



Santolina Timeline

NOVEMBER 2013: Developers make initial presentation to Bernalillo County Planning Commission.

DECEMBER 2014: After several public meetings, the County Planning Commission recommends that the Bernalillo County Commission (BCC) approve Santolina’s request to amend the zone map from “A-1 Rural/Agricultural” to “Planned Communities” and adopt the Santolina Master Plan.

MARCH 18, 2015: Albuquerque Public Schools passes a resolution asking BCC to deny the Santolina Level A Master Plan “until the issues of school financing, transportation, water and infrastructure have been adequately addressed.”

MARCH 23, 2015: County Commissioner Art De La Cruz publishes an op-ed, “Santolina Isn’t the Threat Opponents Claim,” in the *Albuquerque Journal*.

MARCH 25, 2015: Western Albuquerque Land Holdings attorney quoted by KOAT: “Taxpayers outside of Santolina do not need to be concerned that they will have to support Santolina,” said John P. Salazar. Salazar said the developer is also paying 100-percent of the cost, including all of the roads, water and sewer lines, and storm drains.”

MARCH 25, 2015 – JUNE 2015: BCC holds several public hearings on Santolina’s Level A submittals. Despite overwhelming public opposition to the project and the failure of Santolina to meet many of the requirements found in the Bernalillo County Planned Communities Criteria, the BCC approves the project 3-2.

SouthWest Organizing Project (SWOP), Pajarito Village Association, New Mexico Health Equity Working Group and several individuals represented in the proceeding by New Mexico Environmental Law Center (NMELC).

JUNE 16, 2015: Albuquerque City Council refuses to provide input to Bernalillo County on Santolina.

JUNE 16, 2015: BCC approves zone map amendment and Level A Master Plan by a vote of 3-2. Commissioners Art De La Cruz, Wayne Johnson and Lonnie Talbert vote in favor; Debbie O’Malley and Maggie Hart Stebbins oppose.

JUNE 24, 2015: BCC votes along the same lines to sign the Development Agreement with Western Albuquerque Land Holdings.

JUNE 2015: NMELC appeals to state District Court on behalf of its clients; other residents of the South Valley appeal through a private attorney. Issues raised in the appeals include De La Cruz’s bias and the failures of the developer to prove it has water for the project, a comprehensive transportation plan, a concept plan for schools, and that the development will be built at “no net expense” to Bernalillo County taxpayers as required in the Planned Communities Criteria.

SUMMER 2016: The “New Mexico for New Mexicans” Political Action Committee, which is funded by the developers’ staff and attorneys, funnels more than \$64,000 into mailings and billboards promoting the election of actor Steven Michael Quezada to take over the seat of BCC Commissioner De La Cruz, who steps down at the end of 2016 due to term limits. Quezada wins.

FALL 2016: Despite repeated promises that it would not seek public funding, Santolina asks for – and receives from Bernalillo County – \$500 million in 40 Public Improvement Districts (PIDs) and 20 Tax Increment Development Districts (TIDDs). These public financing tools will reimburse developers for infrastructure they had promised to fund.

(Authorized for 50 years, these subsidies will likely top \$1 billion due to inflation.)

JUNE 2016 – JANUARY 2017: Bernalillo County Planning Commission holds hearings on the incomplete Level B Master Plan; recommends approval of the Plan by the BCC in January. NMELC and its clients file an appeal with the BCC. Santolina files an appeal two months late.

MARCH 14/APRIL 4, 2017: BCC holds public hearings on Santolina Level B.1 Master plan. Santolina asks BCC to strip the proof-of-water requirements that must be met before Level B.1 can be approved; BCC directs Santolina to submit proposal to County Planning Commission. BCC refuses NMELC's request to defer hearing while Level A court case is underway, and does not vote on NMELC appeal of Planning Commission's recommendation.

JUNE 5, 2017: Norm Gaume, architect of the 1997 Albuquerque Water Resources management Strategy, publishes an op-ed warning that,

“If the [Planning Commission] makes the wrong decision – to ignore water – and the BCC approves that decision later this summer, the outcome will jeopardize our region’s public water supply, negatively impact local consumers, and affect taxpayers throughout the state.”

JUNE 2, 2017: Ruling on NMELC's 2015 lawsuit, New Mexico District Court Judge Nancy Franchini reverses the BCC's decision to change the zoning for Santolina from “A-1 Rural/Agricultural” to “Planned Community”. Her ruling is based procedural due process violations by the BCC. The Santolina developers have asked the Court to reconsider its decision.

JUNE 5, 2017: NMELC files Motion to Clarify with Judge Franchini, asking Court to clarify that the reversal of the zone map amendment invalidates all subsequent approvals and processes in the Santolina proceeding.

JUNE 7, 2017: Despite the Court ruling days earlier, County Planning Commission holds a hearing on a proposal by Santolina to strip proof-of-water requirements from the BCC's approval of Santolina's Level A Master Plan; the developers have asked that these proof-of-water requirements be waived until the Level C process (which neither allows for public input nor is subject to approval by BCC).

NMELC asks the Planning Commission to defer the hearing on the grounds that the Court decision renders all of the BCC's Level A approvals void as well as the Level B process; the hearing proceeds.

Based on improperly admitted evidence, Commissioners vote to recommend that the BCC approve Santolina's request during its hearing on the Level B process. One Commissioner who votes in favor of the development is Johnny Peña, whose wife Klarissa Peña is employed by YDI, Inc., an organization that owns land that will be developed by Santolina; as City Councilor, she previously recused herself from a Santolina vote in order to avoid the appearance of a conflict. She is up for reelection in 2017.

JUNE 22: NMELC appeals County Planning Commission recommendation of Santolina's proposal to BCC.

Grounds for appeal include:

- Due to the District Court ruling, Santolina is no longer in possession of valid Level A approvals.
- Santolina has not proven that it has obtained water for the project as required by the Level A approvals.
- The elimination of proof-of-water conditions from the Level A approvals violates the Planned Communities Criteria.
- The classification of Santolina's subdivisions as “minor plat” violates the New Mexico Subdivision Act.
- The Planning Commission voted on the Santolina despite a conflict of interest and improper admission of evidence.

AUGUST 15: The BCC will consider developers' Level B.1 Master Plan, as well as Santolina's proof-of-water proposal at a hearing. NMELC and its clients have appealed the Planning Commission's recommendation including challenges to Mr. Peña's conflict of interest and the use of improperly admitted evidence.