

Bernalillo County Commission  
Observer Report for Feb/March meetings  
Karen Wentworth

## **Bernalillo County Commission Sets Guidelines for Future Economic Development**

Barbara Baca, District 1; Frank Baca, District 2; Adriann Barboa, District 3; Walt Benson, District 4 (excused); Eric Olivas, District 5

Bernalillo County has been working to organize the way it awards economic development incentives for the past year, conducting community meetings and working with consultants. The result is a new administrative ordinance passed by the commission to give businesses a map of how to get financial incentives from the county.

It's outlined in this final steering committee report, which can be found on the county website:

<https://www.bernco.gov/economic-development/wp-content/uploads/sites/53/2025/11/SC-FINAL-REPORT.pdf>

The county passed the ordinance at its Feb. 24 meeting. Before the resolution was passed, companies wanting to move into Bernalillo County met with the Economic Development Department and county officials to negotiate the best deal they could for Industrial Revenue Bonds, and Local Economic Development Awards. Now companies wanting public money would be required to make specific commitments to invest in worker training, and environmental sustainability. The resolution is constructed to extend greater financial incentives to companies willing to make greater commitments to investing in projects that would benefit the community.

The resolution is controversial and was opposed in public comments by the Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce, the Hispano Chamber of Commerce, the New Mexico State Economic Development Department and other business groups. It was supported by community members and groups who may benefit from the required community investment provisions.

League Position: This resolution aligns with the League of Women Voters of New Mexico policy on the environment. **“LWVNM believes that government should promote and ensure responsible stewardship of our natural, human, and cultural resources, particularly in the face of growth and development. An essential prerequisite for protecting our resources is to require a comprehensive analysis of the environmental and fiscal impacts of applications before issuing a development permit.”**