

Vista Grande Neighborhood Association (VGNA) Annual Meeting Minutes

Aug. 20, 2026; at Albuquerque School of Excellence – 5200 Sequoia Road NW, at 6:30 p.m.

The Albuquerque School of Excellence provided food, drinks, and a large-screen at their venue, as well as several students to help organize the event. All were excellent, and much appreciated.

A number of public officials and speakers turned out, including:

Yvette Tovar, Mayor Keller's Office

Antonio "Moe" Maestas, NM Dist. 23 Senator, with legislative aide Joe Noriega

Mara Salcido, Policy Analyst for City Councilor Stephanie Telles (Dist. 1)

Mustafa Ayik, Executive Director, Albuquerque School of Excellence

Jim Strozier, from the private Consensus Planning

Few VGNA neighbors showed up for the meeting, but several more have since become members and made contributions to VGNA, as of this writing on Saturday (8-22).

Announcements

Coffee with a Cop – Provides a chance for neighbors to interact with APD. Next one is Friday, Aug. 28 at 9 a.m. at the Golden Corral, 2701 Coors. The Donut Mart at Coors and Sequoia also hosts "Coffee with a Cop" events several times each year.

City of Albuquerque (CABQ) 2026 Goals Survey: Please complete a short (10- to 15-minute Community Priorities Survey to help shape the City's goals for the next four years. (Go to URL: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdLjyPxCsJSugcrhCRJ-wsMoj8ZT0GXe5rKtmVK0iT1MP2xA/viewform?pli=1>) The City will also share and discuss survey results on Saturday, Aug. 29 at the Albuquerque Main Library, 501 Copper Avenue NW, at 10 a.m. All are welcome to come and offer their opinions.

WSCONA Legislative Forum: The West Side Coalition of Neighborhood Associations (WSCONA) invites members and neighbors to meet with Westside legislators for their legislative forum, Wednesday, Sept. 5 at 5:30 p.m. for refreshments, with the event starting at 6 p.m. The forum will be held in-person at the Don Newton Center (Taylor Ranch Community Center), 4900 Kachina Dr. NW.

Participatory Budgeting Kickoff Event. Councilor Stephanie Telles' (CABQ Dist. 1) is hosting a Kickoff Potluck on Thursday, September 10th, 2026, from 5:30-7:30 pm at the West Mesa Community Center, 5500 Glenrio Road NW. Participatory budgeting ("PB") is a democratic process where community members directly decide how to spend public dollars. To learn more about Participatory Budgeting, take a few minutes to watch this video: [Overview of Participatory Budgeting \(Short Video\)](#). Want to get involved, complete the [Orientation Form](#). You are also encouraged to [apply](#) and serve on the Steering Committee, which will help implement the PB process in District 1. The deadline for applying is September 18th, 2026, and final project voting will occur in December. (A separate email will be sent to VGNA members.)

San Antonio Oxbow Open Space now open: Richard Schaefer showed slides of the newly opened San Antonio Oxbow Open Space, and he congratulated the City for moving to purchase the land and create an excellent bird and wildlife viewing area with an electrified pavilion for meetings and walking paths. It sits about a quarter-mile north of

VGNA. However, Schaefer noted that a gate at the northeast corner would be helpful to allow hikers and bicyclists to enter the Bosque berm trail that heads north to the pumping station and Montañito Bridge.



View of the San Antonio wetlands marsh from the Open Space, with the Manzano Mountains in the background.

Speakers

Yvette Tover, Mayor's Office, (ytovar@cabq.gov 505-549-0535) provided handouts on the CABQ Community Goals Survey (See the info above.) She also discussed the City's new legislation (See <https://www.bikeabq.org/news/city-passes-landmark-traffic-safety-bill-protecting-vulnerable-road-users>) to protect pedestrians, people in wheelchairs and bicyclists—all who are now considered “vulnerable road users.” This includes vehicles stopping at crosswalks and not parking within 50 feet of a stop sign throughout most of the City.

Lack of Sidewalks on Coors: The discussion of the new legislation jumpstarted a discussion of the lack of sidewalks on Coors Blvd. between St. Joseph's Dr. in the north and Sequoia Rd. in the south. That presents an impediment and possible danger to vulnerable road users, particularly children, who are likely to walk and bike the area.

See the images below.



Mara Salcido, Policy Analyst for CABQ Dist. 1 Councilor Stephanie Telles:

Participatory Budget Process: Mara Salcido again informed the group about Councilor Telles' efforts to do participatory budgeting with available funds, including State "Set Aside" funds. (See the info and make your reservation at URL: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSecnG808LJrqoT-nbNe0zHCc4BiE4O4WFqf7OnRuuyloYiCYw/viewform>)

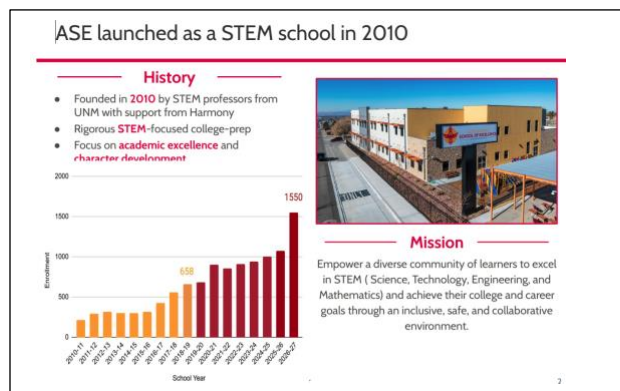
She spoke about the Councilor's priority for Water Conservation and a variety of efforts Councilor Telles will pursue.

Antonio "Moe" Maestas, Dist. 23 State Senator: He was accompanied by Joe Noriega, his legislative aide.

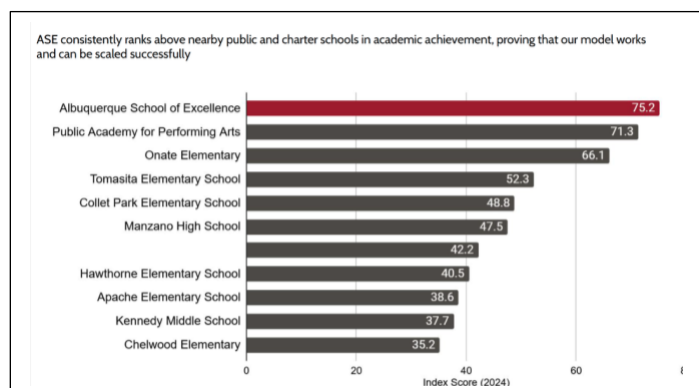
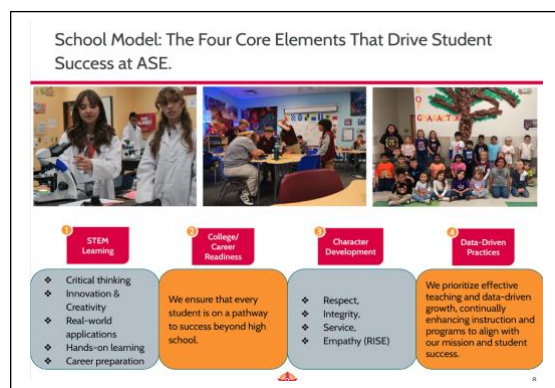
Sen. Maestas addressed New Mexico Legislative efforts in early childhood education, health care, and improvements for the UNM football stadium. In a flyer, he noted he provided capital outlay funding for the Redlands Park/West Mesa Little League and Bosque restoration, among other projects. He spoke about his efforts in the Legislature including:

- Improving Law Enforcement training
- State funding for projects, including a new Soccer Stadium at the State Fairgrounds.
- Zoning Reform at the State level that will apply to all municipalities, that would enable multiple residences in R-1 zoned lots. He received some push back from audience members on this measure.

Mustafa Ayik, Executive Director of **Albuquerque School of Excellence** (ASE East and West Campus) introduced the charter school through a series of slides.



Director Ayik highlighted the STEM academic curriculum and performance relative to its peers.



He described plans for the future buildout on the West Campus, which is starting now at slightly under 400 K-8 students, but should eventually expand to include up to 1,200 K-12 students.



Drop-off and pick-up times will be staggered and handled internally within the campus, which generally drew praise from those in attendance, including some who had previously expressed concerns about traffic.

Jim Strozier of Consensus Planning discussed the plans for the **St. Pius High School sports facilities** renovation, including a lighted, roughly 3,000-person stadium for football and soccer. (Stadium is in yellow in the below slide.) A Phase II buildout would be for the facilities in blue.

There was considerable discussion of the construction of a “crusher fine” path/walkway along the west side of the facility, as part of the overall sidewalk/pedestrian issues on both sides of Coors Blvd. Mr. Strozier noted that even though the CABQ Environmental Planning Commission included the “crusher fine” path construction as a condition of the St. Pius site plan approval, St. Pius does not own the land between the line of elm trees and the west fence of St. Pius. There’s considerable confusion over what entity has ownership and responsibility for this area (shaded pink on the map on the next page)—the NM Department of Transportation, CABQ, Pius High School. Thus, perhaps a committee of the various entities, including the neighborhoods needs to be formed.

(Please let VGNA know if you want to participate in a committee to advocate for sidewalks along the Sequoia Road to St. Joseph’s stretch of Coors Blvd.)

Officers/Board Members 2026-2027

Vice President: Susan Homer

WSCONA Reps: Richard Schaefer, Susan Homer, Brady Lovelady, Joseph Lovato

Anyone who wishes to serve as an additional Board Member is welcome to submit their self-nomination for approval of the members.

Treasurer's Report:

VGNA collected \$120.00 in contributions at the Annual Meeting (8-20-26), which are not yet included in the above-stated balance. Furthermore, four members have sent in \$30.00 in contributions since the annual meeting occurred, and the West Mesa Little League has verbally committed to contributing \$300.00 to VGNA. Therefore, the anticipated new

balance should be at least \$1,733.54 (\$1,283.54 + \$450.00) once all the checks and cash are deposited, assuming no other contributions arrive.

Motion to contribute \$300.00 to WSCONA legal fund--pending: Susan Homer made a motion and Richard Schaefer seconded it, to make a contribution to support WSCONA's legal fund with a \$300.00 contribution. Rationale: WSCONA has represented several individuals and neighborhoods in legal appeals to the CABQ regarding zoning violations, and violations of procedures of the Integrated Development Ordinance, which covers the process of developing properties within the City of Albuquerque. WSCONA's appeals in the last three years have generally been successful, even receiving reimbursement for legal fees from the City on at least one occasion. Nevertheless, WSCONA, which has used attorney Hess Yntema, has incurred a few thousand dollars of legal expenses in the last several years, even though Mr. Yntema frequently works for little or no pay on behalf of WSCONA. WSCONA's legal efforts help individuals "fight city hall," when city hall does not pay attention to its own zoning, ordinances, and legal procedures. Collectively, the ability to seek honest development processes from CABQ is enhanced when neighbors and neighborhood organizations band together to marshal expertise and legal resources. VGNA is one of the 29 recognized neighborhood organizations of WSCONA, which is also recognized by CABQ and BERNCO. Since the meeting had clearly begun to break up when this motion was made, VGNA Secretary/Treasurer Richard Schaefer said he would include it as a membership voting question when he sent out the email with the VGNA minutes. (Both Susan Homer and Richard Schaefer are VGNA representatives to WSCONA, and Richard Schaefer is an officer in WSCONA. He serves as its Secretary.)

The meeting **Adjourned** at 8:45 p.m.

(Post-Meeting Note: Within five days of the Annual Meeting, the above motion was sent via email to VGNA's 20 voting members. They were asked to vote "Yes" in support of the motion or "No" in opposition to the motion. After three more days, the vote count was cut off when 13 members had voted "Yes" with 0 members voting "No." **Thus, the Motion was Passed and a check for \$300.00 was sent to WSCONA's legal fund.**)

(Notes by Dave Dekker and Minutes by Richard Schaefer. Please send corrections directly to Richard Schaefer at schaefer@unm.edu, or call 505-917-9909.)