

VIGIL, XAVIER I.

From: City of Santa Fe <noreply@santafenm-gov.com>
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2026 12:31 PM
To: Governing Body Public Comment
Subject: New submission from your Governing Body Public Comment form

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Submitted on: Monday, February 23, 2026 at 12:30pm

- First Name: Bob
- Last Name: White
- Your Email Address: [REDACTED]
- Your District: District 4
- Meeting Date: Special Meeting
- Section of Agenda you would like to comment on: Public Comment
- Your Comment: I have been involved in the discussion of this issue almost since the day the Monument was toppled. I wrote emails to the mayor and both of my councilors. I spoke during public comment in most every session with the Monument on the Agenda. I actively participated in the CHART process, and like many participants, I watched as it went off the rails without any intervention by the mayor or Council. From my very first emails and public comments, I was first asking, then pleading, for an engineering study to determine the structural integrity of the base and Obelisk remains. I am so happy this has finally been completed, and work has started to finally actually resolve this.

My background: 1. Married into Santa Fe in 1975, and have lived in Santa Fe or Belen in the intervening years. I think I have seriously integrated into the culture, and that may be best evidenced by my best friend, a leader at Taos Pueblo, who out of the blue one day said, "You may be a white boy, but you are no gabacho." Greatest compliment I ever received. 2. Have studied history since childhood, and the last 50 years have had particular focus on the cultural interactions in singularly unique New Mexico. 3. After retiring my wife and I volunteered as docents and tour guides at Ranchos de Las Golondrinas for several years. I learned much NM history in my interactions there, but I also have considerable "book learning", with particular focus on Pententes, Comanche, and Comancheros. Not putting this in to make it seem I am asking for special treatment, but just to let you know what informs my recommendations.

So many of the proposals that were discussed during CHART and various public meetings were well intentioned, but were really missing the importance of that spot to many Santa Fe residents born and raised here. Not so much because of the historic factors of the Obelisk, but likely more because it has become the final symbol on the Plaza of the Hispanic-Mestizo/Pueblo cultures that built Santa Fe from 1608 until their marginalization beginning in the 1980's. The Pueblos at least still have the Portal vendors, but there is nothing else on the Plaza, and very little east of St

Francis, that reflects the Hispanic-Mestizo culture.

Since restoring or moving the Monument does not seem feasible from either a fiscal or safety perspective, there should be a new memorial built, but not one honoring a specific event or person. It should be a celebration as much as a memorial, and should celebrate the culture that was first appropriated, and then forced out of the neighborhoods in which they built that culture. This culture is pretty much different from any others in the Americas, and I really don't think many newcomers understand what was lost in the Disneyfication of the Plaza and downtown. The City may love the tax dollars tourism has generated, but it has an obligation to not brush under the rug the cost that was paid by families that were here before the tourists, wealthy retirees, and trust fund vagabond pushed them to the edges. The descendants of those families will be here long after those groups have moved on to the next big thing.

Bids could be put out for a broad interpretation, and with Santa Fe's many traditional arts&crafts people let the creativity flow. Nothing denigrating or disrespectful to any group, but singularly focused on what has been lost.

Thank you for any consideration.