

**Observer Corps Report – Albuquerque City Council meeting
21 June 2023
(The City Council does not meet during July)
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Middle Rio Grande Housing Collaborative – Update. The City Council voted eight to one to approve the Joint Powers Agreement between the City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County establishing the Middle Rio Grande Housing Collaborative. Voting for: Benton, Davis, Fiebelkorn, Grout, Jones, Lewis, Pena, Sanchez; voting against: Bassan. The mayor signed it on June 30. [R-23-144 Text](#)

Housing

O-22-54. The City Council voted to amend the Integrated Development Ordinance (IDO) to allow casitas in R-1 zoned residential areas. The ordinance passed by a five to four vote. Voting for: Benton, Davis, Fiebelkorn, Jones, Pena; voting against: Bassan, Grout, Lewis, Sanchez. This ordinance includes proposed zoning changes as part of the Housing Forward Initiative. Public comment included 14 speakers in support of the IDO change, citing the need for affordable housing. Six people spoke against the change stating that it has not been thoroughly considered or would change the character of neighborhoods. [O-22-54 Text](#)

Seven speakers representing NaeVa (formerly Native American Voters Alliance Education Project) spoke against a planned development of a 348 unit, three story housing development at the base of Petroglyphs National Monument. The speakers acknowledged the need for additional housing, but expressed concern over a lack of consultation with tribes and pueblos.

Change to City Council/City Manager Government Format

P-23-1. Proposition to place on the November 2023 ballot a change to the city's form of government from a city council/mayor format to a city council/city manager format. This proposition failed to pass on a three to six vote. Voting for: Grout, Lewis, Sanchez. Voting against: Bassan, Benton, Davis, Fiebelkorn, Davis, Jones, Pena.

During the public comment period three individuals spoke in favor of putting the proposition on the ballot, four spoke against it. Two of the speakers against the proposition represented unions and stated that they would rather bargain with an executive with authority and accountability.

Professor Krebs of the UNM Political Science Department reiterated the points he made during the June 5 City Council meeting. He presented research that indicates the city council/mayor form of government has greater citizen engagement and more minority voter participation than the city council/city manager form of government. During the professor's discussion he was asked to clarify if he was paid by the city administration to present his research. He indicated that he was paid which sparked concern among the council members because they had been informed by the city administration that he was not paid by the city.

Another speaker was David Campbell, who identified himself as former CAO/City Manager City of Albuquerque, former City Manager of Rio Rancho, former Albuquerque City Attorney and Planning Director. He spoke "in favor of government reform", identifying this as an opportune time to consider city/county unification or consolidation. Three council members (Bassan, Davis, and Benton) stated they were open to further exploring city/county consolidation.

[P-23-1 Text](#)