To: Michael Garcia, Mayor of Santa Fe

Cc: Katherine Christner, staff liaison to the Public Safety Committee

From: Khalil J. Spencer, Resident, Santa Fe

RE: Letter of interest to serve a term on the Public Safety Committee

6 October 2026

Dear Mayor Garcia

I wish to volunteer for service on the city's Public Safety Committee (PSC). I previously served a term on the committee from about 2021 to 2024 as the liaison from the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee. I am familiar with the PSC and its operation.

The city advertisement for the open position states "The Public Safety Committee reviews programs, initiatives, projects, construction, signage, and other matters related to Santa Fe Police and Fire Department operations that may require public examination before Governing Body approval. The committee also makes recommendations on public safety issues to the Finance Committee, Governing Body, and other appropriate bodies."

In my past experience on the PSC, the committee was underutilized in its mission. At first the committee lacked a quorum but even when we had a quorum, we often were left looking at policies and outcomes after the fact. Should I serve another term, I would want to ensure the committee was far more proactive, much as I saw the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee being proactive in creating policy and advising the Governing Body.

There are numerous issues where this committee could helpful in advising the Governing Body. Given the recent coverage of police and Alternative Response Unit issues, these rise to the top. These include reviewing police use of force policies, the adequacy of the academy training for our new officers, the structure and mission of a citizen oversight body, and whether the department is right-sized given the growth of the city. The PSC could be working with or perhaps overlapping with a reconstituted Citizen's Police Oversight Board. We could be advising on the Alternative Response Unit(s) viability and reviewing the city's emergency operations procedures. The PSC was asked to review these EOP's during the last months of my 2021-24 term but that review never seemed to materialize. The committee could be asked to think on any other issues that the Governing Body asks of us.

To be effective, a PSC or a newly activated oversight board must be seen as being thoughtful, non-judgmental, and willing to learn about the issues and situations these bodies are asked to opine on before drawing conclusions. Going in with a preconceived know-it-all attitude can be corrosive or destructive to any ability of a committee or board to

interact with both the public and our city's public safety professionals. I'd hope to find that balance.

My involvement with public safety issues goes back farther than my term on the PSC. As an undergraduate, my work study job from my second semester as a freshman until graduation was as a student security aide on the University of Rochester's Security Dept. I was on night patrol for most of that time. I was responsible for both the dorms and academic buildings, writing reports and when necessary, handing off problems to the Rochester Police Dept via my management team. I worked full time as a U of Rochester security officer for one year before heading off to graduate school. In Los Alamos, I was appointed to the Transportation Board in 2003 and promptly took the Los Alamos Police Department's Citizen Police Academy class given the overlap between transportation policy and enforcement. I often met with the police chief in Los Alamos on traffic safety issues. Public safety is an important job for a city government. We have to get it right.

Finally, if needed, I am quite familiar with Inspection of Public Records Act and Freedom of Information Act policies given my work in the Classification Office at Los Alamos National Lab (2017-25). Identifying and managing controlled information was an important part of that job; ensuring IPRA exempt information is handled properly by citizen volunteers on these committees and boards is likewise important.

So, if I can be of service on this committee, I am glad to pitch in.

Khalil J. Spencer

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