



June 15, 2022

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**BERNALILLO COUNTY REFUSES TO HOLD SANTOLINA HEARING ONLINE  
Officials Ignore Pleas to Expand Access to Public Hearing**

*Albuquerque, NM*—The Bernalillo County Commission is refusing to provide the greatest accessibility to the public by not allowing the public to attend the upcoming Santolina hearing scheduled for June 28 at 2pm over Zoom as they have done in the past throughout the pandemic. This is despite multiple requests from immunocompromised community members who want to participate, but fear for their health during this time of rising Covid-19 cases in Bernalillo County and across the state of New Mexico. The public deserves the greatest accessibility to attend this public hearing and their public safety should be kept at the forefront during these ever-changing times.

Despite requests for public health accommodations, the County is insisting on holding this hearing in-person only at 415 Silver SE, Albuquerque, even though the Covid-19 pandemic continues to spread, with people having to stay home either because they are sick, or are caring for family members, or have been exposed/tested positive and are quarantining in line with current CDC guidelines.

Bottom line—the County's policy of in-person only for the June 28 BCC meeting will prevent many interested community members from actively participating, likely, in violation of the Open Meetings Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In response to these concerns, the County has simply stated it is not set up for hybrid meetings.

New Mexico Environmental Law Center, on behalf of its clients and in solidarity with other concerned organizations, is asking the County to therefore hold the hearing over Zoom only until they have the capability to hold it both in-person and online (hybrid). We are urging community members to contact the Chair and Vice Chair of the Bernalillo County Commission and the Bernalillo County Manager asking for the June 28 hearing to be held either hybrid (online and in-person) or online only if hybrid is not available at this time.