention strategy that includes immediate and strategic actions:

1. Implement a strict curfew for individuals under the age of 18, with certain exceptions, prohibiting them from being outdoors after 11:00 PM. This measure addresses the alarming trend of minors, including those as young as 11 to 14 years old, being involved in violent crimes.
2. Undertake a complete overhaul of the Albuquerque Police Department (APD) from top to bottom, ensuring that our police force is more efficient, responsive, and equipped to handle the complexities of modern policing.
3. Introduce a Police ROTC program within our schools to foster a sense of civic duty and law enforcement career interest among students. This program will serve as a pipeline for young individuals to engage positively with their community and consider careers in law enforcement.
4. Hire graduates from the Police ROTC program into the city's Public Service Aide (PSA) program, providing them with valuable, real-world experience in public safety and community service.
5. Launch a "Police Day Work" initiative, which will assemble a team of retired law enforcement professionals from various agencies, including the APD, Sheriff's Department, State Police, FBI, CIA, and Federal Marshals. These seasoned officers will patrol the streets, offering their expertise and visibility to deter crime. Importantly, these officers will serve as contractors, not city employees, which has already garnered positive feedback from the retired law enforcement community.

Through these measures, we aim to declare and effectively wage a war on crime, prioritizing the safety and security of Albuquerque's residents and visitors.

Q13

Some businesses are afraid to call for police assistance when a crime is committed because they don't want to be labeled a nuisance property. What will you do to ensure that businesses are receiving proper police protection?

To address the concerns of businesses hesitant to seek police assistance for fear of being labeled as nuisance properties, I propose the following approach: In my administration, the concept of a 'nuisance call' will be eliminated. Recognizing that crime is at an unprecedented high and can happen multiple times a day, it is imperative that businesses feel fully supported and protected by law enforcement. We will ensure that every call for assistance is treated with the seriousness it deserves, fostering a safer environment for businesses to thrive without fear of retribution or negative labeling.

Q14

Replace

Albuquerque Police Chief Harold Medina was involved in a highly controversial car crash. The corruption within APD, including high-ranking officials on DWI cases, is alarming. On the positive side, it was recently announced that the Department of Justice consent decree will soon end. If elected, would you retain or replace Chief Medina?

Q15

How will you stop the open drug dealing and drug use in Albuquerque?

To address the issue of open drug dealing and drug use in Albuquerque, my approach is firm and unequivocal: Every individual caught engaging in drug use or drug dealing in public will be arrested on sight. This policy will apply universally, with no exceptions made for any individuals, regardless of their circumstances. It is essential to establish a zero-tolerance stance on these activities to safeguard the community and deter such behavior effectively.

Q16

Reduce

If elected, would you expand, reduce, or maintain the size of Albuquerque's Government? If applicable, please explain where growth or reduction would occur and how.

Q17

What specific plans do you have to improve Albuquerque's infrastructure and road conditions, and how will you prioritize and fund these improvements?

To enhance Albuquerque's infrastructure and road conditions, my strategy involves a significant reallocation of funds, specifically utilizing the \$200 million saved from the budget adjustments. These funds will be dedicated to improving our roads and infrastructure, with a particular emphasis on prioritizing paving projects. We will adopt cold paving methods, known for their efficiency and cost-effectiveness, to ensure that road improvements are not only prioritized but also implemented in a manner that maximizes the use of available resources. This approach underscores our commitment to enhancing the city's infrastructure while adhering to fiscal responsibility.
