

# **Development of Sustainability Plan**

NOTE: The following table is a summary of written comments turned in as part of the group exercises at the Sustainability Action Plan public input meetings held in January 2010. Participants were asked to identify goals, actions to achieve the goals, obstacles to success, and possible ways to overcome the obstacles. Similar goals were combined into a single row for this table. **This table does NOT represent a draft plan.**

Goals (w/ frequency)	Actions	Obstacles	Possible Remedies
<p>Increase recycling rate by making recycling more convenient and accepting more variety of materials</p> <p>16</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin curbside recycling</li> <li>• Increase number of drop-off sites so people don't have to go as far</li> <li>• Recycle glass and more types of plastic</li> <li>• Compost organic waste at schools and larger facilities</li> <li>• Make it illegal to dump green waste; require composting</li> <li>• Make recycling a requirement</li> <li>• Encourage placement of recycling bins at apartment complexes via tax incentives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased cost for equipment and operations</li> <li>• Apathy, ignorance about the benefits of recycling; resistance to change</li> <li>• Lack of awareness about what can be recycled and when pickup occurs</li> <li>• Resistance if it requires too much extra effort</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedicate % of sales tax; lodger's tax to recycling efforts</li> <li>• Find grants or state/federal appropriations for equipment</li> <li>• Tax increase by referendum to fund recycling</li> <li>• Education of all segments of society, including schools and political leaders, about benefits of recycling and costs of landfill operation/expansion</li> <li>• Make it more expensive to throw things away than to recycle ("pay as you throw"), and use fees to subsidize recycling, or to provide recycling participation credit</li> <li>• Start with less frequent pickups, and increase as funds allow</li> <li>• Collaborate with other communities that have facilities</li> <li>• Do a pilot project modeled after successful curbside recycling in other communities</li> <li>• Sponsor special recycling events utilizing volunteers</li> <li>• Utilize same existing trash trucks for recycling pickup</li> </ul>
<p>Reduce water use in City and private operations, ensuring that consumption is not depleting the aquifer over time</p> <p>11</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage citizens and schools to use low-flow and water conservation measures, particularly for low-income residents</li> <li>• City should lead by example: conservation practices in its own facilities</li> <li>• Use inclining block rate pricing to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population growth may offset efficiency gains</li> <li>• Socio-economics: some simply can't afford the greener appliances</li> <li>• Cost of City incentives and enforcement</li> <li>• Politics of water "rights"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase cost of violating water conservation ordinance and use fines to fund conservation.</li> <li>• Education and outreach, especially to children, on topics like xeriscaping, native plants, ecological need for water, costs of excess consumption</li> <li>• City could buy appliances @ cost and</li> </ul>

	<p>incentivize conservation while allowing moderate use to remain affordable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote grey water use for irrigation</li> <li>• Promote rain water collection</li> <li>• Improve enforcement of conservation ordinance</li> <li>• Charge more for new developments outside of City</li> <li>• Replace inefficient toilets, shower heads, water heaters, washers</li> <li>• Quantify ACTUAL water use in the City, determine what a “sustainable” level of water consumption actually is and ensure we don’t exceed it even as population grows</li> <li>• Limit grass or watering of yards</li> <li>• ban flood irrigation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aversion to City intervention into personal freedoms</li> <li>• Most water consumption occurs outside City limits (agriculture)</li> <li>• Cost of constructing water reclamation facilities</li> <li>• Voluntary participation may be limited</li> <li>• Belief that it is not (yet) an issue</li> <li>• Special interests blocking examination of issue – golf courses/businesses</li> <li>• Resistance to redoing landscaping</li> </ul>	<p>offers them to citizens for less \$ than they can get it as individuals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include information on aquifer levels on each bill</li> <li>• Involve groups like NMSU OASIS, wildlife society, etc.</li> </ul>
<p>Increase energy efficiency in City facilities and in the community as a whole</p> <p>11</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct energy audits on all City buildings</li> <li>• Use more efficient lighting, including LED where appropriate</li> <li>• Turn off office equipment @ night</li> <li>• Education on weatherization, thermostats, etc.</li> <li>• Tiered pricing structure for energy</li> <li>• Set commercial standards for energy consumption</li> <li>• Retrofit existing buildings with insulation, windows, etc.</li> <li>• Shift electricity use to off-peak hours</li> <li>• Utilize automatic shut off and programmable thermostats</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability of trained personnel to do audits</li> <li>• Up front cost of improvements</li> <li>• Short term thinking</li> <li>• Lack of awareness about energy use and its implications</li> <li>• Need current data, and real time data on usage with smart meters</li> <li>• Habits are hard to break</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workforce training</li> <li>• Documentation of long term savings</li> <li>• Educate about lifecycle costs</li> <li>• Buy efficient bulbs in volume at offer to citizens at discount rates</li> <li>• Report periodically on progress</li> <li>• Rising cost of energy means we can’t afford not to</li> <li>• Work with EPE to sponsor retrofits</li> <li>• Lobby PRC to allow EPE to charge higher rates at peak times, and require installations of smart meters that can tell the difference</li> <li>• Establish low interest loan programs</li> </ul>

<p>Increase generation of renewable energy, eventually producing as much as we consume</p> <p>12</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• solar hot water in day use City buildings</li> <li>• City building codes could require minimum PV system, or solar hot water heaters in buildings</li> <li>• Offer incentives such as fee waivers</li> <li>• Use renewable fuel (such as biofuel, electricity) in fleet vehicles</li> <li>• Install PV on all parking lots and other City property</li> <li>• Install wind turbines on the mesa and hydropower on the river</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up front cost of improvements</li> <li>• Cheap fuel</li> <li>• Resistance to change</li> <li>• Resistance from utilities– reduced sales</li> <li>• Need trained installers</li> <li>• Aesthetics of wind and PV installations</li> <li>• Impacts of renewable energy on threatened species</li> <li>• Battery recycling for electric vehicles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education – true cost of energy</li> <li>• Tie City utility contracts to renewable cooperation</li> <li>• Lobby PRC to require EPE to increase the amount of renewable electricity generation in the grid</li> <li>• Provide clear examples, and make renewable energy the City image</li> <li>• Provide incentive programs such as low interest loans or tax breaks</li> <li>• Rising cost of energy will make it more viable</li> <li>• Support research programs for technologies, especially algae biofuel</li> <li>• Encourage community wind/solar projects so poor people can benefit as well</li> </ul>
<p>Increase the share of food consumed from local sources, thereby supporting local growers/processors, and improving food security</p> <p>9</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plant fruit &amp; nut trees in parks instead of shade trees, and adopt out landscapes to be planted, cared for, by community groups</li> <li>• Encourage home gardens</li> <li>• Support community gardens; encourage use of vacant lots for this</li> <li>• Legalize backyard hen keeping</li> <li>• Purchase local food for City services and encourage schools to do same</li> <li>• Encourage preservation of agricultural lands</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fruit trees grow slower and are more expensive to maintain</li> <li>• Current incentives favor larger, more distant operations</li> <li>• Lack of gardening expertise</li> <li>• Cost of installation/ maintenance of gardens</li> <li>• Apathy and ignorance of food system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with NMSU researchers, Food to Table Program, and OASIS student group</li> <li>• Promote farmers markets more</li> <li>• Host/support workshops about gardening, garden support structures (greenhouses, cold frames, drip systems, etc.)</li> <li>• Charge import tax on food that travels long distance (if legal)</li> <li>• Education – compile a comprehensive list of local food resources</li> <li>• Tax incentives for ag land owners and users</li> <li>• Create more CSA programs with local farmers, along with direct market with beef/poultry farmers</li> <li>• Foster communication between public &amp; agriculture producers, bridging the distance between the two</li> </ul>
<p>Protect the quality of our drinking water</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit the use of pesticides and herbicides</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost differential of manual vs. chemical</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Positive examples from other communities</li> </ul>

supply 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employ more humans in manual weed control</li> </ul>	<p>methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overcome misinformation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase fines for violations</li> </ul>
Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and dependence on fossil fuels 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve efficiency of existing buildings</li> <li>• Design new buildings to require less heating and cooling</li> <li>• Utilize renewable electricity and motor fuel</li> <li>• Provide for transit, biking and walking facilities throughout City and beyond (e.g., Railrunner)</li> <li>• Encourage reduction of waste and recycling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budgetary constraints</li> <li>• utility company support</li> <li>• knowledgeable builders, city officials, residents, businesses</li> <li>• leadership and dedication</li> <li>• codes, regulation may be unpopular</li> <li>• The sense of many that fossil fuels are limitless</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City program development – Sustainability</li> <li>• public info/education, especially in schools</li> <li>• MPO multi-modal planning</li> <li>• LEED-ND – neighborhood development</li> </ul>
Increase the number of people utilizing environmentally friendly transportation through better facilities and compact development 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase mileage of bike lanes/paths, esp. NMSU area</li> <li>• Design walkable/mixed use neighborhoods</li> <li>• Install more bike racks around town</li> <li>• spend more planning time &amp; money on other transportation options</li> <li>• Provide incentives for alternatives, disincentives for auto use</li> <li>• Adopt the bike friendly community task force recommendations, and keep this task force alive and meeting</li> <li>• Add shade along pedestrian routes</li> <li>• Allow mixed use development by right in many places</li> <li>• Incentivized infill development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developer resistance</li> <li>• Resistance from lenders</li> <li>• Not all existing roads have facilities, and they are expensive to build</li> <li>• Ease/convenience of driving</li> <li>• drivers/bikes do not communicate well on the road</li> <li>• Roadway design is often exclusively for autos</li> <li>• Right of way limitations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobilize students to bike to school</li> <li>• Bike to shop/work/play month</li> <li>• education regarding safe bicycle riding &amp; driving with bikes</li> <li>• Make parking permits on campus expensive</li> <li>• Bike programs (yellow bikes in Silver City)</li> <li>• Local gas tax could be used to finance alternatives</li> <li>• Re-educate planners and engineers</li> <li>• Let the citizens of Las Cruces know why we're moving in this direction. Advertising – good PR</li> <li>• Reduce street widths, use existing ROW, drains (EBID) outfall channel, Interstates, highways</li> <li>• TIDDs for mixed use and infill</li> </ul>
Protect habitat including wilderness areas and wildlife corridors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop plan to protect &amp; maintain ecosystem function, collaborate with university professors/extension, to designate key areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development encroaching on habitat areas</li> <li>• Property rights</li> <li>• Development interests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stick to the vision plans</li> <li>• Evaluate development impacts on nearby habitat/wilderness</li> <li>• Educate public (lectures, seminars,</li> </ul>

4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey endangered species frequently</li> <li>• ensure monitoring &amp; accountability</li> <li>• regional flood action group</li> <li>• Create a GIS planning map that identifies parcels of land with ecological value</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• unwillingness or inability (time conflicts) of professionals to collaborate</li> <li>• Lack of financial support &amp; acquisition of land parcels</li> </ul>	<p>workshops, incl. schools) on benefits of conservation (decreased erosion, runoff, increased water quality, improved aesthetics, improved quality of life, recreational opportunities, possible ecotourism)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider conservation easements</li> <li>• Creative collaborations</li> </ul>
Increase instream flow in the Rio Grande to be a year-round flow through the City creating a healthier ecosystem & community destination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create an option for water utility clients to donate water rights or money to purchase water rights</li> <li>- Work with EBID to create a special water use district</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Current policies and public perceptions toward the river</li> <li>- The City's own plans to eventually use surface water as a drinking water source</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Partner with local NGOs; acquire new funding by mixing w/ wetland restoration projects; add value to the river through renewed recreational activities and associated businesses (e.g., charter fishing or possible canoe rentals, etc.)</li> </ul>
Create a robust incentive program for sustainable actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- change payment structure for trash collection to promote recycling</li> <li>- Offer tax credits for green businesses</li> <li>- Promote savings of water conservation programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Budget limitations</li> <li>- Bad PR if handled poorly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tap into existing funding sources</li> <li>- Pool resources with other communities to make bulk purchases of water conserving appliances, etc.</li> <li>- Fund programs through savings in conservation programs (or the red light cameras)</li> </ul>
Reduce junk mail delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Make postage MUCH more expensive for junk mail (advertisement/unsolicited mail)</li> </ul>		
Flood control and street runoff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coordinate how street runoff gets to the river</li> <li>- Oppose Wilderness Act that would prevent future flood control efforts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development</li> <li>- Existing storm drains</li> <li>- new clean water standards</li> <li>- New federal laws</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More coordination with other entities</li> <li>- Oppose new Clean Water Act laws</li> </ul>
Recognize the accomplishments of Bellingham Washington	<p>Have a BALLE speaker come to Cruces and enlighten our City decision makers on what can be done when one is truly educated and passionate about bringing real &amp; needed change on</p>	<p>The current culture of status quo "business as usual" that becomes the bottleneck for "real" change.</p>	<p>Educate our decision makers so they "get it" and are passionate about real change. Currently the best ideas will take too much energy to move forward. Our leaders need to actively seek out "best practices" from cities</p>

	issues of sustainability		that are leading in various sustainability arenas – food, energy, housing, transportation
Preserve and expand arroyos to control flooding	Connect arroyos to the extent possible to tailor the path of runoff flood waters	Unrestricted growth encroaching on arroyos	
Require that all City & County government buildings be minimum LEED Gold by 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assess the needs</li> <li>- Include illegible in City ICIP</li> <li>- Make these \$s a high priority in ICIP budget</li> <li>- City/County illegible plan</li> </ul>	\$433 million of ICIP needs are already identified. Therefore, competition will be tough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Voices, many voices</li> <li>- City Council meeting</li> <li>- Prioritize in Vision 2040 plan</li> </ul>
A program to get kids more involved in their future. To help sustain the earth. To give a care.	I know we have Action for Youth, but we need some program to get more kids involved. Hands on program with rewards to kids would want to be in the program.		
Keep the public informed with Sustainability Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Website, e-mails, public meetings, more discussions like tonight</li> <li>- Give local solar and wind manufacturing tax break</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- People just don't care</li> <li>- not enough education on sustainability</li> <li>- Cost (i.e., add insulation to an existing home)</li> <li>- "change is hard" attitude of a lot of people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- make plan "personal"</li> <li>- more meetings like this – make DVD and check it out at the library</li> <li>- tax rebates, grants, buy in quantity and sell at lower cost</li> </ul>
Long term infrastructure improvement & management plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Condition assessment of existing water, sewer, gas, roads, drainage, other infrastructure.</li> <li>- budget for improvements to achieve needed capital improvements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- inadequate investment in infrastructure</li> <li>- short term thinking</li> <li>- underbudgeting of city needs</li> <li>- "not in my term" thinking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Think long term &amp; budget</li> <li>- Priority that makes sense</li> </ul>
Turn Las Cruces into a well known hotspot for sustainability-minded individuals	Public relations approach – NMSU & City		
Partner with the County by 2012 to buy all needed supplies together and only buy sustainable products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- meet with the purchasing managers of both the City and County</li> <li>- Have lists available of all needed supplies</li> <li>- keep track of all ecologically sound</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- turf issues</li> <li>- persuasion of staff who may not see this as important</li> <li>- cost may be an issue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- make this a rule or ordinance for doing government business</li> <li>- educate staff</li> </ul>

	product catalogs - only buy safe eco-products		
Create an eco-business incubator by 2012	Brainstorm what products could be useful to the region (recycled carpet, glass, plastic, paper) and decide 1 or 2 products that could be manufactured here	- money - place - infrastructure	- create or identify markets - do a feasibility study - find property - design a building that is ecologically correct
Reduce the amount of trash pickups the City needs to do which reduces operating costs and emissions	Place several “Big Belly” units throughout heavily trafficked areas in the city. These solar powered trash compactors reduce the amount of trips the city needs to make to empty the trash	The up-front costs	
Institute green/recycling practices, materials, procedures in all City office operations in new City Hall by 1-1-11	- Identify each area where changes can be made and what they are - compute cost and difficulty of each change, and benefit in \$, carbon, etc. - prioritize and get about it - build on OASYS at NMSU	- Takes time, effort from staff - public not aware of benefits	- Similar actions have been taken elsewhere – learn from them - educate the public to demand it - track savings - credit department with savings, compliance
Outlaw hot water circulation systems on new buildings	Teach people how much it costs them in gas use to keep their water hot. The circulation cools the water (\$ & sense)	- These systems are convenient and make plumbing cheaper. People and builders like them. - Utilities sell more gas - The cost has never been clearly evaluated and made known	- Facts and cost education - green awareness
Form and sponsor Civic Action Groups targeted to sustainability issues	- Encourage groups to form - provide a focus and encouragement - support the groups – take their input and give them jobs to do	Old fogies in the City might not support	Ignore them
Reduce plastics	- make plastic bags illegal - make plastic water bottles illegal	Retail business	
Reduce waste of time, materials, and money	Better coordination among all levels of government, including City, County, School District, and Federal	Jealousy of turf, and/or jurisdiction overlap	Review of organizational responsibilities with a view to removing overlap and increasing clarity
Save resources to put	Cut spending, as in renew old	Americans are greedy and	Stop building new houses – use what we got

our money into recyclable resources	buildings rather than build new ones. Make stuff that lasts!	people want to move here but want cheap living	
Reduce waiting/idling time at intersections by 5% or 15 seconds	Reduce the cycle times of the light by 5%, and do further timing for traffic flow on Lohman Ave westbound	Cost of redoing circuitry on traffic cabinets or replacing	Do those that can be changed first illegible replacements
Lower plastic bag use by 25% by 2012	- limit on plastic grocery bag use - create incentive for people such as discounts when supplying their own bags for reuse/recycle at the entrance/exits	- Getting people to want to take that extra step - in the city recycling requires a lot of time to be invested	- Market the ideas over radio and TV - making recycling more simple, individuals may be more inclined to contribute
Develop plans for upgrading older neighborhoods for traffic flow, walking, and bicycling so they are closer to being on par with new areas (50% within 2 years)	Mapping needs for easier pedestrian & biking pathways, better traffic control to aid pedestrians. Survey both infrastructure and neighborhoods in older parts of town. Could the EBID channels be improved for walking and biking – as is done in other cities like ABQ?	- Very old infrastructure, no place for new paths - people apathetic about changes or afraid they could raise prop. Taxes - lack of city funds, time to carry out surveys	Smaller neighborhood meetings, clear definition of goals & the need for sustainable neighborhoods, as well as for the city.
More efficient use of space, so as to leave as much land as possible undeveloped. Curb construction of new business buildings by 40% by 2015	Limit the number of new buildings being erected in favor of currently unused spaces (old blockbuster has been empty for months! Those situations are horribly inefficient). Can be measured by comparing current to future new building construction.	Many corporations want their buildings to have a particular look or style, and renovating an existing building is more labor intensive than starting from scratch @ a time when labor and supplies are cheap	Offer incentives such as tax breaks for businesses using previously constructed buildings rather than new ones. This plan leaves more land undeveloped, which leaves more space for wildlife, also lowers material waste. Possibly lowers contracting job availability.
Increase green housing	Provide incentives for building green housing	Costs extra money to construct, not enough builders that understand how	Education to children