

Governor visits Las Vegas barbershop to tout COVID recovery plan



[Steve Marcus](#)

Cecia Alvarado, left, Nevada State Director for Mi Familia Vota, and Erica Mosca, executive director of Leaders in Training, arrive for a news conference with Governor Steve Sisolak, second left, and Paul Madrid, one of the shop owners, at Eastside Cutters Tuesday, Aug. 24, 2021. Molly Forgey, the governors campaign communications director is at center. The event was part of the Democratic National Committees Build Back Better bus tour which made a stop at the barber shop.

By [Ricardo Torres-Cortez](#)

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Last year, Paul Madrid wasn't sure his Eastside Cutters Barbershop would weather the financial chaos created by the coronavirus pandemic. Today, the shop has expanded and recovered 90% of its business.

Gov. Steve Sisolak and Las Vegas Councilwoman Olivia Diaz visited the east Las Vegas business this morning as part of campaign by the Democratic National Committee to tout President Joe Biden's COVID-19 economic recovery agenda.

"We're dealing with a once-in-a-generation pandemic," Sisolak said. "We need to take this opportunity to invest in our communities, in our state, to make it better."

Nevada has allocated about \$100 million in federal funds to help small businesses stay open through the pandemic, assisting in covering the costs of essentials such as rent and payroll. Madrid said federal money helped keep the barbershop afloat through the Small Business Administration's Paycheck Protection Program.

Earlier this year, Nevada accepted \$2.7 billion in federal coronavirus relief as part of Biden's Build Back Better agenda.

"I can tell you that here on the east side, we have felt the effects of COVID-19," said Diaz, a Democrat who represents the ward where the barbershop is located. "We have a lot of my constituency that are the essential workforce. It has been hard times, but I'm looking toward the future for...economic prosperity, in particular for my constituency."

Sisolak, also a Democrat, called Madrid an "incredible individual" and noted that he visited the barbershop a couple of months ago when it was located next door.

The current location housed a beauty salon that didn't survive the pandemic, Madrid said. He and his three business partners bought the property and remodeled it. Six barbers work there, with chairs available for four more.

Madrid, a Rancho High School graduate, joined the U.S. Army in 1989 and served for four years. He was stationed in Alaska until he and his wife moved back to Las Vegas.

Being a barber came naturally to him. His father, a barber who cut hair at El Cortez for 30 years, asked him to try it out as Madrid was working odd jobs after his military service.

Madrid worked with his father for about four years, then 22 years ago joined Eastside Cutters, which has been around since the 1960s. Madrid has raised his two sons in Las Vegas.

"It's just second nature to do it. It's a good job," he said. "You won't be rich, but you will never be broke, either."