

**LOS ALAMOS COUNTY
COMMUNICATIONS PLAN
January 2015
Five Year Update**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Recognizing that communication with citizens continues to be the primary mission of the Communications & Public Relations (C&PR) division, the C&PR Administrator assessed changes in organizational structure, workload, previous goals set forth in the 2010 plan, and new tools, methods or technologies.

The organizational structure has seen two changes since 2010: 1) a move of the Marketing function to Community & Economic Development; and 2) a move of the Media Services function to Information Management. No further changes are recommended or anticipated for C&PR's structure for the next five years of the plan. The Communications Team will not be continued. All of the operating presumptions from 2010 were reaffirmed: there is still no plan to create a centralized Community Relations Division, leaving the responsibility for some public outreach efforts (such as public information and involvement plans for projects) housed inside the various divisions.

Workload has increased for C&PR because of internal and external factors. To address the increase, process changes being recommended for implementation over the next five years include evaluation of operations (efficiencies), new or improved technology and better resource prioritization of work orders.

Communication tools were re-evaluated in this five-year update, with metrics added to the Plan for the first time as the County continues to work on measuring its success. New sections covering digital and social media, photography and videography were added, along with a section about interactions with media.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Communications Plan (“the Plan”) was developed by the County’s C&PR Administrator in 2010, in conjunction with the County Administrator. It was reviewed by the County’s Senior Management Team, as well as staff performing public information duties within each department. It was presented to the County Council for further feedback and endorsement on November 16, 2010, with a goal to review the plan and update it every five years. This is the first update to the Plan, which sets goals for the County in the area of general communications. It assists the C&PR Administrator in the prioritization of time and resources and answers the questions of “What did we do – and why did we do it? What is the benefit and at what cost? Is there a more effective way to do it?”

II. COMMUNICATION GOALS

If the Plan is successful, it will:

- Fulfill the County’s Vision statement to “engage citizens” in local government decisions
- Communicate with citizens using a proactive, not reactive, approach
- Use processes and technology for communicating timely, accurate and useful information in a County-wide coordinated and professional manner
- Emphasize two-way flow of information, which in return enhances community problem solving, both internally and externally
- Improve day to day operations and customer service County-wide
- Identify, budget and manage resources to provide the most cost effective communication strategies
- Consistently improve communication benchmarks set for LA Scores as measured by the bi-annual Community Survey
- Evaluate new technology and methods to better communicate with the public

III. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The County uses a decentralized communications structure. The Communications and Public Relations (C&PR) Administrator reports directly to the County Manager and is the spokesperson for the County, with the exception of Utilities’ matters. The C&PR Administrator also serves as the County’s C&PR Administrator, and as such, may be assigned by the County Manager to key projects of high public interest; however, responsibility for Public Information & Involvement Plans (PIIPs) for projects resides within Capital Projects and Facilities, Public Works, and Utilities. To a lesser degree, PIIPs might be carried out by Staff in Community Services (Parks, Recreation and Open Space), Information Management and Environmental Services.

The C&PR division houses graphics design and photo/video support. Media Services (the print shop and audio-Visual support for Chambers) was transferred to Information Management (IM) in 2014. Graphic design and photo video support are services made available county-wide and tracked in a work order system. Jobs can vary from large to small projects. It ranges from preparation of annual reports (Police Department) to assisting departments with materials for

presentations within the community or at a regional or national level (for example, a trade conference display).

The division is no longer responsible for leading marketing efforts, with the exception of the commercial airlines service (added in 2014). Marketing is housed within Community & Economic Development. The marketing group does request assistance from C&PR through the work order system.

IV. BACKGROUND

The role of the division has changed in five years. When design services (provided by the Visual Information Specialist) were opened up County-wide five years ago, requests were being handled on a case by case basis with expectations that the ability to respond would be limited by staffing, timing and other higher priority projects. This is no longer the case – a work order system sets the expectation that the work order will be processed by the requested due date. Workload has increased for the Visual Information Specialist as more and more employees become aware of the service. The plan was for Media Services to supplement this staffing, but sharing the workload with the two employees of Media Services was minimal compared to the new impacts on the Visual Information Specialist in supporting Media Services. While it was helpful to regain time spent by the Visual Information Specialist working in Media Services when it was transferred to IM in 2014, the workload is still a challenge. Other factors have contributed to the increase in workload in five years. Some examples:

- In 2010, the division offered limited support to the Boards and Commissions - this workload has increased with some of the Boards requesting help preparing brochures or with their special events.
- In 2010, the division did not support the Elected Officials in the past, but this has changed, with support for the Clerk now being part of the duties
- The social services division was added – C&PR now has work orders for materials for them
- The Environmental Services Specialist position in 2010 had graphics design experience, but when the position changed that was removed – therefore, this division now requests more support from C&PR
- The Police Department has become more active in public outreach since 2014 and requests more support
- With dwindling budgets for public outreach, services that might have been contracted out to a professional designer or photographer are now being submitted to the work order system to save money
- Marketing assistance requests have increased with the addition of the Economic Vitality Administrator – a position that did not exist in 2010
- Branding became a Council goal in 2011 – the impact on the division is still TBD regarding how and where Branding will be housed and supported in 2015 if it proceeds
- Commercial Airlines service was added and marketing was pulled in house in 2014 due to budget and contractor concerns – this has had a significant impact on the division with 25% of the two positions' time supporting Airlines marketing

- Events such as ScienceFest were expanded, with requests for assistance from C&PR in 2014
- Signage was added in 2013 – this can range from design of plaques for buildings, updating door signs or building locator maps, or designing trails signage, for example
- Photography was expanded (offered) to all divisions
- Videography was added as a new service in 2013
- Social media (Facebook) was added in 2013, which takes additional time and monitoring
- The Daily Post was created in 2013, which takes additional time for media interaction

The C&PR Administrator and Visual Information Specialist meet bi-weekly to discuss workload and deadlines. Internal (employee) projects, proactive outreach (nice to have but not essential) projects and marketing projects are set as lower priorities than projects for public outreach, which greatly lengthens their lead times. While not ideal customer service, addressing workload in this manner is one of the few ways that the division can continue to address its fundamental mission: public information. In 2015, the C&PR Administrator will begin setting more timelines and hours available criteria to limit large projects that can tend to evolve due to “scope creep”. Better planning will also be needed with the assistance of a Seasonal Calendar each year to spot long range deadlines for special events.

Other elements and responsibilities for communication specified in this Plan reside in other areas. For example, the 311 Customer Care Center is housed in the Utilities Department, but the representatives are a key part of day to day interactions with the community. Marketing for Community Services falls to Staff in those divisions and is only minimally supported by the C&PR division.

In updating the Plan, all of the above operating presumptions from 2010 are reaffirmed: there is still no plan to create a centralized Community Relations division. Having one division within the County might provide the highest level of efficiency and flexibility in assigning resources to projects or non-projects in order to achieve communication goals. It would also enhance the ability to implement standards and provide the highest degree of consistency across divisions. However, since Staff in other divisions provide necessary functions outside of communication, which are often times related to office management or program management, this approach is not being pursued nor offered as a recommendation at this time. It should continue to be evaluated in the overall yearly review of the Plan, creation of standards and guidelines, and training opportunities. Regular meetings with other divisions conducting public outreach are beneficial.

V. COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

The previous County Administrator recommended a Communications Team be established to assist in formally evaluating the County’s progress toward achieving the Plan’s goals. The establishment of a Communications Team was in response to a suggestion from the Council-appointed Charter Review Committee in April 2010, with the concurrence of the County Administrator. The Communications Team was established in 2011 with four citizens and four staff members who applied to be considered and were subsequently appointed by the County Administrator without term limits. The team met monthly for the first two years of the Plan, and gave feedback on items such as the 311 Customer Care Center’s walk in services, branding,

kiosk/displays of public information for the new County building, evaluating the County's webpage when it underwent a "facelift" in 2012. They explored the idea of an on line forum which resulted in the launch of Open Forum in 2012, evaluated transparency initiatives which led to the launch in 2012 of the "Sunshine" page, and generally discussed what did or didn't work for a variety of County meetings. Membership declined (two citizens dropped off the team), a new County Administrator was hired, and the final work plan project (upgrading the webpage with some sort of citizen-friendly work order component) went on hold. The team was disbanded in 2013. At this point, there is no directive to reinstate the team for the next five years. While it was beneficial to have the Team in place during the early years of the Plan, at this point the five year update is generally one of "maintenance" and not new initiatives, due to staffing and funding constraints.

VI. TARGET AUDIENCES

Identifying and prioritizing target audiences are an important aspect of every communications strategy. Each strategy is composed to create the most effective process for reaching its target audience(s), which are defined as:

Primary Target Audiences: (high interest, highly vested in the outcome - often the stakeholders in the outcome of the project or issue)

- Community specific (ie. Los Alamos or White Rock)
- Site specific (ie. Within a community – a defined neighborhood, or, a business district)
- Daytime population (commuters)

Secondary Target Audiences: (those who may have a legitimate interest in a project or process as it relates to their area of interest and/or indirect benefits or impacts)

- School District
- LANL
- Visitors
- Other Government entities

Tertiary Target Audiences: (those who have a general interest, but not necessarily a vested outcome in any project or issue)

- General County Population
- Regional (defined as Northern New Mexico)
- State
- National

VII. COMMUNICATION TOOLS

The following sections are updates to the inventory of the communication tools utilized by Los Alamos County. Identifying the audience(s) and evaluating each of these tools helps to maintain or improve its effectiveness. For each area, a specific action plan will be developed as a separate document. The action plan and prioritization will continue to be a key area for development and year-to-year evaluation of the C&PR Administrator's performance review (dependent on funding, in some cases.)

Several sections were added to the inventory (marked as NEW) – a reflection of the changing times with social media, photography and videography moving forward as key communication tools. The inventory was also re-grouped into common areas to make it easier to review.

Finally, metrics have been added to the Plan in this update. Some of these are proposed and the C&PR Administrator will need to research more data before finalizing them, but it could begin to set benchmarks against other communities similar in size/population.

Digital Media

County Website

E-Newsletter (the County Line)

Other E-mail Distribution Lists

Digital Advertising - NEW

Social Media

Interactive Media – NEW

Open Forum - NEW

County Website (www.losalamosnm.us)

Description:

The County's website is the communication tool that reaches the greatest number of people and target audiences. The website saves staff time – questions can be captured and answered, forms and application can be downloaded from the website, and general information can be searched. This ability represents one less phone call, e-mail or letter that must be fielded by staff - freeing staff time and saving tax dollars. According to Google Analytics, the top fields in the last five years are consistently: Jobs, Library and Recreation. When the airlines option was added, it competed closely with Recreation for most number of hits. Options exist to “subscribe” for email alerts to projects, construction updates, or a County weekly newsletter. Helpful links to Visitor information or other organizations are facilitated through the webpage.

Audience: All audiences

Communication Type: One Way

Responsibility: Information Management with support from the C&PR Administrator

Evaluation:

The current webpage has been in existence approximately seven years. It is hosted in-house, as opposed to using a third party web service provider. The license for Sharepoint, which supports the infrastructure of the webpage, will expire in July 2015. This means that future changes to the page will not have technical support from Sharepoint, placing the County at some risk of having a webpage that could experience a serious failure, which would cause a public relations image problem.

Based on the information gathered in the 2010 and again in the 2014 citizen survey, nearly 3 of 4 citizens rated the webpage “good” or “excellent”; however, most communities would attempt to update their webpage every few years. Some of the top items to address in 2010 are still not fixed in 2015: better navigation tool and search engine, a user-friendly home page, phone directory, and easier access to a calendar listing all county events and meetings in one place.

At nearly 700 pages, Los Alamos County's site is unmanageable and requires more and more work to keep its content consistent and up-to-date. The webpage coordinator still offers assistance with updates, but, with the significant number of editors, there continues to be the problem identified in 2010 that is a drawback -- many editors contributing different style, content and documents without any one person having responsibility for approval.

2010 Recommendation & 2015 Status Update:

Short Term: One action was accomplished. As recommended in the 2010 Plan, the County contracted with an award winning website developer to evaluate the website and provide a

facelift/update in 2012 to the main architecture and home page. Web banners (a five slide show on the home page) were added to allow some programmed messages and link throughs.

After the facelift in 2012, the goal was to completely redo the website in 2013. However, the project was placed on hold for two reasons: 1) awaiting another IM project related to establishing policies surrounding web presence and future infrastructure plans; and 2) in 2012, the County entered into a contract with North Star to create a brand platform and strategy. The branding report was approved by the Council in 2014 but has not been funded or implemented. As part of that branding, the webpage would need to be upgraded with the new brand strapline and logo. Making changes prior to branding would not be money well spent. In addition, the policies related to web presence/future infrastructure are not completed and would still be needed prior to proceeding with a new webpage. On a related note, the webpage developer left the County position in 2010. A new webpage developer was never hired and a second web developer position is vacant at this writing. This is a resource issue for future upgrades or maintenance of the webpage. Right now, the County is in the middle of a significant upgrade project for its financial system that could contain components of on-line transactions that would need to be considered for web “portal” access.

At this point, past recommendations are still relevant: Complete website policies and train to standards when the new page is rolled out. Where possible, coordinate the design with other components of the County’s communication strategy and include interactive 24/7 software features. Maintain focus on a user-friendly editing program. Evaluate whether or not the 50 editors could be reduced without sacrificing usability and timeliness. Evaluate updates to the webpage’s architecture that could streamline administrative processes for time spent editing the webpage.

Finally, it should be noted that website templates have become more robust and more economical in the last five years. Most municipalities contract year to year with a third party service, and many of these services offer user-friendly options for work order reporting. Most webpages now load differently in mobile phones or on tablets because more users are leaving a PC environment in favor of this mobile technology. Recommendations for a work order system (with geo-locate), improved access from mobile devices, and improved citizen interface options, including video-hosting or other new technology, are urgently needed in the next iteration of the webpage. These changes are already being made on template sites around the nation. Upgrades and updates are usually free under the annual maintenance contract. The C&PR Administrator has initially recommended purchasing a template solution and turning maintenance over to a third party company, along with finding ways to continue to make the website more two-way and interactive (which may be possible with the new Enterprise Resource Project (ERP)).

Staffing: In 2010, there was a website developer plus two web coordinators that had technical oversight of the webpage. In 2015 there is just one web developer in IM that oversees technical considerations. The C&PR Administrator has general responsibility, but not authority, for the public “image” created by the webpage, but not content. There are approximately 50 web editors who are contributors across a variety of divisions. It’s estimated that these web editors spend several hours each week updating their web pages. The C&PR Administrator spends an

average of 4 hours a week working on webpage updates. The web banners for the home page became a new task for the Visual Information Specialist who spends an average of four hours a month programming the new messages, plus time spent by the web developer to upload the slide show.

Financial: The cost of a third party solution for webpage hosting ranges from \$15,000 to \$25,000 for initial development and merge of the current site into a new site, plus annual maintenance contracts. Costs for an in-house solution (for Sharepoint upgrades) has not been explored and documented. This will be part of the research done with IM in late 2015, after the ERP project is underway.

Metrics: Increase the number of unique Visitors to the webpage by 1% every year. Continue to monitor usage statistics and evaluate user feedback/suggestions for improvements. Based on budget constraints, the plan is to evaluate whether or not to update the website every 5 years, in cycle with the overall Communications Plan update and balancing resources (staff, \$) for addressing all aspects of the Plan.

E- Newsletter – The County Line

Description:

The County's monthly "County Line" black/white printed newsletter was mailed to approximately 8,700 households from April 2010 until funding (for postage and paper) ended its distribution in 2012. It is now offered in an on-line only format and sent out to homes every Friday afternoon. The newsletter is published by the C&PR Administrator through a special feature of the website. It is posted to the webpage after publication. The newsletter's primary focus is on providing a one to two week "look ahead" for events, major issues or projects being addressed by County officials, or general County news. Content from the County Manager's bi-monthly report, project webpage updates, or County news items featured on the webpage are part of the e-newsletter. Items can be submitted by any division to include in the newsletter. In 2010, the County Line had approximately 400 readers. Today the newsletter has nearly 800 subscribers. It is also used for immediate news announcements, though it is not intended to be part of the emergency alert system and not used in that manner.

The newsletter is primarily driven by the C&PR Administrator's time available to craft each weekly newsletter. Many other communities of this size have a monthly newsletter or do not offer a newsletter. The decision was made during the 2010 Plan's creation to keep the newsletter short and concise, with limits on its length, to keep the process manageable for the cost/benefit of offering a weekly newsletter.

Audience: Tertiary – there's no way to gauge if subscribers live in Los Alamos County

Communication Type: One Way

Evaluation:

Advertising funds to promote signing up for the newsletter were cut in the last two years in the C&PR Administrator's; therefore, the only promotion of the newsletter occurs in "free" media – social media, at events like the County Fair (a drawing for a free photo if citizens take a survey and indicate they would like to sign up.)

No communications questions (including newsletter) were asked in the last survey (May 2014) due to budget and length of the survey. Therefore, there is no data about how effective the newsletter is that is statistically valid. It should be noted that e-mail is still a preferred method of communication for a certain (older) demographic, but the younger generation is moving into more social media for collecting news (or apps).

Recommendation:

The mechanics of the County Newsletter function is cumbersome. The newsletter subscribe feature requires a "double opt in" (whereby a citizen must sign up on line once, then receives an email stating they have to click on a second link to validate that they really did sign up for it.) In conversing with the County's Social Media and Website Consultant for marketing of the

airport (Watermelon Marketing), the consultant revealed that most marketing firms work for a “double opt out” to gain more readership. Under this scenario, a person signs up for the newsletter and then if they don’t want it, they must click the emailed link to opt out (unsubscribe). This feature for Airport marketing is available from a low-cost newsletter subscribe service known as Constant Contact. The third party service is more robust in collecting emails and is being used for the Airport marketing in lieu of the in-house newsletter as of January 2015, for the reasons stated above. Webpages often have built in newsletter functions as well – thus, replacing the webpage in FY17 could encompass this as part of the new webpage’s functionality. Regardless of which direction is chosen, the C&PR Administrator recommends improving the newsletter mail out functionality – likely through use of Constant Contact. This would overcome another problem: the newsletter must be e-mailed by IM staff – the vendor for the product is no longer in business and there is no support for it to fix this problem and allow the C&PR Administrator to send the email directly.

In the next five year plan (2020-2025), re-evaluate if an e-mail newsletter is still valuable. As previously mentioned, with a new generation of users turning more to social media, this form of communication may need to be phased out in a similar manner to the printed copy of the newsletter that was mailed out until 2013.

Staffing: The C&PR Administrator spends an average of two hours each Friday writing the newsletter. An average of an additional hour is spent weekly collecting items for the newsletter or posting News stories to the webpage to provide links. Because of other new duties in areas such as airline marketing and social or digital media, increasing the amount of time spent on this e-newsletter is not recommended, and any substitute for the newsletter should not increase staff time on a weekly basis.

Financial: The cost is minimal; adding a newsletter service like Constant Contact will involve adding recurring budget to the C&PR Administrator budget (ie. \$9.00 per month for a Constant Contact subscription; costs increase slightly as the newsletter base grows). Funding is recommended for the FY17 year, or sooner, if no other webpage solution for a newsletter is identified or funded.

Note: in 2013 the County’s police department received a homeland security grant for purchasing an email software package used by LANL for emergency notifications. LANL desired to partner with the County to use the same platform in order to speed emergency communications – an interoperability issue that arose during the Las Conchas fire. However, it was later determined that the County would have to issue a competitive bid for the software and on-going maintenance costs for the particular LANL-purchased package would have been prohibitive once the grant ended. It could not be supported with limited C&PR Administrator or LAPD budgets and the grant was returned to the State of New Mexico in November 2014. This should be revisited in the next five year update if funding improves.

Metrics: Increase subscribers to 1000 by year 5 (add 200 subscribers per year). Expect only minimal or modest growth in this area, for the reasons given above about changing needs and technology.

Other E-Mail Distribution Lists

Description:

The County has good communication avenues with other entities and organizations to share information - primarily its use has been to announce public meetings and events - via email alerts. For example, targeted emails can be given to the Chamber of Commerce to share with their email list, reaching hundreds of businesses in a single day.

Audience: Primary, Secondary

Communication Type: One Way

Evaluation:

The power of an e-mail is that it can be forwarded many times to interested parties and is a very quick and easy, low-cost method to share news. The drawback is that if over-used, recipients tend to quarantine emails as “spam” or “junk” over time, so it should be used sparingly and alerts should be short, factual and to the point.

Recommendation:

No change from 2010 Plan: Continue to use this feature and expand with other organizations if they are willing to share lists.

Staffing: Time to share an email with other organizations is very minimal time spent by the C&PR Administrator.

Financial: E-mail is free.

Metrics: None. E-mail lists are maintained by others.

Digital Advertising - NEW

Description:

Digital advertising was not available in 2010. Today, the C&PR division places digital ads locally with the Los Alamos Daily Post (on line paper) and the LA Monitor (on line paper plus mobile app) to publicize events, meetings, or topics of interest when gathering public feedback. Regionally, the division places ads with music websites offered through KTAOS (webpage) and Pandora, plus targeted ads through Facebook, Google and Linked IN. Visual ads are also being explored with the use of easy-to-download stock video or music files from sites such as Pond and then created in either Animoto or Adobe Final Cut Pro.

It would be very lengthy to explain the options and nuances of all of the above in this description. Samples and demonstrations are available upon request.

Audience: Tertiary for the Post, Monitor and KTAOS – there's no way to gauge if readers are County residents; primary and secondary for Pandora, Facebook, Google and Linked IN (ads can be refined to hit target audiences to a greater degree).

Communication Type: One Way

Evaluation:

This is a new area that the division began exploring in 2014 when taking over marketing of the airport. With knowledge gained from working with the social media consultant for the airlines, the division is turning more and more to use of these kinds of ads to supplement more traditional news print ads or radio ads.

Recommendation:

Many municipalities are beginning to move in this direction to maximize ad budget dollars and increase direct messaging opportunities to residents. Digital ads can expand the reach and have the benefit of running multiple times instead of the more traditional "one time" slot in a newspaper which is then discarded. Advertising on Social Media sites is very inexpensive compared to more typical buys in newspaper, radio or television. A Facebook posted ad of a County photo can reach thousands of people in less than one day and for an average cost of \$30.00.

In the past year, Facebook has expanded its targeted marketing capabilities to allow the page administrators to hone their message or ad to geographical areas (Los Alamos, Santa Fe, Espanola) or interest (hiking, biking, skiing, trails) or even a more tailored profile (people who used to live in Los Alamos, people who live within 100 miles of Los Alamos, people who attended Los Alamos High School). These targeted methods are superior to traditional outlets because the ad is only shown to those who have indicated an interest in the message in their Facebook settings. The likelihood is much greater therefore that they will click through to read the ad.

Likewise, the use of mobile ads (ads that display properly on a smart phone) should be continued, as more people move away from a traditional PC environment and on to smart phones or tablets for accessing news.

Finally, the division should continue to explore new options for advertising and develop “best practices” that could be shared with others within the next two years. If a communications survey can be accomplished within the next five years, the impact of digital advertising should be evaluated for effectiveness.

Staffing: This is a new task since the 2010 Plan. While these are exciting new opportunities, use of digital ads has increased the workload for the Visual Information Specialist. A traditional newspaper ad cannot simply be uploaded to be a web page ad, for example – so additional time is being spent by the Visual Information Specialist to create the ads to meet the vendor’s specifications for web display. For the C&PR Administrator, the ad has to “link through” to some piece of data (a meeting announcement, for example) which causes some additional time to develop on the website but is mostly a timing/timeliness consideration. It takes the Visual Information Specialist an average of 30 minutes per digital ad to design to the specifications.

Financial: Digital ads are low cost but still require new ad budget dollars. The C&PR Administrator is evaluating cost/benefit options for audience reach and shifting dollars into this new area that in the past would more likely have been spent with traditional media such as the Monitor newspaper.

Metrics: On line ads have a unique advantage in the use of technology to gather data as users “click” on an ad. However, this is such a new area for the division that metrics should be established within the next two years. Data that can be furnished to the County varies from vendor to vendor. Continue tracking ad effectiveness through use of on line tools offered by the vendors as a preferred option and seek out vendors who offer this as an option for the price of the ad. Expand skills into tracking/code generation to gather data from the ads.

Social Media

When the Plan was first written in 2010, social media was still relatively new. Today, there are many new social media communication tools that can become functions of the website and through the Internet have the potential to reach broader audiences, especially a younger demographic that is hard for the County to reach with more traditional methods such as mailed newsletters or ads in the local newspaper. Most counties and municipalities have adopted use of Facebook as a minimum social media tool, along with Twitter - not to supplant traditional advertising or outreach – but rather to supplement efforts. According to the results of ICMA’s recent digital use survey in November 2014, 88% of respondents reported that their local government has a social media presence. It is relatively straight forward to use and free. Facebook, YouTube and Twitter offer the ability to communicate from third-party websites and can contain informational material via a “fan page” or regularly posted news and updates. Other popular examples that offer following approaches include Pinterest, Tumblr and Reddit.

Like digital advertising, the benefits of social media are timeliness, cost effectiveness, and easy access to two-way communication. Social media has the added benefit of occurring in an environment where users are already “present” for their own personal/social needs, as opposed to the difficulty in “drawing” a user to seek our website proactively to find County information.

Audience: Tertiary

Communication Type: Two-way, but with limits

Evaluation:

In 2013, the County launched its Facebook page. That was quickly followed by 13 divisions who have Facebook pages. The County Manager adopted a policy for the divisions to request to use Facebook so that it is clear there is a stated purpose, an administrator and one back up person to monitor the page 24/7, and a clear understanding of what is and is not allowed on the pages. Because of first amendment rights, for example, the County has stated criteria in its policy that must be placed on the pages, so that if a problem arises and a post needs to be removed, there is no question that the post was removed for non-compliance and not because the County disagreed with or disliked the statement. The best example of non-compliant posts are examples of spam – an auto-generated post that seeks out open posts on Facebook and places a commercial message (“try my product free for the next 30 days”) on the post. These are easily removed as they have nothing to do with the posted topic.

Facebook icons have been placed on the County’s website (the Home page) and within the various division pages. It is a widely recognized symbol.

The biggest challenge for the divisions since 2013 has been upkeep of the Facebook pages. Posting status updates, photos or videos takes time and thoughtful marketing in order to build a following. If not effective or updated, the pages are abandoned by users over time.

One benefit of the pages is that divisions can easily SHARE a posting to spread the word for another division about a road closure, project public meeting or other interesting news such as holiday hours for County facilities or bus route changes. It also gives more exposure for pages related to tourism or marketing of Los Alamos when the divisions SHARE postings from others, such as Bandelier National Monument or the Valles Caldera National Preserve.

Recommendation:

The 2010 Plan's goal was achieved with adoption of the policy and subsequent launch. The next step is to develop a more general Social Media Policy – several divisions are interested in having a more general policy so that they are free to quickly adapt to new media outreach, tools, apps or other methods of communication. This has been a challenge for the C&PR Administrator in the last year because the other platforms vary greatly in the ability to interact with the public on a stated basis without creating an open forum, which is problematic for the reasons listed above. In the next five years, the goal is to decide whether or not to expand the Social Media Policy and give approval to let more of the divisions use platforms other than Facebook (for example, the Library has requested use of Pinterest). As more and more social media are added, more staff time must be spent to support the accounts, and more employees must have open access to the internet.

Staffing: Keeping up with social media is a new task since the 2010 plan. As previously mentioned, maintaining the Facebook pages is a constant task to keep them “fresh” and interesting. The C&PR Administrator and backup (Visual Information Specialist) maintain the main page which has the most LIKES of all the pages (1500 at this writing). However, with that comes the need for constant posting (or SHARES of other pages) and monitoring. Photos and videos taken around Los Alamos County have proven to be the most popular posts.

The C&PR Administrator and backup spend approximately 4 to 6 hours collectively with the main page, and it's presumed the other division coordinators spend equal or lesser amounts of time. This is a new task that was not on the list of daily tasks when Plan was written in 2010. Adding more social media tasks would take more time – likely in a similar way (4 to 6 hours per social media).

Financial: Facebook posting is free. Other social media like Twitter and Pinterest are also free. Record-keeping tasks must be performed manually by staff for social media. Options to purchase software or contract with a third party to collect the records without use of staff would take budget that is not available in the divisions nor in IM or Records Management. Social media was not created with the need to capture records in mind, making it problematic as there is no option to store the digital media which is third party sourced.

Metrics: Increase LIKES on the main County Facebook page by 300 per year. In five years, this would be 3000 LIKES – people who are following the County's page. Explore metrics from peer groups based on population – is there a meaningful benchmark? If so, update the Plan.

Interactive Media - NEW

When the Plan was first written in 2010, interactive media (on line booklets that allow the user to link through a publication or “pop out” information) was still new technology. With dwindling budgets, more printed materials have been moved on line for cost savings within the C&PR Administrator’s budget. In addition, interactive media can draw the user in for more detailed data or links to expand their understanding of a topic. Interactive media are posted to the County’s webpage or on thumb drives.

Audience: Tertiary

Communication Type: Two-way, with limits

Evaluation:

More interactive media should be explored if new reports are desired, to continue to keep printing costs low. The Visual Information Specialist is working to consistently improve skills in this area as new releases and updates to software improve what is possible. Linking to videos is an area worth exploring in the next five years as skills improve in videography.

Recommendation:

Continue working on improving interactive media skills. Continue moving printed materials on line to save printing costs and make the document more interactive.

Resources:

Staffing:

This is a new task for the Visual Information Specialist that was not expected in 2010. While interactive media replaces the design of print media, it does not necessarily result in time savings – only in ease of working with the final document. Additional time must be spent to establish links or pop outs after the final document is approved and before it can be uploaded.

Financial: Interactive media is free and replaces the cost of a printed booklet.

Metrics: None.

Open Forum (on line public comment) - NEW

Open Forum was launched in 2012. It is an on line tool that allows the County to post a question and then gather responses in one forum. It is accessed through the webpage and has the ability to email announcements to subscribers, if they have elected to set up a profile. Open Forum is hosted and moderated by a third party under an annual agreement with Peak Democracy.

Audience: Tertiary

Communication Type: Two-way, with limits

Evaluation:

Open Forum has been very popular with residents who want to read about projects or initiatives and then weigh in. It has the added benefit of allowing users to support a statement made by someone else, and, allows them to read all responses on an item, which can often spur them to make their own comments. A new feature added in 2014 allows the County to reply to a user if they post a question or erroneous data that needs to be corrected. The reply can be private or public. It takes little staff time to upload a topic and a report summary is easy to download with just the click of a button at the end. Staff support is very good from Peak Democracy and they constantly upgrade their product with new features at no cost.

Recommendation:

The County should continue to fund Open Forum and find ways to use it for on line polling of the public. Train others in other divisions to use the product and expand its uses in the next five years.

Staffing: Setting up an Open Forum topic takes between one to two hours and is handled either by the C&PR Administrator or other trained administrators. Peak Democracy also offers staff to set up a topic for free. Training takes approximately an hour to walk through basic functions.

Financial: The cost for Open Forum is \$2,700 a year for a license that can be used by the divisions once they have been trained. Advertising for open forum topics is limited by C&PR Administrator ad funds for topics rather than general outreach ads promoting the forum.

Metrics: Increase subscribers by 100 in five years.

Print Media & Displays

Annual Reports

Brochures, Maps & Booklets

Information Kiosk - NEW

Other Printed Material (Misc.)

Annual Reports

Description:

There are four annual reports that are produced by the C&PR Division:

Annual Report – delivered in January each year to the Community by the County Manager

Proposed Budget Summary – delivered in March each year to the community by the County Manager

LAPD Annual Report – delivered in February each year to the community by the Police Chief

Economic Development Report – delivered in March/April each year by the Economic Vitality Administrator (EVA).

Audience: Secondary and Tertiary - County elected officials and employees; the citizens and businesses of Los Alamos County; local, state and federal officials

Communication Type: One Way

Evaluation:

Annual Report – In 2010, the report was being printed in house and distributed widely. To save budget, this report moved on line and became interactive in 2013. It is printed only in limited cases now. The County Manager gives a State of the County address at the first Chamber breakfast in January of each year with a separate (summary) PowerPoint.

Proposed Budget Summary – In 2010, the report was printed as a tabloid inserted in the Monitor. This report moved on line and became interactive in 2014. It is printed sparingly – primarily for the public to reference during budget meetings.

LAPD Annual report – In 2010, the report was printed in house and distributed through the police department to various organizations. To save budget, it was moved on line and made interactive in 2014. It is printed sparingly when officers make presentations or for recruitment purposes.

Economic Development Report – In 2010, the report was printed in house and distributed primarily to state and federal officials. To save budget, it was moved on line and made interactive in 2012. It is printed sparingly, when elected officials distribute it to state or federal officials. The EVA distributes it at trade shows and conferences on a thumb drive with other economic materials.

All of the above are posted to the County's webpage and available on thumb drives.

Recommendation:

There are no plans to change the current practice and no plans to add more Annual Reports.

Staffing: Preparation of these reports can be very time-consuming for the Visual Information Specialist. Moving them on line has helped reduce layout/graphic design time slightly, however, the time saved by moving them on line is then supplemented by establishing all of the interactive features and links. The goal is to continue to seek out ways to reduce this time, because the reports take a considerable amount of time between November and March, making it difficult to fit in other work requests. Moving toward templates on all of the above is helpful.

Financial: As mentioned above, moving the reports on line was a cost-savings measure two years ago; however, it had the side benefit of making the reports more interactive.

Metrics: Cost/benefit for hours spent on each report against number of reports distributed could be a future metric as the division looks to maximize resources. The Annual Report and Proposed Budget Summary are required by Charter. The LAPD Annual Report is required for accreditation for the police department. It would be up to the EVA to establish a measure for the ED reports to measure its value. The C&PR Administrator will be exploring this metric within peer groups in 2015 and may amend the Communications Plan metrics if this cost/benefit approach can be used on this item (or other print or digital items.)

Information Kiosk - NEW

Description:

The information kiosk is located in the west vestibule of the new Municipal Building. It houses a display case of gifts presented to the Council on one side and a slotted/information counter plus LCD screen on the other side, as well as a bulletin board. Community service contractors are permitted to post fliers on the board announcing upcoming events. The C&PR division maintains the stock on the other brochures and maps featured in the kiosk.

Audience: Tertiary

Communication Type: One Way

Evaluation:

The kiosk is popular with visitors to the building who are arriving to attend a meeting or conduct business. They can easily pick up a trails network map, a brochure about the animal control ordinance, or other timely informational fliers.

Recommendation:

The kiosk set up is technically challenging – the board is too tall and counter too deep to easily reach, and the slots for information are too large to adequately hold booklets. The display unit for the gifts has shelving that is not easy to adjust. The division has turned in a work request to Facilities to renovate the displays and make them easier to stock and maintain.

Staffing: It takes the C&PR Administrator or Visual Information Specialist a few hours a month to check and restock items. Displays for the gift case can take a few hours a month for preparation of materials or plaques and then coordinating with Facilities.

Financial: Information is printed in the Print Shop and thus there is no cost to the division, but it is managed to be cost effective and attractive when on display.

Metrics: None. It is too widespread and tracking number of pieces distributed would not necessarily yield meaningful data.

Brochures, Maps and Booklets

Description:

This category includes various print pieces including the Citizen Handbook, the Recreation activities' brochures, County location and trail maps, or other material published by Community Services such as Parks, Recreation and Open Space, or the Library, Police and Fire Departments, etc. Booklets support activities for such entities as the Fuller Lodge Historic District Advisory Board for items such as the Fuller Lodge brochure, walking tour guide book, or other historic outreach efforts for visitors and tourists. At this writing, a new booklet is being drafted for the Arts in Public Places Board (a listing and description of the public art around Los Alamos and White Rock.) Other requests for support are considered on a case by case basis and highly dependent on staffing availability and budget.

Audience: Secondary & Tertiary - the Parks and Recreation brochures focus primarily on informing Los Alamos County residents about upcoming events or services within Los Alamos County. Most of the other material is distributed to the general public and visitors. Economic development materials may be distributed locally, regionally or nationally.

Communication Type: One Way

Evaluation:

No change from 2010: When updating information for regularly published items, they should be reviewed periodically for accuracy and “refreshed” every 2 or 3 years to keep the material inviting and readable. New photos and graphics/clip art should be used and local photos are highly encouraged (versus stock photos or on line clip art services).

Recommendation:

No change from 2010: The County has never undertaken a comprehensive survey of the various kinds of written information that exist and an inventory that would reveal areas of improvement for consistency, clarity or overall “branding” of the County as one entity. The County’s logo has never been updated in 65 years, nor does the County have a particular brand name that is consistently applied and used across all divisions. County divisions are primarily left to prepare their own materials, develop their own logos, and their own marketing slogans. This approach spreads to the County’s webpage, uniforms, signage and numerous other public outreach areas.

Staffing: If the Council decides to fund community branding, it’s expected that graphics design would be out-sourced to a graphic design firm. There is no staffing in the C&PR division for such an extraordinary effort.

Financial: Materials are printed by the requesting department in the Print Shop. There is no cost impact to the division’s budget for those services. In 2014, when cost savings were identified at year end, the division updated and printed out-of-house a limited number of citizen handbooks,

which is the most popular item requested by citizens and employees. There are no plans to update the booklet again for another five years and it would be budget dependent at that time.

Metrics: None. It is too widespread and tracking number of pieces distributed would not necessarily be meaningful data.

Direct Mail/Written Correspondence

Description:

Besides official County business, direct mail is generally used by Staff to inform residents and businesses about activities or projects impacting neighborhoods. Letters are often mailed out to residents inviting them to public meetings or open houses to encourage their participation in a project in the early planning stages.

Audience: Primary

Communication Type: One Way

Evaluation:

Letters or postcards are mailed to residents and businesses in areas where projects and activities are planned, allowing them time to prepare for the upcoming activity or inviting them to learn more. In the 2010 Capital Improvement Project cycle for Phase 1 applications, the County took a “lessons learned” suggestion from the 2008 cycle and began sending letters to residents near proposed projects, inviting them to the public hearings and notifying them of the project.

Recommendation:

No change from 2010: Letters and postcards are most often used as tools for PIIPs, or by the Community & Economic Development Department to meet specific Planning and Zoning requirements for notifications within 300 feet of a proposed project site. It is recommended that the County continue to include written correspondence as a communication tool.

It should be noted that letters must offer ways for the public to engage – not merely share information about a meeting and ask them to attend. They should be able to share their thoughts outside of meetings – encouraging them to visit the webpage for more information, send e-mails or letters to key staff members in charge of the project or activity, use Open Forum, or even have the ability to call 311 and verbalize an opinion or be referred to the appropriate department.

Staffing: Not an impact on the C&PR division – other divisions handle mailing out letters to geographical areas. This is not expected to change in the next five years unless the Neighborhood Program is implemented.

Financial: No budget exists in the C&PR division for printing postcards, addressing them or mailing them out. Equipment that was used for this task in Media Services was eliminated with the end of the County Line printed newsletter in 2013.

Metrics: None. Measures would be tracked inside the divisions sending out the mail.

Other Print Material (Misc.)

Description:

There are a wide variety of other materials used by the County, such as:

- Door hangers - used to alert residents of activities in a particular neighborhood, primarily Public Works or Utilities related (repaving, water shut off, etc.)
- Overpass banners - used to announce meetings or special events
- Posters or flyers - generally used in County buildings or local businesses, in conjunction with banners to promote special events.

Audience: Primary and Tertiary depending upon type of materials. Door hangers are used to inform residents of neighborhood activities; banners, posters and flyers inform the general public.

Evaluation:

All printed materials should have a consistent look/feel/theme and avoid overly detailed information that is hard to read, especially on overpass banners. As previously stated and related to other comments about materials prepared by other divisions for special events, the C&PR Administrator has no authority to review materials. Many divisions do seek advice or even support services from the Visual Information Specialist, and while this is encouraged, it cannot always be accommodated.

Recommendation:

No change from 2010: As with all materials being printed that reflect upon the County and its image, the biggest challenge in this area is consistency and readability. The C&PR division makes every effort to review materials submitted to them (through the Graphics Design Work Request) and offer suggestions or make revisions, but has no authority over a division manager or higher to impose graphics design and print suggestions on any materials. For the staff to become more involved or have that ownership and responsibility would involve a change in the organizational structure and County Manager policies. See previous constraints listed under other sections.

Staffing: Work orders are submitted to the Visual Information Specialist and reviewed bi-weekly with the C&PR Administrator. As previously noted, as the work orders have increased and other responsibilities such as airlines marketing have increased, prioritization of work orders continues to be a challenge.

Financial: The division strives to work with requesters to only print the minimum number of pieces needed, to save printing costs county-wide. Many changes were made during the time that Media Services was housed within the C&PR division from 2010 -2014 to support cost-cutting measures. For example, two-side copying or printing to larger format paper and trimming, or, reducing the amount of ink used in publications were all established in the last four years as best practices. A new "Managed Print Services" contract should further reduce printing costs. The C&PR Administrator budget contained a line item to print bill stuffers (in utility bills) until 2013. This

was eliminated as a cost-cutting measure and has not been restored. It was primarily for two or three seasonal fliers (for example, reminding residents about animal control regulations for keeping dogs on leashes, or, to clear sidewalks of weeks during the summer months.) Funding for overpass banners was eliminated in the C&PR Administrator's budget in 2013 as a cost savings measure.

Metrics: None. It would be time consuming to collect data across all of the divisions, and the data would not be very meaningful.

Other Outreach Methods:

Meetings, Forums & Open Houses

Special Events

Surveys (Citizen Survey, other surveys)

311 Customer Care Center

Meetings, Forums & Open Houses

Description:

These are opportunities for two-way, open dialogue – places for discussion where participants have an opportunity to express opinions and give input either verbally or in writing. These forums include project meetings or meetings with business and special interest groups. They can involve community leaders, County Councilors, and other elected officials, project managers or stakeholders. The general guideline is to announce such meetings no less than 7 days prior to a meeting and optimally 10 to 14 days before a meeting.

Audience: Primary, Secondary & Tertiary – Meetings can target a specific neighborhood, or, can be broader and include Los Alamos County citizens, businesses, home owner associations and special interest groups.

Communication Type: Two Way

Evaluation:

In addition to the regularly scheduled County Council meetings and other Boards or Commission or Ad Hoc committee meetings (all open to the public), public meetings facilitate information exchange and encourage resident engagement. They provide an informal venue for sharing information and discussing current topics directly related to projects or activities.

Recommendation:

Most public meetings are staffed by divisions and they conduct public outreach in accordance with a Public Information and Involvement Plan. The C&PR Administrator is not involved in these efforts, but the Visual Information Specialist might provide graphic design support for ads if staffing is limited inside the division for such tasks, as has been the case the last few years with reductions in funding that have caused staff to take on other non-PIIP duties and increased the number of work orders for items such as ads.

The Senior Management Team is considering “neighborhood outreach programs” in 2015. These meetings would be new meetings that would require support (outreach) from the C&PR Administrator. Prior to the Plan being developed in 2010, the previous County Administrator had conducted neighborhood meetings called “County Conversations” - these were broad Town Hall types of meetings with no agenda. Meetings were held in various geographical areas in school gyms or churches. An action item list of comments taken in was generated and distributed to key staff for follow ups. The new outreach programs would be differently structured. They would define one topic and have a set agenda with a facilitator and time limit for discussion of ideas – likely in round table discussions with flip charts to record answers in small groups, with the group then reporting out their results to the larger assembly. Residents would be contributors to staff

actions by identifying possible solutions to the presented problem or answering structured questions to provide feedback about a topic.

Staffing: Adding neighborhood programs outreach would be a new task for the C&PR Administrator and Visual Information Specialist. Time spent would be dependent on frequency of the meetings plus the outreach plan that is drafted, but based on past experience could take several hours a month that is not currently budgeted in the division. This time would likely need to be gained by discontinuing or scaling back on use of some other tool to replace it with this new task. If the program proceeds in 2015, this will become a consideration for an amendment to the Communications Plan.

Financial. There is no C&PR Administrator budget for neighborhood program outreach. Based on the County Conversations program, it could take several thousand dollars to support outreach: direct mail postcards were sent out to each geographical area at least two weeks in advance of a County Conversation. No equipment exists for this service to be provided in house and it would have to be generated out of house, adding expense and time considerations to the process. Press releases and website postings as well as print and radio ads were also funded for County Conversation outreach efforts. If the program proceeds in 2015, methods for outreach will become a consideration for an amendment to the Communications Plan and update to the C&PR Administrator budget.

Metrics: None. The number of meetings held and attendance for any public meeting varies widely, based on the location, time of day and topic of interest.

Special Events

Description:

Special events provide entertainment and a gathering place for Los Alamos County citizens and visitors from around the region. The C&PR division is involved in some, but not all, special events, as directed by the Council or County Manager. Most special events and their outreach are conducted by the divisions, who have dedicated resources for planning, promotion and execution, especially in the Recreation Division or Library.

Audience: Tertiary – can include visitors

Communication Type: Two Way

Evaluation:

Events bring visitors to Los Alamos County, which helps promote Los Alamos County businesses. The events bring visitors that might not come to Los Alamos County for any other reason. They help establish a positive image for the City and create visibility for the businesses. Events can establish goodwill between the City and its citizens. Events also provide great opportunities to take public information to the residents. For example, the Council hosts a booth each year at the County Fair with public information about projects, programs or studies. The Council also hosts a booth at Farmer's Market once a month with similar information.

Recommendation:

Because Los Alamos County is known for its plentitude of recreational and outdoors opportunities, and because events can foster goodwill, provide unique venues for informal interactions, and more intangible benefits, it is recommended that the County continue to sponsor current events.

Staffing: Farmer's Market booths were added in 2012 as a new task. Staff sets up the booth but Council breaks it down at the end of the market. Before adding new events in the next five years, there should be careful consideration toward staff time spent and prioritization/timing considerations. They can be time consuming for staff in all divisions as well as the C&PR Administrator and Visual Information Specialist, both to prepare for and then staff on the day of the event.

Financial: Adding new events requires corresponding budget to conduct outreach or fund promotional activities and items. There are no funds in the C&PR Administrator budget for promoting any new events.

Metrics: None.

Citizen Survey

Description:

The County conducts a citizen survey is contracted out to a professional consultant. It is administered to 400 households meeting US census demographics in Los Alamos County. The survey is conducted by phone for approximately 15 minutes. It occurs every other year.

Audience: Tertiary – the survey targets only residents of the County

Communication Type: Two Way

Evaluation:

The most recent survey occurred in May 2014. The overall objective of the research is to monitor the community's opinions and expectations about services the County provides. Most of the data feeds the LA Scores Program. This process helps the County internally gauge its progress in the delivery of services, compare its performance to other municipalities (ICMA benchmarks) and develop goals for the future.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the County continue budgeting and conducting annual citizen surveys and reporting the results to support LA Scores. However, it is not funded in FY16 in the C&PR Administrator's proposed budget and will be paid for using carryover funds from FY15. The next survey will occur in May 2016.

With the rollout of new Customer Service Standards in 2014, the next survey should strive to find a way to measure whether or not employees are following the standards (if they apply to the public). If it is not possible to add questions to the 2016 survey, a separate survey through Open Forum could be an option.

Staffing: Gathering competitive bids, procurement, design of survey, analysis of results and presentation(s) of the survey results plus media meetings and public outreach takes approximately 60 hours of the C&PR Administrator's time across four months (approximately 15 hours a month on various tasks related to the survey.)

Financial: Budget for the survey has continued to decrease in the last four years. In 2010, the County spent nearly \$20,000 on the survey. In 2010 that decreased to \$14,000 and in 2014 decreased to \$12,000. This has led to reductions in the number of questions asked on the survey. The last survey was conducted by Research & Polling. The budget target for the 2016 survey will be \$12,000.

Metrics: LA Scores provides the metrics for this item as a separate report published with the proposed budget each year. The divisions look at changes over time to see if performance has improved. Within the survey, questions asked about openness and transparency of government are monitored by the C&PR Administrator. A "trust of government" question was added in 2012.

Other Surveys

Description:

Survey Monkey is an additional on line source that is available to any division wishing to design on line surveys in order to gain feedback on projects or issues. Open Forum also has survey options built in and the benefits of alerting subscribers to the forum that a new survey has been launched.

Audience: Tertiary

Communication Type: Two Way

Evaluation:

Survey Monkey does have some limitations and constraints in its flexibility; however, it has been used several times in the past. Participation is fairly limited and requires supplement outreach to drive users to the website and then the link to Survey Monkey.

Recommendation:

With limited budgets, the C&PR Administrator has dropped its annual subscription to Survey Monkey as of FY16, and will be asking divisions to either pay for it in their budgets for a one time survey (less expense), or, to use Open Forum which is free to them.

Staffing: Surveys uploaded to Survey Monkey or Open Forum are developed within the divisions, not by the C&PR Administrator. In a few cases, the C&PR Administrator has helped with surveys for others who don't have staff who know how to use Survey Monkey or Open Forum design tools. This will continue to occur on a case by case basis, time permitting.

Financial: As noted above, the cost of an annual subscription to Survey Monkey was proposed for the FY16 budget but then dropped to fund other items in 2015 that are a higher priority.

311 Customer Care Center (CCC)

Description:

The 311 CCC is a centralized customer service location for all County questions –using a 311 phone line and walk in services. There are currently five representatives who staff the CCC.

Audience: Tertiary - the citizens of Los Alamos County, visitors

Communication Type: Two Way

Evaluation:

This division is outside of the purview of the C&PR Administrator. However, the C&PR Administrator does work with the 311 CCC by copying them on news releases so they are up to date, as well as attending meetings with them quarterly for general discussions. The C&PR Administrator also helped 311 in co-hosting Customer Service Week with public displays and advance outreach. The event was held on one afternoon during that week – a new task added in October 2014. Other divisions also participated in the event.

Recommendations:

Continue working with 311 CCC representatives to keep them informed of public meetings, events, and topics.

Staffing: Dept. of Public Utilities' (DPU) employees staff the 311 CCC.

Financial: Funds for paying for salaries as well as funds for advertising the services offered through the 311 CCC are housed in the DPU budget. Customer Service Week outreach (ads) are paid for by the C&PR Administrator budget (approximately \$500).

Metrics: Metrics would be maintained by DPU not the C&PR Administrator.

Photography & Videography **(NEW SECTION)**

LCDs (includes Reel Deal screen, etc.)

Video & Audio Streaming of Meetings

Photography & Videography Services

LCDs (includes Reel Deal Theater screen or other Video/Electronic) Advertising - NEW

Description:

With the construction of the new Municipal Building, three LCDs were installed in the lobby. The updates to the screens are the responsibility of the C&PR Division. They are updated every two weeks with news about current events, programs, seasonal announcements or other announcements (for example, in 2014 the County opened up use of the screens for community service contractors like PEEC or the Historical Society to announce their programs or lectures.)

The division also keeps the monitors on the busses up-to-date with the same LCD videos.

A different video showing at the Reel Deal was the responsibility of the division until 2014, when funding was cut (\$4,500 for one year for a sixty second ad).

The division has also done advertising through the Chamber's "red post" LCDs, which are positioned around the community in various facilities. Ads for the commercial airlines service are shown on red post.

Audience: Tertiary

Communication Type: One way

Evaluation:

Like other digital media, the LCD screens listed above are a different outreach tool that can reach a different audience. The Reel Deal ad was beneficial because it reached a broad audience and younger demographic; however, the ads (which run as a trailer pre-movie) have become so popular with local businesses that it is possible the County's ad will only appear once or even might not show at all in the prime 15 minutes before the start of a movie. The ad was determined to be too expensive to continue. It also took extra time on the part of the Visual Information Specialist to update the ad every other month, and thus the ad tended to appear outdated seasonally.

Recommendation:

The County may explore red post ads for other advertising of events or meetings, based on timing and cost. The LCD videos are worthwhile in the lobby because many people visit the building, but they are also time consuming to produce and then upload manually into the computer inside the control booth. Based on other changing priorities, the C&PR Administrator may opt to change out the LCDs only one a month, or every other month, to save time for the Visual Information Specialist for other work orders.

Staffing: The Visual Information Specialist spends approximately 8-10 hours a month creating and uploading videos to the LCD locations listed above. This is a new task that was not on the

list of daily tasks when Plan was written in 2010. Adding more LCDs would increase the time and thus is not a priority.

Financial: At this writing, the C&PR Administrator is exploring software that might allow this process to be wireless transmission, saving time. The purchase of a solution would be budget dependent in either FY15 or FY16, and might add a recurring cost to the division's limited budget.

Metrics: None.

Video Streaming & Audio Streaming of Council Meetings or Board Meetings - NEW

Description:

The County Manager's office added video streaming and audio streaming of Council meetings in 2011. On line features to add the ability to track a meeting with its agenda and minutes (for video on demand later viewing) was added in 2013. When the new Municipal Building was opened in 2014, several of the Boards and Commissions moved to the new system and began streaming their meetings. The Council also added KRSN broadcasts and streaming of their meetings in White Rock in 2012.

Audience: Tertiary

Communication Type: One-way

Evaluation:

Streaming is very popular with the public and employees wishing to tune into meetings from their PC. As more use of smart phones and tablets moves forward in the next five years, it will be important to continue to update technology to keep up with the smaller format screens.

Recommendation:

Funding for streaming video is in the County Manager's budget and should continue to be a priority. Funding for KRSN broadcasts is in the C&PR Administrator budget, but newer technology for streaming could replace this option for audio-only broadcasts, and is being explored in 2015.

Resources:

Staffing: Because of the improvements in streaming, changes were made to the PAC 8 television contract in 2014 to allow the County to interrupt their broadcast with a council meeting broadcast (accomplished remotely in the control booth inside the Council Chambers). Camera operators are now county employees, not PAC 8 employees.

Financial: Paying for the video streaming is the responsibility of the County Manager's office. The PAC 8 contract does not break out a cost for broadcast of the council meetings. The audio streaming with KRSN for work sessions is \$100/hour and approximately \$3,000/year.

Metrics: None.

Photography and Videography Services - NEW

The division opened up photography as a work request in 2011, and added Videography as a work order in 2012. Photography had previously been reserved for the C&PR Administrator, County Manager or Council-directed tasks but is now offered to all divisions. Videography is a new task that was added in response to today's audience being more visually oriented with the popularity of social media (You Tube).

Audience: Tertiary

Communication Type: One -way

Evaluation:

Photography and Videography services are provided by the Visual Information Specialist as work orders. The time consuming part of these tasks are the edits to the digital photos or video production. Photos and videos do very well on social media posts. It is very difficult to find free time to organize the photos, including records keeping and archiving old photos appropriately. Facial recognition features have helped in some cases, but more work is needed in this area. The ideal solution is to have a public intranet that could support photo sharing for employees – but this continues to be a lower priority as a “housekeeping” item that often gets bumped in favor of more urgent activities or work orders. Organizing the photo library would be a tremendous help in saving time for putting together publications.

Videography is also gaining popularity with the divisions. Again, time for this task is critical because it requires adding sound and background to the videos to make them attractive.

Recommendation:

The Visual Information Specialist will be taking a training course in April 2015 about using technology to better manage photos upon uploading them. This problem is not unique to County government. The ability to take thousands of digital photos has led to the corresponding problem of files management. The problems with finding time to produce videos will persist for the next five years and likely become more of an issue as social media becomes more prevalent and it becomes more difficult to capture a user's attention without use of photos and video to stand out among dozens of competing ads. This is also going to be the case with Economic Development efforts and likely to be a component of branding if it proceeds.

Staffing: As previously mentioned, this is an area that the division should strive to grow to keep up with changing demands; however, it is not possible given staffing to give it the attention it deserves.

Financial: The division set up support services under a separate professional contract with PAC 8 in December 2014 because it cannot process all of the work order requests for video. Divisions can pay PAC 8 to produce a video for them under a Task Order arrangement. This is also beneficial to the local television station after the County reduced funding in their

contract last year; however, the tasks must be funded by each division requesting the service and may still be constricted due to tight budgets.

Metrics: None. Within Facebook metrics, the division can see marked increases in traffic to the page for a photo or video post. It is a strategy in public outreach for Facebook that has been made a priority.

Media (NEW Section)

Press Releases

Media Meetings

Media Calendar

Other Media: Advisories, Photo Ops,

Media Packets & Interviews

Press Releases

Description:

Press releases are prepared written materials that provide news about the County. Depending on the topic, releases are e-mailed to local, regional or national print publications, television and radio stations, posted to the County's News section of the webpage, and posted to the intranet for County employees to read. In Los Alamos, primary coverage is provided through the Monitor, the Post and KRSN 1490 AM.

Audience: Tertiary

Communication Type: One Way

Evaluation:

News releases share relevant and timely news and will continue to be key to any public outreach or communications efforts.

Recommendation:

No changes to the 2010 Plan: Continue to issue releases to media locally. Continue to explore options and build better relationships to better enhance exposure regionally. Los Alamos County typically gets very low "positive" press coverage from regional media. Explore national media options and ideas for gaining more positive press coverage of the County on topics of national interest, such as the upcoming Manhattan Project National Historical Park.

Staffing: Press releases are prepared by the C&PR Administrator as well as others who perform public outreach functions across several divisions. An average press release is one or two pages and takes approximately one or two hours to prepare, e-mail and upload to the webpage.

Financial: Free

Metrics: None. While the number of releases could be counted, it would vary widely based on topic, relevance, and current events happening and would not be meaningful. Since they are distributed by many different divisions, there would also be time spent tracking the total numbers across all divisions – a task without meaningful data.

Media Meetings

Description:

The C&PR Administrator meets with the DPU Public Affairs Manager and members of the Monitor & Post every other Thursday for approximately an hour.

Audience: Primary - Media

Communication Type: Two Way

Evaluation:

The C&PR Administrator hands out a written report that serves as the agenda for the meetings. It covers upcoming meetings or events, a preview of Council meetings, and any other ideas for possible news stories. Many times these meetings are a good opportunity for the County to proactively tell its “good news” which might otherwise go unnoticed. The media are also welcome to ask questions or request follow up on items of their choice. If a meeting attendee is absent, the agenda is emailed to them afterwards.

Recommendation:

Continue to hold the meetings every other week. They are beneficial for building relationships with the media as well.

Staffing: Meeting agendas are prepared by the C&PR Administrator and take approximately an hour to research and prepare.

Financial: Free

Metrics: None. The number of items on a media meeting report that are covered by the media annually could be tracked, but, would vary widely based on events happening around the County. For example, in a year where many projects are being designed, numbers would artificially be inflated because media would be attending public meetings.

Media Calendar

Description:

The media calendar is released on the first day of each new month and features a handy listing of all upcoming events or public meetings. It is sent to local media and shared internally with others doing public outreach, as well as being emailed to others with an interest in coordinating with the county, such as School District staff. Having the calendar also helps staff avoid having public meetings or events on the same date. The C&PR Administrator calls for items from staff the last week of the month in order to prepare the calendar. It is also included in the County Manager's bi-monthly report.

Audience: Primary - Media, Employees, School District

Communication Type: One-way

Evaluation:

The calendar was created in 2012 and is a handy reference for meetings "at a glance" without searching for them on the webpage calendar.

Recommendation:

Continue to publish the calendar monthly.

Staffing: This was a new task for the C&PR Administrator in 2012 and takes approximately one or two hours a month for publishing the calendar and keeping it updated (if events or meetings get added, the calendar is updated and sent out again).

Financial: The calendar is free on email.

Metrics: None.

Other Media: Advisories, Photo Ops, Media Packets & Interviews

Description:

The C&PR Administrator handles media relations using the methods previously described as well as other items:

Media Advisories: Prepared for press conferences or special events and sent to regional media, including time/place date of an event and attaching visuals or background materials. May also include directions to the event or special notes about parking.

Photo Ops: Similar to an advisory, but issued with a suggested photo op to the newspapers or television stations, usually with suggested caption for a photo.

Media Packets: Prepared folders with background information that can be handed out at a press conference or event. Or, it may be a thumb drive with the information.

Interviews: The C&PR Administrator may schedule advance interviews ahead of a complicated or controversial topic that is coming forward. This may include on air interviews on radio stations such as KRSN.

Audience: Media, but it benefits public outreach efforts for residents

Communication Type: One-way

Evaluation:

Continue to promote all of the above

Recommendation:

These are basic C&PR Administrator functions that should never be eliminated and have a high priority in a media relations program.

Staffing: Media relations' tasks such as the above vary week to week for the C&PR Administrator, but on an average can take one or two hours a week.

Financial: Free

Metrics: None.

**Public Information &
Involvement Plans**

and

**Emergency Communication
Plans**

Public Information & Involvement Plans (PIIPs)

Description:

The Public Information and Involvement Plan (PIIP) has been used for approximately 15 years and has evolved over time to include the new tools described in the Plan – which has led to greater ability to conduct public outreach. PIIPs are filed in the Council’s workroom and can also be included in project related materials given to the Council for award consideration

Audience: Primary and Secondary

Communication Type: One-Way and Two-Way, depending on the PIIP activities defined

Evaluation:

The PIIP works well for projects and continued use is recommended for all projects. It should be evaluated by those conducting public outreach and refined to fit their needs. One improvement made since 2010: The PIIP did not work well with non-projects – more loosely categorized as studies. Therefore, a category called “studies” was added in 2010 in accordance with Plan recommendations (for example, the Transit Plan Update in 2014 required a PIIP because it was a study – that would not have occurred in 2010).

Recommendation:

Issues resolution (another non-project item) do not currently require a PIIP to be completed by the responsible department and approved by the C&PR Administrator. It would be difficult to categorize such issues and place parameters and criteria mandating a written PIIP upon the divisions. The divisions generally do a good job of identifying issues with the C&PR Administrator and seeking advice on how to proceed.

Staffing: Unless assigned to a special project, the C&PR Administrator does not carry out PIIPs; this is the responsibility of the division.

NOTE: Within the Utilities’ department, the PIIPs for projects are approved by the Public Affairs Manager.

Metric: None.

Emergency Communication Plans

Emergencies precipitate the need for timely, accurate information to all audiences. Outreach may be local, regional or national (as was the case for the Cerro Grande and Las Conchas wildfires, for example.) The Communications Plan does not address emergency communication because a separate plan is in place with established protocols and responsibilities under an Incident Command System.

Non-emergency events (for example, a road closure blocking traffic during rush hour for an accident, or, delays in opening County services due to a snow delay) are handled using a variety of communication tools to quickly disseminate information in conjunction with LAPD and LAFD. These can include: News postings on the County webpage, sending out an e-newsletter, Facebook postings, 311 CCC updates, press releases and recordings on 1610 AM radio (the County owned radio emergency broadcast station).