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**CITY OF SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO**  
**PROPOSED AMENDMENT(S) TO RESOLUTION NO. 2025-\_\_**  
**Call for Charter Review Commission**

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**Mayor and Members of the City Council:**

**In relation to Resolution No. 2025-\_\_.**

**This amendment WILL change the caption.   X**

**This amendment WILL NOT change the caption.**

**I intend to propose the following amendment(s),**

**CITY OF SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO**  
**RESOLUTION NO. 2025-\_\_**  
**INTRODUCED BY:**

- Councilor Jamie Cassutt
- Councilor Pilar Faulkner
- Councilor Alma Castro

**RED – AMENDMENT A – Councilor Michael Garcia**

**A RESOLUTION**

**CONVENING A CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION NO LATER THAN APRIL OF 2026**  
**TO CONSIDER MAYOR AND CITY COUNCILOR POWERS **AND THE USE OF****

1 **RANKED CHOICE VOTING.**

2  
3 **WHEREAS**, the voters of the city of Santa Fe adopted the City of Santa Fe’s Municipal  
4 Charter (“Chater”), at a special municipal election held on December 9, 1997; and

5 **WHEREAS**, the Charter states that it may be “amended or repealed as provided by law”  
6 and NMSA 1978, Section 3-15-16, provides that the governing body of a home rule municipality  
7 may amend its Charter by submitting a proposal to the qualified electors; and

8 **WHEREAS**, the voters of the City of Santa Fe (“City”) amended the Charter in elections  
9 in 2008, 2014, 2018, and 2023; and

10 **WHEREAS**, Section 10.01 of the Charter calls for the Governing Body to appoint a charter  
11 review commission (“Commission”) “as needed, but not less frequently than every ten years”; and

12 **WHEREAS**, a Commission may review and recommend to the Governing Body the  
13 adoption of ballot questions regarding proposed Charter amendments for the electorate of the city  
14 of Santa Fe to consider; and

15 **WHEREAS**, it is important that members of the Commission be residents of the city of  
16 Santa Fe; that, to the extent possible, they have either an interest, knowledge, or training in local  
17 government or law or a personal knowledge of the government of the City of Santa Fe; and that  
18 they represent a variety of backgrounds and perspectives; and

19 **WHEREAS**, Section 10.01 of the Charter addresses community engagement during a  
20 Charter review stating that “[t]he creation of the commission and its function shall be advertised  
21 on a separate page of the city’s web site and the page shall allow for the public to submit  
22 proposed amendments. The commission shall hold no less than two meetings in each of the city’s  
23 council districts, for the purpose of taking input from the public.”; and

24 **WHEREAS**, the Governing Body recognizes that meaningful community engagement is  
25 fundamental to ensuring that the City’s Charter reflects the values, priorities, and voices of Santa

1 Feans; and

2       **WHEREAS**, the 2023 Charter Commission Report included a recommendation to  
3 “provide for a separation of powers between the executive and the legislative branches of City  
4 government” and to “[c]reate a new Article V to replace current Articles V-VIII, entitled  
5 GOVERNANCE with these sections: The Legislative Branch, [and] The Executive Branch”, and  
6 the Governing Body wishes to renew the conversation on the topic; and

7       **WHEREAS**, the 2023 Charter Commission Report states that there was a “short period  
8 of time” to make recommendations; and

9       **WHEREAS**, a resolution about the commission’s recommendation to “provide for a  
10 separation of powers” was item 9g at the Special Governing Body meeting on Tuesday, August 22,  
11 2023, and the Resolution that described the recommendation noted that the Charter Commission’s  
12 recommendation presented changes that required “additional time for review and consideration”;  
13 and

14       **WHEREAS**, the voters of the City approved ranked choice voting during the 2008,  
15 Regular Municipal Election and the City implemented ranked choice voting beginning with the  
16 Regular Municipal Election on March 6, 2018; and

17       **WHEREAS**, Section 4.06 of the Charter outlines the ranked choice voting system stating  
18 “...the mayor, city councilors and municipal judge shall be elected using a ranked choice  
19 (sometimes called instant runoff) voting system allowing voters to rank in order of their preference  
20 the candidates for each office appearing on the ballot.”; and

21       **WHEREAS**, the Governing Body seeks the Commission’s review and evaluation of the  
22 ranked choice voting system to ensure it continues to serve the best interest of voters and to support  
23 fair and representative elections; and

24       **WHEREAS**, the Governing Body wishes to dedicate additional time to the topic of  
25 separation of powers, and to consider a balance of powers as well as review the use of ranked choice

1 voting, by convening a Commission to review the separation and balance of powers between the  
2 mayor and city councilors and the ranked choice voting system.

3 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE**  
4 **CITY OF SANTA FE** that a Charter Review Commission shall be convened consistent with  
5 Section 10.1 of the City’s Charter, including the following parameters:

6 **Section 1. NAME:** The commission shall be called the Charter Review Commission  
7 (“Commission”).

8 **Section 2. PURPOSE:** The purpose of the Commission is to review the City’s  
9 Charter and determine whether to recommend changes to the Charter to modify the Mayor’s and  
10 the City Councilors’ powers and duties as well as whether to recommend changes to the ranked  
11 choice voting system.

12 **Section 3. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:** The Commission shall review the  
13 Mayor’s and Councilors’ duties and powers as well as the ranked choice voting system established  
14 in the Charter and any amendments proposed by members of the Governing Body and the public  
15 on those topics, focusing on separation of powers and balance of powers between the mayor and  
16 city councilors and the ranked choice voting system. The Commission shall complete its review  
17 and prepare a report of the Commission’s recommendations regarding proposed Charter  
18 amendments no later than April 1, 2027, such that the Governing Body may consider and adopt the  
19 recommendations for consideration during the November 2027 election. After receiving the report,  
20 the Governing Body shall consider the proposals and vote on resolutions regarding placing the  
21 proposed amendments on the ballot for vote by its electorate. The Commission recommendations  
22 shall include, but not be limited to, the powers and duties of the mayor and city councilors and the  
23 ranked choice voting system, including the following:

- 24 A. Whether there should be separation of powers or balance of powers as between the  
25 mayor and city councilors;

- 1 B. Whether the City’s mayor should have a purely executive role, rather than both a  
2 legislative and executive role and, if so, what new powers and limitations should  
3 be adopted along with such a separation of powers;
- 4 C. Whether the mayor, city manager, or the city councilors should propose the City  
5 budget and what should be required in the budget’s development;
- 6 D. Whether the City should adopt a strategic plan, and, if so, who should put it forward  
7 for review, and how often should it be updated;
- 8 E. Whether a city councilor who is running for mayor should be required to give up  
9 their city council seat; How to fill vacant council seats; ~~and~~
- 10 F. Who has the power to appoint, dismiss, and supervise the city manager, city  
11 attorney, and city clerk-; ~~and~~
- 12 G. Whether ranked choice voting continues to serve the best interest of voters and  
13 whether it supports fair and representative elections.

14 **Section 4. MEMBERSHIP; OFFICERS; TERM:**

15 **MEMBERSHIP:** As is consistent with Section 10.01 of the Charter, the Commission  
16 “shall consist of nine members, one selected by each member of the governing body.” The  
17 appointees shall be residents of the city of Santa Fe, and, to the extent possible, either have an  
18 interest, knowledge, or training in local government or law or have personal knowledge of the City  
19 government.

20 **OFFICERS:** The commissioners shall elect one member to be their chair and one member  
21 to be vice-chair.

22 **TERM:** The members of the Governing Body shall appoint commissioners no later than  
23 April 1, 2026, and the commissioners shall conclude their term by April 1, 2027.

24 **Section 5. ABSENCES:** Failure to attend three consecutive regular meetings or  
25 thirty-three percent (33%) or more of the Commission’s regular meetings shall constitute an

1 automatic tender of resignation by such member, which the Governing Body may accept or reject  
2 at its discretion.

3 **Section 6. VACANCIES:** Vacancies on the Commission shall be filled by the  
4 member of the Governing Body who appointed the commissioner who held the vacated position.

5 **Section 7. MEETINGS; DURATION; QUORUM:** The Commission shall meet at  
6 least once per month, in accordance with the Open Meetings Act and any other applicable City  
7 policies and procedures and “hall hold no less than two meetings in each of the city’s council  
8 districts, for the purpose of taking input from the public.

9 **Section 8. STAFF LIAISON:** The City Manager shall identify no fewer than two employees  
10 to work alongside the City Attorney or City Attorney’s designee to assist the Commission to  
11 perform research and drafting functions for the commission.

12 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the City shall advertise the creation of the  
13 Commission and its functions on a dedicated page of the City’s web site, and the page shall allow  
14 for the public to submit proposed amendments.

15 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that as is consistent with Section 10.01 of the Charter,  
16 the “governing body shall consider and vote upon proposing the commission’s recommended ballot  
17 questions.”

18 Respectfully submitted,

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20  \_\_\_\_\_

21 Michael Garcia, Councilor

22  
23  \_\_\_\_\_  
24 Pilar Faulkner (Sep 24, 2025 14:24:02 MDT)

25 Pilar Faulkner, Councilor

1 Amendment approved as to Form:

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4 Erin K. McSherry, City Attorney

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8 ADOPTED: \_\_\_\_\_

9 NOT ADOPTED: \_\_\_\_\_

10 DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

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14 ANDRÉA SALAZAR, City Clerk

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25 *Legislation/2025/ Amendment A/ Call for Charter Review Committee to Review Mayor and City Councilor Powers*