

Three candidates, nine questions and Sierra Vista’s bottom line

Flowers, Martin and Rodriguez respond in writing to the Herald/Review Mayoral Candidate Forum

Sponsored by Herald/Review Media



Brandon Martin



Mark Rodriguez



Carolyn Flowers

Photo: credit to be supplied. Candidates shown left to right: Brandon Martin, Mark Rodriguez and Carolyn Flowers.

ABOUT THIS FORUM

The Herald/Review sent Sierra Vista mayoral candidates Carolyn Flowers, Brandon Martin and Mark Rodriguez eight common questions focused on city expenses, services, revenue and economic development, along with one individualized question based on each candidate’s experience or campaign positions. Candidates also were invited to submit and answer up to two questions of their own and provide a closing statement. The candidates were told their responses would be published as submitted. Their answers appear below without editing.

Sierra Vista mayoral candidates answer fiscal, growth questions

IN THIS PACKAGE

Eight common questions	2-9
Individual candidate questions	10-11
Candidate-submitted questions	12
Closing statements	13

QUESTION 01

Balancing the budget

If recurring city revenues do not keep pace with operating costs, which approach would you favor: reducing expenses or services, increasing taxes or fees, drawing from reserves, or some combination? Identify any department, program or service you would reduce and any you consider off-limits.

Brandon Martin

I favor reducing expenses and eliminating waste first, never raising taxes or fees on hardworking families. We will conduct a full efficiency review of every department, consolidate overlapping functions, and freeze non-essential spending. Core public safety, roads, and essential utilities are off-limits. Non-core programs and administrative bloat will be scrutinized first. Drawing from reserves is a last resort only after every efficiency measure is exhausted. Residents are already paying more through recent sewer and refuse rate hikes. My aim is to stop the cycle of deferred maintenance followed by rate shocks. Limited government and fiscal responsibility mean living within our means so more money stays in your pockets.

Mark Rodriguez

I am not in favor of increasing taxes for the residents of our city. The city does maintain a “rainy day” fund reserve in case of emergencies, but that fund is for more dire situations than we are currently in. So, my approach would be a combination of reduced expenses and untapped revenue generating sources. And as for any program or service that I would consider off-limits, I would say anything that currently ensures our city is safe and secure, would be off-limits. There are some areas I would like the city to investigate for cost savings and avenues I would like the city to pursue generating additional revenue through better promotion and advertising without sacrificing community resources.

Carolyn Flowers

My first priority would be examining expenditures and identifying efficiencies before increasing taxes or reducing essential services. Responsible budgeting requires decisions based on financial data, not arbitrary cuts.

I would review administrative expenses, vacant positions, discretionary spending, and underperforming programs. Nonessential purchases could be deferred. Public safety and other essential services must remain priorities, although every department must operate efficiently.

I oppose routinely using reserves to cover recurring expenses, and tax or fee increases should be a last resort. Before considering them, we owe residents a thorough examination of how we're spending their money. Fiscal responsibility means living within our means while protecting the services our community depends on.

I give an example of how I’ve successfully done this in the past in my final answer.

QUESTION 02

Firefighter meet-and-confer

Would you support directing the city manager to negotiate a memorandum of understanding establishing meet-and-confer status with the Professional Fire Fighters of Sierra Vista? What benefits, costs or long-term financial obligations do you believe such an agreement could create?

Brandon Martin

I will evaluate any proposal on one standard... does it improve service to residents without locking the city into unsustainable long-term costs? Meet-and-confer can improve communication and retention, but it must not become a back-door path to binding contracts that drive up personnel costs while revenues stay flat. Any agreement must protect the city’s ability to manage staffing levels and budgets. I will insist on full cost projections including pension, overtime, and future escalation before supporting it. Public safety is a priority, but so is protecting taxpayers. We cannot repeat the pattern of approving higher costs today that force rate or tax increases tomorrow. Transparency and affordability come first.

Mark Rodriguez

Yes. I would support directing the City Manager to engage in discussions with the Professional Fire Fighters of Sierra Vista regarding a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that establishes a formal meet-and-confer process. More importantly, I believe every City of Sierra Vista employee, regardless of department or position, deserves an opportunity to have their concerns, ideas, and recommendations heard by city management and the City Council through an appropriate and transparent process. This should not be something available exclusively to firefighters or police officers. Our public works employees, parks and recreation staff, administrative personnel, and every other city department deserve the same respect and opportunity to participate in discussions affecting their workplace. I believe some of the best ideas for improving city operations come directly from the employees doing the work every day. The current Employee Council does not meet very often and does not address every issue that employees from all departments may be having.

There are many benefits to gain by establishing an open and structured line of communication that can improve employee morale, strengthen relationships with management, identify operational inefficiencies, and ultimately improve services for our residents.

A meet-and-confer agreement does not have to mean automatically increasing spending or committing the city to financial obligations it cannot afford. Any agreement should clearly define the process, respect applicable Arizona law and the responsibilities of city management and elected officials and ensure that financial commitments remain subject to appropriate budget review and approval. I would want to understand the administrative costs, any proposed compensation or benefit changes, and the potential long-term financial impact before approving an agreement.

My position is simple, city employees should have a voice, city management should be willing to listen, and the City Council should remain accessible and accountable. I believe we can establish a productive relationship built on mutual respect, transparency, and communication while remaining responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars. Whether you wear a firefighter’s uniform, a police uniform, or work in any other city department, your voice matters, and I believe city leadership should recognize that.

Carolyn Flowers

I strongly support our firefighters and believe they deserve competitive compensation, appropriate staffing, quality equipment, and a safe working environment. However, supporting firefighters and supporting formal Meet and Confer are two different things.

My concern is establishing a separate negotiating process between the city manager and union leadership that gives one employee organization influence unavailable to other all other City employees. Union leadership also doesn't necessarily represent every firefighter's interests.

While structured communication has benefits, we must consider administrative costs and long term financial obligations.

I've reviewed more than a decade of City budgets and seen our commitment to public safety grow. Public safety represented 30% of our budget in 2010, compared to 53.8% today.

I remain open to meaningful dialogue with firefighters and their representatives, but would not support formal Meet and Confer. Decisions about compensation, benefits, and taxpayer dollars must remain accountable to the elected Mayor and Council.

QUESTION 03

Parks and public amenities

Does Sierra Vista’s current collection of parks, recreational facilities and public amenities match the city’s ability to maintain them over the long term? Would you defer new projects, consolidate facilities or reduce services to control operating costs? Please identify any specific examples.

Brandon Martin

We must match amenities to our ability to maintain them. Enhancing existing parks with cost-saving energy improvements makes sense; adding new facilities we cannot afford to staff and maintain does not. I will defer non-essential new projects until operating costs are under control and prioritize maintenance of what we already own. We are currently building a new park on Fab Avenue while the playground at Veterans Memorial is in disrepair.

Consolidation of under-used facilities will be examined. Recreation should support quality of life without becoming a budget drain. Families should not subsidize amenities that sit under-utilized while roads and core services suffer.

Mark Rodriguez

In my previous interviews and debates I have identified amenities as important to attracting and retaining residents and workers as a quality-of-life issue. I have also stated that the city’s current phased approach of large projects fits in line with our available budget and grant opportunities. The staff often presents large projects with information regarding the overall cost and then the cost per phase if broken up. That approach also allows the council to determine if we can use any current outside funding sources such as Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) federal grant funding, to help offset those costs. I have also emphasized the value of community input regarding realistic city planning. So, I do believe that our current collection of parks, facilities and amenities does match the city’s ability to maintain them over the long term.

There is a possible opportunity to consolidate some of the current city buildings if the city and Sierra Vista Unified School District (SVUSD) were able to come to an agreement on the sale/purchase of the Rothery Center complex. The city would then be able to divest itself of some of its older buildings that have exceeded their life expectancy and move their operations into the Rothery Center which is also in a better location.

Carolyn Flowers

Sierra Vista's parks and recreational amenities contribute significantly to our quality of life, but every facility comes with ongoing maintenance and operating costs. We must be responsible about what we build and what we can sustain.

I believe every neighborhood should have a park within walking distance. That's why completing our Parks Master Plan, including Roadrunner Park on the south side of town, is so important. Access to parks shouldn't depend on which neighborhood you live in.

If revenues remain flat, I would prioritize maintaining existing facilities and completing planned improvements before pursuing additional discretionary projects that create new operating expenses.

I would also evaluate facility utilization and program participation to identify efficiencies, but wouldn't advocate closures or service reductions without understanding their impact on residents.

Our goal should be accessible, well maintained parks and recreational opportunities that we can sustain for generations.

QUESTION 04

Capital-project priorities

Which roadwork, facilities or other capital projects within the city’s control should receive the highest priority during the next four years? Which could be deferred if revenues remain flat? Explain how you would treat projects supported by restricted grants or outside funding that cannot simply be redirected.

Brandon Martin

Highest priority is critical road repairs and pavement that keep people safe and commerce moving. A full-city assessment will identify the worst segments first. Facilities that support public safety and essential services come next. Lower priority aesthetic or expansion projects can be deferred if revenues stay flat. Restricted grants and outside funding will be accepted only when the city can sustain the long-term maintenance and staffing costs. I will not chase grants that create future obligations we cannot afford. Private-sector partnerships and efficiency will stretch every dollar further than simply adding more projects to an already strained budget.

Mark Rodriguez

The highest priority over the next four years should be Neighborhood Annual Street Maintenance, Buffalo Soldier Trail (BST) reconstruction, airport improvements, current sports fields/parks bathrooms, all of which are also part of our current Strategic Plan. Police Vehicles, Fire vehicles and Veterans Memorial Park parking lot improvements also fall indirectly into our current Strategic Plan and would be of high priority as well. Other items that could be deferred due to flat revenue are new park designs and new park construction.

In terms of grants or outside funding that cannot be redirected, we must be vigilant when dealing with any grant requiring matching funds or ongoing expenses and maintenance fees. And only supporting them when the project aligns with a city priority and an identified revenue stream can cover the city’s full life-cycle costs.

Carolyn Flowers

My highest priorities would be maintaining and improving existing infrastructure, particularly roads, drainage systems, and essential public facilities. Projects addressing safety, deteriorating conditions, and costly maintenance issues should take precedence over discretionary improvements.

Buffalo Soldier Trail reconstruction is one example. I've worked with federal representatives to secure funding for these improvements. As Chair of the Sierra Vista Metropolitan Planning Organization, I also recognize the importance of regional projects like Theater Drive.

If revenues remain flat, I would consider deferring discretionary beautification projects, nonessential facility expansions, and amenities that create additional operating expenses.

Restricted state and federal grants generally cannot be redirected to unrelated projects or operating expenses. Declining them could mean losing valuable infrastructure investments.

However, grant funding doesn't automatically make a project financially responsible. We must evaluate matching requirements, future maintenance obligations, and alignment with community priorities before committing taxpayer resources.

QUESTION 05

Economic-development leadership

Sierra Vista operates under a council-manager form of government, with the council setting policy and the city manager overseeing daily operations. Within that structure, what can a mayor realistically do to foster economic development and increase recurring city revenue? Please identify specific actions you would take.

Brandon Martin

As mayor I set the agenda, build coalitions, and drive results. I will expand Opportunity Zones focused on defense technology, cyber, and drone industries tied to Fort Huachuca. I will slash bureaucratic hurdles for private builders to deliver attainable housing targeting hundreds of new units and push market-driven job growth. A Joint Coordination Committee with the Fort will convert military skills into civilian careers and attract contractors. I will advocate relocating the county seat to Sierra Vista to consolidate resources and signal to state and federal partners that we are ready for sustainable missions. The mayor’s real power is leadership, negotiation, and relentless focus on private-sector growth that raises revenue without raising taxes.

Mark Rodriguez

In previous interviews and debates, I discussed that as a councilman I have constantly promoted Sierra Vista directly to prospective businesses and advocated for additional Fort Huachuca missions. I have supported improving our permitting and access to records, including digitizing blueprints to reduce delays in the permitting process. I have also emphasized connecting businesses with realtors, available properties and existing business-support resources such as Arizona at Work and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC). I have also discussed how I communicate with other municipalities around Arizona and have discussed forming a space partnership with Yuma, AZ as we are both attempting to procure space launch and space re-entry licenses. I have proposed that we bring together Buena’s Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, Cochise College CTE programs and Arizona at Work and local trades employers at another youth job fair. I have supported our procurement department holding information sessions so that local contractors understand the bidding process for government contracts which would help them as well as keep the money here locally.

As Mayor I would do more of the same but also on a larger scale like how our current mayor is now been named to the Arizona US Space Academy Bid Committee that will shape Arizona’s bid for the permanent United States Space Academy. Bringing an academy like that to our city would most definitely increase recurring city revenue.

Carolyn Flowers

The mayor can provide leadership, build partnerships, and work with Council to create an environment where businesses can succeed. One of my priorities would be establishing clear economic development goals in our next strategic plan.

Having served on Council since 2018 and as Vice Mayor, I understand both the authority and limitations of the position.

My priorities would include streamlining processes for those doing business with the City, removing existing barriers for new businesses, ensuring adequate infrastructure, and strengthening partnerships with Fort Huachuca, regional economic development organizations, and our state and federal representatives.

I would also focus on retaining and expanding existing businesses, not simply recruiting new ones. As a former small business owner, I understand the challenges entrepreneurs face.

Increasing recurring revenue requires growing our commercial tax base through sustainable private investment, business expansion, and increased local spending. We must make Sierra Vista a place where businesses want to invest and residents want to spend their money.

QUESTION 06

Grants and ongoing costs

Grants can support infrastructure and economic development, but they may also require matching funds or create continuing staffing and maintenance expenses. What is your strategy for increasing grant funding while ensuring the city does not accept projects it cannot afford to sustain?

Brandon Martin

I will aggressively pursue grants that align with core priorities: roads, public safety, veteran, and Fort-related economic development, while requiring a full life-cycle cost analysis before acceptance. Matching funds and ongoing costs must be identified and sustainable without future tax or fee increases. Grants that create permanent new staff positions or maintenance burdens we cannot afford will be declined. Transparency and long-term planning replace the current pattern of short-term wins followed by rate shocks. Efficiency reviews and private partnerships will reduce the need for grants that come with strings.

Mark Rodriguez

In previous questions, interviews and debates I have mentioned supporting a phased implementation of city projects. I have also favored regional cooperation, including shared public-safety training opportunities. As I previously mentioned in regard to DCIP Grants, we must keep a watchful eye on any grant requiring matching funds or ongoing expenses, supporting it only when the project aligns with a city priority and an identified revenue stream can cover the city’s full life-cycle costs

Carolyn Flowers

Grants are valuable tools, but they are not free money. Every grant comes with obligations, and responsible leadership must consider the full financial impact before accepting funding.

As Chair of the Sierra Vista Metropolitan Planning Organization, I have worked with state and federal partners to secure funding for critical infrastructure improvements. I understand both the opportunities and responsibilities involved.

My strategy would prioritize grants that align with established city needs, particularly infrastructure projects we would otherwise need to fund ourselves.

When presenting grant opportunities to Council, city staff identifies matching requirements and applicable ongoing maintenance, staffing, and replacement costs. As elected officials, it's our responsibility to evaluate those obligations and ensure they align with our long term financial planning.

Success should not be measured by how many grant dollars we receive, but by whether those investments deliver lasting value without creating unsustainable financial burdens for taxpayers.

QUESTION 07

West End revitalization

Sierra Vista has pursued West End revitalization for many years through streetscape improvements, redevelopment plans, incentives and public investment. Do you consider that effort successful so far? What measurable benchmarks — such as business occupancy, private investment, property values, housing or sales-tax generation — should determine whether the city continues or changes its approach?

Brandon Martin

After years of public investment the results must be measured in private-sector outcomes: business occupancy rates, private investment dollars, property-value growth, new housing units, and actual sales-tax generation. If those numbers are not rising, we change course. I will shift emphasis toward market-driven solutions, reduced red tape, and leveraging our Fort Huachuca advantage rather than continued heavy public spending with unclear returns. Success is private capital and jobs, not more plans and streetscapes. Measurable private investment is the only benchmark that matters.

Mark Rodriguez

I was not on council when the original investment was approved, which I feel gives me an opportunity to assess its results independently and not base it off any initial support initially given to the project by the council at the time. I would personally broaden the definition of success beyond business occupancy and tax revenue to include improved neighborhood conditions (better lighting and less flooding), increased pedestrian safety, better use of public spaces, and residents’ satisfaction. If I were to use that definition of success, then I would have to say that the project has done all those things, so it is trending in the right direction. I feel that revitalization should not only include business growth but also improve daily life for the people who already live and work there. I believe that the addition of the Henry Jones Legacy Park on Fab Ave will increase foot traffic to the area, which will in turn increase revenue for local businesses. The completion of the first phase of that park should be the next benchmark where the city should check the pulse of the project. We must also put pressure on current land owners who are not supporting their tenants and standing in the way of progress.

Carolyn Flowers

As someone who operated a business in the West End for more than 15 years and lives in one of its oldest neighborhoods, this issue is particularly important to me.

We've made meaningful investments in infrastructure, streetscapes, and public spaces, and we're seeing measurable progress. Vacant commercial space has declined by 4.3%, representing nearly 100,000 square feet. Additionally, the City recently received a building permit application for the anticipated renovation of a 14,900 square foot warehouse.

We measure progress through commercial vacancy rates, new business openings, private investment relative to public spending, property improvements, and sales tax generation.

While these results are encouraging, revitalization is an ongoing effort. The West End has tremendous potential, but lasting success must be driven by private investment and economic activity, not perpetual government spending. We need to build on what works and be willing to change what doesn't.

QUESTION 08

An economic legacy

When your term as mayor is complete, what specific and measurable accomplishment would you want regarded as your signature economic legacy?

Brandon Martin

I want Sierra Vista known as America’s first true Veterans City with hundreds of veterans transitioned into civilian careers each year, expanded healthcare access through shared resources, and measurable growth in defense, cyber, and drone-related private investment. Combined with hundreds of new attainable housing units delivered by cutting bureaucratic hurdles, and a stronger, results-oriented partnership with Fort Huachuca that raises recurring revenue without raising taxes, that will be the legacy: a more affordable, opportunity rich city that respects taxpayers and puts hardworking families and veterans first.

Mark Rodriguez

In previous interviews and debates, I have stated my vision that combines thriving small businesses, increased youth opportunities, active commissions with funding, and improved public safety. I have also emphasized keeping Sierra Vista a small community while improving and revitalizing what is already here. I have also supported stronger connections between training programs, local employers, and residents.

So, one specific measurable accomplishment after my term is complete would be a 25% increase of new businesses filling current empty spaces. Especially if those new businesses were owned by entrepreneurs under 30. Because that would mean that young people found a reason to build their future here which aligns directly with my current focus of getting our youth more involved and then continuing to focus on them as local young professionals.

Carolyn Flowers

I want my legacy to be a stronger, more diversified local economy that provides greater opportunity for our residents while reducing the financial burden on existing taxpayers.

Specifically, I want my term as mayor to be judged by measurable growth in private investment, commercial occupancy, locally generated sales tax revenue, and quality employment opportunities.

I want to see our West End experiencing genuine economic revitalization, existing businesses expanding, and new employers choosing Sierra Vista because we've created the right conditions for investment.

Just as importantly, I want our infrastructure to support that growth without leaving future generations with unsustainable obligations.

Because a city is never truly finished, my goal is to leave Sierra Vista financially stronger, economically more resilient, and better positioned for future generations.

That is the kind of legacy I believe public service should be about.

Public-safety staffing and capacity

You have emphasized support for police officers, firefighters and other public-safety employees. Do you believe Sierra Vista’s police and fire services are adequately staffed? If not, identify the positions or capabilities you would add, their likely cost and how you would pay for them without weakening other city services.

Mark Rodriguez

Individual question

In previous interviews and debates I have emphasized appropriate staffing levels and locations for police and fire services. I have also mentioned the valuable insight I receive from doing regular fire station visits and ride-alongs with both Sierra Vista Fire and Police Depts. I have also mentioned supporting regional cooperation and shared training sites. Southeast Arizona Law Enforcement Training Academy (SEALETA) at Cochise College and the new Regional Detention Officer Academy are examples of that. Those training opportunities also support our partner agencies in Cochise County, and I want to see similar opportunities for fire departments in our region as well.

Although we are below national and regional averages, I don’t necessarily believe Sierra Vista’s Police and Fire Departments are understaffed in terms of personnel. However, I do believe our Fire Department is experiencing a shortage of available emergency response units relative to the growing demand for services. Our firefighters are handling such a high volume of calls that we regularly rely on neighboring agencies to respond to emergencies and transport patients within our own city. Just last month, Fry Fire District handled more than 40 ambulance transports originating in Sierra Vista. Based on an estimated \$1,200 per transport, that represents approximately \$48,000 in potential ambulance billing revenue that could have been generated by our own department. This influences our response times as well and may leave some areas of our city outside of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard for response times.

I would support exploring additional ambulance units and the personnel necessary to operate them. The goal would be to use ambulance billing revenue to offset, and potentially cover, the costs of those additional resources. We would need to evaluate actual reimbursement rates, operating

expenses, and staffing costs before making those decisions.

I would also like to explore establishing a low-acuity response unit within the Fire Department, similar in concept to the Community Service Officers utilized by our Police Department. This unit could handle non-emergency calls such as snake removals, smoke detector assistance, and other low-priority service requests that currently tie up fire apparatus and emergency personnel. By redirecting those calls to an appropriately staffed and equipped unit, we could keep our fire engines and ambulances available for emergencies while improving efficiency and controlling costs.

My priority is to identify practical solutions that improve public safety without taking resources away from other essential city departments. Every department plays an important role in serving Sierra Vista, and I believe we can make improvements through responsible budgeting, operational efficiency, and open communication with the employees who provide these services every day.

Brandon Martin

Also responded

Public safety is non-negotiable, yet after years of opportunity on the council the core question of sustainable staffing levels remains open. I will start with a data-driven assessment of response times, call volumes, and overtime costs rather than simply adding positions. Any added capabilities must be paid for through efficiency savings elsewhere not by weakening other services or raising taxes. Retention, training, and modern equipment often deliver more impact than headcount alone. I will protect public safety while refusing to repeat the pattern of approving higher costs without a clear funding plan that keeps the rest of the city whole. Results and fiscal responsibility must go together.

Experience and a Veterans City proposal

You have served on the City Council since 2018 and as vice mayor since 2023 while describing flat revenue as a leading challenge. Identify one budget or economic-development decision you supported that produced measurable results, and one city policy or decision you would approach differently as mayor.

Carolyn Flowers

Individual question

One example is the refuse enterprise fund. When I was elected in 2018, the City was routinely using reserves to cover operating expenses. In 2019, I led an effort to thoroughly examine the fund's finances, identify inefficiencies, and make necessary changes. Those changes addressed an unsustainable budgeting practice and reinforced the importance of fiscal accountability.

As mayor, I would approach economic development more proactively. While we have made progress, I believe we need a stronger focus on growing recurring revenue rather than relying on existing revenue streams to keep pace with rising costs. I would prioritize streamlining permitting processes, strengthening partnerships with economic development organizations, and retaining and expanding existing businesses. I would also advocate for measurable economic development goals in our next strategic plan. Growing our commercial tax base is essential to maintaining services without continually increasing the burden on residents.

Brandon Martin

Also responded

After eight years on the council and as vice mayor, flat revenue is still described as a leading challenge, that fact itself shows the need for a different approach. I will not defend past decisions; I will change the trajectory. One clear difference: instead of accepting rate hikes and deferred maintenance as inevitable, I will demand aggressive efficiency reviews, transparency on every dollar, and market-driven growth through Opportunity Zones, reduced housing red tape, and a real Veterans City initiative that brings private investment and jobs. The measurable result I will deliver is rising recurring revenue from private-sector expansion, not continued reliance on higher fees from residents. Eight years is long enough to know that more of the same will not solve the problem.

QUESTION FOR BRANDON MARTIN

At the SACA debate, you proposed declaring Sierra Vista a “Veterans City” to attract veterans, retirees and investment. What would that designation entail in practice? Identify the policies, incentives or programs you would pursue, their anticipated costs and benefits, and the measurements you would use to determine whether the initiative succeeded.

Brandon Martin

On day one I will declare Sierra Vista America’s first Veterans City. In practice that means a Joint Coordination Committee with Fort Huachuca meeting quarterly, joint programs converting military skills into civilian careers with a target of hundreds of veterans placed yearly, expanded healthcare access through shared clinics and private partnerships so veterans and all residents get care without long waits or long drives, and focused recruitment of defense, cyber, and drone employers. Costs will be minimized by leveraging existing Fort resources, grants aligned with these goals, and private-sector partnerships rather than new city bureaucracy. Benefits:

higher employment, increased private investment, stronger sales-tax base, and a national reputation that attracts more veterans and retirees. Success will be measured by annual veteran placement numbers, new defense-related jobs, private investment dollars, and growth in recurring city revenue, all without raising taxes.

Questions the candidates chose to ask

Candidates were invited to submit and answer up to two questions of their own.

Brandon Martin

How will you stop the cycle of deferred maintenance followed by sudden rate hikes that hit household budgets?

Full transparency on every dollar, aggressive efficiency reviews across all departments, long-term capital planning, and acceptance of grants only when ongoing costs are sustainable. Families should never again be the backup plan for years of deferred maintenance.

What concrete steps will you take in the first 100 days to begin growing private-sector jobs and housing?

Declare Veterans City status, convene the first Joint Coordination Committee with Fort Huachuca, launch a red-tape reduction review for housing and business permits, and begin expanding Opportunity Zones focused on defense-related industries.

Mark Rodriguez

Rodriguez did not submit additional questions.

Carolyn Flowers

How do you plan to stay engaged with the businesses and people in Sierra Vista?

Staying connected with residents and businesses is essential to effective leadership. I believe the Mayor should be accessible, visible, and actively engaged in our community.

I plan to continue Mayor McCaa's Walking on Wednesdays initiative, but I'd like to take it a step further by inviting our Tourism and Economic Development team to join me. This would allow us to connect directly with business owners while bringing knowledgeable staff and valuable City resources right to their doorsteps.

I would also like to introduce weekly City updates through our Public Information Office, similar to what Mayor Konrad has done in Huachuca City. Regular updates on City projects, decisions, and upcoming events would help keep residents informed and engaged.

Communication should go both ways. I want residents and business owners to feel heard, know what's happening in their City, and have opportunities to participate.

How has your experience serving on City Council and as Vice Mayor prepared you to lead Sierra Vista through its financial and economic challenges?

Serving on City Council since 2018 and as Vice Mayor has given me firsthand experience with the responsibilities, challenges, and limitations of local government.

I've participated in eight budget cycles, helped navigate difficult financial decisions, and worked with state and federal representatives to secure funding for critical infrastructure improvements.

As Chair of the Sierra Vista Metropolitan Planning Organization, I've developed relationships and partnerships that help bring resources back to our community.

My experience as a small business owner also provides a valuable perspective on the impact government decisions have on businesses and families.

Leadership requires more than identifying problems. It requires understanding how government works, building relationships, making informed decisions, and following through.

I understand the challenges facing Sierra Vista, and I know the work required to address them. My experience allows me to continue that work from day one.

Their final words



Brandon Martin

Sierra Vista is a community of grit, family values, and an unbreakable bond with Fort Huachuca. For too long we have watched costs rise while opportunity lags. I am a 20-year resident, Army veteran, former Lowe’s manager, and Training Coordinator who will deliver results. As mayor I will declare Sierra Vista America’s first Veterans City, slash bureaucratic hurdles for attainable housing, demand real efficiency in city government, and grow private-sector jobs tied to our greatest asset, Fort Huachuca. Limited government, fiscal responsibility, and protecting your wallet are not slogans; they are the standard I will enforce every day. Residents deserve results, not more of the same. Let’s reclaim Sierra Vista as a place where freedom thrives and government gets out of the way.



Mark Rodriguez

I am running for mayor because I want to ensure we remain a prosperous city that supports people of all ages and backgrounds. In my 21 years of serving our country, 9 years as a government contractor, and 5 years as a Councilman, I have held many titles. But titles only confirm a position and don’t bestow actual leadership qualities. Being mayor requires actual leadership experience and leadership qualities that set our community at ease knowing that they have a competent leader representing them. Thankfully I have that leadership experience that I gained while serving our country in peacetime and in war, as well as serving our community for over five years now.

Serving this community has been a non-stop commitment for me since my first day in office. I’m proud to have been consistently present for our residents every year, not just when an election is near.

Throughout this campaign, despite misleading claims that were later corrected by local media, I have chosen to maintain a standard of professional integrity. My focus remains on moving our community forward in a positive direction. As your Mayor, I will always bring this same level of professionalism and dedication to city hall.



Carolyn Flowers

Sierra Vista is home. It's where my husband and I have raised our family, where I spent more than 15 years as a small business owner, and where I've had the privilege of serving you on City Council since 2018.

Over the years, I've learned that leadership isn't about making promises. It's about showing up, listening, making difficult decisions, building relationships, and following through.

Our city faces real challenges, from rising costs and limited revenues to aging infrastructure and the need for greater economic opportunity. Addressing those challenges requires experience, responsible decision making, and a willingness to work together.

I believe Sierra Vista's future is bright, but we must be thoughtful about how we grow, responsible with taxpayer dollars and our natural resources, and committed to preserving the quality of life that makes our community special.

I'm grateful for the trust you've placed in me over the past eight years. It would be an honor to continue serving you as your next Mayor.

I hope you'll pick Flowers for the Hummingbird Capital!