



Sacramento Mayoral Candidates Face the Voters

Written for the web by [James Scullary](#), Evening Executive Producer



SACRAMENTO, CA - The seven candidates for Sacramento Mayor squared off Wednesday evening at the Candidates Face the Voters Forum sponsored by News10, The Sacramento Bee and the California Museum.

Answering the first question, Sacramento Mayor Heather Fargo said her top priority was public safety, including improving Sacramento's level of flood protection. She also cited the revitalization of midtown and downtown Sacramento, adding, "Incredible progress, not only in downtown and in midtown, which has really come alive in the last eight years, but also throughout the entire city," she said.



Top challenger Kevin Johnson said law enforcement would be his biggest priority as Mayor. He also expressed concern that violent crime in Sacramento had risen in recent years. And he said the city could be better-run.



"Unemployment is the highest that it's been in a decade. That's not a Sacramento that I'm proud of," he said. "We have a \$58 million budget deficit."



Answering the question on economic development, candidate Leonard Padilla said he would encourage the opening of a pair of casinos in Sacramento, with one each in the northern and southern parts of the city.

He said he would focus on better schools and even took a potshot at the Sacramento Kings. "The Kings mean absolutely nothing to the city of Sacramento," Padilla said. "They take money out of the local economy."



Eco-candidate Muriel Strand said she is running on economic sustainability, getting a laugh when she said, "One thing I would like to do is change the city ordinance so people could keep chickens for eggs and for food."



Fargo said she has created a special office to create economic opportunities and that has paid off in helping bring new restaurants, businesses and hotels to downtown and midtown Sacramento.

Johnson said one of his highest priorities would be attracting and retaining businesses in Sacramento, and

