

**2009 RIO GRANDE FOUNDATION SURVEY OF ALBUQUERQUE
MAYORAL/CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES**

Please complete and mail or fax this survey to RGF as soon as possible.

**Website: www.riograndefoundation.org Mail to PO Box 40336,
Albuquerque, NM 87196**

Phone: 505-264-6090 Fax: 505-213-0300

-

**ANSWERS TO THIS SURVEY WILL BE PUBLISHED ONLINE
AT WWW.RIOGRANDE_FOUNDATION.ORG AND WILL BE MADE
AVAILABLE TO THE MEDIA.**

1. **BUDGETS.** The Council recently passed the Decade Plan for Capital Improvements, including the 2009 General Obligation Bond program, and the Operating Budget. Both predict relatively constant annual revenues (and expenditures) despite the clear evidence of a recession and decreased tax revenues. Do you support the projected level of revenues and spending in these and future budgets?

X YES NO UNDECIDED

The city budget, passed unanimously by the City Council, is based on zero growth. If the economy improves or declines, we can adjust the budget in very short order to reflect new information. That is how we balanced the budget when the recession first hit. Decade plans are just that – general targets over a long period of time and are always subject to change.

2. **CITY CHARTER.** The Charter Review Task Force submitted their report and recommendations on May 1, including recommended changes to election rules, Councilor and Mayor salaries determined by a citizen's independent salary commission, a more independent City Clerk, budget

processes, campaign contributions, planning authority, establishing a citizen's independent salary commission (new Article XVIII), and a new article on violations of the charter. Do you support these recommendations?

YES NO UNDECIDED

NONE OF THE ABOVE – I SUPPORT SOME AND OPPOSE SOME

I am opposed to the salary commission. I believe any increases in City Council or Mayor's salaries should be decided by the voters. I support making the clerk more independent. I am disappointed that the proposed Charter did nothing to strengthen our toothless conflict of interest of laws for city councilors.

3. **WATER UTILITY.** The joint Water Utility Authority independently acts on growth, planning, water/sewer rates, and tax issues that overlap or conflict with City and County authorities. Members of the WUA are appointed, and many (really all) voters have no direct representation. Would you support legislation to require public election of the members of the Water Utility Authority?

YES NO UNDECIDED X

Actually, I oppose the Water Utility Authority and think it should be abolished which would result in returning direct accountability at the ballot box to City Hall. If we are going to regionalize water, which is not a bad direction, then we should rethink the entire Authority and it would of necessity have to contain accountability measures which it currently lacks.

4. **TROLLEY.** The estimated cost of building a "modern streetcar" in Albuquerque is \$30-45 million per mile. Rail transit also requires heavy subsidies for operations and maintenance. Do you support the use of taxpayer funds for rail transit?

X YES NO UNDECIDED

I am not aware of any "Trolley" proposals and there are no proposals for rail systems in this election. The cost is not \$30-45 million per mile. Indeed the proposed modern rail system is cheaper than the \$350 million dollar "fix" for the single intersection of I-25 and Paseo del Norte (which will also require heavy subsidies for operations and maintenance). Albuquerque is one of only a handful of cities that does not have a modern rail system. We have now been surpassed by Phoenix, Tucson, Denver, Salt Lake City, Dallas, Houston, San Diego, Portland and Seattle. We must have the most diverse transportation portfolio possible. I advocate placing the issue on the ballot and letting the public decide.

5. **EVENTS CENTER.** Cost estimates for an arena or events enter (with a hotel) exceed \$400 million and would necessitate a tax increase. There are existing convention sites in the area, some of which are losing money, and there are alternate sites that could be less expensive to develop. Do you support the use of taxpayer funds to construct an arena/events center?

XYES NO UNDECIDED

Again, this is a matter that is not at issue in this election. However, your premise is false. The only existing convention site in the area is the Albuquerque Convention Center and it is losing ground to the casino centers, which encircle the City, primarily because they are investing in the supporting infrastructure. There is no economic analysis that even remotely suggests that there are alternative sites that would be less expensive to construct and operate. Because it would involve a tax increase my intent is to place it on the ballot and let the public decide.

I pledged to never raise taxes without a public vote and I have kept that pledge. We have had only one tax increase in my time as Mayor and that is the quarter cent public safety tax, which was approved at the ballot. In fact, I have also reduced gross receipts taxes twice by 1/8th each time.

6. **TAX INCREMENT DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS (TIDDs).** The New

Mexico Tax Increment Development Act allows for the commitment of up to 75 percent of the increased Gross Receipts Tax and Property Tax for up to 25 years to fund infrastructure bonds. In New Mexico, TIDDs could apply to in-fill redevelopment (Brownfields) or to new developments (Greenfields), and Albuquerque has approved both types (e.g., Quorum at Uptown, Winrock, Mesa del Sol, SunCal). TIDDs have been called a developer incentive or subsidy, diversion of long-term future revenue needed elsewhere, simply a tool, and more emotional labels. Do you support the use of TIDDs for both in-fill projects and large developments on the borders of Albuquerque?

YES **NO** **UNDECIDED**

Those who call them “developer subsidy” or “diversion of long-term future revenue needed elsewhere” simply don’t understand what TIDDs are. Simply, TIDDs assure entrepreneurs that if they will invest substantial private dollars, government will leave a percentage of the taxes derived from those expenditures in the area for infrastructure. Mesa del Sol, home of Advent, Schott Solar, Fidelity and ABQ Film Studios is a perfect example of how TIDDs work. Under the law, each project must be independently analyzed to assure that it delivers net new jobs and doesn’t simply move jobs from one part of town to another.

7. **COUNCIL STAFF.** In the last few years, the council staff has been increased adding a handful of Policy Analysts (each Councilor now has a dedicated assistant) and planners (e.g., senior Planning analyst) and employing consultants or task forces to study new initiatives (e.g., Events Center, Form Based Zones, 21st Century Transportation task force). Would you support a reduction in Council staff, requiring the Administration to take increased responsibility for legal and planning initiatives?

YES **NO** **UNDECIDED**

8. **RED LIGHT/SPEEDING CAMERAS.** Do you support the continuation of Albuquerque's red light/speed camera program?

YES **NO** **UNDECIDED**

We have had a dramatic reduction in accidents at the camera intersections and seen a general reduction across the city as a result of the new system. They are saving lives.

9. **LIMIT ON ANNUAL SPENDING GROWTH.** Would you work to limit annual spending growth to approximate the combined annual rates of inflation and population growth?

YES **NO** **UNDECIDED**

I always have and will have a balanced budget. We have fewer city employees today than we did 8 years ago. Our general fund budget is the same size today as it was 4 years ago. My budgets have been smaller than the growth in the economy. I have accomplished that by growing the economy while keeping the tax rate the same.

10. **GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY.** Would you support legislation creating an online database of government spending in Albuquerque, thus enabling citizens and community leaders to better keep track of how taxpayer dollars are used?

YES **NO** **UNDECIDED**

Every action taken by my administration, including budgets, is currently available for viewing at www.cabq.gov. I am proud to have proposed and assured passage of the Bob Johnson electronic records access act which puts Albuquerque at the forefront nationally for being accessible and transparent. I am also proud to have received the Bill Dixon award for open government from the Foundation for Open Government for my work with public records as a State Senator.

-

**ANSWERS TO THIS SURVEY WILL BE PUBLISHED ONLINE
AT WWW.RIOGRANDE_FOUNDATION.ORG AND WILL BE MADE
AVAILABLE TO THE MEDIA**

CAMPAIGN INFORMATION (PLEASE PRINT)

CANDIDATE NAME Martin J. Chavez

CANDIDATE (OR AUTHORIZED) SIGNATURE

NAME OF SIGNER (IF OTHER THAN CANDIDATE)

ADDRESS 136 Washington SE, Suite B

ABQ NM 87108

PHONE 5049313

FAX 764-8736

EMAIL jgriffin@griffinassoc.com

WEB SITE martychavez.com

CANDIDATE FOR Mayor

DATE 8/28/09