

Cochise County Strategic Plan 2011-2015



"Our programs are public, our service is personal"

The New Normal

During the past twelve months, Cochise County government staff have been diligently working to compile our first-ever Strategic Plan. Every department and elected office participated in this process, providing valuable input on the current status of our operations, and, more importantly, how we can improve upon what we do. Our ultimate aim is the most efficient and effective delivery of services possible.

The first step was adopting unique Vision and Mission Statements that clearly reflect the core values of Cochise County leadership. To enable the realization of the Vision and Mission Statements, detailed Goals, Objectives, Implementation Strategies, and Measures of achievement were articulated.

These action elements of the plan will help empower Cochise County staff at all levels to focus their efforts on the most important matters at hand, while providing benchmarks against which we can measure our progress. Moreover, they will provide a framework within which we can best allocate limited resources — particularly important during times of economic challenge.

The achievement of the goals is intended to be reflected in ongoing improvements over the years, not one-time accomplishments. To that end, this Strategic Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis to continually incorporate the evolving needs and desires of our constituents within the framework of county activities authorized or mandated by the state legislature.

We are pleased to present this plan to you and welcome your input on the services we provide.

Sincerely,

Patrick G. Call	Ann English	Richard Searle
District 1	District 2	District 3
Chairman	Vice-Chairman	Supervisor



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Why Develop a Strategic Plan?

Strategic planning is the process of identifying long-term goals and objectives and then determining the best approach for achieving those goals and objectives. There are many advantages to using this methodology, but in short, strategic planning:

- Requires county leadership to look into the future, providing an opportunity to influence the future
- Defines the vision and mission of county government and focuses leadership on goals and objectives
- Provides better awareness of organizational direction, needs, and continuity
- Helps bring all county employees into an integrated service delivery system, providing standards of accountability for people, programs, and allocated resources

In the words of management expert Peter Drucker, *"The best way to predict the future is to create it."* The strategic planning process will help us individually, collectively and cooperatively work to best meet the needs of our constituents.



Vision Statement

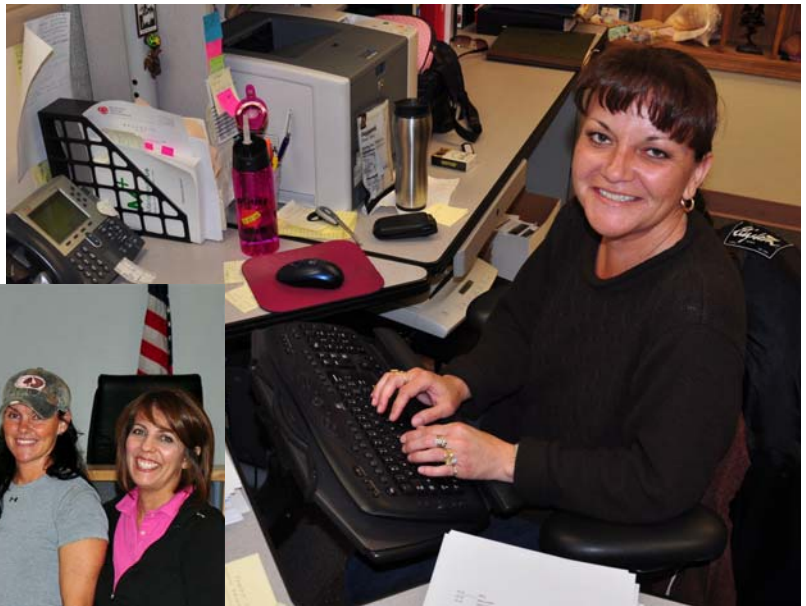
“Cochise County fosters diverse, vibrant and safe communities, planning for the future while honoring our legendary cultural heritage.”

Our Vision Statement expresses the ultimate role that county government fulfills. This vision was adopted by the Board of Supervisors based on the core belief that county leadership should first and foremost encourage every stakeholder to always work toward the improvement of life in Cochise County.

Mission Statement

“Provide regional leadership and effective, high-quality services with personal and professional integrity.”

Our Mission Statement describes in broad terms the actions county government will undertake in order to realize the vision outlined above. The mission was adopted by the Board of Supervisors to acknowledge the county’s commitment to being a leading force for progress in the county, while at the same time ensuring all services are provided with the utmost quality and integrity.



Methodology

Goals are the major service or programmatic areas where the county will focus its efforts in order to achieve our stated mission and ultimately advance our vision. The goals are broad, long-range themes that will often involve more than one county department.

A principal advantage of such cross-functional management is that the utility of county resources is maximized, while at the same time the customer experience is naturally enhanced. In articulating the following goals, county management focused on constructs where county staff can realize the greatest impact on improving the daily lives of our constituents.

Our goals are divided into two descriptive categories, namely **“What We Do”** goals and **“How We Do It”** goals, as further detailed on the next few pages.

To support the stated goals, **Objectives** and **Implementation Strategies** have been identified to provide further detail on how the county will proceed. These more specific steps make up the action plan of county management.

Finally, so that we can regularly monitor our progress, specific quantitative and qualitative **Measures** have been identified. Progress against baseline standards will ensure that intended results are being generated by the efforts put forth.



“What We Do” Goals

- **Public Safety and Justice** — promote safe communities, strengthen legal services, and ensure access to justice
- **Environment and Land Use** — preserve and enhance the rural nature of Cochise County by encouraging open space and wise use of water and other natural resources to sustain and enhance the local economy
- **Infrastructure Management** — prudently manage our investment in civil and capital infrastructure
- **Health and Wellbeing** — promote public health, safety, and preparedness in all county communities

“How We Do It” Goals

- **Customer Service Excellence** — build a culture of performance, continuous improvement and innovation in order to foster an ethic of working together for “One Cochise County”
- **Quality Workforce** — develop and empower the county’s most valuable asset, our employees
- **Fiscal Responsibility** — maintain and enhance a culture of transparency to the public while operating with restraint and accountability



Goal: Public Safety and Justice

Promote safe communities, strengthen legal services, and ensure access to justice

Objective 1. Expand and integrate information and technology systems

Implementation Strategies

- Pursue county-wide interagency data systems
- Implement E-Citation System

Objective 2. Expand jail and evidence storage

Implementation Strategies

- Prioritize utilization system for jail and evidence space
- Create Jail Expansion Committee

Objective 3. Expand use of technology systems

Implementation Strategies

- Utilize electronic distributions
- Pursue digital disclosure/distributions

Objective 4. Limit liabilities to county

Implementation Strategies

- Provide legal/risk management training programs
- Develop employee newsletter on legal issues



Goal: Public Safety and Justice

Promote safe communities, strengthen legal services, and ensure access to justice

Objective 5. Maintain professional legal services

Implementation Strategies

- Pursue professional training opportunities
- Joint training between law enforcement, courts, and legal services

Objective 6. Maintain fair and effective court services

Implementation Strategies

- Review and adjust case assignments within courts

Objective 7. Ensure offenders are sanctioned appropriately

Implementation Strategies

- Utilize evidence-based practices in probation and offender assessment
- Pursue a pre-trial services program



Goal: Environment and Land Use

Preserve and enhance the rural nature of Cochise County by encouraging open space and wise use of water and other natural resources to sustain and enhance the local economy

Objective 1. Create an awareness of the role water and other natural resources have on the sustainability of our unique lifestyle in Cochise County

Implementation Strategies

- Staff or contract for environment and land use in Community Development Dept.
- Create a groundwater inventory baseline for all county watersheds
- Monitor utilization in all watersheds (capture state-reported data and evaluate the effect of drought)
- Create a land utilization information base by area (watersheds)
- Provide information to the public or legislature on water and land use
- Create water-saving regulations when beneficial for new construction/renovations (hot water circulating pumps, on-demand hot water, solar water heating, rainwater catchment systems)
- Assess the need for individual water overlay districts in stressed watersheds



Goal: Environment and Land Use

Preserve and enhance the rural nature of Cochise County by encouraging open space and wise use of water and other natural resources to sustain and enhance the local economy

Objective 2. Safeguard and enhance our open spaces and other natural resources to preserve the county's rural character

Implementation Strategies

- Staff or contract for environment and land use in Community Development Dept.
- Encourage open space by:
 - Support for planned development that provides for the preservation of open space and viewscapes
 - Mandate or create incentives for open space in subdivisions
 - Seek legislative tax incentives to keep large parcels in open space or conservation easements
 - Reunite/assemble parcels returned to county to form large parcels with restrictions on lot splits
 - Put mechanisms in place such as Agriculture Districts to preserve agricultural land
 - Develop a relationship with the State Land Department to monitor state land in county
- Continue to protect the county's dark skies through enforcement of the county's Light Pollution Code
- Internally implement water and power saving measures at all facilities
- Seek funding (grant, project finance, or other) to implement solar energy in county complexes
- Obtain expertise on water, power, and fuel saving devices for county residents
- Continue to find ways to clean up dump sites, old unusable mobile homes, abandoned cars, etc.



Goal: Infrastructure Management

Prudently manage our investment in civil and capital infrastructure

Objective 1. Protect, maintain, and enhance the county's investment in its civil infrastructure (roads, streets, flood control)

Implementation Strategies

- Develop a long-term (20- to 30-year) transportation infrastructure plan
- Develop transportation corridors
- Develop a long-term (20- to 30-year) flood control program

Objective 2. Protect, maintain, and enhance the county's investment in its capital infrastructure (facilities, buildings, equipment)

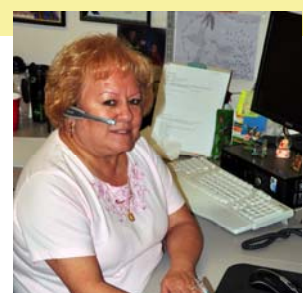
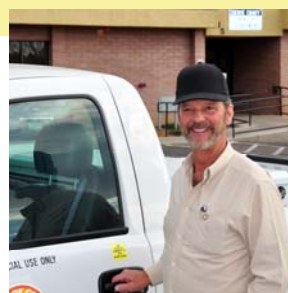
Implementation Strategies

- Develop/review/revise the county's asset management plan
- Adapt to customer needs based on demand

Objective 3. Enhance citizen access to county information and services

Implementation Strategies

- Formulate and implement a data and records management plan to ensure preservation and accessibility of records
- Increase public awareness and use of county's website by enhancement geared toward conducting e-business transactions and delivering fresh, relevant content that is easy to find
- Increase public awareness and use of county library and bookmobile services/internet access



Goal: Health and Wellbeing

Promote public health, safety, and preparedness in all county communities

Objective 1. Protect the health of citizens

Implementation Strategies

- Implement health and safety codes to ensure food and water safety
- Provide vaccination programs for adults and children
- Direct involvement in prevention and early intervention programs to combat the following disease conditions: obesity, diabetes, and asthma
- Perform mandated infectious disease surveillance and recommended chronic disease surveillance
- Direct involvement in prevention and early intervention programs to combat the following disease conditions: poor dental hygiene, tooth decay
- Maximize effectiveness of Cochise Combined Trust Wellness Benefit for county employees
- Enhance citizens' access to health care services
- Monitor trends in social determinants of health (poverty, violence, access to affordable housing, access to health insurance) to advise policy makers

Objective 2. Ensure county government's emergency preparedness to respond and to maintain operations

Implementation Strategies

- County emergency manager to organize exercises at least twice per year to test selected portions of County Emergency Response and Recovery Plan
- Emergency preparedness training for all county employees at regular intervals
- County departments to establish and maintain emergency preparedness



Goal: Customer Service Excellence

Build a culture of performance, continuous improvement and innovation in order to foster an ethic of working together for “One Cochise County”

Objective 1. Create a culture where county employees treat residents and other employees alike as valued customers

Implementation Strategies

- Implement a top-down structure of accountability throughout the organization

Objective 2. Provide mechanisms for instant feedback on the quality of service received

Implementation Strategies

- Create/expand internal and external surveys to measure quality of service
- Explore the use of different technologies to provide instant feedback (text messaging, Twitter, Facebook)
- Create a system to provide this feedback to department directors, County Administration, and the Board of Supervisors on an ongoing basis

Objective 3. Follow up on internal/external feedback to ensure satisfactory problem resolution and direct constituents to web-based evaluation forms to help with problem solving

Implementation Strategies

- Educate both employees and the community regarding the many services the county provides
- Continue and possibly expand the Quality-of-Life survey effort of departments that have significant interaction with the public
- Develop a list Frequently Asked Questions for county services
- Increase access to county services, personnel and information
- Create a Customer Service Representative position to help accomplish our objectives



Goal: Customer Service Excellence

Build a culture of performance, continuous improvement and innovation in order to foster an ethic of working together for “One Cochise County”

Objective 4. Remain open to possibilities and establish the county as “Best of the Best” in order to solidify leadership role

Implementation Strategies

- Solicit feedback from municipalities and other entities on areas where the county could assist them provided resources are available



Goal: Quality Workforce

Develop and empower the county's most valuable asset, our employees

Objective 1. Recruit and retain a talented county workforce

Implementation Strategies

- Competitive compensation plan (periodic review and adjustment)
- Competitive benefits (educate employees on benefits / annual benefit statements / consistency between county and judicial)
- Create an exceptional customer service expectation for all employees
- Improve county image / culture
- Develop flexible, employee-friendly policies/rules

Objective 2. Development of staff

Implementation Strategies

- County "university" (mandatory county-wide training, management/supervisor training, customer service, ethics, professionalism)
- Succession planning for all positions
- Effective communication throughout the organization (County Administration round tables, email and text message updates)
- Partnership with educational institutions — internships
- Internal internships
- Education reimbursement
- Career path opportunities
- Performance management

Objective 3. Utilize employees in an efficient, effective, and productive manner

Implementation Strategies

- Empower employees via expanded delegations
- Cross-training (intra- and inter-departmental); increased flexibility in duties
- Offer virtual office opportunities



Goal: Fiscal Responsibility

Maintain and enhance a culture of transparency to the public while operating with restraint and accountability

Objective 1. Plan for the long-term sustainability of county services

Implementation Strategies

- Prioritize and deliver the services most desired by constituents within the scope of the county's legislative delegated or mandated activities
- Establish policy for amount and use of contingencies / reserves
- Manage county assets and capital / financial investments to maximize value
- Continual monitoring department by department of mandates vs. discretionary services provided
- Education and engagement of residents / taxpayers of revenue sources and services provided

Objective 2. Keep the county's cost of doing business down

Implementation Strategies

- Look for ways to improve efficiency
- Professional procurement department
- Transition fiscal accountability / management to departments
- Automation of processes and review of current practices (reduce duplication of business manager functions and increase expertise in this area)
- Audit contracts for compliance
- Review all Intergovernmental Agreements to make sure partners are covering cost of providing service
- Utilization / audit of credit card expenditures



Goal: Fiscal Responsibility

Maintain and enhance a culture of transparency to the public while operating with restraint and accountability

Objective 3. Identify new funding sources

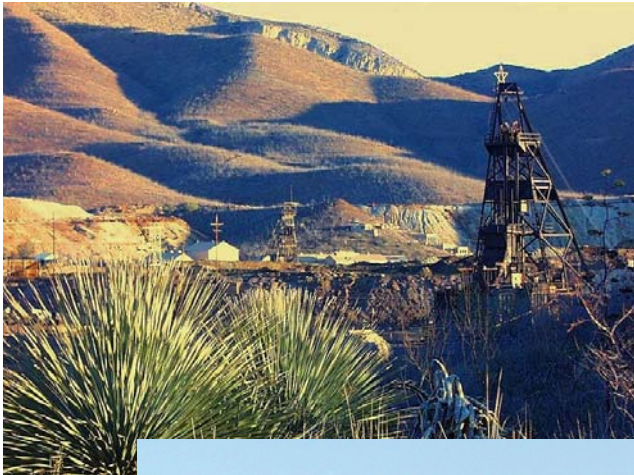
Implementation Strategies

- Partner with other entities to leverage state and federal resources / encourage grant seeking
- Encourage partnerships with other government entities to provide services and collect revenues therefrom in a timely fashion / explore regional partnerships
- Explore financing opportunities (general obligation bonds, new excise tax for services, lease purchase options)
- Identify resources for collection management of outstanding monies owed to county



Measuring Our Progress

While the identification of clear goals, objectives, and implementation strategies is crucial to achievement of the county's mission, equally important is the ability to measure our progress over time against unambiguous benchmarks. Therefore, we have identified measures for each objective that will be tested on a regular basis to ensure that our efforts stay on track.



Public Safety and Justice

Promote safe communities, strengthen legal services, and ensure access to justice

Objectives	Measures
Expand and integrate information and technology systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disposition Report compliance rates Reduce manual citation entry/error rates
Expand jail and evidence storage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jail population vs. capacity reports Reduce temporary storage for evidence
Expand use of technology systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decrease use of paper/copying resources Reduce delay of distribution
Limit liabilities to county	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decrease number and severity of claims vs. county Reduce workplace risks to employees/public
Maintain professional legal services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance recruitment of legal professionals Reduce turnover of legal staff
Maintain fair and effective court services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case disposition and clearance rates Age of active pending caseload reports
Ensure offenders are sanctioned appropriately	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful discharge rates for probation



Environment and Land Use

Preserve and enhance the rural nature of Cochise County by encouraging open space and wise use of water and other natural resources to sustain and enhance the local economy

Objectives	Measures
Create an awareness of the role water and other natural resources have on the sustainability of our unique lifestyle in Cochise County	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Water use responsibility assigned or contracted by 2012• Physical water inventory of one watershed by 2012 and all watersheds by 2013• Physical land utilization by 2012• Literature available for each watershed whether by print or digitized by 2013• Utilize water inventory yearly to determine need for water saving
Safeguard and enhance our open spaces and other natural resources to preserve the county's rural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Water use responsibility assigned or contracted by 2012• All requests for help with community plans are staffed• Each county land sale has large parcels created from old subdivisions• Yearly meeting with State Land Department to determine interest in Cochise County• Install water saving toilets/urinals in all county public restrooms by 2015• 50% of KWH used by county facilities provided by alternative energy sources by 2015• Expansion rate of light pollution levels



Infrastructure Management

Prudently manage our investment in civil and capital infrastructure

Objectives	Measures
Protect, maintain, and enhance the county's investment in its civil infrastructure (roads, streets, flood control)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of lane miles of road improved/maintained annually • Reduce by 1% those properties the county is aware of that have been incorrectly mapped as being in the floodplain
Protect, maintain, and enhance the county's investment in its capital infrastructure (facilities, buildings, equipment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicate separate annual budgets to maintain and enhance existing facilities (including an emergency maintenance fund) • Make annual contributions to a reserve fund for future facilities (from 1/2 cent sales tax revenue)
Enhance citizen access to county information and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop countywide protocols for Records Management and obtain training for all county staff with primary responsibility for records management • Make available on the county's website important public records (e.g., Resolutions, Ordinances, etc.) and develop surveys to measure impact and progress of the county's website traffic and transactions



Health and Wellbeing

Promote public health, safety, and preparedness in all county communities

Objectives	Measures
Protect the health of citizens	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meet and exceed Vaccines for Children annual vaccination targets / maintain year-over-year upward trend in vaccination rates• Track presence of and participation in preventive programs throughout county including those offering physical activity and nutrition counseling• Maintain year-over-year downward trend in incidence and age-adjusted death rates for diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and hospitalizations due to asthma compared to in-county and statewide statistics
Ensure county government's emergency preparedness to respond and to maintain operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Track percentage of regular emergency preparedness exercise goals accomplished (minimum 75%)• Establish and practice emergency call-down procedures; practice interdepartmental operability



Customer Service Excellence

Build a culture of performance, continuous improvement and innovation in order to foster an ethic of working together for “One Cochise County”

Objectives	Measures
Create a culture where county employees treat residents and other employees alike as valued customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent of employees who agree that county departments work together to achieve common goals • Percent of employees who agree that Cochise County strives to provide high-quality customer service • Percent of residents who are satisfied with the overall value of county services for taxes/fees paid • Percent of residents who believe that Cochise County is easy to contact
Provide mechanisms for instant feedback on the quality of service received	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent of employees who agree that county departments work together to achieve common goals • Percent of residents who are satisfied with the overall value of county services for taxes/fees paid • Percent of residents who believe that Cochise County is easy to contact
Follow up on internal/external feedback to ensure satisfactory problem resolution and direct constituents to web-based evaluation forms to help with problem solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent of employees who agree that county departments work together to achieve common goals • Percent of residents who are satisfied with the overall value of county services for taxes/fees paid • Percent of residents who believe that Cochise County is easy to contact
Remain open to possibilities and establish the county as “Best of the Best” in order to solidify leadership role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of areas where the county has taken a leadership role and the overall effectiveness of those roles



Quality Workforce

Develop and empower the county's most valuable asset, our employees

Objectives	Measures
Recruit and retain a talented county workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assess employee turnover/exit interview data• Percent of employees who would recommend Cochise County as a good place to work
Development of staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of employees who attend training sessions• Bell-curve distribution of ratings
Utilize employees in an efficient, effective, and productive manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Percent of employees who are familiar with their department's mission, goals, measures



Fiscal Responsibility

Maintain and enhance a culture of transparency to the public while operating with restraint and accountability

Objectives	Measures
Plan for the long-term sustainability of county services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fiscal Year End undesignated fund balance as a percentage of revenue/expenses/assets
Keep the county's cost of doing business down	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost savings/avoidance Actual vs. budget variance in expenditure Number of audit findings, recommendations, and non-compliance issues Percent of operating expenses covered by departments that can charge fees
Identify new funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of and dollar amounts of new grants received Percent of collected by age of outstanding revenues in the courts and cost of collection function



As We Move Forward

By clearly articulating the vision, mission, and goals of county leadership, this Strategic Plan represents just the first step in putting into action the specific objectives and strategies we have outlined. There may be changes to these detailed objectives and strategies as the county navigates the future; however, the core values and priorities reflected in the vision, mission, and goals will remain constant.

During the development of this Strategic Plan, many useful ideas were generated. A number of suggestions are more relevant to longer-term projects and therefore were not included in this first plan; however, you will likely see some of them as future plans are rolled out.

Thanks for taking the time to read this. Your continued support is greatly appreciated as we move forward as an organization.





*Prepared by the Cochise County Strategic Planning Committee
with the support and cooperation of all county departments and elected offices
April, 2011*

***Cochise County Board of Supervisors
1415 Melody Lane, Building G
Bisbee, AZ 85603
(520) 432-9200***

www.cochise.az.gov



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