

School Siting



City of Las Cruces[®]

PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE

TO: Robert Garza, PE, City Manager

FROM: Brian Denmark, AICP, Assistant City Manager/COO 

DATE: January 30, 2013 **FILE NO.** ACM/COO-13-003

SUBJECT: Joint Work Session Item – School Siting

At the October 16, 2012 Joint Work Session between the City Council and the Las Cruces Public Schools (LCPS) Board, discussion transpired pertaining to the establishment of a School Siting Committee. Conceptual agreement occurred whereby both respective entities agreed to pursue a Memorandum of Understanding to formulate a committee between the LCPS District, City of Las Cruces and Doña Ana County to discuss school siting issues. I will be providing an update on this topic as well as recommend a modification to this concept to consider a regional planning committee that not only contemplates school siting issues, but global policy issues that impact the region.

An informal meeting was held in January, 2013 of this year that included representatives from the LCPS Board, City Council and County Commission to discuss how to proceed with a school siting committee. During the discussion, Board Member Bonnie Votaw raised the pertinent question as to what is the specific purpose of this committee. After considerable discussion, it was agreed that members would consider their thoughts as to what the purpose of the committee should be and reconvene to further discuss. There was also discussion about bylaws and the need for copies of examples from other committees. However, all involved were aware of the upcoming joint meeting and that the topic of school siting would be discussed.

Since that time, City staff has met with County staff to discuss issues related to the Extra Territorial Zone (ETZ) and its current structure and Joint Powers Agreement between the City and the County. Through this discussion, an idea merged where contemplation should be considered to merge the issue of school siting and the ETZ into one concept that may benefit all involved; that being the establishment of a regional planning authority that focuses on policy related issues that impact governmental entities regionally. In lieu of focusing only on school siting, emphasis would be placed on all policy related issues that impact the area.

I will be prepared to present this topic in more detail at the meeting and answer any questions that may arise. The goal is to reach consensus and direction on how to proceed.

If you have any questions, please advise.