



Legislation Text

File #: R-21-220, Version: 1

CITY of ALBUQUERQUE
TWENTY FOURTH COUNCIL

COUNCIL BILL NO. R-21-220 ENACTMENT NO. _____

SPONSORED BY: Diane Gibson, Pat Davis, Trudy Jones

RESOLUTION

Calling For The City Of Albuquerque To Explore Alternative Forms Of Government Through A Study To Be Presented To City Leadership; Identifying Key Aspects Of The Study (Gibson, Davis, Jones)

WHEREAS, the City of Albuquerque currently operates as a Mayor-Council form of government; and

WHEREAS, the City of Albuquerque has operated under such a form of government since 1974, when the city charter was amended to move from a Commission-Manager form to the current Mayor-Council form; and

WHEREAS, the current Mayor-Council form of government establishes two separate branches of government with delineated roles wherein an elected nine-member City Council is vested with the legislative authority of the City to enact all laws and policies conducive to the welfare of the City, and an elected mayor controls and directs the executive branch of the City which is responsible for the most high functioning executive tasks of the City all the way down to the most routine; and

WHEREAS, the staggering of terms amongst the nine member Council establishes an opportunity for continuity within government while at the same time allowing the electorate to guide the direction of the City through their vote; and

WHEREAS, the strong-mayor form of government does not offer the same level of continuity for the executive branch because processes, functions, approaches, knowledge

and skills amongst appointed city administrators, who serve at the pleasure of the Mayor, are subject to wholesale change with each election - which can directly affect the services that most directly impact City residents; and

WHEREAS, each new Mayor holds complete discretion to appoint new leadership to oversee critical city services like the Police Department, the Fire Department, the Airport, the Parks Department, the Planning Department, and the Health and Human Services, to name a few; and

WHEREAS, Conversely, critical city services in Council-Manager forms of government can be led by personnel hired based exclusively on their qualifications, and can remain serving based on their capabilities as opposed to who wins an election; and

WHEREAS, as we have seen in Albuquerque and other Cities, a Mayor-Council form of government can be quite successful, but there is nothing to preclude the City of Albuquerque from re-evaluating its form of government from time to time; and

WHEREAS, the Strong Mayor form of government is not the only form of government available to the City of Albuquerque and several other modern, major cities in our region successfully operate under a Council-Manager form of government including El Paso, Phoenix, and Las Vegas, Nevada; and

WHEREAS, most Council-Manager forms of government still include a critical role for a Mayor where the Mayor is integrated into the City Council as its presiding member, as opposed to being part of a separate branch of government; and

WHEREAS, there may be an opportunity to make Albuquerque's local government more efficient, stable, and fiscally responsible over the long-term by operating as a different form of government; and

WHEREAS, data gathering and interviewing other municipalities of Albuquerque's size in regards to their form of government may highlight the benefits and shortcomings of other forms of government; and

WHEREAS, any major change to the City of Albuquerque's form of government would only be possible through an amendment to the city charter; and

WHEREAS, the intention of this resolution is only to describe an intent to begin an exploratory process in which facts can be presented to the Council and the Administration regarding other forms of government.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL, THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF

ALBUQUERQUE:

SECTION 1. CONTRACTUAL SERVICES

The City Council services Department shall engage a qualified consultant to conduct research and synthesize findings on the various forms of government. Such research shall, at a minimum, include:

- a. An overview of alternative forms of government available to the City of Albuquerque, to include hybrid options of the primary forms of government; and
- b. An analysis of data from peer municipalities relating how their form of government may bear a relationship to the strength of their local economy, their ability to offer continuity in municipal services, and the relative economic efficiency of their operations; and
- c. A professional recommendation based on the findings from the report to identify the relative strength of Albuquerque's current form of government for its constituents in terms of efficiency and transparency, and reasonable alternatives.

SECTION 2. PRESENTATION OF DATA

A presentation shall be made to both the City Council and the Administration no later than 12 months after the execution of a contract for the research and analysis outlined in Section 1. This presentation shall highlight the findings from the research and the recommendation as prepared by the consultant.