



YOUR business is OUR business!

150 East Lohman ** Las Cruces NM 88001 ** 575.524.1969 ** dmoore@lascruces.org

GREATER LAS CRUCES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

ELECTION 2023

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LAS CRUCES MAYORAL & COUNCIL CANDIDATES

To inform our membership & business community, we invite you to complete this questionnaire below. Your completed questionnaire, along with your resume, will be emailed to our list serve, along with posting on our website (lascruces.org). **Please submit this completed questionnaire & photo to dmoore@lascruces.org no later than Thursday, October 19th.**

DISCLAIMER: The Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce does not endorse candidates, but provides our members materials & resources to make informed decisions. Additionally, we provide general election information on the municipal elections & encourage voter participation.



CANDIDATE NAME (as it appears on ballot): William Bill Mattiace

PHONE: 575-339-5499 EMAIL: billmattiace2@gmail.com

Election/Candidate Website: www.billmattiace.com

Please circle or highlight the position of which you are a qualified candidate:

Mayor

Councilor District 1

Councilor District 2

Councilor District 4

Referencing the first 7 questions, we encourage you to present your “Plan of Action” in these areas.

1. Please identify the leadership qualities & experiences you will bring to this position.

I served eight years in city government both as a counselor and as a mayor. My wife and I have operated a small business for over 40 years. I was the Director of the New Mexico Border Authority for eight years, in the now booming Santa Teresa area. Compromise, honest dialogue and negotiation are key skills of mine. Leadership is a partnership between constituents and elected officials based on trust. My door will always be open, I'll always listen, and I'll always be willing to make compromises. I support programs such as the LIFTFUND for the revitalization of small businesses in District 2 & Las Cruces.

2. Ensuring all voices are heard & considered can be daunting, what is your plan to actively engage citizens & businesses in the decision-making process for city policies & projects, maintaining civility and decorum between all interested parties?

The Council should provide more communication opportunities by increasing its social media presence and access to town hall meetings. The town hall meetings must be open to all and inclusive to all. Attendees should be given written instructions regarding behavior and common courtesy guidelines. An open-door policy works and listening to citizen concerns, both individuals and business owners is a must. Counselors should have mandatory regular weekly office hours to meet with constituents.

3. Economic & business development, along with talent/workforce preparation, in Las Cruces is key to our continued growth & sustainability. Please give us your definition of “business friendly” & describe your economic development plan, including entrepreneurship.

Fiscal responsibility, honest and experienced leadership, and community investment without taxation or increases in utility fees. For example, there is more than \$847,000 from a cannabis excise tax the city received that can be used to invest in social and economic infrastructure which in turn will result in job creation and beautification. The council could work with the local chambers to provide entrepreneur resources and classes. We must stay focused on the local needs and properly appropriate resources where they have the most potential to create a better community.

4. Addressing homelessness is a complex issue. What strategies do you propose to provide support and resources for individuals experiencing homelessness while also addressing the concerns of residents and business owners?

It is a national, even global, challenge. The current city government has let homelessness, panhandling, and loitering get out of control for over five years – it didn't happen overnight and it cannot be solely attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic. We have resources, we have non-profits, shelters and food pantries; however, removing the 2002 Panhandling Ordinance has made it difficult to recognize homeless from the aggressive panhandlers. Experience changes outcomes, we controlled our public areas with an ordinance in 2002. The ordinance allowed public safety officers to redirect panhandlers to Community of Hope, Caldito, and Amador Clinic. The present council removed this ordinance and now we have a situation that's uncomfortable for everyone – the housed and the unhoused who need and deserve some help.

5. Over the past few years, we have experienced a tremendous growth in residential & commercial building. We often hear concerns over the amount of time it takes for permitting, inspection, etc. in order to reach occupancy. It has also been stated that many of the City's policies actually increase the cost of building, which unfortunately, is passed on to the consumer. What is your plan to balance the policies of the City with a timely process from beginning to occupancy?

I believe in less government, not more. The city is being mismanaged and this problem is another trickle-down effect of an ineffective council. The city should be doing everything it can to foster growth and decrease costs. But to do this, there must be a master plan and guidelines so that the growth is managed

and beneficial to all, including current residents and businesses. Through collaboration and implementing smart, transparent policies, we can help ensure timely construction and affordable housing for our residents and businesses. However, change only happens with change, new leadership in your city council is the first step to a solution.

6. **Ensuring the safety of our residents and businesses is paramount. What strategies do you propose to address and reduce crime in Las Cruces, while also building trust between law enforcement and the community?** I do believe Interim Police Chief is on the right path creating a Crime Prevention Campaign immediately following the politically timed bonus pay to the LCPD. Yet, here we are. Crime is out of control. Recent FBI statistics show that Las Cruces crime is 73.80% higher than the national average and 12.63% higher than other New Mexico cities. Out-of-control property damage, large numbers of persons accosting residents when they go shopping, vehicles being stolen out of driveways. I have been walking neighborhoods in District 2 and the stories match the problems this city is experiencing. A smarter method to attract new qualified cadets to apply and remain with our force by increasing compensation, not just a one-time bonus! It's a sad fact that LCPD rank and file officers pay ranks 20th in New Mexico and Las Cruces is the second-largest city in the state. Ensuring safety means having the required number of officers to patrol and respond in a city of 112,000 residents. Basic strategy: better pay will recruit first-class officers to LCPD. We should have a nationwide recruiting effort with signing bonuses.
7. **Affordable housing is a concern for many residents and businesses. What steps do you plan to take to promote and facilitate the development of income-aligned housing in Las Cruces through your role on the Las Cruces City Council?**
I believe we can always start joint meetings with experts in affordable housing. The residents/city just received 24 million dollars in the people's bank and is earmarking several million for workforce development, Veterans Affordable Housing, and economic recovery. Knowing we have resources should be an easy path with the above experts to develop a plan for affordable housing with the City and Builders collaborating to lower building and city utility costs. The city should adopt a policy for residents, as successful affordable housing companies have. The applicants must agree to sign a Crime-Free and drug-free housing lease addendum the addendum gives the manager the right to terminate the lease and evict the entire household of anyone involved in violent acts, gang activity, or drug use. Such a city-required policy would have prevented the damages done to the Desert Hope, affordable housing project behind the Shell station on Solano.

Optional "just for fun" questions

- **If you could have any superpower for a day, what would it be and how would you use it to benefit the residents of Las Cruces?**
Invisibility. I'd attend all the closed-door meetings the current city council conducts to find out the real agendas and truly make local government transparent and open. There shouldn't be anything paid for by taxpayer money that isn't 100% public.
- **If you had the chance to invite any historical figure, living or dead, to dinner in Las Cruces, who would it be and why? What would you talk about and where would**

you take them in our city?

It would be Clara Belle Williams, the first African-American graduate of New Mexico College. I'd take Mrs. Williams to Hillrise Elementary in District 2 to have her talk to today's generation about the importance of reading, writing, and arithmetic. And then to the campus of NMSU to see the building that's been named in her honor.

- **If you could choose a theme song to represent your vision for Las Cruces, what song would it be and why?**

"Lean on Me" by Bill Withers. That's what city government should be – a simple helping hand for residents to live prosperous and happy lives. It's gotten too political with too much red tape, and it really doesn't have to be. A simple message in "Lean on Me" that I think is a great vision for any city, but especially Las Cruces. **-END-**

William “Bill” Mattiace

2812 Buena Vida Ct.
Las Cruces, NM 88011
(575) 521-1400
billmattiace2@gmail.com

Summary of Qualifications

- **Excellent negotiator.** Worked to attract several companies to the Las Cruces area, including Triad Medical Center, and negotiated the sale of Memorial Medical Center to help it avoid bankruptcy. MMC is now the most profitable hospital in the Life Point chain of medical centers. Negotiated self-sustaining revenue sources at New Mexico Border Authority (NMBA), the Verizon Tower, El Paso Export Company, Dell Computers and Foxconn parking agreements, Titan Riggers Electronics, Homeland Security, and Cattle Logistics.
- **Budget and finance expert.** Worked extensively to manage city budgets – when elected as District 2 Councilor in 2002 the City of Las Cruces general fund balance was \$156K, at the end of the mayoral term in 2008 the city had over \$23M surplus in the general fund balance. Also improved the NMBA financial situation significantly – raised over \$1.9M dollars in the eight years as director.
- **High energy.** As chairman of the Regional Vision 2040 Advisory Committee, demonstrate the drive to quickly accomplish tasks and bring people together.
- **Genuine public servant.** Both as a city councilor and mayor gave full attention to all constituents. Demanded city government be transparent and responsible. Streamlined the building permit process for companies seeking to relocate to Santa Teresa. Collaborated with the Doña Ana County, El Paso Electric, NMDOT, and local engineering companies to accomplish this. Initiated an \$8M study to improve international rail crossing. Initiated study to complete the St. Francis corridor as an aid to Sunland Park’s economic development. This is currently in the construction phase. Expanded both commercial and passenger lanes.
- **Positive and persuasive public speaker.** Demonstrated effective public speaking that brought conflicting groups together on several key issues including the City of Las Cruces/El Paso Electric cooperative agreement. Delegate and presenter at all the Joint Working Commission meetings. Guest speaker at the BorderPlex, Alliance, Hispano Chamber of Las Cruces, Arizona State University Border Conference, Bi-National Border and Bridges Meetings, U.S. Customs Border Conference, El Paso Business Club, Border Breakfast Club of Mesilla, Chairman of the NM Port Advisory Committee meetings.
- **Experienced leader.** Led the city of Las Cruces to a 2007 budget surplus and economic prosperity by attracting new companies and more jobs. Earned Citizen of the Year Awards from the Las Cruces Chamber and Las Cruces Association of Realtors. Honorary member of both the Lions Club and the Optimist Club of Las Cruces.

Professional Experience

Vice President and CFO, Adventure Travel and Cruise Center Inc., Las Cruces, NM, 1985–present

City Councilor, District 2, City of Las Cruces, Las Cruces, NM, 1998–2003

Mayor, City of Las Cruces, Las Cruces, NM, 2003–2008

Chairman, Regional Vision 2040 Advisory Committee, Las Cruces, NM, 2007

Executive Director New Mexico Border Authority, 2010–2019

Member, Agriculture Economic Committee of the Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce, Las Cruces, NM, 2008–2010

Vice President, Governmental Affairs, Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce, Las Cruces, NM, 2008–2010

Founder and Chairman of Honor Flight of Southern New Mexico, 2008

Notable Honors and Recognition

Multiple **Rotary Paul Harris Fellow Award** Recipient, Rotary International, Las Cruces, NM, 2007, 2010 and 2011

Citizen of the Year, Las Cruces Association of Realtors, 2008

Honorary Member, Las Cruces Forum, 2009–present

Citizen of the Year, Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce, 2010

Honorary Member, Los Leones de Mesilla

Honorary Member, Las Cruces Optimist Club (*Awarded for establishing City of Las Cruces Mayor's Top Teens program*)

Education

New Mexico State University, Studied Elementary Education, attended 1968–1971

General Motors School of Finance, Certificate in Finance Operations, 1968–1971

Airline Reporting Corporation (ARC), Agency Management Certificate, 1990

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