



Michael J. Garcia, Mayor

To: Governing Body

From: Carly Venditti, Metropolitan Redevelopment, Deputy Director

CC: Andrea Phillips, Deputy City Manager
Brian Moya, Interim City Manager

Date: August 21, 2026

RE: Appointment of Metropolitan Redevelopment Commissioner, Danika Padilla

ITEM AND ISSUE:

The Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency respectfully requests the appointment of Danika Padilla to the Metropolitan Redevelopment Commission, as an individual with expertise in the public, private and non-profit sectors with over 15 years, her career has been curated by service to and for the community. As the current Assistant Director for Regional Community Development's North Central Economic Development District, Danika Padilla's experience will add support to the Metropolitan Redevelopment Commission as it continues to pursue public private partnerships. (Carly Venditti, Asset Development Manager, cavenditti@santafenm.gov).

ACTION: Appointment of Danika Padilla to the Metropolitan Redevelopment Commission for a term of five years.

Attachments:

1. Danika Padilla, Resume

City Council

Alma G. Castro, District 1
Patricia Feghali, District 1

Elizabeth "Liz" Barrett, District 2
Paul C. Bustamante, District 2

Lee Garcia, Mayor Pro Tem, District 3
Pilar F.H. Faulkner, District 3

Jamie Cassutt, District 4
Amanda Chavez, District 4

Danika Padilla

Santa Fe, New Mexico

Experienced public affairs professional, with community development, economic development and extensive stakeholder engagement experience. 15+ years of experience building and leading coalitions across New Mexico, including direct experience in planning, community development and advocacy. Skilled in communications and strategic planning, with strong programmatic and fiscal oversight of complex multi-state projects.

Creative problem solver, painter, and avid hiker. Lover of spicy food, good books and long walks.

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Regional Community Development

Assistant Director

May 2026 - Present

North Central Economic Development District

Santa Fe, New Mexico

- Support regional economic development strategies that strengthen local economies, and align community priorities with long-term growth.
- Work with local governments, elected officials, public agencies, community partners, and private-sector stakeholders to advance projects led by northern New Mexico communities.
- Translate broad economic development goals into actionable programs, partnerships, and implementation strategies.
- Support public-facing communication and relationship-building efforts that help diverse partners understand shared goals and project priorities.

Vice President, State Initiatives

December 2026 - May 2026

Education At Work

Santa Fe, New Mexico

- Led statewide programming for national education non-profit focused on expanding access to work-based learning and workforce development strategies.
- Established relationships with diverse stakeholders and led local stakeholder engagement with elected officials, community leaders, business associations.
- Led statewide communication strategy to engage stakeholders through formal media campaigns.

Vice President, Social Impact & Sustainability

April 2018 - April 2024

Meow Wolf, INC

Santa Fe, New Mexico

- Established and scaled company approach to social impact and environmental responsibility (CSR/ESG) for a multistate arts and entertainment company with \$50M+ annual revenue, 1200+ employees and 5 exhibitions in operation.
- Managed and mentored 12 employees in five states; New Mexico, Nevada, Colorado, Texas and California, including performance reviews and coaching.
- Managed department budget of \$2.5 M annually; including regular budget forecasting and reporting.
- Led third party compliance reporting for B Corp Certification of 200+ ESG metrics; increased Meow Wolf's B Corp Score by 37% in 2022; used established impact framework.
- Invested more than \$5M in grant funding in local communities; developed and administered corporate giving and grantmaking programs focused on serving diverse stakeholders.
- Served as primary liaison between company and community members, led and grew relationships based on mutual benefit and trust with strategic community members and key elected officials.

Public Affairs Experience

Strategic Advisor

January 2025 - Present

Self Employed

Santa Fe, New Mexico

- Advise clients on public affairs and organizational development, including nonprofits, elected officials, and mission-driven companies. Facilitate multi-party conversations to resolve concerns and keep projects moving.
- Design campaigns and stakeholder engagement plans that center target communities to build durable support for causes such as environmental justice, arts, and economic initiatives.



Santa Fe, New Mexico

- Clients included Education at Work, New Mexico Sustainable Business, Secretary of State Maggie Toulouse Oliver and Attorney General Raul Torrez.

New Mexico State Director
Kamala Harris for President

July - November 2024
Santa Fe, New Mexico

- Led statewide campaign for the Harris/Walz Presidential campaign to win 5 electoral votes..
- Built and managed a statewide coalition of advocacy organizations, tribal leaders, elected officials, labor unions, and community leaders, including daily stakeholder management.
- Directed statewide campaign operations, communications, volunteer management, and media strategy.
- Negotiated complex stakeholder relationships to advance campaign goals.

Managing Director
Rio Strategies, LLC

February 2017 - March 2018
Albuquerque, New Mexico

- Led day to day operations for a public affairs firm, working with more than 20 public, private and non-profit clients on a variety of fundraising, strategic communications and public engagement initiatives, including direct management of 20+ employees and office operations.
- Implemented standard operating procedures; including client management, document control, fundraising procedures and project management.
- Managed and mentored 20+ employees, with onboarding, evaluations and served as human resources.

Finance Operations Manager, South Central Region
Hillary for America, Presidential Campaign

March 2014 - November 2016
Austin, Texas

- Served on the national fundraising team for Hillary Clinton’s 2016 presidential campaign. Executed 200+ high profile events for Secretary Clinton, President Clinton, and campaign surrogates.
- Raised over \$41 million to Hillary for America, Hillary Victory Fund, and Action Fund from major donors in Arkansas, Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas.
- Cultivated major donor gifts up to \$25,000 from individual donors.
- Directly managed 2 employees, and 50+ major donors across the region.
- Planned, managed and executed over 200 high profile fundraising events across 5 states working with hundreds of vendors, secret service and on impossible timelines.

Fundraising and Impact Consultant
Self-Employed

2010 - 2014
Washington, DC & Seattle, WA & Albuquerque, NM

Extensive experience in public affairs, fundraising, communications, social impact and advocacy through political campaigns, 501c3 nonprofit engagement, and direct government advocacy in Washington, DC, for projects and clients including:

NM Secretary of State Maggie Toulouse Oliver	Office of Representative Jay Inslee
NM Attorney General Raul Torrez	Office of Senator Maria Cantwell
Albuquerque Mayor Tim Keller	Washington Conservation Action
Albuquerque Public Schools	Washington Conservation Voters

EDUCATION B.S. in Urban Planning & Environmental Science, Emphasis in Public Policy
Washington State University
MBA from University of New Mexico anticipated December 2027

LEADERSHIP	AWARDS	SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS
Santa Fe Community College Foundation, Vice President, Former Secretary & Board of Directors, 2018-Present	Woman of Influence, Albuquerque Business First, 2021	"Stimulating the Creative Economy" - New Mexico Creative Industries Week, 2024
Meow Wolf Foundation, Secretary & Board of Directors, 2022-2024	Fast Company, Most Innovative Companies, Most Influential Companies for Social Impact, Meow Wolf, 2020	"Art of Impact" - Rainbow Rainbow Opening Celebration, 2023
Emerge New Mexico, Former President & Board of Directors, 2018-2022		"Sustainability in Themed Entertainment" - Greenloop Conference, 2023