



Lea County

Five Year Strategic Plan

2016-2021

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Section 1

Lea County Mission Statement:

“Lea County shall be results-oriented, accountable to the public, with professional and regional leadership focused on economic vitality, healthy lifestyles, quality of life, and safety of the community.”

Section 2

Approach & Strategies:

1. Collaboration & partnership with local communities, agencies and government entities is essential for success
2. County employees are valued
3. Continuous communication with the public is beneficial and necessary
4. Leverage resources to the fullest extent to maximize the return to the public and minimize cost to tax payer
5. Public and employee involvement and participation is beneficial, needed and valued
6. Transparency and ethical decision making continue to be the framework in which the county operates
7. The responsibility to be good stewards of the public finances
8. Continuous interaction with the State of New Mexico and statewide organizations is required to protect the County's interests

Section 3

Goals & Performance Measures

- 1. Accountability**
- 2. Economic Growth & Vitality**
- 3. Infrastructure & Facilities**
- 4. Quality of Life**
- 5. Safety**

Section 3.1

Accountability

Goal Statement “Lea County is responsible for the public’s tax dollars in a fiscally conservative and transparent manner”

Performance Measures:

1. County expenditures shall not exceed revenue.
2. Accurate and thoughtful revenue projections: actual revenues are not less than forecasted
3. The County does not incur additional long term debt: pay off existing debt obligation on the County detention center facility prior to adding additional debt obligations.
4. County expenditures are available to the public in a convenient and reader-friendly format: obtain highest possible score regarding government transparency from watchdog groups.
5. Budget adjustments for increasing expenditures are reduced from prior year: reduce the number of adjustments due to expenditure increases from the prior year.
6. County Bond rating: obtain AAA
7. Frequency of and type of audit findings: no recurring findings / no material findings
8. County shall maintain strong reserves: 6 months of personnel and operating
9. Public access to information regarding county contracts, finances: obtain highest possible score regarding transparency from watchdog groups

Section 3.2

Economic Growth & Vitality

Goal Statement: “Lea County is a community that has economic growth & diversification”

Performance Measures:

1. Unemployment rate: a downward trend
2. Diversification of taxes by industry: property taxes represent multiple industries
3. A variety of different housing options available
4. Poverty rate: poverty rate of resident’s decrease
5. Median household income: an increase from year to year
6. Annual population growth: maintain positive growth rates each year

Section 3.3

Infrastructure & Facilities

Goal Statement: “The County shall provide a safe, reliable, and efficient transportation network, and county facilities shall be maintained and shall meet the changing needs of the public”.

Performance Measures:

1. % of chip sealed county roads vs. caliche roads (goal: each year chip seal more roads)
2. Future roads provide connections to reduce emergency response time
3. Airports that are maintained and improved with new facilities (goal: increase capacity for changing commercial aircraft)
4. County facilities are ADA compliant
5. Planned water infrastructure system for use and conservation (goal: a system in place with paying customers)
6. Efficient use of utilities and technology in county facilities

Section 3.4

Quality of Life

Goal Statement: “Lea County shall have a variety of recreational & cultural amenities with access to convenient & quality healthcare”

Performance Measures:

1. Health care study indicators (goal: reach national standards)
2. Health indicators- teen pregnancy, substance abuse changes (goal: reduce each year)
3. Number of general and specialty medicine doctors / health care providers per 1,000 residents (goal: reach national standards)
4. Exposure to entertainment / # of entertainment options at county facilities
5. Miles of trails / health walk / new outdoor exercise space

Section 3.5

Safety

Goal Statement: “Lea County shall be a safe community without crime”

Performance Measures:

1. Prevent intoxicated drivers: tipsy taxi / education / enforcement
2. Alcohol related crashes: decrease from year to year
3. Violent crimes change from year to year
4. Lower IOS ratings for county fire districts: decrease response times, greater access to water resources: target of IOS rating 5
5. Proper care and treatment of domestic animals: less stray domestic animals and reports of abused domestic animals
6. Law enforcement response time
7. Vehicular fatalities change from year to year
8. Employee injuries / fatalities / accidents from year to year

Section 4: Supplemental Information

Section 4.1: Process & Timeline:

- Jan 14: 1st Commission meeting – introduction
- Feb 04: 1st work session – first discussion with sample plan content & first reaction from Board
- **March 3: 2nd work session meeting** – presentation of first draft of mission statement & goals with discussion of Action statements and measures / indicators
- **March 3:** —an opportunity for public input
- **Third week in March: 1st town hall meeting for public input**
- **March 31: 3rd commission meeting** – report back on public input and first draft of action statements and measures / indicators
- Second / **Second week in April 2nd town hall meeting**
- **April 14: 3rd work session** – discussion of proposed final Five Year Strategic Plan
- **April 14 3rd Commission meeting**—adoption of final Five Year Strategic Plan
- April: Final town hall meeting to present adopted plan to the public. Plan published on website and distributed to county partners

Section 4.2: Public Input:

- **March 17, 2016: 1st Town Hall Meeting (1st round)- Public Input**
- Lovington: Courthouse
- Approximately 10 attendees
- No negative comments on mission statements / planning process / goals

Comments / public input:

1. Public awareness campaign regarding the proper treatment of animals
2. Need to educate the public on how to treat and care for animals—provide the basic needs: food, shelter, etc.
3. Quality of life—what is included in this?
4. Need proactive safety plans – to protect against from acts of terror
5. Need proactive plans to prevent to crime in the oilfield

March 24, 2016: 2nd Town Hall Meeting (1st Round)—Public Input

- Hobbs: Lea County Event Center
- Approximately 15 attendees
- No negative comments on mission statements / planning process / goals

Comments / public input:

1. Public awareness campaign regarding the proper treatment of animals
2. The County needs laws that are easily understood and that are tough on the cruel / improper of animals
3. The County should replicate the City of Hobbs laws on the proper treatment of animals
4. Economic diversification needs to remain a priority of the county—continue New Horizons—pursue more business start ups
5. More marketing and creating a tourist atmosphere: continue commercial air service, event center, NMJC events—more “head in beds” events –more conferences and industry shows
6. Increase investments in land, labor, training programs, spec buildings, etc.
7. Expand the Arts Industry—county wide arts resource center- tourism—Art District, partnerships to promote the Arts Industry
8. Expand major roads to reduce traffic congestion—add lanes—City of Hobbs and County need to partner on roads expansions
9. Reduce the speeding – more law enforcement is needed

April 11, 2016: 3rd Town Hall Meeting (2nd Round)—Public Input

- Hobbs: Lea County Event Center
- Approximately 8 attendees
- No negative comments on mission statements / planning process / goals

Comments / public input:

1. What is the county's concern regarding building the new Health & Wellness Center, building the equine facility, and having the Event Center and the ongoing cost to maintain these buildings?
2. Why are my property taxes going up to pay for the Wellness Center and the equine facility?
3. The County and City should look having something that will draw people here, some tourism. Something like what is in San Antonio – a large water park or a large amusement park with rides, offer incentives to get those type of things here.
4. What is the County's position on Spectra? How long has Spectra been here? What is Spectra doing to make the Event Center a Cadillac facility?
5. A public transit service between Lovington and Hobbs would be helpful

Section 4.3: About Lea County

- **Founded:** March 17, 1917
- **Location:** Southeast corner of New Mexico bordered by Texas state line on East and South Bordered by Eddy and Chaves County on the West and Curry County on the North
- **Population:** 64,727 (2010), a 16.6 % growth from 2000 Census, 4th highest population growth in state with culturally diverse residents. Considered one of the fastest growing counties in New Mexico
- **Size:** 108 miles long North to South and 44 miles wide at widest point, approximately 4,400 square miles.
- **Communities:** 5 municipalities to include Tatum, Lovington (county seat), Hobbs, Eunice, and Jal
- **Industry:** "EnergyPlex" with oil & gas, renewable energy, nuclear enrichment, and supporting ancillary companies like banking, retail, hospitality, with continuously expanding healthcare industry.
- **Transportation:** the county owns and operates an airport in Jal, and in Lovington and a commercial airport outside of Hobbs, and maintains 1220 miles of county roads with connections to state and federal highways.