Community Meetings
March 23 and 24, 2021
AGENDA

• Introductions
• Scope/Purpose of a Comprehensive Plan
• Emerging Issues
• Question and Answer Session
• Break-out Discussion
WHAT IS A COMP PLAN?

• Policy guide that informs decisions about capital investments and land use

• Vision document for the future of Valencia County; established through a community-driven process

• Outline existing conditions, challenges, and opportunities

• Consider needs 20+ years into the future

• Strategies to achieve County goals and policy priorities

• Policy document rather than a regulatory document (different than the zoning code)
WHY IS A COMP PLAN IMPORTANT?

• Identify general infrastructure and facility needs
• Understand and anticipate changing demographics and economic conditions
• Reference document for staff, residents, and policy-makers when developing infrastructure projects and making land use decisions
• Qualify for grant funding; state recommends that a Comp Plan be updated every 5 years
GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

• Focus is on unincorporated areas
• Incorporated communities have Comprehensive Plans and identify their own priorities
• Valencia County Comprehensive Plan will document services in incorporated areas that are available for all residents
• Many issues transcend boundaries – housing needs, economic development, recreational opportunities, transportation needs
CHAPTERS / COMPONENTS

- Community Profile / Demographics
- Economic Development
- Land Use
- Housing
- Community Services
- Transportation
- Utilities / Water Resources
- Natural Resources / Environment (includes Hazards)

Structure of Individual Chapters

- Existing Conditions
- Community Priorities
- Policies and Action Items
COMMUNITY ASSETS

- Cultural/historical landmarks
- Rural heritage/atmosphere
- Farming greenbelt along the Rio Grande
- Railroad – BNSF and Rail Runner
- UNM-Valencia
WHAT DO WE KNOW? / WHAT HAVE WE HEARD SO FAR?

• High quality of life in Valencia County
• Combination of rural lifestyle and proximity to urban amenities
• Unincorporated areas where additional services are desired; other areas where rural land uses should be preserved
• Previous Comp Plan (2005) does not provide sufficient guidance on land use decisions
• Concerns over long-term water resource availability
• Tension: urban growth versus rural identity
• Balance the desire for economic opportunities with development patterns that are consistent with Valencia County
WHAT DO WE KNOW?

GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

• Development in Los Lunas
  o New housing and commercial activity
  o Facebook and supporting businesses

• River crossing in design phase
  o Alleviate congestion on NM 6, improve access for Valencia County residents
  o Could open new land for development
  o Phase I: Connection between NM 314 & NM 47
  o Phase II: Interchange and connection from I-25 to NM 314
WHAT DO WE KNOW? – POPULATION DYNAMICS

- Modest growth at County level in last 5-10 years
- Recent increase in housing demand, especially in Los Lunas
- County forecast (MRCOG): 2016-2040
  - 4% total population growth
  - 5% total employment growth
  - Majority of growth is likely to occur in incorporated areas
WHAT DO WE KNOW? – POPULATION DYNAMICS

- Increasing share of the population will be over age 65
- Decreasing share of population will be under 18
- Fewer individuals to participate in the workforce (i.e. ages 18-64)
- Implications for senior services, school enrollment, travel patterns, etc.
WHAT DO WE KNOW?
GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

• Regional activity centers – Downtown Los Lunas and Belen

• Comp Plan will evaluate locations for future growth and development
  • Potential medical center
  • Manzano Expressway - El Cerro Mission Blvd to Meadowlake Rd
  • West of I-25
INITIAL COMMUNITY NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

- Greater range of job opportunities (3/4 of employed residents commute outside the County for work)
- Medical services
- Community programs and recreational opportunities
- Roadway improvements
- Improved broadband access

OnTheMap, 2018
• Link now available on Valencia County website
• Resource hub for updates and Comp Plan materials
• [https://bhinc.com/valencia-county-comp-plan/](https://bhinc.com/valencia-county-comp-plan/)
PUBLIC OUTREACH SURVEY

• **Available** on project website through April 15
• Combination of multiple choice, ranked order, and open-ended questions
• Gain insights into public priorities and areas of concerns
• Results to be integrated into Comprehensive Plan
NEXT STEPS/OUTREACH EFFORTS

Public Outreach
• Project website
• Online survey – Open through April 15
• Virtual workshops
• Additional public outreach in late summer 2021

Plan Development
• Draft available for public review in late summer
• Final draft to be considered for approval by County Commission in fall 2021
BREAKOUT SESSION – DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

• What are the best parts about living/working in Valencia County?
• What are one or two things you would most like to change?
• What are you most concerned about?
QUESTIONS

Nancy Gonzales – Community Development Director
nancy.gonzales@co.valencia.nm.us

Gabriel Luna – Land Use Planner
gabriel.luna@co.valencia.nm.us

Aaron Sussman, AICP – Project Manager
asussman@bhinc.com