

DOÑA ANA COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

IS SEEKING CANDIDATES TO SERVE AS



County Manager

Visit Doña Ana County on the web at <https://www.donaanacounty.org>



Doña Ana, County (pop. 225,000), New Mexico

New Mexico's Southern Economic and Cultural Gateway to the State

Doña Ana County invites your interest in serving as their next County Manager. The Board of Commissioners desires a talented, outgoing, progressively minded individual with experience in managing similarly sized organizations with multiple complex services that include elected department heads.

The Community

Doña Ana County is a vibrant, diverse community that, despite its large geographic area and larger population, continues to exhibit the charm of a sense of place often associated with a much smaller community. The County's traditions, culture, and strong ties to its communities compel its leaders to place a priority on developing and preserving relationships.

Doña Ana County covers 3,804 square miles in south-central New Mexico bordering on El Paso County, Texas, and the State of Chihuahua, Mexico as well as Luna, Sierra, and Otero Counties in New Mexico. The County is geographically diverse with spectacular mountain ranges, vast valleys, and a high-desert environment. The Mesilla Valley, the Organ Mountains Desert Peaks National Monument and the White Sands National Monument are some of the historic points of interest. The Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park, 935-acres of scenic desert which encom-

passes a portion of the Doña Ana Mountains, is also very accessible. There are several State of New Mexico parks within convenient driving distance of the County.

Doña Ana County is home to some of the country's most attractive and diverse communities. The largest incorporated city is Las Cruces (115,000 pop.), where there is a very active downtown arts, music, and commercial district. Las Cruces is home to the New Mexico State Aggies. The County includes five incorporated cities with thirty-seven Colonias, offering not only tremendous opportunities but time honored unique cultural experiences.

The County's history is intertwined with the U.S. Army. The Army built forts throughout the nation's border with Mexico, enabling many settlements, ranches, mining camps and homesteads to flourish in addition to helping shape the County's historical landscape.

Doña Ana County is also known for its agriculture and notably, the nation's leading producer of chile peppers, onions, and pecans. The County is home to New Mexico State University and Doña Ana Community College. Doña Ana County is one of only two counties in the United States to have a diacritical mark in its name; the other is Coös County, New Hampshire. Both counties lie on short international borders, Doña Ana with Mexico, and Coös with Canada.

The population of Doña Ana County has risen dramatically since 1900. In 1900, the County was an agriculturally based community with a population of 10,187.

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MISSION AND VALUES

Mission

Enhance the health, safety, and quality of life for all residents as determined by law and community interests. Services are provided through innovative leadership and teamwork in a fair, respectful, and professional manner.

Core Values and Commitments

- **Transparency and Authenticity**
- Integrity
- Honesty
- Reliability and Dependability
- A Culture of Civility and Respect
- Value and Serve the Community

The market centers were Las Cruces, El Paso, Texas and Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua. With economic growth, particularly in the retail and services sectors, more opportunities became available, and the County became more urbanized. The population increased by 22.5% over a 15-year period from 2000 (174,690) to 2015 (213,963). This population growth has occurred in and around the City of Las Cruces as well as in the southern part of the County. By 2040, the County forecasts a population estimated to be nearly 300,000. *(Source: County Website/Community Development Department.)*

A Diverse Economy with an International Presence

Several key employment sectors are represented in Doña Ana County. These include agriculture, healthcare, defense, higher education, government, manufacturing, and tourism. The border with Mexico is actively under development interests for international air cargo operations where the County is taking the lead in cultivating the necessary public infrastructure to accommodate increased development interest.

The climate and restricted air space within New Mexico, in general, makes it an ideal location for the nation's defense industry and testing activities. White Sands Missile Testing Range and related initiatives of New Mexico State University are prominent within the County. According to State sources, approximately 1 out of every 10 jobs are involved with federal research and development activities.

Major employers demonstrate a diverse economy. Below are selected major employers within the County, representing a cross-section of private and/or quasi-public institutions.

- **New Mexico State University.** A public land-grant university has approximately 8,380 full-time, part-time, graduate and undergraduate employees that support the needs of approximately 22,360 students.
- **White Sands Missile Range.** The White Sands Missile Range employs approximately 6,300 including

350 active military. White Sands economic impact is profound and generates \$3.7 billion within the County and the border region.

- **Memorial Medical Center.** Located in the Mesilla Valley, serves the more than 300,000 residents of Las Cruces, Doña Ana County, and the surrounding region.
- **Addus Health Care.** A national home health care and support services company with a significant presence in Doña Ana County and the State of New Mexico.
- **Mountain View Regional Medical Center.** A 169-bed hospital/medical center serving the County and all of southern New Mexico.
- **General Dynamics Mission Systems.** A major national aerospace and defense contractor.
- **NASA White Sands Test Facility.** A significant national testing facility for composite pressure systems, critical systems and materials, flight acceptance, hypervelocity impacts, oxygen systems, propellants and aerospace fluids, and propulsion systems.
- **City of Las Cruces.** A full-service municipality and County seat, with 1,700 employees.

County Initiatives: Highlighted for interest are selected higher profile County projects that are a priority for the County Board of Commissioners. It is expected that the next County Manager will take an active role in developing a work plan for these initiatives with regular, recurring progress reports to the Board of Commissioners.

- **Strategic Plan 2024.** The Board of County Commissioners initiated a new Strategic Plan adopted in November 2023 that focuses the County’s mission on seven (7) Vital Conditions with associated implementation goals. The seven Vital Conditions are: (1) Thriving Natural World; (2) Basic Needs for Health and Safety; (3) Humane Housing; (4) Meaningful Work and Wealth; (5) Lifelong Learning; (6) Reliable Transportation; and (7) Belonging and Civic Muscle, at the center of the County’s efforts.
- **New Emergency Operations Center (EOC).** Doña Ana County’s \$14 million Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is expected to break ground in late 2024. The new 18,000 sq. ft. facility will be located on the New Mexico State University campus. The facility will house OEM’s administrative offices, an emergency operations center, a backup dispatch center, a radio communications room, classrooms, conference rooms, and critical emergency response equipment for disaster responses.



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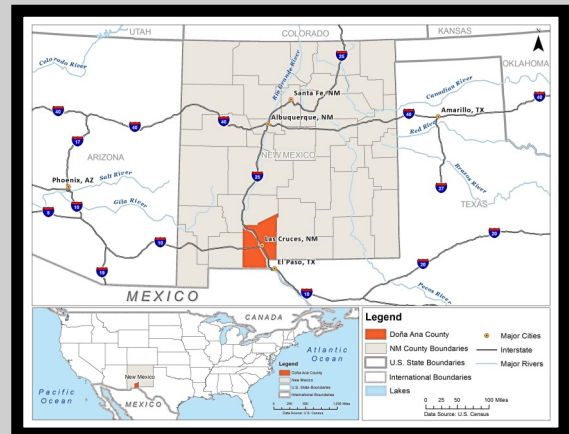
- **International Jetport at Santa Teresa.** Jetport is a full-service airport catering to southern Doña Ana County, the City of El Paso and Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua area. The Jetport's runway accommodates a wide variety of air traffic including business jets, single- and multi-engine aircraft, turboprops, and helicopters. The County is investing additional resources in the Jetport to accommodate greater cargo operations. The airport is designated an International Airport and provides Customs service to aircraft arriving from Mexico and other foreign countries. The airport abuts the Union Pacific Intermodal Railroad Yard and its east-west rail line. The airport and adjacent Santa Teresa industrial park are designated as a Foreign Trade Zone creating economic development opportunities for the County.
- **Broadband Infrastructure.** Last fiscal year, the Board committed \$4M to infrastructure and broadband development. This funding supports a collaboration between two grassroots organizations formed to create Borderplex Connect, a nonprofit organization focusing on digital inclusion.
- **Santa Teresa Gateway Rail Park.** An Industrial park consisting of 225 industrial-zoned acres with two million square feet of industrial space built and over three million square feet planned for new development. The Park is rail served with short-line rail connecting to the Union Pacific Main Line running through it.

Education a State and County priority.

Education is a priority for Doña Ana County with a strong network of public and private schools serving students from primary to secondary age schoolchildren. The County also has several community colleges and technical schools providing vocational training and continuing educational opportunities. With approximately 8,000 students, Doña Ana County Community College is the State's 4th largest community college. It provides 42 associate degrees and over 50 certificates in Career and Technical Education and General Education in cooperation with New Mexico State University. New Mexico State University (NMSU) is the

state's oldest university (1888). NMSU's main campus is in Las Cruces and provides over 180 undergraduate and 120 graduate degree programs.

Higher education goals for its residents have been a high priority of the State for many years. New Mexico was the first state in the country to offer free tuition-to recent high school graduates. In 2022, the tuition-free program was expanded and made permanent with the New Mexico Opportunity Scholarship program.



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Certificate and career training programs offered by the State's universities is also tuition-free for returning adult students.

In New Mexico, every high school student has the opportunity to take dual credit college courses. The dual credit program allows high school students to simultaneously earn credit toward high school graduation and a certificate or postsecondary degree.

Primary education is also a core priority within the County and State. There are three public school districts in Doña Ana County: Hatch Valley Municipal Schools, Las Cruces Public Schools, and Gadsden Independent Schools. Las Cruces Public Schools is the largest K-12 provider in the County, with Gadsden next largest and Hatch the smallest. There are also nine (9) private schools and seven (7) public charter schools within the County. Many of the K-12 schools are extremely high-performing and have obtained a grade "A" or higher on several reports available.

In the summer of 2024, Doña Ana County will host a student internship program that is funded and supported by the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED). The primary goal of the program is to provide High School students the opportunity to participate in high-quality internships in government agencies, non-profit organizations, schools, and private businesses. In 2021, 547 interns were hired with a budget of \$1.3 million; in 2022, 850 students were hired with a budget of \$2.7 million; in 2023, 1380 students were hired with a budget of \$4 million. In 2023, Doña Ana County alone hired over half of the student interns in the State of New Mexico. 2024 is proving to be the best year yet with 1600 students projected to be hired and placed within businesses throughout Southern New Mexico with an estimated budget of \$5 million.

Recreation and Cultural Experiences

Doña Ana County offers numerous recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike. Outdoor enthusiasts can explore the Organ Mountains-Desert Peak National Monument which features hiking trails, rock climbing, and stunning desert landscapes. The Rio Grande River provides opportunities for fishing, kayaking, and birdwatching. Cultural attractions in the County include historical sites, museums, art galleries, and annual festivals celebrating the area's rich heritage and cultural traditions.

County Government

As a state designated class “A” county (minimum gross revenues of over \$75M and over 100,000 in population). Doña Ana County is one of New Mexico’s five (5) State designated Class “A” counties. The County is a Commission-Manager form of government with an elected five-member Board of County Commissioners (Board). The five County Commissioners are limited to two 4-year terms. The Board Chair is the Commission’s presiding officer. The Chair is elected annually among the five Commissioners. All Commissioners are elected by district.

The Board adopts policy, enacts ordinances, and appoints only the County Manager, who is responsible for implementing the policies of the Board. The County Manager is responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the County. The County provides a wide range of services to residents which include public safety (Sheriff; Fire/Rescue, detention, animal control), utilities, fleet/transportation, Jetport, facilities and parks, health and human services, finance, information technology, community development, economic development initiatives and human resources. The 2024 Fiscal Year budget is \$339M and supports 850 full-time equivalent employees with five (5) bargaining units.

Doña Ana County has five (5) Constitutional Elected Department Heads (Assessor, Treasurer, Clerk, Sheriff, and Probate Judge). The Assessor, Treasurer and Clerk are each allocated a non-classified deputy position. The Sheriff is allocated two non-classified positions, Undersheriff and Administrative Secretary. All other employees within their departments are County employees who fall under the budgetary authority of the County Manager and the County’s personnel policies. The County has a Flood Commissioner who is appointed by the Governor.

The Position

The County Manager is appointed by and reports to the five-member Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). Under broad policy guidance and direction of the Board, the County Manager is responsible for managing the administration and operational services of County government. The County Manager’s office has twenty (20) departments, with seven (7) that are direct reports, including two Assistant County Managers, the County Attorney, and Internal Auditor. The County Manager ensures that all departmental activities are compliant with Doña Ana County goals and objectives, state and federal laws, and County policies and procedures.



Christopher Schaljo-Hernandez was elected to County Commission District 1 seat in November of 2022. He took office on Jan. 1, 2023, and will be eligible to seek re-election in 2026. Christopher was elected among the five Commissioners to serve as current Commission Chair.



Commissioner Diana Murillo (Vice-Chair) was elected to the District 2 seat on the County Board on Nov. 3, 2020. Her four-year term ends Dec. 31, 2024, and she is eligible to seek re-election. Murillo also serves as the Mayor of Anthony, New Mexico.



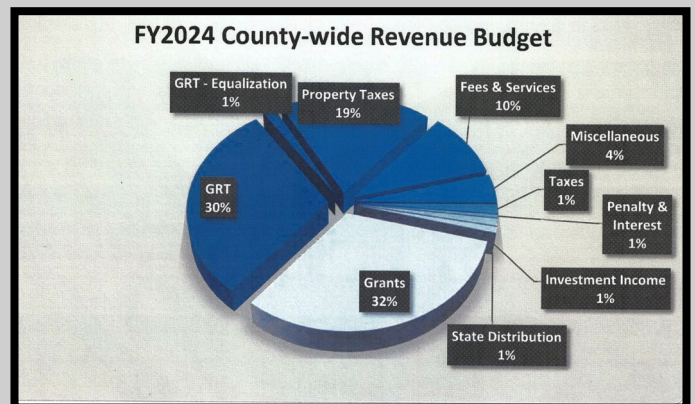
Shannon Reynolds won the election to a second term as the District 3 County Commissioner in November of 2022. He took office on Jan. 1, 2019, and he will now serve until December 31, 2026. Commissioner Reynolds is a US Air Force Vietnam Era USAF Veteran, 1975-1979. He holds a General Engineering Degree.



Commissioner Susana Chaparro was elected to the District 4 seat on the Doña Ana County Board of Commissioners on Nov. 3, 2020. Her four-year term ends Dec. 31, 2024, and she is eligible to seek re-election.



Manuel Sanchez was appointed to the commission seat in District 5 on March 28, 2019. He will serve the remainder of the term vacated by Karen Trujillo, who was appointed to serve a cabinet position under the administration of New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham.

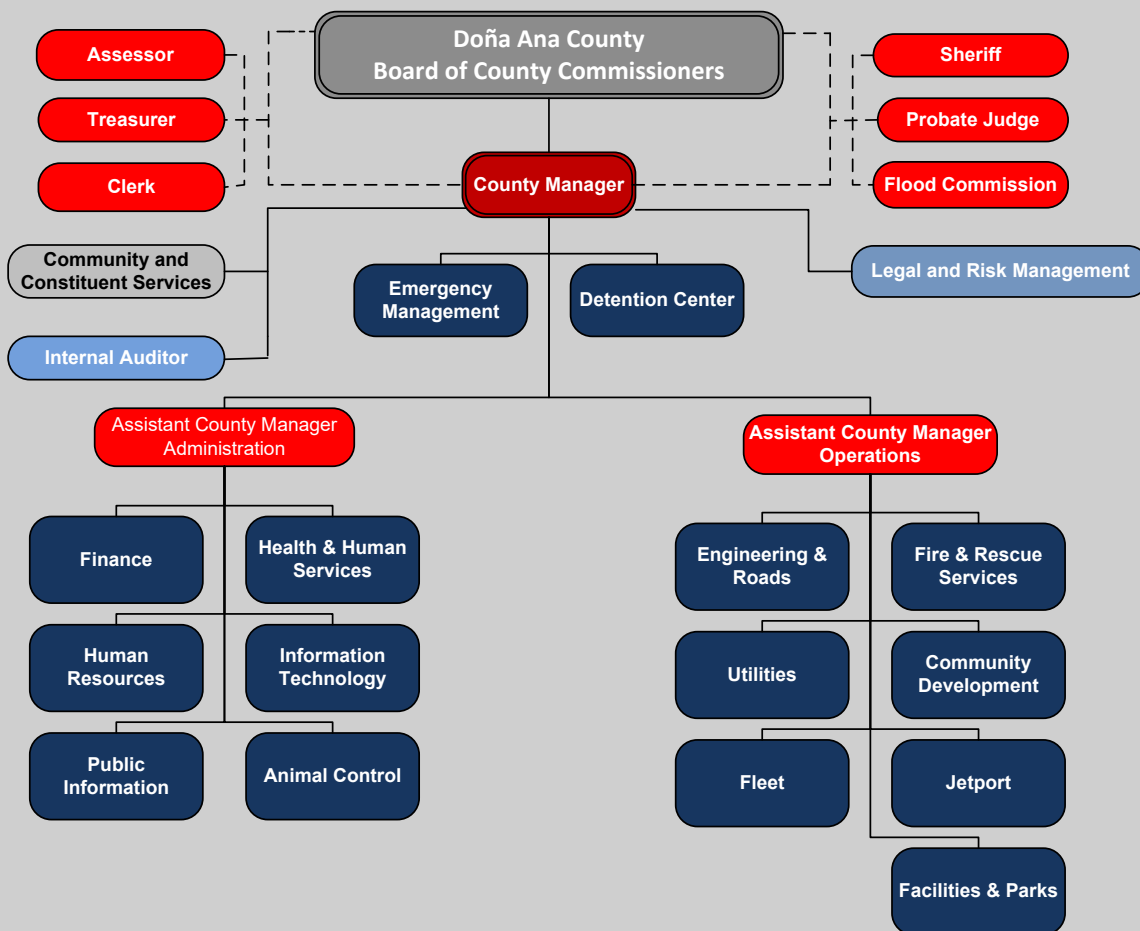


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DOÑA ANA COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

Organizational Chart



Ideal Characteristics, Skills, and Qualities of the Candidate

Leadership. An individual who can think creatively, an “outside the box” thinker who can expand the organizational capacity and take the County to new organizational levels. Also, someone who can assist the Board of Commissioners to implement a long-range vision with specific actionable policies.

Management. An individual who has experience in creating and implementing strategic plans; is skilled at developing work programs, assigning priorities; is not a micromanager and who provides the vision for the team, delegates to staff in their areas of responsibility but establishes clear accountability. Additionally, an individual who can empower the staff with the authority and support needed to make decisions at the lowest, most reasonable level.

Strong and effective communication skills. An individual who values the importance of placing priority on developing relationships with the larger County community while keeping the Board regularly informed of ongoing projects, programs and services and important pending issues. Is an active listener who regularly incorporates a feedback loop.

Effective relationship builder. An individual who places priority on understanding the diversity of the County’s unique cultural areas, neighborhoods, and Colonias. An individual who is experienced in collaborating and supporting elected department heads is a critical component in supporting the overall mission of Doña Ana County. This relationship skill set should also be exemplified within the organization where support for the talented staff and their expertise is needed, if not cultivated in some areas.

Adaptability. An individual who can adjust to varying and frequently leveraging priorities and needs of the diverse geographic areas of Doña Ana County. Additionally, skills that demonstrate a willingness to consider alternative approaches to solving problems, and a general openness to new ideas.

Community Involvement. An individual who will make time to be proactively involved with the community, whether via volunteerism or through other initia-

tives. Being visible and approachable are important characteristics of the style of the next manager. Involvement within the community is important to understand the unique characteristics of the people and places.

Systems Development. Experience with addressing time to permit opportunities, process improvements and evaluate best practices in development services/ community development. This should include an understanding, if not appreciation of the private sector’s perspective on the cost of doing business in the County and how systems can work as a collective “win-win” for all involved. An individual who understands the value of and uses a ‘closed-loop’ to determine if investments in County resources accomplish their intended goals and provide their desired value.

Ethics. An individual that has had experience in developing new systems of service delivery, addressing equity in their application, creating an environment of certainty and fairness. Must be able to “walk the walk” and who takes personal responsibility for their own actions.

Economic Development experience is important and a high priority of the Board. An individual who has experience in developing economic development strategies involving infrastructure, public/private sector collaboration, aerospace, rail, and perhaps even international exposure, would be of value to the County.

Team Builder. It is expected that the next County Manager will or has had experience in developing and enhancing critical areas of an organization including developing succession and talent transfer initiatives. An individual who has developed professional development plans, cultivated an “employee-centered” organization and a culture of across the organization support systems, is highly valued.

Board of County Commissioners Relations

The successful candidate will need to prioritize the collective and individual needs of the Board. The next County Manager should have experience in developing action plans that address the directives of the Board as a whole, while being attentive to individual requests made by Commissioners. The individual should be a skilled and transparent communicator who has experience in developing local, regional, and statewide relationships to advance the interests of the County and ensure services are delivered as expected. The Board desires an individual who is apolitical and impartial when carrying out policies. The successful candidate will also be expected to do an organizational review of current practices and policies and recommend adjustments or changes to the Board. It is also important that the successful candidate be candid in their recommendations, recognizing the importance of leveraging sometimes limited resources to demanding priorities. The individual also should be a skilled negotiator, who is also diplomatic in communication style, approach, and presence. It is expected that the successful candidate maintains a positive, collaborative “customer service” philosophy in dealing with the other elected officials/department heads. Having frequent, recurring meetings focusing on follow-through with the other County Constitutional elected officers will be critical to the success of the next manager and the County.

Requirements

The minimum requirements for this position are a bachelor's degree and ten (10) years of progressively responsible experience in government or business with demonstrated leadership in executive-level management to include County or City Manager, Chief Executive Officer, County or City Assistant Manager, County or City Department Director or Department Director in a jurisdiction with a comparable organization may be considered. An individual who speaks Spanish is preferred but that is not a requirement. The BOCC are committed to providing an employment agreement with a base salary and benefits commensurate with the experience, education, and expertise of the preferred candidate.

Compensation and Benefits

The Board of County Commissioners is committed to providing an employment agreement with base compensation that is highly competitive and commensurate with the education, experience, and expertise of the preferred candidate. The County provides employee benefits that include health, dental, vision, life, employee assistance program, other voluntary insurances, short-term, long-term disability, deferred compensation (457) retirement program, and retirement benefits through the Public Employees Retirement Association of New Mexico (PERA). The County additionally provides vacation, holidays, personal day, and sick leave, and related professional development dues and expenses are provided.

To Learn More and Apply: The recruitment will remain open until filled. The first review of applications is scheduled for May 17, 2024. To apply email a letter of interest and current resume to:

Robert E. Slavin, President or

John Kross, Southwest Regional Manager

SLAVIN MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

slavin@bellsouth.net

For additional information and/or if confidentiality is important to you, prior to applying telephone either: Bob Slavin at (770) 449-4656 or John Kross at (480) 797-4487.