



DONA ANA COUNTY, NM

COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER ASSESSMENT



DECEMBER 2018

Prepared By: Robert L Garza





DONA ANA COUNTY NEW MEXICO

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Executive Summary

Dona Ana County has a wealth of investment, capital and human, in providing reliable, accessible, safe and enriching programs and service to residents. Great value comes from the caring people who provide the county services as well as community members who also contribute to meeting the needs of our diverse communities.

This report provides an assessment of all Community Resource Centers (CRC's) in Dona Ana County. The objective of the assessment was to evaluate uses and procedures for operation and management of the 15 centers and develop recommendations based on best practices for advancing their level of service to best serve residents of Dona Ana County. Methods of analysis included interviews, research of best practice from other agencies, site visits, data collection on programs and usage, job descriptions review, and application of experiences from past management of similar facilities.

Extensive interviews were held with key stakeholders including county leadership, staff, and community volunteers. Site visits to centers, both with staff and independently, made it possible to see facilities and operations in different lights, Combined, this input made it possible to see what is done, how it's done, and who is doing what part of the work.

Private rental and management of the CRC's are done based on dated policy and procedures which have been modified in part over many years of use and interpretation. This assessment has illuminated the need for a renewed look at how the county will operate, manage, and fully utilize these centers.

We must begin by embracing that one size does not fit all when it comes to community needs and how services are provided through the centers. Dona Ana County has great diversity across its boundaries and most areas where CRC's are located are unique in many ways.

To address the unique nature of each center, it will be necessary to establish a variety of types of facilities as well as a differentiation of the types of uses and the types of users. Priorities of use also needs to be established to avoid conflicting priorities for desirable dates and times of use. While the amount of activity within the centers has seen an upward trend over the last few years, there remains greater potential to expand uses and activity within many of the centers.

A philosophical question had to be asked to determine how to maximize effectiveness of the CRC's going forward. Should the use of CRC's be focused on Dona Ana County social service programming alone or should the county be in the facility rental business for other uses? Interviews of county leadership overwhelmingly indicated a desire to not only expand county functions at the centers but also make them more attractive and available for general public use.

Management responsibility for daily operations has been placed over time in various county departments. The challenge to many CRC users is knowing who to go to and what the procedure is for accessing the centers. Establishing a simplified and easily accessible method for property management is a key to achieving the outcomes desired.

This report finds the need for a new policy to address CRC management, procedures and current market based fee structures. The recommended policy recognizes the variability and flexibility needed for enhanced management of the centers as well.

As targeted activity and uses are identified, it is important to recognize generational needs and desires change over time. It is recommended to establish a policy that will apply to different circumstances as they change over time. The goal should be an attempt to meet the current needs of users while preparing, planning, and implementing new programs and activities with growth for the future.

Recommendations are contained within this report to address a multitude of issues which are also reflected in the proposed new policy documents. Recommendations include:

- Specific and General CRC Uses
- Best Practices – Other Agencies
- Variable Cost Structure
- Insurance Requirements
- Cost Offset Model
- Deposit Requirements
- Facility Enhancements
- Facility Security
- Staff Duties and Responsibilities
- Types of Facilities Defined
- Types of Use Defined
- Reconsider Political Activity Uses
- Marketing Incentives
- Programming Issues
- Long Term Use Leases
- Modernized Rental Portal
- Controlled Facility Access
- Volunteer Contracts (Trustees)

Dona Ana County will be able to advance their goals and expand services and uses if the recommendations are implemented. The optimal timeline for implementing this new policy and management approach is coincident with the next fiscal budget cycle where appropriate funding, organizational impacts, and staffing assignments can be addressed.

ANALYSIS

The backdrop to assessment of government based activities is to capture and include environmental factors that guide, control and dictate what can be done in any situation. There are numerous regulatory elements relating to the public and private use of Community Resource Centers but none as pronounced and impactful as Article IX, Section 14, of the New Mexico Constitution (commonly referred to as The Anti-Donation Clause).

Anti-Donation

The anti-donation law requires local governments to charge fair market values for items provided to non-governmental uses. Many objections and concerns have been expressed by prospective CRC users due to the enforcement of compliance with this provision. Often, facility users feel they should be able to use a community center at no cost simply because they are part of this community and pay taxes. The root of objections seems to rest with the financial impact of paying fair market value.

So why not just change the rules to make this problem go away? This provision of New Mexico law is part of the State Constitution. In order to make any alteration or change to the wording of this clause would require the passage of a State constitutional amendment which entails a process significantly more involved than amending a state statute or regulatory provision. Many lawmakers have broached the subject of amending the regulation and their hard work has resulted in some exemption that include:

- To care for the sick and indigent
- For Veterans' scholarship program for educational advancement
- For Healing Arts where doctors agree to stay local if accepting certain aide
- For Local Economic Development Act programs for job creation

Research and Data Collection

Policy and related documents from multiple agencies were reviewed and compared to the local conditions and policies. Effort was made to ensure reasonable comparisons were used where generally equal demographic and socio-economic conditions exist. Source agency documents from the following sources were used.

- Bernalillo County, NM
- Santa Fe County, NM
- El Paso County, TX
- Cochise College, AZ
- City of Truth or Consequences, NM
- City of Chandler, AZ
- City of Ft. Worth, TX
- City of El Paso, TX
- City of Las Cruces, NM
- Las Cruces Public Schools, NM

Interviews

Interviews were conducted with several Dona Ana County Leaders as well as community advocates and current center volunteers. Interviews and input from the County Manager, Assistant County Managers, Health and Human Services Director, Facilities and Parks Interim Director, County Attorney, County Risk Manager, and a majority of the current and elected County Commissioners. Additional county staff were interviewed from Health and Human Services, Facilities and Parks, as well as four Community Center Outreach Coordinators and eight current or former contract volunteers. Their individual input varied in complexity, but all of the discussions yielded valuable issues for contemplation in developing this report and the associated policy recommendations.

Trends

Many public owned community centers have evolved over time to have a single use and service profile centered around the senior populations. While serving our seniors remains a very important responsibility and goal, it's important to diversify uses within the centers to justify keeping them open and accessible before and after hours of use by senior meals and other popular current uses.

Centers focused on whole communities are moving to concepts called “multi-generational facilities” with broad programming designed to serve seniors as well as adults, children, and adults with children. Hours of use for these varied users are complementary and help justify operating and maintaining open access facilities for extended hours during the average day.

Expanded uses and levels of activity are offered but selectively chosen to avoid competition with other existing users such as schools, towns, villages, cities, and even the private sector. Currently, Dona Ana County Health and Human Services focuses programming on adults with children while Adelante targets the senior population through contracts for Meal Programs.

Private Uses and Rentals

Limited data was available to quantify the extent of private uses for the CRC's. An assumption can be made there are currently very limited documented private uses or there is no reliable standardized method for tracking and reporting of this activity. Many expressed that costs are too high for residents to rent the CRC's, so they choose to look elsewhere for space.

Access to Facilities

Interviews of community and elected officials indicated a desire to use the centers beyond the limits of Dona Ana County and related social service programs. There is a desire to support county government's engagement with constituents in rural communities and the centers make an ideal place to do so.

Some reported concerns that centers are not open on any regular cycle or after hours and on weekends and as a result, they are not looked at as the go-to place for community users. Others said it was overly complicated to try to rent or use the CRC's. They reported not knowing who to go to or how to initiate a request for use. Some chose to contact their Commission to seek guidance and help navigating the system currently in place. They also reported it has been unclear about allowable public use for rentals and what activities or agencies are permitted to use a CRC, for what purpose(s), and at what cost.

Marketing

Input and observations revealed the lack of "curb appeal" and identity for the centers. Most have no signage that is visible from adjacent roadways making it difficult to engage interest from passersby. Community members often don't know what's going on in the centers and there is currently no way to look it up online or by reading a marquis or other on-site display.

Most agencies operating full service community centers have invested in both online scheduling programs and on-site variable message marquis to advise those interested in both availability and activities of interest to them.

Facility Rental Costs

Review of cost data from the agencies listed above revealed that there is no industry standard for fee structures and costs (see Attachment A, next page). There are some similarities in cost structures such as variability of cost for differing conditions. The current policy in place in Dona Ana County has a singular fee structure regardless of type of facility and user classification.

High rental cost was a reoccurring comment and source of concern from those who identified obstacles of use for the CRC's. While the current cost of \$100 for four hours seems high, it may be so for simply using a meeting space for a couple of hours but surely under valuing the use of a large venue for a party of over 100 paying attendees. Variable fee structures are certainly desirable and would be easy to manage with appropriate software.

Liability Insurance Coverage

Similar agencies listed above include varied approaches to liability coverage. Some only require insurance for purely private uses and require nothing for not-for-profit agency use. Others have NM Tort Claim limits uniformly applied to every use unless it is governmental use. A policy that ensures Dona Ana County and its employees are protected from risk and associated claims remains the goal. Many agencies offer liability waivers for not-for-profits who do low impact activities with minimal exposure to risk.

Current policy provisions for insurance offer waivers relating to the time of use (dances ending before 7:30 pm). Liability and risk exposure should be based on type of risk not time of day.

Recommendations

This section outlines recommendations from Garza & Associates, LLC regarding the large array of topics necessary to capture the complexity of managing Community Resource Centers for Dona Ana County. Recommendations will fall into four categories: Best Practices, Management Issues, Operational Issues, and Program Issues.

Best Practices

Best Practices in use in other agencies are not necessarily the best solution for a special condition or location but rather good standards where most agree on the stated position. In the case of Community Resource Centers, there are many common threads with other agencies that can be replicated in Dona Ana County which include the following:

1. Computer Lab Implementation

Earlier in this report we identified the necessity to target services not only to current CRC users but to prospective and future users alike. Computer labs are very commonplace in progressive community centers across the country. Their popularity has risen with the ever increasing amount of information and activities centered around the use of technology. DAC should strive to get Computer Labs established within the level one CRC's (Most active centers) as a starting point with the goal of expanded use at level two facilities. The computers can be used for employment assistance, education and afterschool programming, recreation, general library research, and many other uses. In some jurisdictions, there are Joint Powers Agreements with local school districts to provide lab programs and tutorials. In others it may be possible to get agreements for after school programs using school district teachers and staff.

2. Library or Book Exchange Program

This is done in one of three ways: Through partnership with other local government agencies operating libraries in the area, a bring-a-book/take-a-book program, or with the use of a mobile library provided by a local city agency on a fixed regular cycle. With mobile library options, residents should be able to order a specific book or reference material that can be brought to the CRC on a specified date. Books by mail (rental from local sources) also supplement this use in many jurisdictions. It is important to keep in mind that schools in the areas of CRC's have professionally operated libraries, so they should be the go-to source for children's book needs.

3. Bus Stops

Regional transit districts often seek public property to locate their transit stops. If CRC's are located along existing routes, RTD's should be encouraged to co-locate bus stops on site. In many jurisdictions, it is also common to have school bus stops co-located at community centers, so youth will have access to adult supervision before and after school when needed.

4. Passive Recreation Sites

Recreation uses are frequently sought in Community Resource Centers. In jurisdiction where recreation programming and staff are available, active organized recreation services are provided. In areas such as Dona Ana County, users are required in most cases to using facilities in a self-paced, self-directed way. Passive recreation includes the ability to use outdoor recreation amenities such as basketball courts, skate parks, horseshoe pits, playgrounds, and walking trails. Well defined walking/jogging/hiking trail maps should be created and posted at CRC's, so residents can park at the facility as a trail head and proceed to exercise on a path that has been cleared of obstacles and deemed to be a safe, ADA compliant, path of travel.

5. Not-for-profit Agency Programs

In some jurisdictions, not-for-profit agencies are allowed use of CRC's at no cost. The recommendation to ensure compliance with Anti-Donation laws is to differentiate between those non-profit agencies whose programs support and align with Dona Ana County Mission, Vision, and Core Values and those that do not. Aligned non-profit agencies can receive use of CRC's at a 50% reduced cost. They may also have that fee waived if the value of their service to the county is justified to offset those costs. Other non-profit entities (who allow public access to their events/programs) but whose programs are not aligned with the county will receive use of the CRC's at a 15% reduced cost. Many agencies compel those who receive county funding to provide services and programs within the CRC's on a fixed set schedule.

6. Variable Uses

Multiple community centers often have varied geographic, historic or culturally unique qualities. Not all programming should be offered at all locations, but specific programs should be offered to align with facility limitations, staffing limitations, participation levels, and community desires. Recommended use for each CRC is included in the facility summaries under tab five and further described in the recommendation section below.

7. Variable Rates

Most jurisdictions attempt to align fees with the intensity of use. Specific recommendations for diverse fee structures is included in recommendation 14.

8. Party Rentals

Private uses can cover an almost unlimited number of examples but the most prevalent private uses for centers the size available in Dona Ana County include Quincineras and other birthday celebrations, baby showers, reunions, anniversaries, fundraisers, political, and religious events. Current county policy, adopted by the BOCC in 2004, prohibits any political event in county facilities. Religious activities such as a funeral wake or service fit into most other facilities use as a private non-profit use. If putting CRC's into a higher level of operation remains a goal, allowing political gatherings on a first come, first serve basis like other private uses should be considered.

9. Alcohol

Alcohol use is a permitted use in many jurisdictions reviewed. They require appropriate liquor license permits, security and conformance with all applicable laws and regulations. Because Dona Ana County has an active DWI prevention program offered in some locations, permitting alcohol use within these sites would be a direct conflict of purpose. Whether the county wants to consider allowing such use in other locations remains a subject for consideration. Many prospective private users prefer the ability to serve beer and wine. The draft policy presented with this report prohibits alcohol use in all facilities.

10. Legal Advocacy and Financial Planning Classes

Many jurisdictions either use their own staff, other not-for-profit agency partners, or contract for such services. These areas are in high demand and services are often offered by many other not-for-profit agencies. Tax preparation assistance is also a very popular amenity offered through a volunteer system on set dates during tax season.

Management Issues

Recommendations contained within this section relate to trends, direction, guidance, strategy, financial management, risk and liability, and approach. Items in this section are complex and necessary to provide needed clarity and alignment with organizational goals.

11. Policy Focus

Care must be taken to ensure a revised policy does not focus only on current demands or needs. With time, users of CRC's will change, and their needs and desires will be much different than those who use the facilities today or those who reflect on "the way things used to be". Programming and use of CRC should attempt to meet the current needs while preparing, planning and implementing growth for the future.

12. Types of Facilities

After careful review of existing Dona Ana County CRCs' characteristics, as well as the varied capacity for uses, a system of defining various "types" of facilities has been created.

Characteristics were evaluated for each center to include activity levels and number of youth and adult users. Additional characteristics like kitchen type, staffing levels, programming, potential amenities, and potential rental types were also tallied. See Attachment B at the end of this section.

Current and potential uses were then evaluated for each center in almost 30 separate categories of use. The categories of use were separated between public and private use. See Attachment C at the end of this section.

As a result of this evaluation, a recommendation to designate each facility as one of three types as follows:

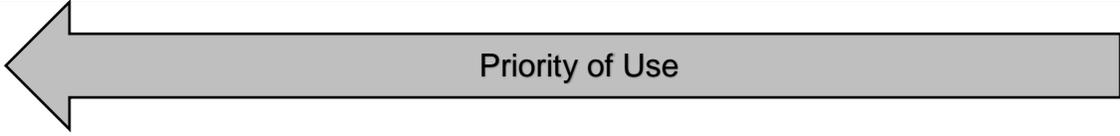
Level One	Level Two	Level Three
Full Time Centers	Part Time Centers	Occasional Use Only
Facilities	Facilities	Facilities
Radium Springs	Placitas	Rincon
Dona Ana	Mesquite	Colquitt
Butterfield	La Mesa	DeLaO Visitors Center
Vado/Del Cerro	South Valley (Anthony)	Dona Ana Boxing Club
Dolores Wright	Betty McKnight	
Organ		

Level one facilities are considered the primary hub for Dona Ana County programming and expended service centers. These facilities will be staffed full time. Staffing CRCs full time builds trusting relationships with constituents, allowing the county and partner organizations to deliver services and connect to people on a reliable continuous basis. The Health and Human Services Department health promotion and community outreach staff coordinate or conduct activities and oversee daily CRC use. Renting for private use can be challenging at these locations due to booking for governmental programs. On-line booking services will enable interested private users to reserve time around other programmed activity.

Level two and three facilities are often smaller or have other limiting factors for full service use initially. These centers will remain in operation and marketed/ managed by property management staff within the county also with the use of an online facility booking system.

13. Types of Users

One size does not fit all when it comes to the diversity of potential users of CRC's. Four types of facility users are recommended. The following table lists the potential users and their associated priority of use. Those on the left will have a higher priority of use than those on the right when competing for booking dates and times.

PUBLIC USERS		PRIVATE USERS	
Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
DAC / Govt. Programs / Anti-Donation Exempt	Aligned NFP or Volunteer	Not Aligned NFP	Private or Commercial
 <p>Priority of Use</p>			

Type 1 Users include Dona Ana County staff, other governmental agencies, and those exempt from the Anti-Donation Clause.

Type 2 Not-For-Profits have programs and activities within the center aligned with the Mission, Vision, and Core Values of the County. Rental fees will be set at 50% of market value for these uses unless these users enter into a service agreement with the Department of Health and Human Services with agreement to open all books and ensure no financial gain outside of performance compensation is being secured by the user.

Type 3 Not-For-Profits are those whose interest is the group itself rather than for the general public.

Type 4 Users are those who limit access to the facility during their rental or may charge admittance. This category includes groups and individuals whose purpose is direct or indirect financial gain and whose use of facilities will result in the group's or individual's direct or indirect financial gain.

The following attributes are further described for each of the user types:

Dona Ana County Recommended Facility User Types

	Public Users		Private Users	
	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
	Programs / Anti-Donation Exempt	Aligned NFP or Volunteer	Not Aligned NFP	Private or Commercial
Access	Open to All	Open to All	Limited / Controlled	Limited / Controlled
Program User Cost	None	Limited to Actual Activity Cost (1)	Varies - Not Controlled	Varies - Not Controlled
Required % of Facility Use Cost	None	50% (2)	85%	100%
Insurance Requirement	None	Full, Waiver Eligible	Full, Waiver Eligible	Full
Example Uses	DAC HHS Program	Exercise Classes	Boxing Club	Dance Lessons
	Sewing / Quilting	Arts and Crafts Classes	Church Service	Fundraiser
	Government Agency	DWI Education / AA Meetings	Performing Arts	Wedding Reception
	Public Meetings	Food Distribution	Professional Organizations	Quincineras
	Senior Meals (Contracted)	Recreation by agreement	Service Organizations	Anniversary Party
	Library, Computer Lab, Donation Program	Youth Education	Farmers Market Organizations	Funeral Service / Wake
	Recreation by DAC	Nutrition or cooking classes	Bingo / Loteria	Reunions

Notes: (1) Fees Managed and Controlled by DAC
 (2) Fees may be offset if agreement is in place aligning use to DAC Mission Vision / Core Values

14. Varied Cost Structure

The cost to rent or use a CRC should be based on location/venue type, use, and duration. Current policy only offers one single cost allocation method (4 hour rental) which may not be flexible enough to align with user expectation and needs. The variable cost approach is easy to manage with the use of an automated booking program for facility rentals.

Fees listed below are market adjusted to 2019. As a basis of comparison, a facility use fee of \$100 in 2006 would be \$135 in 2018 if adjusted for inflation. The proposed fees are generally compatible with previous use values but offer lower fees for shorter durations and smaller rooms while assessing higher fees for larger and lengthier uses.

**Dona Ana County
Proposed Facility Rental Fees
Level One**

Facility	Time	Public Users						Private Users					
		Type 1 (No Cost)			Type 2 (50%)			Type 3 (85%)			Type 4 (100%)		
		DAC / Govt. Programs or Anti-Donation Exempt			Aligned NFP or Volunteer			Not Aligned NFP			Private or Commercial		
		Meeting Room	Multi-Purpose Room	LS Kitchen Use	Meeting Room	Multi-Purpose Room	LS Kitchen Use	Meeting Room	Multi-Purpose Room	LS Kitchen Use	Meeting Room	Multi-Purpose Room	LS Kitchen Use
Radium Springs and Dona Ana	0-2 Hours				\$18	\$35		\$30	\$60		\$35	\$70	
	2-4 Hours				\$35	\$60		\$60	\$102		\$70	\$120	
	Add Hr				\$13	\$20		\$21	\$34		\$25	\$40	
Butterfield, Vado/Del Cerro, Dolores Wright	0-2 Hours				\$18	\$35	\$38	\$30	\$60	\$64	\$35	\$70	\$75
	2-4 Hours				\$35	\$60	\$75	\$60	\$102	\$128	\$70	\$120	\$150
	Add Hr				\$13	\$20		\$21	\$34		\$25	\$40	
After Hours and Weekend Hourly Fees *					\$15	\$25		\$26	\$43		\$30	\$50	
Deposit					\$18	\$50		\$30	\$85		\$35	\$100	

* Additional fee may be waived if a certified volunteer is present and staff are not needed to open and close facility

**Dona Ana County
Proposed Facility Rental Fees
Level Two**

Facility	Time	Public Users						Private Users					
		Type I (No Cost)			Type 2 (50%)			Type 3 (85%)			Type 4 (100%)		
		DAC / Govt. Programs or Anti-Donation Exempt			Aligned NFP or Volunteer			Not Aligned NFP			Private or Commercial		
		Meeting Room	Multi-Purpose Room	LS Kitchen Use	Meeting Room	Multi-Purpose Room	LS Kitchen Use	Meeting Room	Multi-Purpose Room	LS Kitchen Use	Meeting Room	Multi-Purpose Room	LS Kitchen Use
Organ, Mesquite, and La Mesa	0-2 Hours				\$18	\$30	\$38	\$30	\$51	\$64	\$35	\$60	\$75
	2-4 Hours				\$35	\$50	\$60	\$60	\$85	\$102	\$70	\$100	\$120
	Add Hr				\$13	\$20		\$21	\$34		\$25	\$40	
Betty McKnight, Placitas, South Valley	0-2 Hours				\$13	\$30		\$21	\$51		\$25	\$60	
	2-4 Hours				\$25	\$50		\$43	\$85		\$50	\$100	
	Add Hr				\$18	\$20		\$30	\$34		\$35	\$40	
After Hours and Weekend Hourly Fees *					\$15	\$25		\$26	\$43		\$30	\$50	
Deposit					\$18	\$50		\$30	\$85		\$35	\$100	

* Additional fee may be waived if a certified volunteer is present and staff are not needed to open and close facility

**Dona Ana County
Proposed Facility Rental Fees
Level Three**

Facility	Time	Public Users						Private Users					
		Type I (No Cost)			Type 2 (50%)			Type 3 (85%)			Type 4 (100%)		
		DAC / Govt. Programs or Anti-Donation Exempt			Aligned NFP or Volunteer			Not Aligned NFP			Private or Commercial		
		Meeting Room	Multi-Purpose Room	LS Kitchen Use	Meeting Room	Multi-Purpose Room	LS Kitchen Use	Meeting Room	Multi-Purpose Room	LS Kitchen Use	Meeting Room	Multi-Purpose Room	LS Kitchen Use
Colquitt, DeLaO, and Rinon	0-2 Hours				\$13	\$25		\$21	\$43		\$25	\$50	
	2-4 Hours				\$25	\$40		\$43	\$68		\$50	\$80	
	Add Hr				\$10	\$15		\$17	\$26		\$20	\$30	
Dona Ana Boxing Club**	0-2 Hours					\$40			\$68			\$80	
	2-4 Hours					\$70			\$119			\$140	
	Add Hr					\$25			\$43			\$50	
After Hours and Weekend Hourly Fees *					\$15	\$25		\$26	\$43		\$30	\$50	
Deposit					\$18	\$50		\$30	\$85		\$35	\$100	

* Additional fee may be waived if a contracted or certified volunteer is present and staff are not needed to open and close facility

** Monthly or annual rental agreement may be more appropriate

15. Deposit Requirements

Current policy requires a fixed \$100 deposit for renting any facility regardless of type of use or duration. The charts provided above under section 14 include recommended deposit fees which are variable and range from as little as \$18 for a reduced fee meeting room to \$100 for a full facility rental. This variable deposit amount is fairer and more aligned with potential facility impacts.

Further recommendations for deposit management includes the allowance of use of credit cards to be put on file similar to the way one provides a credit card for incidentals when reserving a hotel. If credit card processing fees (typically 2-3%), are a concern, the user can pay the fee by agreeing to release of all but \$3 when the agreement is closed.

16. Booking Incentives

To enhance staff motivation to market available CRC periods of time, revenues from such activity could be earmarked and reserved for investment in programming or improvements at the centers. For example, if rental fees for the level one centers goes to H&HS for programming and rental fees for Level two and three get earmarked for facilities and used for building enhancements. With this model in place, staff have incentive to market and fill calendars at all of the centers.

16. Insurance Requirements

The certificate shall show building user liability insurance policy limits in the amount of not less than \$1 million. Certificates of insurance shall include the name of the insurance company, name and address of the insured, type of policy, period of policy, a description of the activity, and the date(s) of the activity. The certificate shall include an endorsement which names Dona Ana County as an additional insured on the Certificate of Insurance.

Several different options should be in place to provide the county with reasonable liability coverage for non-governmental uses. Allowing a personal policy rider from an insurance company based on a current policy (if sufficient limits are in place), a potential waiver (see Exhibit C in the proposed policy section), county purchased policy with fees set annually based on level of use, and through open carriers.

17. Insurance Waiver

For many uses of the facility, the risk of injury and damage may be considered low enough that the county does not require any special liability insurance. All non-governmental use will require full coverage liability insurance unless a waiver has been accepted by county Risk Management staff. In some cases, the county can consider the approval of a waiver for not-for-profit users if they execute the proper hold harmless liability waiver for low impact uses. Recommendation to consider waiver of insurance for meeting room rental and small gatherings under 40 people.

If implemented, the proposed approach to fees and charges could significantly reduce the financial burden on users. The table provided below provides a comparison between the current policy and the proposed policy for a typical special event rental.

	Current Policy	Proposed Policy
Rental (4 hours)	\$100	\$120
Deposit	\$100	\$0 Credit Card on file
Insurance	\$135	\$50 (pooled estimate)
Out-of-pocket cost	\$335 \$100 refunded	\$170

18. Evaluating Existing External Uses

All users of county facilities need to do so with appropriate permits or long term agreements. All agreements should include specific uses and timelines of use.

Revenue generating enterprises within county buildings such as a Boxing Club in Dona Ana, Ballet Folklorico dance lessons in Dona Ana, Religious Services in Mesquite, and Loteria/Bingo in various locations should all be brought into compliance with county policy. All of these examples fall under the category of private use. Loteria and Bingo are regulated by the State of NM Gaming Control Act – beneficiaries were not disclosed so no conclusion on compliance is implied.

19. Cost offset Models

Cost offset opportunities or rental credit programs are in place in other agency policies. In some hardship cases, potential CRC users have a financial hardship and have difficulty paying the market rates. Two methods have been used by other agencies. One is a fee waiver for indigent users who have demonstrated income eligibility requirements to the Department of Health and Human Services. The other is a method that allows interested parties to undertake work for the county to offset rental fees. The type of work available can be as simple as housekeeping, weed and litter collection, clerical, or other laborious low risk activities where help can be provided to the affected center.

20. Repeal Existing Policy(s)

Existing facility use policies should be rescinded at such time as new policies go into effect. There is a 2006 facility use resolution and a 2004 political activity resolution that may be viable to repeal at this time.

Operational Issues

Recommendations contained within this section relate to facility specific enhancements or improvement.

21. Building and Equipment

Provisions need to be made to ensure the CRC's remain on the county's capital improvement program. This is necessary to ensure access to funding offered by legislators through state capital outlay. It is understood that Dona Ana County desires to establish its legislative agenda with priorities selected by its leadership. If CRC's are nowhere within the five year plan, appropriations will not be available for the centers.

There are capital improvements needed in most of the centers. Facilities staff can provide a recommendation for each site.

22. High Speed Internet and WI-FI

Many of the CRC's do not have these services available and that alone prevents a lot of programming and use. Installation of a reliable ISP and WI-FI system at all Level One facilities followed by the others is recommended. Computer labs will not function effectively if users can't access the internet and other online resources.

23. Online Rental Service / Software

Online facility reservation software is readily available in the market or an internal application can be developed by county IT staff. This scheduling software is the backbone to enhancing and managing the CRC's by standardizing procedures and sharing of booked and available facility capacity. Use of such a system will also ensure all uses and associated revenues are appropriately tracked and reported. This system will also prevent prospective users from having to travel to multiple locations to make rental arrangements.

24. Monitored Security

The county has a considerable investment in their CRC's. A monitored security system would not only protect unoccupied buildings and valuable assets such as computer equipment, but it will also be a security resource for the staff who often have to use the centers alone. Some level of site security service should be in place at each location.

25. Volunteer Contracts

There are volunteers willing to assist the county with daily operational issues within the CRC's. The policy in place enabling compensation to volunteer groups who take on responsibilities in the center appear to be working. However, some have expressed dissatisfaction with doing considerable work with no compensation. To avoid Anti-donation concerns with these organizations tacking on additional fees to cover their expenses, the county should explicitly prohibit collection of any fees outside of the permitting software system.

Stipends should be paid to volunteers on an established basis either annually or on a per event basis. Specifics can be identified within individual site specific agreements. The county previously contracted with volunteer organizations such as CCDA (Chaparral Community Development Association) but those agreements have been expired for a while. A renewed effort should be made to get such agreements updated and back in place.

26. Keyless Entry

All CRC's should be re-keyed because keys have been issued to an unknown number of people who currently have uncontrolled access to the public buildings. There does not seem to be a central key management system for the CRC's because of the diverse management responsibilities which have changed over time.

If investment is made to re-key these buildings, an electronic programmable key card system is recommended. The electronic key card system will enable property management to track, record and report on building access. The system allows managers to track not only building access but user access as well. When a user loses key privileges, a simple stroke on a keyboard can cancel access control for any user without having to find or collect keys. Key cards can also be programmed to only work during permitted periods in cases where staff are not present.

27. Governmental Partners

Public School Districts and municipal governments offer complementary and similar services through their programs. It's important to understand the nature of their work and sensitivity should be provided to ensure the county does not try to compete or duplicate services.

School districts offer after-school and recreation programming in most of their school sites. Through the use of Joint Powers Agreements, School Districts may be able to provide supplemental after school program within CRC computer labs. Municipalities often assume responsibility for parks, recreation, and public service facilities within their jurisdictions. The South Valley center may be a good candidate for such transfer. A JPA with municipal governments may also be viable for limited scope recreational programming for set sites and dates.

Conclusion

Community Resource Centers (CRC's) throughout the County have been in place for many years. Their use has diminished over time for a variety of reasons.

The ever changing technology age where community members meet and socialize through social media has had an impact which is likely to become even more pronounced in the coming years as next generation users replace current users within the facilities. Dona Ana County will best prepare for the future by bringing technology into the Community Resource Centers.

Remaining factors that have caused lower use of the centers are structural in nature. Issues such as ease of access, rental costs, knowledge of availability, and a lack of property management professionals to facilitate the desired multitude of public and private uses.

A full time staff property manager assigned to facilitate the use of all Community Resource Centers is the optimal approach to enhancing facility use. The property manager can manage and market all Community Resource Centers like mini-convention centers with clear lines of responsibility, controls, and communications.

This report contains dozens of recommendations on operation, management, and use of CRC's. A broad spectrum of potential uses can and should be considered to expand programming at the centers once the initial reorganization and investment (i.e. high speed internet and PC Lab) is complete. Some of the potential expanded uses available in the areas of social, cultural, recreational, quality of life services, and educational are listed below.

- Health and Wellness Providers
- Telemedicine
- Employment Services
- Social Service Organization Use
- Active and Passive Recreation
- Community Gardens / Greenhouse
- Ceramics Arts
- Jewelry Arts
- Community Game Nights
- Technology Use Education
- Community College Courses
- Mentoring and Tutoring
- Farmers Markets
- Performing Arts
- Culinary Arts / Cooking Classes
- Legal Services
- Tax Filing Assistance
- Weekly Movie Nights
- Community Swap Meets
- Pet Adoption Sites
- Spay and Neuter Programs
- Localized Business Incubator
- Commercial Kitchen Business Starts
- Fitness Equipment – Low Impact
- Food Counters and Coffee Shops

With the implementation of the recommendations contained within this report, substantial measurable improvement will be realized. The first step will be to establish the property management function and task that individual with developing budget proposals and recommendations on phasing in the remaining measures.

Duties and Responsibilities

Staff within Health and Human Services are currently assigned programming responsibilities for the CRC's. They are able to maintain the status quo with programming related to their department goals and objectives but it's clear there is an organizational desire to expand programming and facility use outside of the Health and Human Service Department mission. As such, my recommendation is to clearly separate the CRC users from those who manage the spaces they occupy.

Staffing private events during off hours has also been a challenge due to limitations on overtime and flex schedules. A review of existing building security contracts to allow security companies to open / close facilities for after hour / weekend use may be an interim solution while property management functions are being put in place. The proposed fee structure within this report includes an additional fee for staff time related to after hour or weekend events requiring staff to open or lock CRC's for private uses. This fee could also be used to pay certified security professionals if needed.

An assessment of all activities associated with CRC use and management was completed. The chart on the following page illustrates the various activities and the associated responsible party. As can be seen, there is a grey area where responsibilities for property management does not fit well under existing staff duties and expertise.

A property management function should be created and optimally located within the Facilities and Parks Department. A full time staff property manager assigned to facilitate the use of all CRC's is the optimal approach to enhancing facility use. The property manager can manage and market all Community Resource Centers like mini-convention centers with clear lines of responsibility, controls, and communications.

With this approach, the Health and Human Services Department will be one of many users of the centers with the requirement to reserve and schedule their uses like all others. As described within this report, the county staff use of the CRC's will maintain the highest priority of use over other types of uses.

The new property manager will be the single point of contact needed by all CRC users to ensure consistency and predictability. This employee will have coordination duties with Facilities, Legal, Risk, Procurement, Contracting, Finance, User Departments and Administration to gain required approvals and facilitation of customer requests and uses. This position will need to be the manager of the online booking program, CRC facility key management, and have full time mobile (vehicle and cell) access to facilities, prospective users, and operational staff.



Dona Ana County

Community Resource Center Responsibilities

Type	Activity	Facilities & Parks	H&HS	Legal and Risk	County Manager	Other
O&M	HVAC Systems	X				
O&M	Security Systems	X				
O&M	Standby Generators	X				
O&M	Fire/ Life/ Safety Systems	X				
O&M	Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing Systems	X				
O&M	Janitorial/Custodial Services	X				
O&M	Preventive Maintenance	X				
SM	Parking and Access	X				
SM	Signage	X				
SM	Landscape & Irrigation	X				
SM	Lighting	X				
SM	On-Site Storage	X				
SM	Emergency Response(s)	X				
CM	Construction Management	X				
CM	Contract Administration	X				
CM	Design	X				
CM	Capital Outlay Projects and Reporting	X				
PM	Plan & Mgt of System Replacement Cycle(s)	X				
PM	Pay Utility Bills	X				
PM	Property Acquisition, Sale or Disposal				X	
PM	Budgeting and Allocation of Resources				X	
PM	Safety Reviews/ Evacuation Planning/ Insurance			X		
PM	Long Term Property Utilization and Planning					
PM	Scheduling and Coordinating Uses and Leases					
PM	Key and Access Management					
PM	Equipment Inventory and Condition Assessment					
PM	Tracking of Facility Users and Uses					
User	Promote Participation: Youth/Adults/Seniors		X			
User	Customer Service for Participants / users		X			
User	Facilitate and Coordinate Meetings/programs		X			
User	Rental / Use Policy and Agreement Compliance		X			
User	Payment of Usage Fees		X			
User	Careful Treatment of DAC Property and Equip		X			
User	Return Facility to Pre-Use Condition		X			
User	Compliance with Grant and Funding Limitations		X			
User	Reporting Service Levels and Activities		X			
LEGEND						
O&M	Operations and Maintenance	SM	Site Management			
CM	Construction Management Services	PM	Property Management			