



# Sandoval County Economic Development Action Strategy

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Prepared for Sandoval County  
and the Sandoval Economic Alliance | April 2019



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01

# Introduction

# About this Action Strategy

In September 2017, the Sandoval Economic Alliance (SEA) hired Avalanche Consulting to conduct a Target Industry Study of Sandoval County. The goal of this study was to provide an in-depth assessment of the competitive position of Sandoval County and its labor shed and to recommend target industries on which the SEA can most effectively focus its activities. Commissioned by SEA, this Study was a cooperative effort funded by Sandoval County, New Mexico Gas, Amrep Southwest, Century Bank, Klinger, US Bank, JR Allison, Mike Skolnick, and Becky Teague.

This Study found a distinct need for an updated economic development strategy to coordinate partners and activities focused on economic base job creation across Sandoval County. Through partnership with Sandoval County, in October 2018, the SEA again contracted Avalanche Consulting to assist in developing an Economic Development Action Strategy to address this need.

The desired outcome of this Action Strategy was to further engage stakeholders throughout Sandoval County and identify clear, actionable recommendations to coordinate and accelerate local economic development initiatives towards common goals. Through the engagement process, the specific goals of the Action Strategy were refined to:

- Provide a **tactical plan** to create competitive business sites
- Build a **collaborative framework** for all partners
- Lay a **foundation for future** economic development activities
- Establish a **communication system** to build a long-term economic development vision
- Provide an **implementation plan and metrics**

The findings of the strategy planning process are presented in this document – the Sandoval County Economic Development Action Strategy.





# Target Industry Study

Based on an economic evaluation of Sandoval County, the Target Industry study recommended three primary target industries for economic development: **Life Sciences**, **Professional Services & Support**, and **Advanced Technology & Manufacturing**. Sandoval County has many competitive strengths to support job creation in these industries, but availability of business location sites currently limits the potential for job growth.

The target industries and their niche sectors are listed in the graphic below. For background on how these targets were identified and specifics on the opportunities they present, please review the Sandoval County Target Industry reports.



# Steering Committee Members

Sandoval Economic Alliance, Sandoval County, and Avalanche Consulting sincerely thank the members of the Action Strategy Steering committee for helping inform and guide the development of this strategic plan. Members include:

Lisa Adkins, FatPipe	Gary Housley, Don Chalmers Ford	Lorraine Ruggles, NM Dept. of Workforce Solutions
Chrissy Akes, The Neighborhood in Rio Rancho	Mayor Gregg Hull, City of Rio Rancho	Pierce Runnels, Geobruigg North America
Pierre Amestoy, Amestoy Dri-Wall	Gabe Jenson, Bosque Brewing Company	Jerry Schalow, Rio Rancho Regional Chamber of Com.
Cary Beam, Cuba VISTA Volunteer	Savannah Jermance, City of Rio Rancho	Jamie Silva-Steele, UNM SRMC
Barb Belknap, Sandoval Signpost	Mike Kloeppel, Town of Bernalillo	Elan Silverblatt-Buser, Silver Leaf Farms
John Black, West Wood Realty	Alex Lenzo, St. Francis Episcopal Church	Virginia Smith, Adelante Consulting
Brian Brichford, HP	Joshua Madalena, Five Sandoval Pueblos	Ed Smith, Edit House Productions
Laura Burton, UNM Health Sciences Center Rio Rancho	Dianne Maes, Sandoval County	Kim Smith, Edit House Productions
Daniel Busse, ASK Academy	Eddie McCall, Covenant Community Dev. Corp.	Jim Spadaccini, Ideum
Anthony Caravella, City of Rio Rancho	Gordon Moore, Lectrosonics	Jeanie Springer, Springer 5 Investments
Phil Casaus, Brycon	John Morrow, West Wood Realty	Mike Springfield, Sandoval County
Dr. V. Sue Cleveland, Rio Rancho Public Schools	Mark Mosher, Amfabsteel	Rebecca Stapp, Safelite
John Craig, City of Rio Rancho	Okpareka Ndidiamaka, Olive Tree Compounding Pharmacy	Emily Stovel, Sandoval County
Brad Crowson, WESST	Mary Angela Parkins, St. Felix Pantry	Jessica Taylor, Realty One of New Mexico
Richard Draper, Sandoval Health Collaborative	Dave Patterson, Insight Lighting	Becky Teague, PNM
Argen Duncan, Rio Rancho Observer	Carey Plant, AMREP Southwest	Mayor Jack Torres, Town of Bernalillo
Erika Edgerly, Intel	Paula Porter, Paulita's of New Mexico	Councilor Bob Tyler, City of Rio Rancho
Commissioner Kenneth Eichwald, Sandoval County	Alan Porter, Paulita's of New Mexico	Mayor Richard Velarde III, Village of Cuba
Paul Eskew, Aeroparts	Roberta Radosevich, Haven House	Mike Vidal, PLTI
Charley Ford, NM Highlands University	Ray Regan, Realty One of New Mexico	Antoinette Vigil, Sandoval County
Gena Goodson, Rio Rancho the Magazine	Frank Rivera, Rotary Club of Rio Rancho	Dora Dominguez, Sandoval County
Commissioner Dave Heil, Sandoval County	Mayor JoAnne Roake, Village of Corrales	
Mary Homan, New Mexico Gas Company	Jim Rogers	



# Community Engagement

To be effective, a strategic plan must hear directly from the community it is meant to serve. Beginning with the Target Industry Study in 2017, the planning process engaged stakeholders throughout Sandoval County – including local businesses, citizens, educators, elected leaders, public officials, and more. To date, the planning team engaged more 100 stakeholders through interviews, focus groups, an online survey, and Steering Committee workshops. Groups that participated in the process included:

- SEA Board of Directors
- County Commission
- Elected Officials from local Cities
- Economic Development Partners
- University of NM Regional Medical Center
- Central New Mexico Community College
- Rio Rancho Public Schools
- Rio Rancho Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Local Employers
- Human Resource Managers
- Presbyterian Rust Medical Center
- New Mexico Economic Development Department
- New Mexico Partnership
- Non-Profit Leaders
- Real Estate Professionals
- Non-profit Leaders
- Real Estate Professionals
- 60-member Steering Committee
- Young Professionals

The perspectives of these and other individuals directly shaped the direction of this Action Strategy, which is focused on creating competitive sites for businesses in Sandoval County to grow economic base jobs.

Those engaged through the planning process also noted a need for additional outreach in the community – to help build a shared vision for Sandoval County’s future and make the case for many economic development activities recommended in this Action Strategy.

As a result, continued community engagement is a top focus of strategy. There will be more opportunities for the citizens and businesses of Sandoval County to inform future economic development activity.



# Action Strategy Executive Summary

The Sandoval County Economic Development Action Strategy provides a tactical plan to create competitive sites for business in Sandoval County. Sandoval County has an urgent need for business sites that can accommodate office, manufacturing, and other commercial uses. Lack of sites contributes to slow economic base job growth in the county and a relatively small tax base. These factors, in turn, create fiscal challenges for local governments in providing quality services to residents and make Sandoval County a talent and dollar export community – where children graduate and leave, seeking careers elsewhere; where the majority of residents drive to jobs outside the county; and where local wealth is spent on retail and services in neighboring communities that gain the tax benefits.

This export-oriented, bedroom community economy is not sustainable. Residents love Sandoval County and its cities, but their unique culture and high quality of life cannot be maintained without a more robust and diverse economic job base. The county offers many competitive assets for businesses, but shovel-ready sites are severely lacking. The specific steps outlined below and detailed in this report are designed to mobilize the county to address this need.

## **ACTION STRATEGY GOAL – Sandoval County has competitive sites for business.**

### **ASSEMBLE LAND AND DEVELOP SITES**

- Identify preferred locations for constructing business park(s)
- Plan and estimate costs for site development and utility preparation
- Prepare site renderings and plans for presentations
- Develop options for land assembly, including lobbying the New Mexico state government for limited eminent domain powers
- Assemble land parcels to create a business park
- Utilize existing and create new funding mechanisms for site development and maintenance
- Explore other tools and regulatory changes to accelerate private construction of office, manufacturing, and other commercial sites

### **INVEST IN INFRASTRUCTURE**

- Complete Paseo del Volcan
- Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to include consideration for future developments
- Build regional awareness and support for priority infrastructure projects
- Identify potential partners and funding sources
- Proactively invest in expansion projects and maintenance

### **ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY**

- Create a communication and engagement plan
- Recruit a team of community ambassadors
- Build communications and feedback platforms
- Conduct a mass media rollout
- Follow up with face-to-face engagements
- Continue to update and engage





02

## **Tactical Framework**

# Time for Action

**“Our greatest export is our children.”** This is a common refrain across Sandoval County. It captures one of the top concerns for local families – our children leave the county in search of economic opportunity they cannot find here. This statement mirrors other stark realities for Sandoval County. One could say, “Our greatest export is our residents,” as the majority of our residents leave each day to work in Bernalillo County. Or, “Our greatest export is our tax dollars,” because without a diverse job base, we cannot support local retail businesses, and instead spend our money in other communities. This state of affairs is not sustainable. **If we export our children, our work, and our dollars to other communities, what will be left to sustain our county in the future?**

**The greatest obstacle holding us back has been our lack of competitive sites for business.** This should not be a revelation. Leaders in the county have raised this concern for decades, but little has changed. Creating spaces for new business is not an easy task; if it were easy, we would have accomplished it already. The subdivision of land in the 1970s created unique challenges for assembling parcels. Building roads, utilities, and sites is also not cheap.

The difficulty of the task can no longer be an excuse. **If we do not solve this challenge, we will continue to pay higher costs – exporting our youth and workforce will force us to make tough decisions between reduced services or increased taxes.** It will only get harder to serve our communities.

**To create local opportunities for our children and generate the tax dollars necessary to sustain our county in the future, we must invest in ourselves today.** As site selector Mark Sweeney said when assessing Sandoval County, “If you view infrastructure as a cost rather than an investment, you are going to die.”

This Economic Development Action Strategy provides a tactical plan that lays a foundation for Sandoval County’s future prosperity. It focuses on specific steps that mobilize our communities to create competitive sites for businesses. There are other economic needs to address across the county and each of its cities, but the critical need for sites makes this the top priority. Solving this challenge will create space and economic growth that allows us to address other needs. Ignoring it will only create new challenges.

**Effectively building sites depends upon engaging with residents and businesses throughout Sandoval County – making the case for critical investments while also listening to their stories, needs, and aspirations.** This is how we will build a coalition to support economic development today and a community-driven vision for what we need in the future.



# Tactical Framework

This Action Strategy recommends a tactical approach to addressing Sandoval County's most critical need – **creating competitive sites for businesses**. Achieving this goal requires collaborative action in three areas – **land assembly and site development; construction of supportive infrastructure, and community engagement**.

The following pages outline a roadmap to achieve this goal, with specific tactics in each area. It is important to remember that **this roadmap is only a guide**. Once a journey has begun, the map may not show unexpected road closures, traffic, and newly constructed routes. Similarly, these tactics may encounter obstacles, and new opportunities may emerge, but the goal remains the same – creating competitive sites for businesses.

The tactics will evolve as the plan is implemented and local leaders make it their own – tailoring the specifics to match the abilities of implementation partners and the unique characteristics of Sandoval County and its cities. Care should be taken to ensure these efforts **consider the values of local communities, preserve cultures, and protect the natural environment**. Whenever decisions are made in a flexible framework, they must be aimed at the primary goal – creating competitive sites for business. **If this goal is not achieved, the county and its residents will have no foundation to address other important needs around education, entrepreneurship, and other topics.**

## ACTION STRATEGY GOAL

Sandoval County has competitive sites for businesses.

## FOCUS AREAS

Land Assembly &  
Site Development

Investments in  
Infrastructure

Community Engagement



# Other Economic Development Topics

The Sandoval County Action Strategy is focused on creating competitive sites for businesses, but there are other important **ongoing activities and possible initiatives in Sandoval County that support a resilient economy and thriving residents**. Some of these efforts have been underway for years, while others are new ideas worth exploring in the future. This is not an exhaustive list, but it highlights other topics important to successful long-term economic development.

**Although these topics are important for the county, they remain dependent on creating competitive sites for businesses.** For example, it is hard for educational institutions to develop training programs for technology manufacturers, if those businesses cannot expand or locate in Sandoval County. Similarly, if there is little existing office space, there are few options for creating co-working or incubator space for entrepreneurs. **The Community Engagement portion of this Action Strategy should include forums to explore these and other topics once the action strategy goal has been achieved.**

**EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT** – Modern economic development is often focused on talent – ensuring that communities are attracting the best and brightest individuals and training local students with skills that match the needs of local businesses. As is the case in many communities, some Sandoval County employers express difficulty finding employees with specific skills – especially in the trades. The Rio Rancho Chamber and other business organizations are working with local schools to develop pathways that train students for in-demand careers, but more work can be done to build collaboration between businesses and educators. Efforts to ensure that students are aware of local training programs and career opportunities can help retain graduates in the county, and businesses can find the employees they need. However, with the economic job base numbers fairly low in Sandoval County, justifying complete realignment of education programs at UNM or CNM is challenging. If more business sites are developed through this strategy, however, economic base employment will grow to a level that can justify new educational programming.

**ENTREPRENEURSHIP & INNOVATION** – Entrepreneurs are an important source of new jobs in every community. Sandoval County is home to a high share of well-educated, inventive individuals who should be encouraged and supported in efforts to start new companies in the county. Creation of a coding academy or boot camp program could help students and adults learn technical skills they need to develop software without the expense of traditional college. To ensure that inventors and those with technical skills do not open their businesses outside Sandoval County, economic development must still focus on the need for sites and space. SEA, the County, and local cities must continue to explore programs to create shared office space and flexible innovation spaces for entrepreneurs, or face a likely continued export of local skills.

**NATURAL RESOURCES / BIOMASS PRODUCT MANUFACTURING** – Sandoval County is rich with natural resources, and protecting and utilizing these resources is critical to the livelihood of many rural county residents. Partners in the county are currently exploring the creation of a groundbreaking biomass manufacturing facility that would generate many local, well-paying jobs and help protect the natural environment. Exploring programs that help manage and protect natural resources, while also creating sustainable jobs for rural sections of the county, must also continue.





03

**Action Strategy**

# Land Assembly & Site Development

## GOAL – SANDOVAL COUNTY HAS COMPETITIVE SITES FOR BUSINESSES

Sandoval County has almost no utility-served, shovel-ready industrial sites, and it has limited office space. Existing businesses are often unable to expand their operations locally, leading them to either halt growth or decide to expand in another community. It also means that new businesses considering opening in Sandoval County must look elsewhere. This happens more than you might think. Over the past two years, six companies considered locating in Sandoval County and passed on the opportunity due to lack of sites. These were all attractive businesses – offering well-paying jobs and large capital investment that would provide a strong boost to the local tax base.

Sandoval County is an attractive destination for businesses. The county is home to a large, well-educated, and highly innovative workforce. The county's climate, rich cultural diversity, and natural beauty make it attractive for individuals and businesses alike. The county's offerings include some of the best schools in the state, world-class healthcare, Central New Mexico Community College (CNM), and the University of New Mexico (UNM). In the modern, knowledge-based economy, these assets are tremendously valuable, but without competitive sites for businesses, businesses will look elsewhere for their operations.

This focus area of the Action Strategy details tactics around land assembly and site development – the most important component of creating competitive sites for business in Sandoval County. The county needs office buildings, which will be addressed in this section, but the primary focus of these efforts is around creating a business park for modern manufacturing facilities.

The following pages describe in detail the recommended steps to assemble land and develop sites in Sandoval County. These steps include:

- Identify preferred locations for constructing business park(s)
- Plan and estimate costs for site development and utility preparation
- Prepare site renderings and plans for presentations
- Develop options for land assembly, including lobbying the New Mexico state government for limited eminent domain powers
- Assemble land parcels to create a business park
- Utilize existing and create of new funding mechanisms for site development and maintenance
- Explore other tools and regulatory changes to accelerate private construction of office, manufacturing, and other commercial sites



# Land Assembly & Site Development

## SITE LOCATION & NEEDS IDENTIFICATION

### *Business Park Development*

- **Identify physical locations in the county that make sense for developing a business park.**
  - Multiple locations options should be identified in case challenges occur in the development of one site.
  - Considerations for potential sites include transportation access, utility services, environmental impacts, and existing neighboring uses.
  - It is important to note that modern manufacturing business parks are clean operations with minimal noise and visibility concerns. Nonetheless, location identification should consider traffic and other safety concerns that may affect neighbors after construction.
  - Location identification should be conducted in a transparent process that includes local communities.
  - Avalanche recommends finding a site between 100 and 300 acres.
- **Hire an engineering firm to assess preferred locations, describe engineering needs, and provide cost estimates for construction.**
  - This assessment should consider the specific needs of businesses in Sandoval County's target industries.
- **Draft design guidelines for business parks that protect community values, aesthetics, and environment – e.g. requiring "Green" buildings.**
- **Hire a developer and/or architectural firm to prepare conceptual plans of the business park utilizing the design guidelines and engineering needs assessment.**
  - These should include renderings that show how the park will fit within the landscape and rough construction cost estimates.
- **Compile all assessments and renderings in a visually attractive business park plan.**
  - This plan will be utilized in lobbying and communication efforts at the state and local level.
  - It should clearly explain why choices were made related to potential site locations and engineering needs.
  - It should also describe how the plan aligns with community values and economic needs.

### *Office Development*

- New office space is already being developed in a few locations in Rio Rancho – including within Los Diamantes in the Unser Gateway and City Center. These locations make sense, as modern office tenants seek space in proximity to housing, amenities, and transportation.
- Sandoval County and its municipalities should **examine their comprehensive plans and ensure that land is zoned to allow office building construction** in appropriate locations – often mixed-use and transportation served.
- **Office development could be accelerated by rezoning priority locations identified by planners and the communities in combination with streamlining of development processes** and other incentive tools discussed later in this section.



# Land Assembly & Site Development

## LAND ASSEMBLY

After creating the business park plan, leadership must assemble land to construct the park. Because much of the desirable land in Sandoval County is held by private owners who do not reside in the county, assembling land for a business park can be time consuming, expensive, and often impossible. Those who have done this work in the past tell stories about hiring private investigators to track down landowners and other onerous and costly efforts.

The use of eminent domain by the county and/or local municipalities to procure properties at fair market value would be a highly effective tool for overcoming this obstacle. Because the State of New Mexico has restricted the use of eminent domain for economic development purposes, the entire county would need to lobby the state legislature to pass law(s) to allow limited use of eminent domain for these purposes.

In the landmark 2005 *Kilo v. City of New London* case, the US Supreme Court ruled that eminent domain could be used for economic development purposes, but that states could individually further restrict these uses through legislation. In 2007, the State of New Mexico did just that – changing the Metropolitan Redevelopment Act to disallow takings for economic development. This Action Strategy does not criticize this decision or advocate for a full return of eminent domain for economic development, but Sandoval County is facing an untenable situation and requires some form of legislative relief. Platting in the 1970s created thousands of small parcels that are nearly impossible to aggregate – a unique situation that requires additional tools.

- **Convene legal and legislative experts to identify specific proposed legal changes if necessary.**
  - Proposals to create eminent domain legislation for Rio Rancho are not new, but the economic need has become urgent. To successfully pass new legislation for a limited scope eminent domain, all communities in Sandoval County must make their case to the state legislature.
  - Lobbying for a limited scope eminent domain will require a coordinated campaign from the people and businesses of Sandoval County.
- **Meet with state legislators and make the case for eminent domain Sandoval County** – sharing past studies, this strategy, the business park plan, and the testimonies of developers and landowners to help justify the urgency of this need. It will be important to note that these tools are important to all communities in New Mexico, and not just Sandoval County.
- **Explore other tools for land assembly** in case it proves impossible to change state laws around eminent domain. This will require creative thinking. Some other options to consider include:
  - Incentivizing landowners to participate in business park development by offering them shares in the future value of the developed park.
  - Utilizing special taxing districts that require only a majority of property owners in a specific geographic area to vote for and fund construction of a business park.
  - Creating a new pool of money dedicated specifically to land assembly for a business park – potentially funded through industrial revenue bonds or other public-private partnership mechanisms.





# Land Assembly & Site Development

## SITE DEVELOPMENT

Once the land for a business park has been assembled, the park must be constructed, filled with tenants, and maintained. This will require funding and a framework for managing the property.

- **Establish an operating system for the business park.**
  - When developing the business park plan, the Action Strategy committees should consider a variety of models for funding and operations. Many successful communities around the country utilized Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) to construct and operate their business parks. These PPPs can take different forms, but often they will utilize public financing to assemble and construct a business park but enter an agreement with a private operator to maintain the property, deal with tenants, and collect rents for a limited period of time. Others might lease the land at a discount to a developer to construct and operate the business park for a limited period of time.
  - These PPPs can allow the public to minimize the risk of constructing and operating a business park by sharing the costs with a private company. They can also put the management of a park in the hands of an experienced private company capable of more efficiently doing the work than a government agency.
- **Identify funds for construction and maintenance.**
  - Until the engineering needs assessment and business park plans are completed, it is impossible to make an accurate estimate of costs, but developing the business park will be an expensive endeavor. Because current local government budgets are tight, Sandoval County, local municipalities, and other partners must explore creating new funding mechanisms for this Action Strategy.
  - Wherever possible, federal and state grants and programs should be utilized to assist with studies and infrastructure development. For example, the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) offers technical assistance grants of up to \$75,000 that could help fund the needs assessment.
  - New Mexico allows for an additional gross receipts tax (GRT) to fund economic development. Sandoval County should consider a limited-term gross receipts tax dedicated to constructing and operating a business park. New taxes are never easy to establish, but through the Community Engagement portion of this strategy, Sandoval County leaders can make the case to local residents, elected officials, and businesses for a small GRT increase. It will be important to show the significance of this initiative, how the funds will be spent, and that the tax will have a "sunset" clause – so residents know the tax increase will not be onerous.
  - Other funding mechanisms to consider include Tax Increment Development Districts (TIDD) and Public Improvement Districts (PID).



# Land Assembly & Site Development

## SITE PROMOTION

- **Develop plans to market and promote the business park.**
  - Getting the business park development efforts underway will likely draw attention from across the state and nation. The business community will see the activity and know that Sandoval County is “open for business.” This alone will generate new prospect activity, but Sandoval Economic Alliance should develop a clear marketing plan and supporting budget to promote the new business park.

## OTHER SITE RELATED EFFORTS

- In general, when conducting comprehensive planning efforts, Sandoval County and local municipalities **should ensure that they retain viable land zoned for commercial uses** – especially office, biomedical, and manufacturing. This will help encourage private sector development of sites alongside the Action Strategy’s efforts to construct a county business park.
- Wherever possible, efforts should be made to **expedite and incentivize development** by streamlining the permitting processes and creating special incentives, such as fee waivers, for targeted businesses that will help grow the economic job base.
- **Continue to expand the Virtual Building Program** through SEA.
  - If buildings are not already in place for new businesses, it is important to have plans in place for rapid construction and show them how this would work. The Virtual Building Program allows businesses to see how a building would look on a site. The program must be combined with a guarantee that buildings can be permitted and constructed in a short time frame (six months or less ideally).



# Land Assembly & Site Development

## SAMPLE MESSAGING

The greatest priority for Sandoval County is the development of competitive sites for business. Identifying and developing these sites within Sandoval County will require widespread community support, given the challenges and funding needs. Building community support will require engagement of everyone, from the general public to major employers to elected officials. Convincing each of these audiences will require different messaging and support. The partners implementing this strategy will need to tailor the messaging specific to Sandoval County nuances, but the overarching call to action must be personal, immediate, and real, because ***we must invest in the future of Sandoval County today.***

### BUSINESS LEADERS

- **Message:** Increasing commercial sites will help all businesses in Sandoval County by increasing available locations to operate, potentially reducing commercial rents, bolstering the population of daytime consumers, and spreading out the local tax burden.
- **Delivery Methods:** Face-to-face meetings and speaking engagements at chamber events and local industry associations

### COMMUNITY & NON-PROFIT LEADERS *(including leaders in education, healthcare, and non-profits)*

- **Message:** Your organizations depend on growth in population and tax revenues. Competitive sites will generate new business and employment opportunities in Sandoval County, which translates to more residents and a greater tax base.
- **Delivery Methods:** Face-to-face meetings with leaders of healthcare systems, universities, technical colleges, school districts, and major non-profits.

### SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS *(including current landowners, environmental groups, NIMBYs and naysayers)*

- **Message:** We can create competitive sites for business while also protecting our local values, aesthetics, and culture. Special care will be taken to minimize environmental impacts of any infrastructure improvements and site development. Design guidelines will require new buildings are attractive and match the local community aesthetic.
- **Delivery Methods:** Take as much of a proactive approach as possible. Identify these parties through social media and opinion pieces in local newspapers. Meet with these groups or individuals to listen and address their concerns and, when possible, discuss a way forward.

### GENERAL PUBLIC

- **Message:** Focus on the effects of the current system on families (grown children moving away, long commutes away from families, etc.) and on tax bills – showing that without more economic base jobs, in the future taxes will likely increase if we wish to provide quality services. For the personal/family audience, using testimonials from real people may increase the message's impact. For tax and fiscal audiences, using data to show challenges may be more convincing.
- **Delivery Methods:** Identify community ambassadors and engage in face-to-face interactions with small groups or town hall meeting forums.



# Land Assembly & Site Development

## SAMPLE MESSAGING (CONTINUED)

### LOCAL & STATE ELECTED OFFICIALS

- *Message:* Explain the history and special challenges around land assembly that Sandoval County faces. Share the Target Industry Study and other studies, personal stories testifying to local challenges, and background information that demonstrates this is a well-researched and carefully planned strategy. Make the case for why supporting these efforts is good for Sandoval County, its municipalities, and the State.
- *Delivery Methods:* Face-to-face meetings to include delegations of community leaders and major employers, letter writing campaigns from general public, and declarations of support posted online or in major newspapers

### STATE ELECTED OFFICIALS (outside the region)

- *Message:* Creating opportunities for economic base job growth in Sandoval County benefits the entire State of New Mexico – through primary and secondary impacts. A dedicated effort to construct new sites for businesses will also bring positive attention to New Mexico, demonstrating that the State is willing to work to support business and communities.
- *Delivery Methods:* Face-to-face meetings that include elected officials from Sandoval County and employers with a major statewide impact or presence (i.e. hospital systems, universities, utilities).





# Land Assembly & Site Development

## WHAT IS A SHOVEL-READY SITE?

“Companies that have made announcements in recent years have cited the presence of a “ready to go” site as one of the reasons that the company chose the location. Generally speaking, a shovel-ready site should have the following characteristics:

- The site is available. The site must be truly for sale, preferably with established terms and conditions. While the most ideal situation would be to have parcels owned by the EDO, it is often not feasible. An acceptable alternative would be long-term, renewable, assignable option agreements with landowners on key parcels.
- The site is fully served. In an ideal situation, all of the utilities are already at the site and the systems have adequate excess capacities to meet potential demand. If that is not possible, an acceptable alternative is to develop detailed plans with the service providers to extend and upgrade utilities.
- The site is developable. A shovel-ready site should have all necessary due diligence completed. It should be free of any utility easements or rights-of-way. If there are easements, the community should be able to present detailed plans on the ability and willingness to move those utilities, providing details on cost and schedule.”

*Source: Site Selection, May 2011. “What is the True Value of a Shovel-Ready Site?” Author, Jeannette Goldsmith.*

## ATTRACTING SPECULATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Lack of access to shovel-ready sites and available building space is among the top reasons communities lose economic development opportunities. The solution requires cooperation between the public and private sector entities. If the public does not directly create a business park, there are ways to encourage private sector speculative building construction.

Government entities can offer zero-interest loan programs, free/discounted land, federal grant assistance, and other incentives to entice private sector investment in a spec building. Constructing adequate infrastructure to appropriately zoned sites in advance of development plans will make private construction significantly more likely. It is also important to keep information on available properties up-to-date on marketing and real estate inventory websites.

Keeping regional developers and commercial brokers abreast of spec development opportunities is also important. If attractive properties are available, SEA and other organizations could host occasional bus tours of their communities and sites for the regional commercial real estate developers.



# Land Assembly & Site Development

## BEST PRACTICE – CHATTANOOGA'S ENTERPRISE SOUTH

Long a center of American manufacturing, in the early 2000s, Chattanooga, Tennessee and surrounding Hamilton County were starting to see slower job growth. Chattanooga is located in a hilly part of Tennessee, with lots of small mountains. Housing and business construction through history had left few level sites available for development. City and County elected leaders, the business community, and economic developers realized that lack of sites was slowing their ability to create jobs and forcing many of their businesses to move operations elsewhere in order to expand.

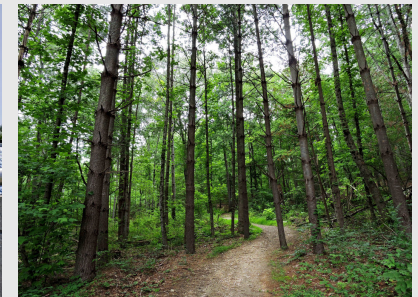
Leaders in the community took bold action – deciding to construct a world-class business mega-site to help attract a large, modern manufacturing company. The City and County governments pooled public resources and partnered with private business to raise funds to complete the project. Identifying a former Volunteer Army Ammunition Plant owned by the US Department of Defense on the edge of town – the countywide partnership decided to make it happen.

Local public and private partners mobilized the entire community – setting this as a top priority, raising funds, identifying additional resources, and taking action. The entire process of purchasing the land, planning the site, and developing it took nearly a decade and millions of dollars, but Enterprise South opened with tremendous success.

The State contributed by constructing a new interstate highway interchange to access the park. A large portion of the property was dedicated as public park lands. Shortly after completion of the project, in 2008 Volkswagen announced that they would open its new assembly facility in Chattanooga. This facility is the world's first LEED Platinum certified automotive facility. In the ten years since opening, Volkswagen Chattanooga invested \$2.3 billion and created more than 3,500 jobs. Last month, they announced they would create an additional 2,000 jobs as they expand to open their American electric vehicle assembly facility.

### Key Components of Enterprise South Development

- Partnership between the City, County, State, and Private Sector
- Delivery of utilities and infrastructure to site
- Ability to respond quickly to business needs
- Preservation of land for community



# Land Assembly & Site Development

## BEST PRACTICE – WHOLE BUILDING DESIGN GUIDE

**Whole Building Design Guide** The National Institute of Building Sciences publishes the *Whole Building Design Guide* – a web portal that provides current best practices for building design and codes. The project is a collaborative effort that brings together federal agencies, private companies, non-profits, and educators to present the latest industry expert knowledge and opinions on best practices. For a wide variety of business types, the guide includes extensive detail on design guidelines, space attributes, relevant codes and standards, and resources to support development. This resource can be utilized by cities when reviewing their development codes to ensure that they match the needs of today's industries while still protecting the public interest.

The Whole Building Design Guide can be found here:

<https://www.wbdg.org/about-wbdg-whole-building-design-guide>

## BEST PRACTICE – THE WOODLANDS, TX

**The Woodlands** Located 45 minutes from downtown Houston, The Woodlands is a master planned community set in a picturesque location. Over 40 years, the Woodlands carefully and intentionally developed a master plan to create a quality location for people to live, work, and recreate. In order to achieve their vision, the Woodlands remained flexible and adaptive to their planning – incorporating new assets such as Lone Star Community College by renaming the nearby area College Park to brand and develop an adjacent education and living center. Similarly as residential development grew rapidly, the Woodlands shifted focus towards encouraging more commercial and office development to avoid losing those opportunities. With changing market demand, they are now also focusing on creating a Town Center with mixed-use residential, commercial, and office. Throughout the 40 years of development, one constant has been the careful planning of road, water, and sewer infrastructure to serve the existing population growth and encourage commercial and office development in preferred areas.



# Investments in Infrastructure

## GOAL – SANDOVAL COUNTY HAS COMPETITIVE SITES FOR BUSINESSES

Connectivity is essential in today's business world. Connectivity is driven by infrastructure – including high speed internet, roads, transportation networks, water systems, and other physical investments that connect people, resources, and information. These investments help connect supply chains but also people to opportunities for employment, education, healthcare, and entertainment. They are the critical lifeblood of a community. If Sandoval County wants competitive sites for businesses, it must also construct the infrastructure necessary to effectively support business growth.

The population of Sandoval County has grown rapidly in recent years. Bounded by mountains to the East, future growth of the Albuquerque metropolitan area – both jobs and people – will likely be to the West. But if Sandoval County does not have the infrastructure to support growth, businesses will pass by the county. Already in the last five years, jobs and population in West Metro have grown faster than in Sandoval County, because the road, water, and other infrastructure is in place to support businesses and residents. To ensure Sandoval County grows economic base jobs and builds a more sustainable community, it is imperative that we proactively develop the infrastructure necessary to preserve quality of life and provide a foundation for business.

Investment in infrastructure is an investment in our future. Sandoval County needs transportation networks to alleviate current traffic congestion and to provide better mobility throughout the county and region. Future growth will also require investment in our capacity to supply power and water, especially to new businesses. Today we also operate in a global market, and increasing high speed internet access for residents and businesses is essential to maintaining connectivity and spurring innovation.

This focus area of the Action Strategy details tactics for addressing Sandoval County's infrastructure needs, which is necessary to developing competitive sites for business and providing all residents of Sandoval County with equal access to prosperity. The following pages describe the most pressing infrastructure needs for Sandoval County and ways to address them. While individual infrastructure projects require various partners and steps for completion, the basic steps for addressing Sandoval County's competitive infrastructure needs include:

- Complete Paseo del Volcan
- Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to include consideration for future developments
- Build regional awareness and support for priority infrastructure projects
- Identify potential partners and funding sources
- Proactively invest in expansion projects and maintenance



# Investments in Infrastructure

## PASEO DEL VOLCAN + TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS

When completed, Paseo del Volcan (PDV) will provide a critical transportation artery for Sandoval County. The highway will open up access to currently inaccessible land throughout the county, reduce traffic, and allow business operations to flow more easily in Sandoval County and the entire State of New Mexico. By increasing access, PDV will create opportunities for businesses to utilize land and new amenities to be constructed. Desired amenities, such as restaurants and retail, will grow as more residents find employment within the county. As new employment opportunities and amenities grow, so too will the tax revenues needed to provide services and support the local quality of life that residents treasure. In this way, PDV will provide significant benefits to all communities in Sandoval County, even those that do not lie along its route.

While Paseo del Volcan will provide interconnectivity throughout Sandoval County, the Albuquerque metro, and New Mexico, additional investments in transportation networks within the county are necessary to improve mobility for residents. These investments include improving and expanding roadways and public transportation options, such as buses. Improving transportation networks will make it easier for residents to commute to jobs, attend school, and access recreational amenities and healthcare.

Completing Paseo del Volcan will require coordination with regional, state, and federal agencies to purchase the right-of-way and construct. Coordinating these efforts must coincide with building support from residents of Sandoval County and the surrounding region. The following recommended steps will help move this critical transportation artery forward:

- **Reignite regional efforts to develop the Paseo Del Volcan** – coordinate lobbying efforts with the City of Albuquerque, Bernalillo County, and other regional communities and agencies.
- **Identify steps to utilize right-of-way funds** before the June 30 expiration date
- **Evaluate and update past assessments** on cost, impact, funding, and implementation
- **Begin to secure funding** to fully develop the Paseo Del Volcan
- **Form a public-private partnership** to support funding efforts and future development along the PDV

Approximately 75% of our residents travel out of the county for work each day. This trend needs to change, but without transportation connectivity, Sandoval County will be unable to accommodate the needs of current businesses and population – let alone grow new business and support residents.





# Investments in Infrastructure

## ELECTRICITY

A site needs to be fully served by utilities to be considered competitive or “shovel ready.” Fully served entails having all utilities – generally water, sewer, electric, and natural gas - at a site with the capacity to meet everyday and excess demand.

Expanding Sandoval County’s utility infrastructure to serve future growth, specifically the identified new sites for business, will require a significant investment. Providing electricity to sites is uniquely challenging in New Mexico, because the Public Regulation Commission does not allow construction of new substations without a user already in place. But if a substation is not already in place, a new business will not locate to that site. This creates an untenable situation for building competitive sites for business that can be addressed with the following steps:

- **Advocate for change in the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission** policy to allow for advance construction of substations.
- **Conduct studies to assess costs, identify rights-of-way, and estimate timelines** for upgrading or extending service to identified areas.
- **Secure letters of commitment from landowners** where rights-of-way are needed.
- **Expand and/or upgrade electrical service** to identified areas.

## WATER RESOURCES

Like much of the Western United States, fresh water sources are scarce in New Mexico. Sandoval County currently has enough water to serve its residents and businesses, but in the future, water will likely become more precious. State, County, and municipality leaders must continue to explore and develop new sources of fresh water, before it becomes more urgent and costly. For example, the saline reservoir west of Rio Rancho could be tapped and processed using new desalinization technology. Like all infrastructure investments, securing water for the future will be expensive, but it is critical for future residents and businesses.

## HIGHSPEED INTERNET

Access to high speed, broadband internet today is equivalent to paved roads and indoor plumbing one hundred years ago – if you do not have it, you will be left behind. Gigabyte internet service is becoming the gold standard, and communities across the US are building their own broadband networks or encouraging their internet service providers (ISP) to do so. Leaders in Sandoval County must coordinate a campaign to encourage existing ISPs to expand service and provide it to future development.





# Investments in Infrastructure

## COMPREHENSIVE INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- **Assemble a team of planning, utility, and development partners** from Sandoval County and local municipalities.
- **Identify areas of planned future growth**, along with the maintenance and expansion needs of existing infrastructure to include roads, water/sewer, power, natural gas, and high speed internet.
- **Designate areas with immediate, short-term, and long-term needs.**
- **Prepare cost estimates and a comprehensive infrastructure investment plan** that addresses needs in order of priority.

## REGIONAL AWARENESS & SUPPORT

- **Identify potential partners and funding sources for infrastructure investments** – including federal, state, and regional programs.
- Create a plan for generating awareness and support across Sandoval County – and the Albuquerque metro area, when necessary. (See Messaging and Community Engagement sections)
- **Utilize targeted messaging to create a unified call to action** (see Sales Messages for details).
- **Provide tools and venues to boost community support.**

## STEPS FORWARD

- **Secure commitments from utility companies and landowners.**
- **Update infrastructure plans as changes occur.**
- **Provide updates to communities on progress and needs.**



# Investments in Infrastructure

## SAMPLE MESSAGING

A variety of audiences and messages will be needed to rally up support investments in Sandoval County's infrastructure. It is important to **frame these as investments, not costs**, because infrastructure is not a luxury, but a necessity. To maintain our quality of life and sustain our communities, **we must invest in the future of Sandoval County today.**

Below are the major audiences that should be leveraged, along with the most relevant messaging and delivery methods.

### ELECTED OFFICIALS (LOCAL, STATE, NATIONAL)

- *Message:* Your constituents demand support for infrastructure investments in order to grow Sandoval County and the Albuquerque metro.
- *Delivery Methods:* Face-to-face meetings to include delegations of community leaders and major employers, letter writing campaigns from general public, and declarations of support posted online or in major newspapers

### BUSINESS & COMMUNITY LEADERS

- *Message:* Investments in infrastructure improve your ability to do business by providing greater connection to suppliers, customers, and workforce. Additionally, these investments ensure that Sandoval County has the ability to support your future growth needs.
- *Delivery Methods:* Face-to-face meetings and speaking engagements at chamber events and local industry associations

### ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS

- *Message:* A proactive approach to Sandoval County's growth ensures we prioritize and protect the beauty and resources of our county.
- *Delivery Methods:* Face-to-face meetings with related groups

### GENERAL PUBLIC

- *Message:* Infrastructure is necessary to support the quality of life we love in Sandoval County. Investments in infrastructure grow opportunities for both jobs and amenities. These are not additional costs, but necessary investments in sustaining our future.
- *Delivery Methods:* Public forums, articles and interviews in the local news, social media, and billboards (if applicable)

### INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS

- *Message:* The citizens and businesses of Sandoval County demand access to high speed, gigabyte internet. We are the fastest growing county in New Mexico
- *Delivery Methods:* Face-to-face meetings with provider managers, letter writing campaigns by elected leaders, businesses, and citizens



# Investments in Infrastructure

## BEST PRACTICE – OKLAHOMA CITY'S MAPS PROGRAMS

Nearly a quarter of a century ago, after an economic collapse in the oil industry, Oklahoma City leaders created a plan to help their struggling community. The initiative called for taxpayers to drive downtown revitalization and included nine major projects in the central business district that would provide new and upgraded cultural, sports, recreation, entertainment, and convention facilities. The selling point? The plan explicitly detailed what projects would be funded, and the government would not go into debt to pay for the projects. In 1993, Oklahoma City voters passed a five-year, one-cent sales tax.

And it paid off. The program was overwhelmingly successful and generated \$350 million in funding. The U.S. Conference of Mayors pointed to the community noting, “Using a pay-as-you-go structure allowed Oklahoma City to build world-class facilities without the burden of debt for future generations and city leaders. Oklahoma City citizens made the historic decision to invest their own money in the city they called home.”

The first nine MAPS projects took ten years to complete and included construction of the Triple-A Bricktown Ballpark, a new downtown arena, the Bricktown Canal, and renovation of the Civic Center Music Hall and Convention Center, to name a few. The re-making of OKC was well underway and it coincided with efforts to rebuild after the tragic Oklahoma City bombings. MAPS helped the community rise in the face of adversity and build community pride and momentum.

MAPS for Kids was passed in 2001, followed by MAPS 3 in 2009, and a *Better Streets, Safer City* program in 2018. Solicitation is currently underway for MAPS 4 project ideas with a highlighted focus on inclusivity. Residents can submit their ideas via the [ideas4maps.com](https://ideas4maps.com) website, through social media using the hashtag #ideas4maps, through letters, emails, and through face-to-face conversations throughout the community.

### Key Components of OKC MAPS

- Temporary one-cent sales tax
- Funds transformational projects, not run-of-the-mill projects
- Must propel city forward
- A compromise to meet many needs

To learn more about this best practice: [OKC MAPS FAQs](#)



# Investments in Infrastructure

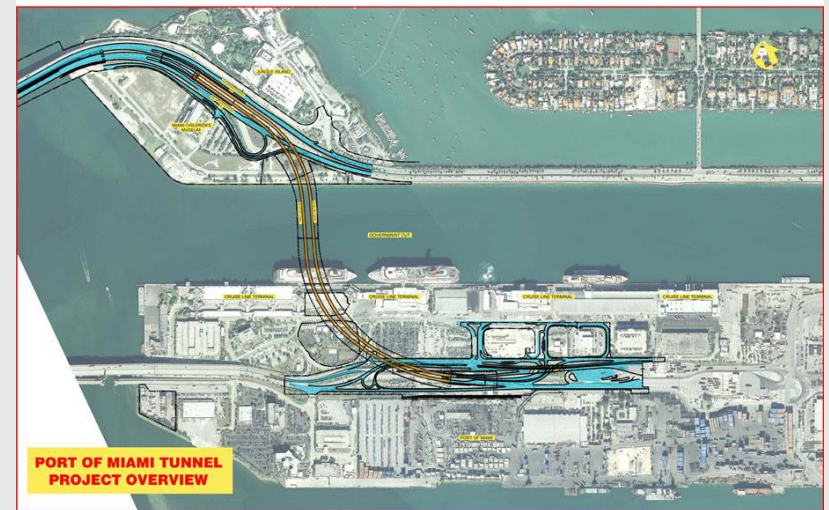
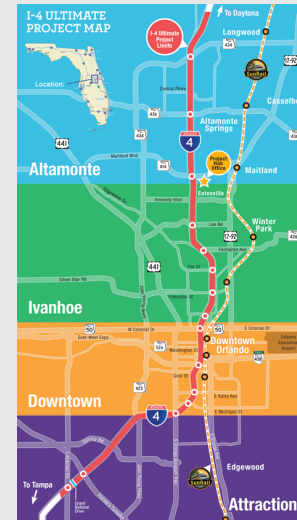
## BEST PRACTICE – PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE

**Florida's I-4 Ultimate Project** will be the largest transportation project in Florida history. The \$2.3 billion project will include construction on 21 miles of Interstate 4, 15 major interchanges and 140 bridges. The project will also add four variable-priced toll express lanes in medians and all general use lanes along the entire corridor will be rebuilt. The private-partner group will design, build, finance, operate and maintain the facility for 40 years.

**Port of Miami Tunnel** is an example of a project based on availability-payments as a way for contractors to recoup their capital costs. A private firm was responsible for the design, construction, operation and maintenance of the project. During construction, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) made milestone payments to the private partner. Upon completion, however, it was obligated to make availability payments. At the conclusion of the agreed-upon term, the tunnel will be turned back to FDOT.

**US 181 Harbor Bridge in Corpus Christi** will be designed, constructed, and maintained by a P3 engagement launched by the Texas Department of Transportation.

The **Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Rapid Bridge Replacement Program**, designed to replace at least 500 bridges across Pennsylvania, is an extremely large P3 super project.



# Community Engagement

## GOAL – SANDOVAL COUNTY HAS COMPETITIVE SITES FOR BUSINESSES

Developing competitive sites for business in Sandoval County must be driven by local residents. Without their support, it will be challenging to raise funds, prioritize sites, and make investments in the county's future. Concurrent with efforts to assemble land, develop sites, and plan for infrastructure, we must proactively make our case for economic development with the citizens, businesses, and leaders of Sandoval County.

We desire a future driven by the residents who live, work and play here, a Sandoval County for those who love their communities. We see inclusive engagement as an integral part of designing this future vision and building the necessary foundation to support it.

Our engagement efforts will seek to empower residents in creating their future vision for Sandoval County. These efforts must include time for listening to residents' hopes and concerns, a platform for collaborating on a shared vision for the future, and education on the role of economic development and investments necessary to sustain our communities.

The engagement process puts the residents of Sandoval County in the driver's seat of their county's future. They will help lay the groundwork for growing Sandoval's economic base jobs, while ensuring its beauty and culture are preserved. It is critical to note that Sandoval County cannot sustain the quality of life and services residents currently enjoy without growth in tax revenues. Throughout the engagement process, we must deliver the key message that building a brighter tomorrow requires making investments today. As stated in other sections, connecting with local communities will require a dedicated effort utilizing a variety of tools and messages. While the exact message varies based on the goal and audience, the overarching call to action continues to be ***We must invest in the future of Sandoval today.***

Below are the key steps for initiating an inclusive community engagement process.

- Create a communication and engagement plan
- Recruit a team of community ambassadors
- Build communications and feedback platforms
- Conduct a mass media rollout
- Follow up with face-to-face engagements
- Continue to update and engage the community



# Community Engagement

## PLAN AND THEN ENGAGE

The community engagement effort must take a very personal approach so the residents of Sandoval County feel invested in their community's future. This approach does not preclude leaders from utilizing technology tools and media for communicating the overall urgency and needs, but it does require an extra layer of face-to-face engagements and personalized messaging. Another essential factor will be putting in place tools to maintain communication and generate support.

- **Establish a communications and rollout plan.**
  - The communications plan should include the timelines, messages, and methods of delivery from the initial rollout to the community updates. See the individual messaging sections for suggestions.
- **Recruit and educate community ambassadors.**
  - A team of community ambassadors should be used to inspire participation in the public forums. These ambassadors must be carefully chosen to represent the many unique faces and voices of Sandoval County. Once selected, these ambassadors should be educated on the goals for the engagement and the correct messaging for their respective audiences.
  - When recruiting ambassadors, try to find those who can reach and appeal to the most residents. Below are some ways to break down the different populations:
    - **Geography** – neighborhoods, political districts, pueblos, reservations, and school districts
    - **Demographics** – college students, young professionals, working age adults, retirees, Spanish-speaking population
    - **Affiliations** – churches, schools, gyms, industry associations, professional groups
  - Examples of possible ambassadors:
    - Small business owner(s)
    - Major employer(s)
    - Heads of neighborhood associations
    - Community leaders (churches, pueblos, schools, universities, hospitals)
    - Elected officials
    - Heads of young professional groups



# Community Engagement

- **Build communications and feedback platforms.**
  - There needs to be a website or landing page where residents can go to find information on the county's plans, engagement events in their area, ways to support initiatives, and how to stay informed.
  - Platform examples:
    - Website with community plans, needs, and events
    - Survey tool for collecting additional feedback on plan
    - Newsletter sign-up so residents can stay informed
    - Social media channels to support the engagement efforts
- **Rollout plan to county as a whole.**
  - The initial rollout will require the use of traditional and social media, along with support from leaders across the county (both ambassadors and other leaders to include heads of major companies, small companies, hospitals, school districts, universities, technical colleges, non-profits, etc.)
  - Platforms for initial rollout:
    - Local television stations, especially morning and evening news broadcasts
    - Earned media or opinion pieces in the local newspapers, and business and community journals
    - Local radio stations, both ads and during broadcasts
    - Billboards around the county (if applicable)
- **Plan and conduct face-to-face engagements.**
  - The goal of the community engagement efforts is to include as many residents as possible.
  - Special effort must be made to engage leadership and citizens of the pueblos.
  - Agenda for public forums and other engagements:
    - Quick introduction to include the historic and economic realities of Sandoval County
    - Listening session to hear concerns and questions
    - Facilitated discussion on future vision for Sandoval County
    - Short overview of economic development's role in this future
    - Most pressing needs, next steps, and calls for action (e.g. support to tax increase, change in eminent domain, and petition to PRC)





# Community Engagement

## ONGOING COMMUNICATION

- **Continue to engage and update.**
  - It is imperative that the communication and engagement continue well after the initial face-to-face engagements end. The Action Strategy will take a number of years to complete, and there will be future economic development needs and opportunities in the county.
  - Community engagement must be an ongoing priority for Sandoval County to ensure that leaders and partners are aligned with residents and businesses.
  - The following steps will help ensure continued support and engagement:
    - **Let them know they were heard** - Share a summary of hopes and concerns heard throughout the county
    - **Let them know their opinions matter** – Illustrate how their input went into the creation of the county’s future vision.
    - **Illustrate how leaders are putting this vision to action** – Provide development plans for communities.
    - **Empower residents to ensure their vision comes to fruition** – Include specific calls for action and tools for elevating their voices.



# Community Engagement

## MESSAGING TAKEAWAYS

It is imperative that those implementing the Action Strategy are sharing a consistent message with residents, businesses, and elected leaders. The previous focus areas of the Action Strategy shared sample messages for different audiences, and the following are additional sample messages for leaders and ambassadors conducting community engagement:

- Building sites for business is **critical** to protecting the things we love about Sandoval County.
- The investments that we make today – in sites and infrastructure – are necessary to build a sustainable future for Sandoval County.
- Sandoval County can no longer export its most valuable resources – young people, workers, and tax dollars – to neighboring communities.
- Economic development is an ongoing process. Your engagement and support today will make this strategy and our county stronger in the future.

Whenever possible, messages should be framed based on the specific audiences:

- Businesses – If we improve our infrastructure and sites, our businesses will grow and we will have access to a larger supply of skilled workers
- Parents with children – Growing economic base jobs will help provide tax dollars for our schools and local career pathways for our kids.
- Young Professionals – Opening access to Sandoval County and growing economic base jobs will support the retail and amenities that make this a truly Live, Work, and Play community.
- Environmentalist – Proactively investing in infrastructure allows us to set environmental and design guidelines to ensure that we are directing growth instead of growth happening to us.

**Whenever possible, invite citizens and business leaders to share testimonials about their experience with an issue. Real, personal stories are often more effective for communicating a message than statistics alone.**



04

## **Implementation Plan & Metrics**

# Implementation Framework

This Action Strategy requires the coordinated action of a number of organizations and individuals within Sandoval County over the next year and onward. To begin moving the Action Strategy forward, Avalanche recommends that a portion of this strategy's Steering Committee transition into a focused **Accountability Committee**. This Committee should be charged with oversight and management of overall progress in each focus area. The Committee should meet initially on a monthly basis – perhaps shifting to bi-monthly in 2020. Establish two **Co-Chair** positions for the Accountability Committee to serve as primary drivers and points of contact for the Committee.

Additionally, **working groups** should be formed around each focus area: Land Assembly & Site Development, Investing in Infrastructure, and Community Engagement. Working groups should comprise individuals with motivation, interest, and skills related to the focus of their working group. These are the groups that will drive implementation of the specific tactical actions outlined in this strategy. Each working group can be assigned a chairperson to coordinate meetings and keep the agenda on track. During each Implementation Committee meeting, working group chairpeople will be asked to report on progress to the larger group.

Sandoval Economic Alliance should assist as the **facilitating organization** for the Accountability Committee and working groups. Their role will be similar to that played during the development of this Action Strategy – sending meeting notices, identifying meeting locations, handling meeting logistics, and distributing follow-up reports to Committee members. The Sandoval County Commission and SEA Board will play important roles keeping the county on task and reminding everybody of the importance of this mission.

At all levels, implementing the Action Strategy will require **bold leadership by individuals and organizations** throughout Sandoval County. The Action Strategy is a guide towards the goal of creating competitive sites for business in Sandoval County, but moving the county towards that goal requires continued, coordinated action by leaders in the county. This is a difficult task, but with strong support, leadership, and collaboration, it is possible.

To get things started, Avalanche recommends convening the first meetings of the Accountability Committee and working groups by the end of April. We also encourage Steering Committee members to consider other individuals and organizations who could help implement the strategy and invite them to attend initial meetings.

The tables on the following pages contain a list of actionable sections of the Action Strategy along with suggested time frames for completion. The Accountability Committee and working groups can use these tables to help prepare tactical teams and determine specific deadlines moving forward. **Completion of each primary action are primary milestones to track implementation progress.**



# Implementation Timelines

## LAND ASSEMBLY & SITE DEVELOPMENT

CATEGORY	ACTION	2019										2020			ONGOING
		APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR		
Site Location & Needs	Identify potential site locations														
	Conduct needs assessment														
	Draft design guidelines														
	Prepare conceptual plans														
	Compile business park plan														
Land Assembly	Identify legislative options														
	Lobby legislators for eminent domain														
	Explore other tools for land assembly														
Site Development	Establish business park operating system														
	Identify funds for construction & maintenance														
Site Promotion	Develop plans to market and promote the business park														
Other Efforts	Review comprehensive plans & and zoning														
	Streamline permitting & develop incentives for development														
	Expand the Virtual Building Program														



# Implementation Timelines

## INVESTMENTS IN INFRASTRUCTURE

CATEGORY	ACTION	2019										2020			ONGOING
		APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR		
Paseo del Volcan & Transportation	Coordinate regional efforts														
	Right-of-way next steps														
	Evaluate & update assessments														
	Secure funding														
	Form a public-private partnership														
Electricity	Advocate for changes at PRC														
	Conduct cost studies & analyses														
	Secure letters of commitment														
	Expand/upgrade electrical services														
Water	Explore long-term options														
High Speed Internet	Campaign to develop faster service														



# Implementation Timelines

## INVESTMENTS IN INFRASTRUCTURE (CONTINUED)

CATEGORY	ACTION	2019										2020			ONGOING
		APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR		
Comprehensive Infrastructure Needs	Assemble planning team														
	Identify areas of planned future growth														
	Prioritize development areas by time frame														
	Prepare cost estimates and investment plan														
Regional Awareness & Support	Identify regional partners & funding														
	Create unified call to action														
	Provide tools and venues to boost community support														
Steps Forward	Secure utility & landowner commitments														
	Update infrastructure plans														
	Provide updates to community on progress														

# Implementation Timelines

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

CATEGORY	ACTION	2019										2020			ONGOING
		APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR		
Plan & then Engage	Establish a communications plan														
	Recruit & educate community ambassadors														
	Build communications and feedback platforms														
	Roll out plan to community as a whole														
	Plan & conduct face-to-face engagements														
Ongoing Commu- nication	Continue to engage and update														





# Economic Development Metrics

The following metrics provide guidance for monitoring economic development trends and activities in Sandoval County.

## GENERAL ECONOMY

- Total job growth
- Target industry job growth
- Job-to-population ratio
- Capital investment
- New business creation
- Gross receipts tax revenues
- Property tax revenues
- Unemployment rate

## TALENT

- Educational attainment by degree level
- Household income
- Population growth
- Population age / diversity
- Youth migration patterns

## REAL ESTATE & INFRASTRUCTURE

- New Commercial, Office, & Industrial real estate starts
- Commercial, Office, & Industrial real estate availability
  - Square footage, vacancy rates, pricing
- Utility availability & pricing
- Share of residents with high speed internet access
- PDV Construction Milestones

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

- Overall prospect activity
- Qualified leads
- Relocation deals completed and number of jobs / capital investment
- Business retention engagements
- Retention deals completed and number of jobs / capital investment
- Incentives awarded

## MARKETING & COMMUNICATION

- Number of visits to SEA website & landing pages
- Average length of stay by visitors on SEA website & landing pages
- Number of social media followers (SEA)
- Number of Sandoval County and city media mentions
- Number of qualified leads generated by targeted marketing efforts



05

**Appendix:  
Community  
Survey Results**

# Community Survey

From December 2018 through January 2019, Avalanche Consulting and SEA sought public input through an online community survey. This survey asked three questions related to visioning and goal setting for the County's economic development Action Strategy.

The survey received 77 responses and provided additional refinement to the perspectives heard directly from residents and businesses in meetings and focus groups across Sandoval County.

Looking to the future, respondents envision a Sandoval County that is Growing, Diverse, Vibrant/Thriving, and Sustainable. There was a strong desire to see more jobs and an overall prosperous economy.

When prioritizing economic development activities, the top three identified by respondents were Attracting new businesses, Developing shovel-ready sites, and Improving roadway infrastructure.

The full results of the survey are summarized on the following pages.



**Question 1: Picture your ideal version of Sandoval County in 20 years. What three words would you use to describe the city's future economy?**

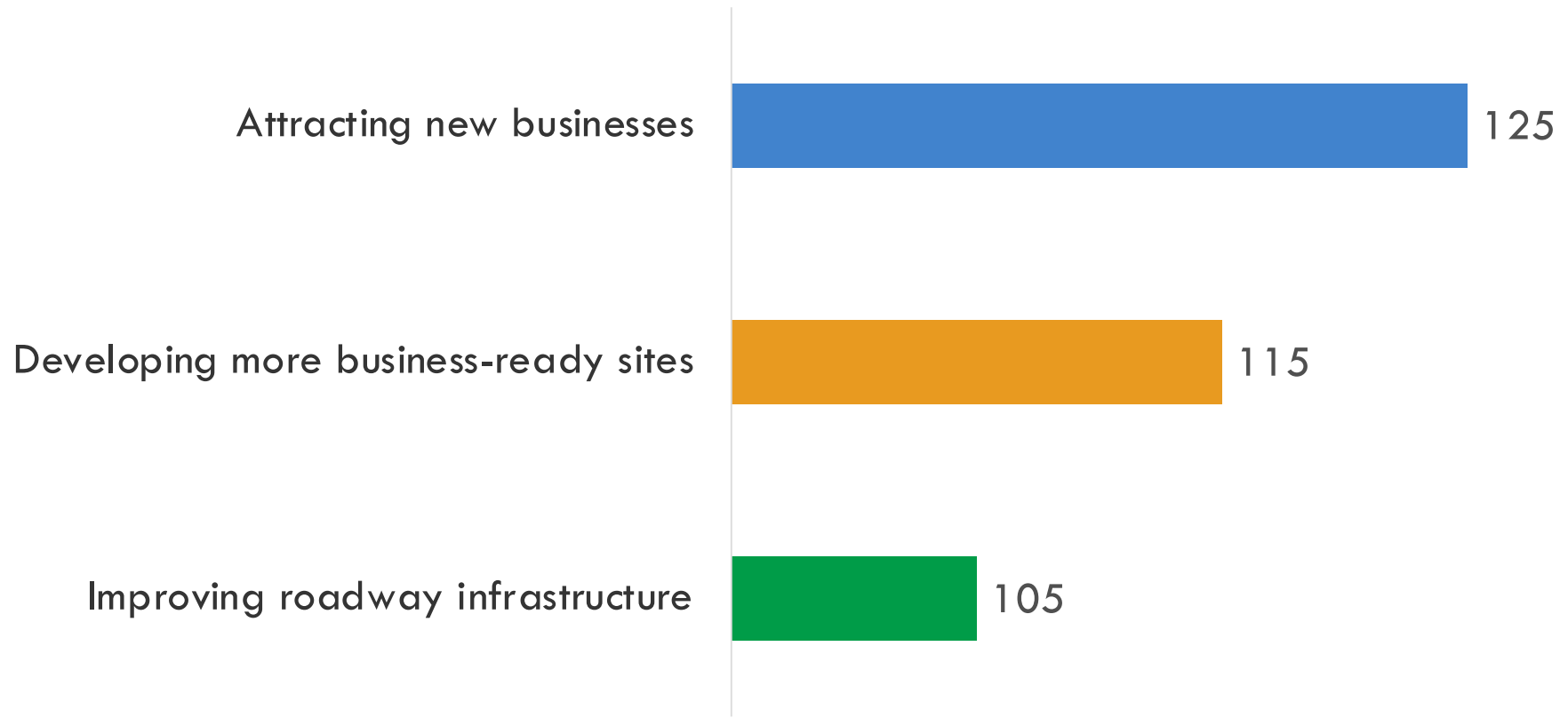


## Question 2: What makes Sandoval County different from other communities in New Mexico?



**Question 3: Modern economic development must address a range of priorities in every community. Of the list of topics below, please select the top three priorities that Sandoval County should tackle to make it a better place for business:**

Top Three Priorities by Total Weighted Vote



## Question 3 continued...

### Remaining Priorities by Total Weighted Vote

