
CITY OF RIO RANCHO
STRATEGIC PLAN

March 2009

City of Rio Rancho Strategic Plan

March, 2009

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INTRODUCTION

The City of Rio Rancho developed this Strategic Plan to establish priorities for city government for 2009 to 2014. It represents the consensus that emerged from the collaborative efforts of the city leadership over a period of several months.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

In summer 2008, the City of Rio Rancho initiated the development of a Strategic Plan. Management Partners, Inc. was retained to assist the city in the process. The purpose of this effort was to create a set of clear goals and strategies for meeting critical needs and challenges facing the community and city government.

Citizen input was essential to this process and it was solicited in a variety of ways. A key method employed was a statistically valid survey of resident opinions conducted during the summer of 2008 by the National Research Center to conduct the National Citizen Survey (NCS). NCS survey results of Rio Rancho citizens were compared to scores in a national benchmark. A complete copy of the Rio Rancho Citizen Survey Results is on the City's web site (www.ci.rio-rancho.nm.us/citizensurvey).

The process also involved data collection, discussion, and preparation of goals and strategies. An environmental scan was prepared and strategic planning issues were identified from numerous sources. Previous studies and reports and budget documents were reviewed and each member of the Governing Body was interviewed. The City's management team provided information and perspectives about existing work plans and unmet needs, and the team participated in two strategic planning workshops. The Governing Body joined the management team in a day-long workshop to discuss potential multi-year goals and strategies for meeting those goals.

A graphic recorder captured the discussion of the Governing Body and staff, and some of the charts created at the workshop appear throughout this document.

Another source of community input was the series of reports from Transition Teams appointed by the Mayor to provide feedback on City needs and services. The Transition Team reports were presented in June 2008.

Additionally, to hear from Board and Commission members, the City designed and conducted an on-line survey in November and December 2008. Board and Commission members were asked to provide opinions about initial draft goals and strategies. During this timeframe, the City Manager or Assistant City Manager visited each Board and Commission to invite participation in the survey. All employees of the city were also invited to take this survey.

Community Conversation meetings were also held in each district throughout the spring, summer and fall. At these meetings, the Mayor met informally with citizens to hear their opinions and to share information about the City and strategic planning process.

On February 24, 2009, approximately 80 residents participated in a Community Workshop. The purpose of the workshop was to obtain specific input on draft goals and strategies. At the workshop, a brief presentation was provided that outlined the process and environmental scan themes. Citizens were invited to speak with members of the Governing Body and staff and to provide their input about draft goals and strategies.

Appendix I contains a complete timeline of the major activities in the Strategic Planning process.

COMPONENTS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

This Strategic Plan is for the period 2009 – 2014. It contains the following elements:

- Mission
- Vision
- Values
- Goals
- Strategies

A description of each of the elements is in Appendix II.

MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

At the joint Governing Body-Staff workshop participants engaged in visioning exercises. Following the workshop a subcommittee of staff and Governing Body members met to create mission, vision and values statements. These were then presented to the entire group. These statements appear in the next column.

Mission

This mission statement for Rio Rancho is:

The City of Rio Rancho's mission is to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the community by providing excellent service to achieve a high quality of life for residents, businesses, and visitors.

Vision

The vision statement for Rio Rancho is:

A diverse, sustainable, family-friendly community that is safe, vibrant and attractive to residents, businesses and visitors.

Values

The overarching values of Rio Rancho are:

- Service
- Accountability
- Respect

The values statement for Rio Rancho is:

A philosophy of service, accountability and respect shall govern our interactions with citizens and with each other.

Graphic Recorder Chart I:
Vision Exercise: Headlines for the Year 2031



GOALS

The Strategic Plan promotes the City of Rio Rancho's vision by establishing goals and strategic directions for each of the issue areas identified during the planning process. The following six goals have been created to reflect the character of the community that is envisioned in the future. The goals are multi-year in nature.

Goal 1: INFRASTRUCTURE

Ensure that the City develops new and has well-maintained infrastructure that fosters a quality community, supports a strong economy and meets the needs of current and future residents.

Goal 2: DEVELOPMENT

Ensure the City has plans and policies in place to attract and create well-planned high-quality, stable, residential, commercial and industrial development.

Goal 3: FISCAL HEALTH

Ensure that the City's fiscal health is strong with a growing tax base, sound financial policies and economically diverse funding solutions.

Goal 4: PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES

Provide services to ensure the safety and health of the community through quality police, fire and emergency medical services.

Goal 5: GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Deliver quality services to meet community needs, assuring that the City is sufficiently staffed, trained and equipped overall.

Goal 6: QUALITY OF LIFE

Provide quality of life services to meet community needs, assuring that there are strong relationships with all sectors of the community and ample opportunities for citizen engagement.

STRATEGIES AND PRIORITIZATION

Each goal has several strategies intended to help reach the goal over several years. Appendix II shows how the goals and strategies fit into the overall strategic planning process.

Two strategies per goal are priorities for focus by the City over the next 12 to 18 months (except the Development goal which contains three priorities for that period). The 12 – 18 month priorities are notated in this Strategic Plan as "FY 09 to 11." These priorities were established based on input from the Governing Body at the workshop as well as consideration of all inputs into the process.

A timeline for subsequent strategies will be developed by the Governing Body and staff during annual discussions of the Strategic Plan.

Graphic Recorder Chart II: Inputs to the Process



Goal 1: INFRASTRUCTURE

Ensure that the City develops new and has well-maintained infrastructure that fosters a quality community, supports a strong economy and meets the needs of current and future residents.

Rio Rancho is one of New Mexico's newest communities, incorporated as a City in 1981. It comprises approximately 105 square miles. As a young, large community, the City's infrastructure needs are substantial. Growth into less developed areas of the community puts demands on current infrastructure and creates demands for new infrastructure. Another factor that impacts infrastructure is that of diverse land ownership. Also known as antiquated platting, this land ownership pattern makes it very difficult to provide basic infrastructure in a well-planned manner. Finally, the creation of the new downtown in the City Center area also creates demand for expanded infrastructure in that part of the City. In particular, these needs are critical to economic development.

Citizen concern for infrastructure is evident in the results of the Citizen Survey. Rio Rancho scored below the benchmark of other cities for whom the survey has been administered on all dimensions in the transportation category. The infrastructure dimensions cited by Rio Rancho residents as in need of improvement include: ease of car travel, ease of bicycle travel, ease of walking, availability of paths and walking trails, traffic flow on major streets, and sidewalk maintenance. Additionally, the survey contained the multiple-choice policy question: "To what extent would you support or oppose an increase in your property tax for each of the following purposes?" Among the choices offered to respondents, the ones receiving the most responses were "road improvements" and "more roads." Those two categories received the highest percentage of "strongly" or "somewhat" support ratings (83% and 77%, respectively).

Strategies

Seven strategies, as listed below, have been identified to achieve the goal of developing new and having well-maintained infrastructure. Strategies A and B are the two strategies for focus during FY 09-11.

Strategy A (FY 09-11): Develop a plan for water sustainability and conservation to support growth and development over the long term.

Strategy B (FY 09-11): Develop and implement a plan for financing the maintenance of existing streets.

Strategy C: Develop and implement a plan for expanding current and building new needed major roads (i.e. formal thoroughfare plans).

Strategy D: Develop and implement a plan for maintaining, improving and building sidewalks.

Strategy E: Establish new and maintain existing parks, trails and open space.

Strategy F: Develop and implement a plan for building and financing major water & wastewater utility infrastructure.

Strategy G: Develop and implement a plan for a recycling center, a single point of service for multiple special waste disposal services provided to residents that would prevent illegal dumping into our environment.

Strategy H: Enhance existing and explore new tools for addressing the drainage needs of the City.

Goal 2: DEVELOPMENT

Ensure the City has plans and policies in place to attract and create well-planned, stable, high-quality residential, commercial and industrial development.

The City of Rio Rancho has experienced rapid growth in recent years. The 2000 Census reported a population of 51,765. Current population estimates exceed 80,000. Growth in the City has been predominantly residential. Families find Rio Rancho a desirable place to live. In November 2008, *Business Week* ranked Rio Rancho as the best place in New Mexico to raise children. In the Citizen Survey the City scored above the benchmark on both dimensions for housing: availability of affordable quality housing and variety of housing options.

The City is working to balance its focus on residential development with commercial and business-oriented development so that more amenities will be provided within Rio Rancho's borders, the commercial tax base will be stronger, and good jobs will be available to local residents. The Citizen Survey showed that residents desire more retail opportunities.

Additionally, another factor that impacts development is that of diverse land ownership. Also known as antiquated platting, this land ownership pattern presents unique challenges to development.

Strategies

Seven strategies, as listed below, have been identified to achieve the development goal. Strategies A, B and C are the three strategies for focus during FY 09-11.

Strategy A (FY 09-11): Develop a unified vision of the level and type of growth to be allowed in the community, including but not limited to, a diversity of housing, by updating the Vision 2020 Plan.

Strategy B (FY 09-11): Update and implement the citywide comprehensive Economic Development Strategy that targets businesses the community wants and makes Rio Rancho a destination for a variety of events and activities.

Strategy C (FY 09-11): Develop and implement a strategy for increasing the City's gross receipts tax base to support diverse community services and facilities.

Strategy D: Develop and implement a method of reforming the current antiquated platting (including proposing legislative changes at the State level) in order to ensure quality development and proper use of water resources in the future.

Strategy E: Develop and implement a set of approval criteria for new development, based on the Governing Body's vision for future development by updating the Vision 2020 Plan.

Strategy F: Develop, implement and enforce design criteria for new infrastructure associated with new development by updating the Vision 2020 Plan.

Strategy G: Develop and implement a Comprehensive plan containing clear principles and policies set forth to achieve the City's goals pertaining to public and private development by updating the Vision 2020 Plan.

Goal 3: FISCAL HEALTH

Ensure that the City's fiscal health is strong with a growing tax base, sound financial policies and economically diverse funding solutions.

The City receives more than half of its revenues (55%) from gross receipts tax and only 18% of its revenue from property tax. As a predominantly residential community that experiences substantial retail leakage to Albuquerque, the City faces budget constraints. Until the City's commercial tax base grows to a significant degree, challenges meeting all of the community's service delivery, infrastructure and quality of life interests will persist. This requires a clear focus on the City's fiscal health.

Fiscal health was identified as a priority by board and commission members as well as by employees in the on-line surveys conducted of those groups in fall 2008. Nearly all respondents selected either "Important" or "Very Important" in regards to fiscal health (97% of board and commission members and 100% of employees).

Strategies

Six strategies, as listed below, have been identified to achieve the goal of fiscal health. Strategies A and B are the two strategies for focus during FY 09 - 11.

Strategy A (FY 09-11): Develop a clear policy regarding issuance of impact fee credits to ensure that credits provide true benefits to the City.

Strategy B (FY 09-11): Re-establish and maintain a new General Obligation (GO) Bonding Cycle to help finance City infrastructure.

Strategy C: Complete an impact fee study and adopt a policy that clarifies when development should pay for the cost of necessary infrastructure and when tax dollars should be used.

Strategy D: Complete the analysis of water and wastewater rates needed to support the water system.

Strategy E: Develop and implement an annual review of fees and charges for City services, and research new fees.

Strategy F: Create mechanisms for effective and regular communications between the City and the schools in order to establish a mutual understanding of how plans for school expansions will be developed, paid for, and implemented.

Goal 4: PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES

Provide services to ensure the safety and health of the community through quality police, fire and emergency medical services.

The City of Rio Rancho is proud of its low crime rate, the second lowest in the state. Safety is one of the key characteristics that attracts people to the community. Public safety was one of three highlights in the NCS Citizen Survey. Scores for "feeling safe" in both neighborhood and commercial areas were above the benchmark of other communities surveyed. Additionally, citizens scored Police and Fire services above the benchmark with "Excellent" (84%) or "Good" scores (92%).

The community's population growth affects the demand for public safety services. The strategies below reflect a desire by the City to continue to proactively manage public safety services in an environment of change and limited resources.

Strategies

Four strategies, as listed below, have been identified to achieve the public safety goal. Strategies A and B are the two strategies for focus during FY 09 - 11.

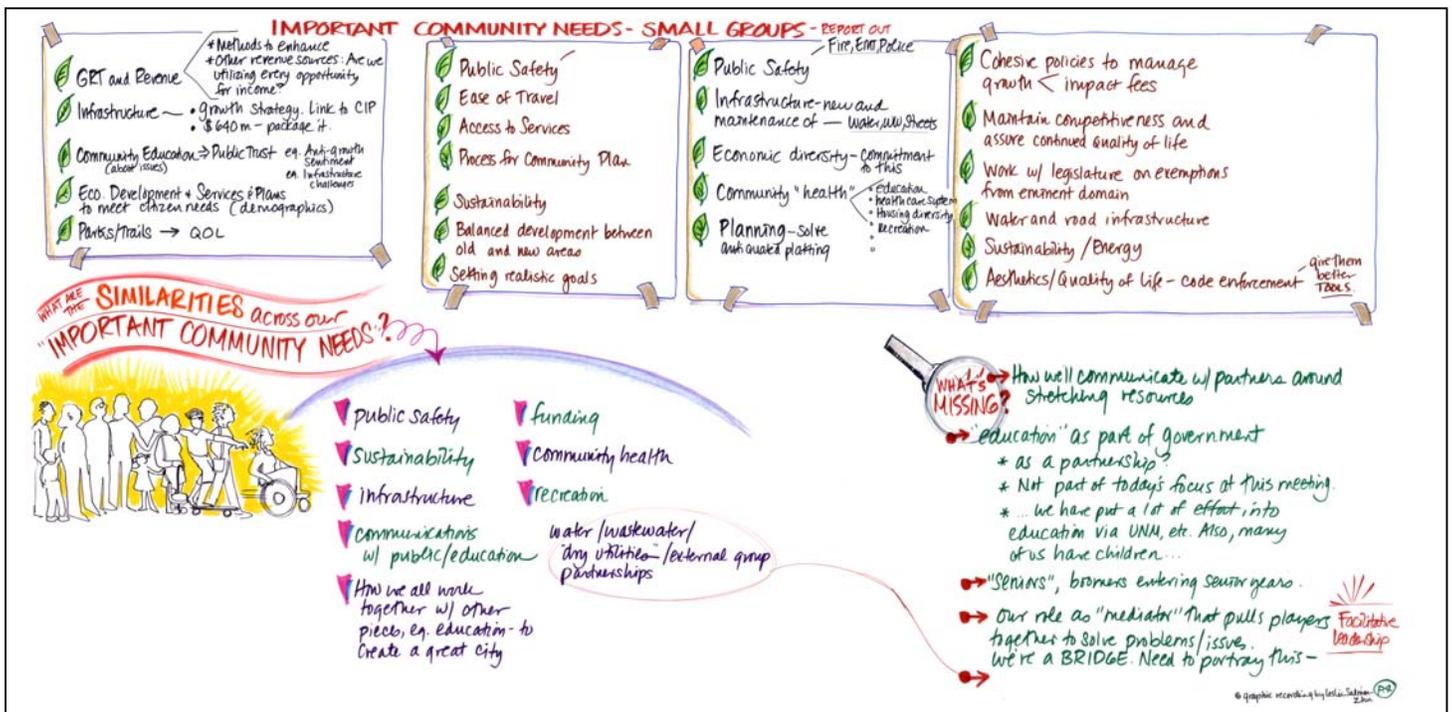
Strategy A (FY 09-11): Define and establish service and staffing levels.

Strategy B (FY 09-11): Create and implement a plan to meet the public safety facilities needs, including a communications facility, new fire stations, fire headquarters facility, police substation, and municipal court building.

Strategy C: Develop a regional approach to Emergency Communications including conversion to a modern radio communications infrastructure in order to increase coverage and allow interoperability with other metro, state and federal agencies.

Strategy D: Create and implement a plan to establish, through voter approval, a public safety tax to fund new positions and capital.

Graphic Recorder Chart III: Community Needs



Goal 5: GOVERNMENT SERVICES
Deliver quality services to meet community needs, assuring that the City is sufficiently staffed, trained and equipped overall.

This goal pertains to operations and how we lead and manage our organization to best accomplish the delivery of services to citizens. On the Citizen Survey, the City scored below the benchmark on the dimensions of City employee knowledge, responsiveness, courteousness and overall impression. We recognize this as an area for improvement.

Additionally, a theme in the Mayor's Transition Team Report is a need for improved customer service by City government. The Transition Team Report also cites communication both within and outside the organization as integral to excellent service. The strategies in this category support delivery of quality services.

Strategies

Six strategies, as listed below, have been identified to achieve the quality government services goal. Strategies A and B are the two strategies for focus during FY 09 - 11.

Strategy A (FY 09-11): Develop a supervisory and leadership development program to improve all staff effectiveness.

Strategy B (FY 09-11): Develop and implement a plan to ensure the recruitment, retention and succession of quality employees.

Strategy C: Define a "culture of customer service" and provide training for each City employee to ensure they have the skills to meet the service delivery and customer service requirements of the City.

Strategy D: Evaluate existing mechanisms and then enhance, develop and implement a variety of means for residents to obtain information and access services.

Strategy E: Develop and promote a culture of sustainability. Sustainability is defined as: Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The City of Rio Rancho is dedicated to achieving sustainability by conducting daily operations through balanced stewardship of human, financial, and natural resources.

Strategy F: Partner and collaborate internally as well as with jurisdictions of government, schools, and other private and public entities to enhance area services, including but not limited to human services and transit services

Goal 6: QUALITY OF LIFE

Provide quality of life services to meet community needs, assuring that there are strong relationships with all sectors of the community and ample opportunities for citizen engagement.

Quality of life is a cornerstone of the City of Rio Rancho. Community quality was a highlight in the results of the Citizen Survey. In the Citizen Survey, 80% of respondents rated the community as an “Excellent” or “Good” place to raise children. Additionally, 74% of respondents rated the community as an “Excellent” or “Good” place to retire. Both of these dimensions were above the benchmark. The strategies below are focused on building upon our successes in quality of life.

Strategies

Seven strategies, as listed below, have been identified to achieve the quality of life goal. Strategies A and B are the two strategies for focus during FY 09 - 11.

Strategy A (FY 09-11): Develop a plan to enhance culturally enriching programs within recreation, lifelong learning and the arts.

Strategy B (FY 09-11): Develop and implement a community-branding program to create a unified identity for the City.

Strategy C: Conduct community surveys to seek feedback about satisfaction with City services and the health of the community.

Strategy D: Increase communication and citizen involvement in creating the future of the City in order to create a stronger sense of community and higher level of public trust.

Strategy E: Create a facilities plan for enhancement of libraries, community centers, senior centers, parks and spaces that foster lifelong learning, recreation, interdisciplinary collaboration and a sense of community.

Strategy F: Identify long-term funding sources for future cultural, arts, senior services, parks and library facilities.

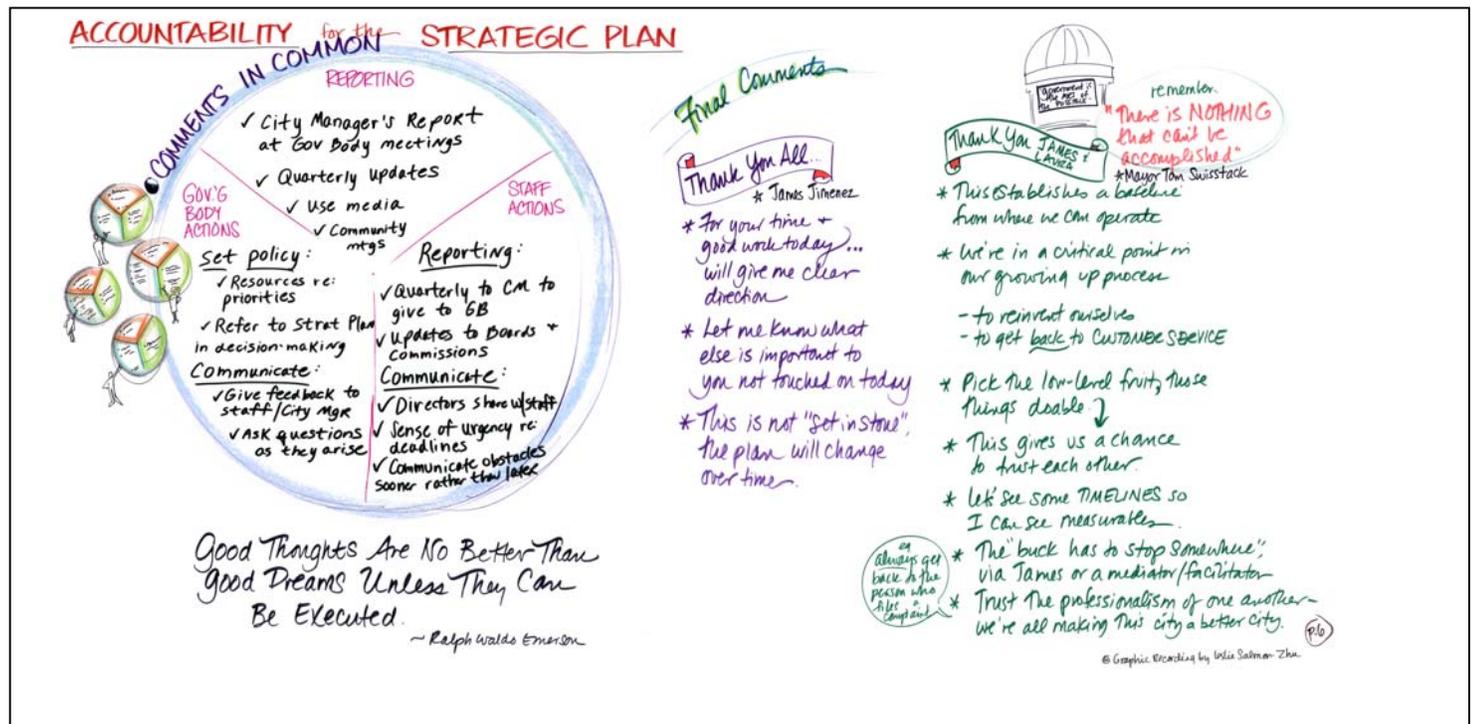
Strategy G: Create a plan for providing aesthetic improvements to neighborhoods.

IMPLEMENTATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Implementation and accountability are critical to the Strategic Plan. The Plan will help prioritize the work of the organization. It will also serve as a reference point for policy-making discussions by the Governing Body. The items below are actions the City will take to integrate the Strategic Plan into the organization.

- ✓ Incorporating Strategic Plan strategies into the budget process and budget document and integrate it into departmental work plans.
- ✓ Keeping the Governing Body apprised of status toward achievement of Plan goals by sharing information regularly.
- ✓ Providing a copy of the Strategic Plan to every City employee, creating forums to answer employee questions, and integrating the items within the Plan into day-to-day work of employees.
- ✓ Keep City employees apprised of accomplishments of Plan goals by sharing information regularly.
- ✓ Adding a category to Agenda Briefing Memos (ABMs) linking agenda items to the Strategic Plan
- ✓ Conducting an annual review of the Strategic Plan that includes a review of progress toward goals and revision as necessary.
- ✓ Making the City's Mission and Vision Statements highly visible.

Graphic Recorder Chart IV: Accountability and Workshop Wrap-up

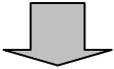


APPENDIX I

Strategic Planning Process: Major Activities and Inputs

June, July, August 2008:

- Interviews with Governing Body
- Citizen Survey Conducted
- Transition Team Report Presented



8/21/08: All-day Workshop with Senior Staff



10/27/08:

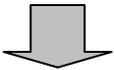
Half-day Workshop with Senior Staff and New City Manager



November, December:

Board/Commission Survey & Employee Survey

January 5, 2009: All-day Workshop with Governing Body and Senior Staff



Tuesday, February 24, 2009: Community Workshop

Governing Body, Senior Staff & Citizens

Purpose: To get citizen comment on the draft strategic plan

Details: 6:30 PM at City Hall (3rd Floor Atrium); Doors Open at 6:00



March 25, 2009:

Strategic Plan Presented to Governing Body for Adoption

APPENDIX II Strategic Planning Elements



- The **mission** statement states the purpose of the organization. It defines what the organization stands for and what it will do.
- The **vision** states where the organization wants to be in the future.
- The **values** of an organization drive both the goals and strategies created and the process of implementing the strategic plan.
- **Goals** set the framework for City of Rio Rancho policies that guide the direction and focus of the organization, budget decisions and allocation of other resources, such as staff time. Goals are “up on the balcony” wide views of opportunities for change and improvement. They are statements of how you want the future to be.
- **Strategies** are the means to achieve the goals. They are the individual projects that must be assigned, with resources identified, which will contribute to the achievement of a goal. Projects should be achievable within the available resources, with clear direction and attainable timeframes, with periodic checking in about progress, changes or challenges.

APPENDIX III
Environmental Scan



**City of Rio Rancho
Governing Body/Staff
Strategic Planning Workshop**

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

January 5, 2009

Environmental Scan: Inputs to the Process

- Citizen survey
- Transition Team Report
- Interviews with Governing Body members
- Management Team workshops and departmental work
- Community Conversation Meetings
- Employee Survey
- Board and Commission survey
- Data about factors affecting Rio Rancho

Results of Citizen Survey

Highlights

Housing

Public Safety

Community Quality

Opportunities

Transportation

Economic Sustainability

Public Trust

Transition Team Report

- Community Stakeholders in 6 focus groups:

Fiscal

Infrastructure

Administrative

Development

Business/Economic Dev.

Public Safety

- Spring 2008

Results of Board and Commission Survey

GOALS

Important/
Very Important

Infrastructure: 100%

Fiscal Health: 100%

Development: 100%

Public Safety Serv: 93.9%

Govt Services: 81.3%

Quality of Life: 78.8%

STRATEGIES

Most Important

I: Water Infrastructure

F: Impact Fee Credits

D: Unified vision level &
type tied with antiquated
planning

P: Service & Staffing Levels

G: Customer Service

Q: Facilities & Parks

Results of Employee Survey

GOALS

Important/
Very Important

Infrastructure: 98.0%

Govt Services: 97.5%

Fiscal Health: 96.6%

**Public Safety Serv:
96.1%**

Development: 89.4%

Quality of Life: 75.7%

STRATEGIES:

Most Important

I: Water Sustainability

G: Recruitment &
Retention

F: Impact Fees*

P: Service & Staffing Levels

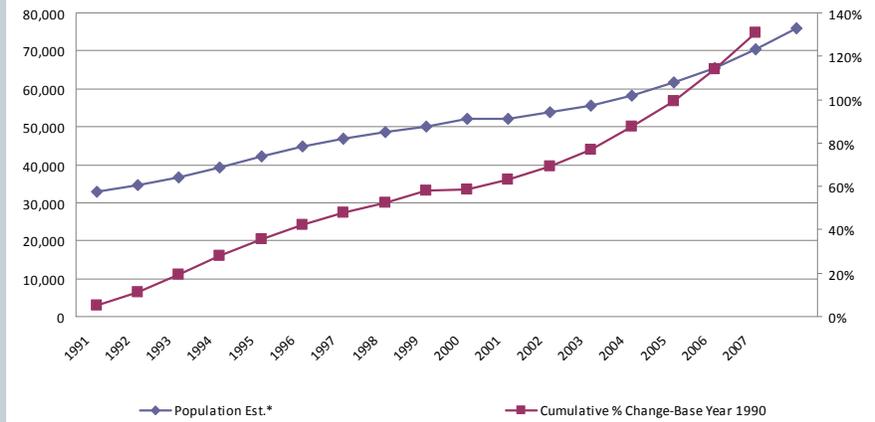
D: Eco Devo Strategy

Q: Communication &
Citizen Involvement

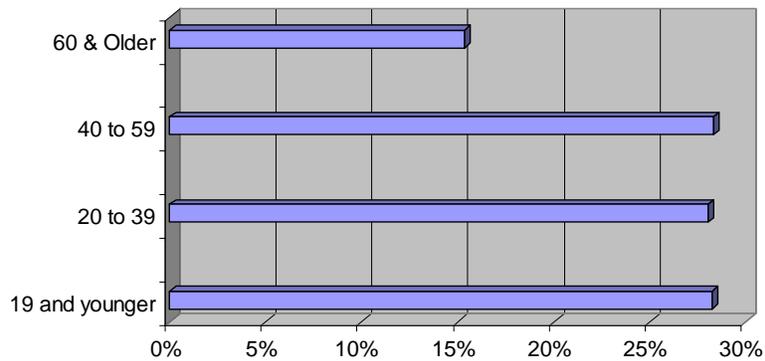
Factors Affecting Rio Rancho

- Growth
 - Population
 - Building
 - Demographics
 - Land Ownership
- City Budget & Revenues

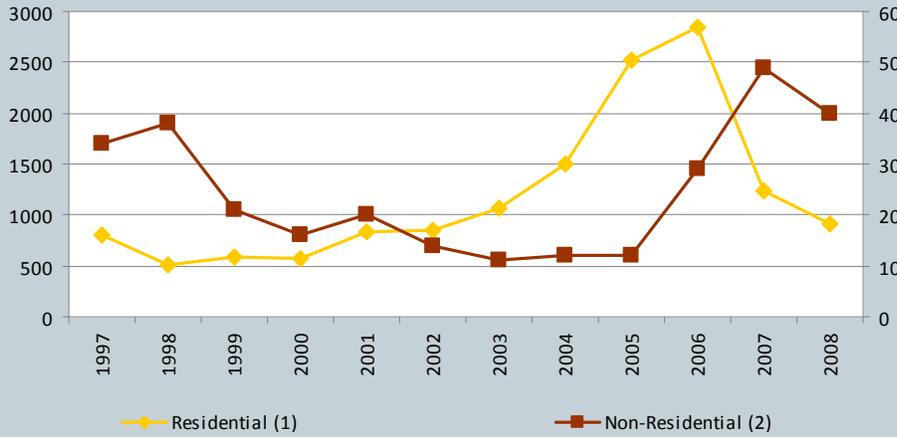
Population Growth: 1991 to 2007



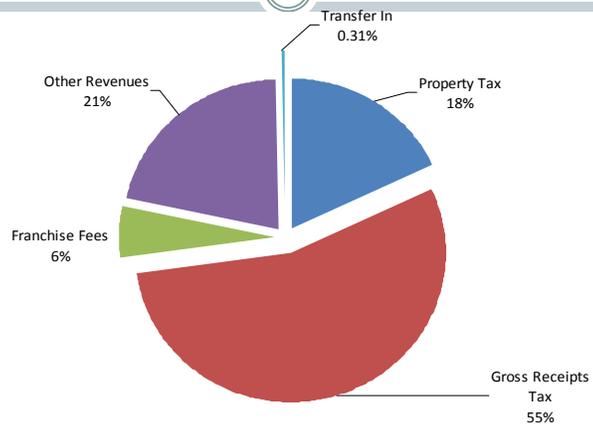
Demographics: Age Profile Sandoval County



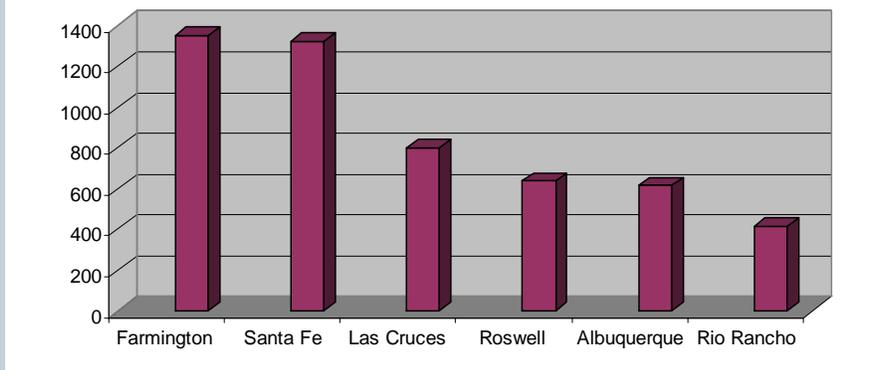
Building Permits: FY97-FY08



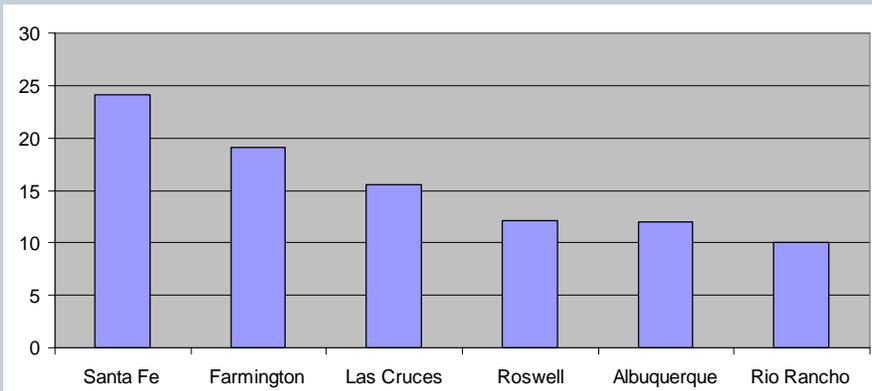
Revenues by Type



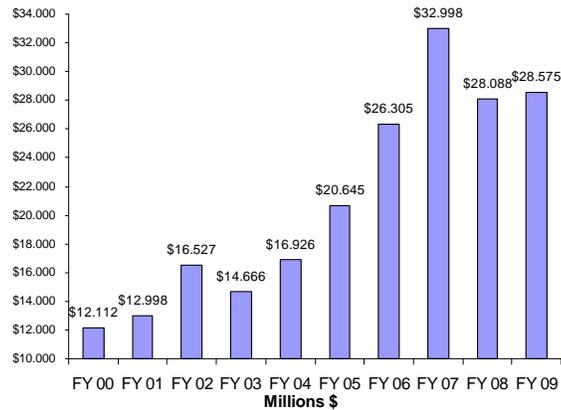
GRT Per Capita



Employees Per 1,000 Population



GRT – Last 10 Years



Diversity of Land Ownership

- Antiquated Platting
- Land Assembly Issues
- Challenge to overcome...

Capital Needs

- **2009-2014 ICIP**
 - \$640 Million in Unmet Needs
- **Proposed GO Bonding Cycle**
 - 2009: \$25M
 - 2011: \$11M
 - 2013: \$11M

Property Tax – Last 10 Years

