

CITY of ALBUQUERQUE

TWENTY SIXTH COUNCIL

COUNCIL BILL NO. R-25-163 ENACTMENT NO. _____

SPONSORED BY: Dan Lewis

1 RESOLUTION

2 ADJUSTING FISCAL YEAR 2026 OPERATING APPROPRIATIONS AND
3 RESERVES TO ENHANCE THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT'S EFFORTS TO
4 INCREASE PLAN REVIEW AND PERMITTING EFFICIENCY FOR THE
5 BETTERMENT OF THE CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE.

6 WHEREAS, the City of Albuquerque seeks to improve the efficiency,
7 transparency, and accountability of its building permitting process; and

8 WHEREAS, the City has established its own fees for issuing trade and
9 building permits in its Uniform Administrative Code; and

10 WHEREAS, there is a housing shortage in the City of Albuquerque; and

11 WHEREAS, the Planning Department wishes to explore and implement
12 measures to further increase efficiency in its building permitting processes;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, increasing efficiency can better serve residents, developers,
15 and City departments by shortening permitting timelines, expediting plan
16 review, and enhancing customer service; and

17 WHEREAS, additional investment will contribute to a nicer, cleaner, safer
18 and more energy-efficient built environment throughout the City of
19 Albuquerque, to the benefit of all; and

20 WHEREAS, additional investment will help address the economic and
21 housing needs of our residents; and

22 WHEREAS, appropriately placed resources can provide valuable tools to
23 expedite permitting and thereby allow construction projects to commence
24 sooner.

25 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL, THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF
26 ALBUQUERQUE:

SECTION 1. The amount and dedication included in Section 5. page 3, lines 8 through 11 of R-25-132 is hereby unreserved and approved for use by the Planning Department for the purposes of this Resolution.

SECTION 2. That the following amounts are hereby adjusted to certain programs from unreserved fund balance for Fiscal Year 2026:

GENERAL FUND – 110

Planning Department

One Stop Shop	450,000
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SECTION 3. That the City Council hereby approves and authorizes the Planning Department's budget to be increased by \$450,000 to be used towards improving plan review timelines and permitting efficiency. The Planning Department may consider methods to coordinate and monitor trade and building permit processing; make recommendations to the Director to streamline the plan review and permitting process; ensure consistent and fair application of the technical codes; and promote accountability and transparency in permit issuance.

SECTION 4. That in its efforts to increase efficiency, the Planning Department will include an ombudsman to facilitate communication with permit applicants, and may include, but is not limited to, additional efficiency enhancements such as developing a third-party plan review program consistent with the Uniform Administrative Code, contracting with a professional-technical plan reviewer to alleviate backlogs, and the addition of permitting and plan review staff to more efficiently manage the volume of permit applications for the purpose of shortening permitting timelines.

SECTION 5. The Planning Department shall meet the following timelines for the plan review and permitting processes and take the necessary measures to effectuate these timelines and refunds:

A. Provided that applicants submit plans that only require one review cycle and all other requirements are met, residential building permits shall ordinarily be granted within 90 days; commercial building permits that have opted for FasTrax plan review shall be granted within 120 days; all other commercial building permits shall ordinarily be granted within 180 days. Notwithstanding the Uniform Administrative Code, if the Building Official deems that plan

1 review corrections required from the applicant have been timely and
2 reasonably provided by the applicant, and that the majority of the review time
3 has not been attributable to the applicant, but a residential permit has not
4 been issued within 90 days or FasTrax commercial permit in 120 days or
5 regular commercial permit within 180 days, the ombudsman may grant a
6 refund of 50% of permitting fees up to \$100,000.

7 B. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Uniform Administrative Code,
8 should an applicant disagree on the fee decision of the ombudsman, they may
9 appeal within five (5) business days of that decision to a Permitting Appeal
10 Committee comprised of the Chief Operating Officer of the City, the Director of
11 the General Services Department and the Director of the Department of
12 Municipal Development or their respective designees. No employee of the
13 Planning Department, including the Director, may be a designee to the
14 Committee. The Committee shall receive argument and make a final
15 administrative decision on an appeal within ten (10) business days of
16 receiving an appeal.

17 SECTION 6. The Planning Department shall make information available to
18 increase transparency, including but not limited to:

- 19 A. Performance metrics, including application processing times;
- 20 B. Annual reports to the City Council;
- 21 C. Training and outreach to permit applicants and City staff;
- 22 D. Recommendations on updates to permitting-related codes and policies.

23 SECTION 7. SEVERABILITY. If any section, paragraph, sentence, clause,
24 word or phrase of this Resolution is for any reason held to be invalid or
25 unenforceable by any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not
26 affect the validity of the remaining provisions of this Resolution. The Council
27 hereby declares that it would have passed this Resolution and each section,
28 paragraph, sentence, clause, word or phrase thereof irrespective of any
29 provision being declared unconstitutional or otherwise invalid.