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Notwithstanding internet/mobile connectivity issues and not being able to connect with each other in person, there is a silver lining to conducting the majority of the League’s business virtually. As I mentioned in my welcome to each of our Policy Committees last month, it has provided us with the ability for more inclusion in the League’s Policy Process than meeting in-person. By staggering individual Policy Committees on different dates and times via Zoom, it enabled a number of people to serve on multiple Policy Committees, which is something practically impossible to accomplish during simultaneous meetings held in person on the same day!

The second step in the League’s policy process is to submit the Policy Committees’ recommendations of the 2020-2021 Resolutions and Statement of Municipal Policy to the Resolutions Committee. On August 1st, 2020, the Resolutions Committee met via Zoom with over 62 people in attendance, including NMML staff. Fantastic attendance! NMML President-Elect and Raton Mayor Neil Segotta did an excellent job of chairing the Resolutions Committee Meeting.

The Resolutions Committee considered thirty-one Resolutions, seven New Resolutions, and several amendments to the Statement of Municipal Policy that had been reviewed, passed, and adopted by the five Policy Committees (Community, Economic Development & Governmental Operations; Environment, Energy & Natural Resources, Finance, Intergovernmental Relations & Taxation; Public Infrastructure & Human Resources; and, Public Safety). One new Resolution was submitted to the committee under the New Business agenda item, and was remanded back to League staff for amendments. This amended Resolution will be presented at the next meeting of the Resolutions Committee that is scheduled to occur during the NMML Annual Conference via Zoom on Wednesday, September 2nd.

League staff are working hard on the upcoming NMML Annual Conference. Many of the traditional aspects of the Annual Conference will be retained using Zoom, including subsection meetings, Resolutions Committee Meeting, the Annual Business Meeting, celebrating our MOLI Graduates, and great standalone sessions and speakers that will interest everyone! While we will miss having our traditional in-person lunches and evening events, staff are cooking up something that will end the conference on Thursday in a new way. I am hoping everyone, including spouses, significant others, sponsors, League staff, and friends can join in and celebrate the New Mexico Municipal League and each other!

Thank you to everyone who participated on a Policy Committee or multiple Policy Committees and on the Resolutions Committee. I also thank everyone who served on the 2020 Nominating Committee, who met on August 1st, and recommended Marilyn Burns, Mayor of Tatum, for the undeclared Director-at-Large position.

The Nominating Committee report will be presented for approval to the Designated Voting Members from each of our 106-member municipalities at the Annual Business Meeting to be held on Thursday, September 3rd during the Annual Conference. Nominations from the floor may be made by any member in good standing at the Business Meeting for this position as well as for any office or directorship, to be filled this year as follows: President-Elect, Vice-President, Treasurer, and the Three Directors-at-Large.

As always, thank you for your service to your community!
What is a cash mob? A cash mob is a group of people who assemble at a local business to make purchases. The purpose of these mobs is to support both the local businesses and the overall community. They may also serve a secondary purpose in providing social opportunities. They are a form of flash mob, and are inspired by them. During this time of crisis, Raton has decided to do virtual Cash Mobs. It takes place on a regular basis through the Raton Cash Mob Facebook page via a Facebook live event.

In 2010, local community member, Lynette Simpson came up with the concept in Raton. She later joined forces with former Chamber of Commerce Director, Melissa Unger. When COVID-19 hit, Jessica Barfield, Raton Economic Development Director, Geoff Peterson, Center for Community Innovation Director and Brenda Ferri, Raton MainStreet Executive Director put their heads together to come up with a solution to help the struggling communities.
small businesses in Raton. They reached out to Lynette and Melissa to see if a virtual cash mob might work. The Raton Cash Mob agreed to give it a shot. On April 9, 2020, they held their first virtual Facebook Live Cash Mob event at Raton’s own Roses’ Honeysuckle Station. From April 9, 2020 through July 2, 2020, the team has held Facebook Live events every Tuesday and Thursday to help struggling businesses in Raton and Colfax County. To date, they have held 22 shows helping 33 businesses. Some shows consist of more than one merchant. The Raton Cash Mob Facebook page has 1,722 followers and shows average around 99 viewers/shoppers per show. The show is tag team hosted by Lynette Simpson and Melissa Unger and directed/filmed by Brenda Ferri. The at home team that tracks all the sales and comments during the show are Jessica Barfield, Dean Olona, Caleb Bradley, Brenna Simpson and Erika Ferri. This team effort has brought nearly $38,000 into Raton’s small businesses during the state mandated closures and restrictions. Everyone involved with the Raton Cash Mob is a volunteer and does it because they care about the future of Raton’s Small Businesses. The idea has caught on around the state. The Raton team trained a team in Las Vegas and also inspired Clovis and Tucumcari to host similar events. Next month the Las Vegas Cash Mob will be highlighted.
The Families First Coronavirus Response Act ("FFCRA") requires certain employers to provide to their employees with paid sick leave or with extended family and medical leave for certain COVID-19 related reasons.

**Covered Employers:** With few exceptions, the paid sick leave and expanded family and medical; leave provisions of the FFCRA apply to public and private employers with fewer than 500 employees.¹ With very narrow exceptions, the provisions of the FFCRA apply to all public sector employers.

To be eligible for benefits under the FFCRA, a person must have been employed for at least 30 days. The FFCRA applies to all employees, even part-time employees except that an employer may elect to exclude certain health care providers or emergency responders from eligibility.

Benefits Provided: The FFCRA provides for the following benefits to eligible employees:

- Two weeks (up to 80 hours) of paid sick leave at the employee’s regular rate of pay if the employee is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and seeking a medical diagnosis, or the employee is under a quarantine order; OR

- Two weeks (up to 80 hours) of paid sick leave at 2/3 the employee’s regular rate of pay if the employee is unable to work as a result of the need to care for an individual who is subject to a quarantine order or to care for a child whose school or child care provider is closed or unavailable for reasons related to COVID-19.

- Part-time employees are entitled to paid sick leave, as well. Leave time for part-time employees is equal to the number of hours that such employee works, on average, over a two week period.

¹ The Department of Labor is authorized to issue regulations to exempt small businesses with fewer than 50 employees from the paid leave requirements "when the imposition of such requirements would jeopardize the viability of the business as a going concern" (we are unsure whether any Department of Labor regulation allowing an exemption for "small businesses" will apply to municipalities).
Qualifying Reasons for Leave: An employee qualifies for paid leave under the FFCRA if the employee is unable to work (or unable to work remotely) because the employee:

▪ Is subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19;
▪ Has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine related to COVID-19;
▪ Is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and is seeking a medical diagnosis;
▪ Is caring for an individual subject to (a) a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19, or (b) who has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine related to COVID-19;
▪ Is caring for a child whose school or place of care is closed (or whose child care provider is unavailable) for reasons related to COVID-19; or
▪ Is experiencing any other substantially-similar condition specified by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with the Secretaries of Labor and Treasury.

Use of FFCRA Leave: There is no waiting period in order to use leave provided under the FFCRA. This sick leave is available for immediate use regardless of the employee's tenure at the municipality. Note, however, that paid sick time under the FFCRA will not carry over from year to year. Additionally, employees are not entitled to reimbursement for unused FFCRA leave upon termination, resignation, retirement, or other separation from employment.

Calculation of Pay: Paid sick leave under the FFCRA is calculated as follows:

▪ Employees taking leave to care for themselves must be paid at their regular rate of pay or the applicable minimum wage, whichever is higher up to $511 per day and $5,110 in total.
▪ Employees taking time off to care for family members must be paid at two-thirds of their regular rate of pay or the applicable minimum wage, whoever is higher up to $200 per day and $2,000 in the total.
▪ Employees are entitled to use this emergency sick leave before using any paid leave the employee has accrued through an existing city leave program. In other words, a city cannot require an employee to use any other available paid leave before using the sick time.

Prohibitions and Penalties: Employers may not discharge, discipline, or otherwise discriminate against any employee who takes paid sick leave under the FFCRA and files a complaint or institutes a proceeding under or related to the FFCRA. Employers who violate the terms of the first two weeks' paid sick time or unlawful termination provisions of the FFCRA will be subject to a fine of not more than $10,000 or imprisonment for not more than 6 months. Rest easy, because no person can be imprisoned except for an offense committed after conviction for a prior offense under this act.

Notice: Municipalities must post a notice containing information regarding the emergency sick leave provisions; the Labor Department will create a model notice no later than seven days after the Act is enacted.

Emergency Family Leave: Municipalities must provide up to 12 weeks of FMLA leave for employees who: (1) have been on the job for at least 30 days, and (2) are unable to work (or telework) because they need to care for a minor son or daughter because the son's or daughter's school or place of care has been closed, or if the child care provider of that son or daughter is unavailable due to a COVID-19 emergency.

The FFCRA provides for up to an additional 10 weeks of paid expanded family and medical leave to be paid at not less than two-thirds of the employee's regular rate of pay where an employee is unable to work due to a bona fide need for leave to care for a child whose school or child care provider is closed or unavailable for reasons related to COVID-19. The paid leave is capped at $200 per day and $12,000 total (aggregate over a 12 week period). The first 10 days of time taken may consist of unpaid leave, however, an employee may opt to use accrued paid leave, instead of unpaid leave for the first 10 days of Emergency Family Leave. Any employee on this Emergency Family Leave must be restored to his or her prior position at the end of the leave; however, this requirement does not apply to municipalities with fewer than 25 employees if the position held by the employee on leave no longer exists due to economic conditions or other changes in the employer's operating conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the employer makes reasonable efforts to restore the employee to an equivalent position.
Jal, the southeastern gateway to New Mexico, is a city that is proud of its past but moving steadily toward a brighter future! New construction and upcoming projects can be seen throughout the community as we make plans for future growth.

Completed projects within the city limits in recent years include new state-of-the-art elementary and junior high/high school buildings; new water lines along with new paving; extension of infrastructure to the eastern and northern edges of the city; improvements to the City’s existing parks, and development of new public spaces celebrating our unique history.

That history stretches from the stone age to the stars! Native Americans hunted on land where buffalo roamed and mastodons once walked. Buffalo Soldiers of the U.S. Cavalry rode through here and buffalo hunters became the area’s first settlers.

In the 1890s, The Cowden brothers of Palo Pinto County, Texas brought a herd of cattle branded with Jal from shoulder to hip and turned them loose in this sparsely populated corner of territorial New Mexico. They established an adobe headquarters from which they ran their operations here, and had some 40,000 head of cattle scattered from Midland, Texas to Carlsbad, New Mexico.
A general store and post office, given the name Jal, was established in 1910 to serve the Cowden’s cowboys and the few homesteaders nearby. But the Cowden family moved their cattle to other ranges as more and more homesteaders came to stake claims to what had been open range. In 1916, the post office and mercantile was dragged some six miles by mules to be closer to a well that provided a good source of water. That spot was near what is today the intersection of New Mexico Highways 18 and 128. The town of Jal was here to stay.

Jal remained a small cattle town until the discovery of oil in the 1920s, when it became a typical oilfield boomtown, and two competing townsitite companies fought to profit from land sales. One of those companies was run by the man who would be Jal’s first mayor and Chief of Police, a former Oklahoma and Texas lawman nicknamed “Two Gun Dick” Herwig for the pair of revolvers he sported. After Herwig was run out of town by Texas Rangers for making and selling illegal alcohol—with some help from the owner of the other townsitite company—the rowdy boomtown settled down and became a place more welcoming to civilized society.

In 1927, during the height of the first oil boom, a

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Texas oil man and a Houston lawyer partnered to form a company to provide natural gas to the city of El Paso, Texas. El Paso Natural Gas Company would, for 60 years, form the backbone of Jal’s economy. It grew to become the largest employer in Lea County and eventually went on to be one of the largest gas transmission companies in the world.

Meanwhile, Jal’s schools grew from humble one-room affairs to some of the finest in the state. Jal High School has turned out a number of notable students such as Dr. Charles D. Brown who helped design propulsion systems that sent the Gemini capsules into space. He also worked with the Mariner 9 and Viking orbiter programs that explored Mars, and is probably the reason that there is a crater on Mars named for the city of Jal. Bill Webb, a 1970 Jal graduate, worked on the shuttle program.

Today, the STEM curriculum with the SystemsGo program that originated in Fredricksburg, Texas as a hands-on approach to learning in STEM. SystemsGo New Mexico was founded in 2016 with six schools participating in the annual spring rocket launches. Hosted annually in Jal, the first launch in 2017 saw fewer than ten rockets fired. The event has grown each of the following years with more schools participating and more of the students rockets launched. In 2019 the event more than doubled the number of participating schools and had planned on launching at least forty rockets in a three day launch window during April of this year.

STEM students in Jal have successfully launched four one pound one mile rockets and two transonic rockets. They were slated to launch another two one pound one mile rockets and two more transonic rockets in April of this year but saw the event cancelled by the COVID-19 pandemic. Utilizing a computer aided program called Rockism, the local students have traveled to Santa Fe to be honored in the Roundhouse and met with the Secretary of Education for the state of New Mexico. The Jal SystemsGO students are the only
New Mexico students to have presented their mathematical model of transonic flight to engineers at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas. All SystemsGo students are automatic recipients of scholarships to New Mexico Tech.

Doctor Brown’s legacy is being continued today by recent JHS graduates Scott Komar and Nick Verschuren. Both excelled in the STEM program and were on the design team for Jal SystemsGo. They are both currently majoring in mechanical engineering and aerospace engineering at New Mexico State University and are members of the New Mexico State Atomic Aggies Rocketry team. Jal students have been chosen to serve as student ambassadors for the aerospace program and NMSU and continue to make presentations, recruit, and grow the program at the university. The city has seen its vision move from cattle trail dust to stardust in just over 100 years.

Sports have also played an important part in Jal’s history, with football championships dating back to 1939, along with state titles in boys and girls basketball, track, golf and baseball and softball. Ladies Professional Golf Hall of Famer Kathy Whitworth, the first woman golfer to win over a million dollars in tour earnings, was born and raised in Jal.

Another notable name with ties to Jal is rock and roll legend Roy Orbison. His parents lived here briefly, and he and his band honed their musical abilities playing weekly dances at the Jal Community Center during the 1950s. According to Orbison, his song “Working for the Man” was written about his time in Jal as an employee of El Paso Natural Gas Company.

The town continued to grow through the 1970s, with the construction of Jal Lake Park, which includes a manmade lake that—seen from above—spells out the name of the town. And an outstanding library was constructed thanks to a trust fund left by an early homesteading family. Woolworth Community Library provides computers with high speed internet, print and audio books, videos and newspapers, along with meeting facilities, a full kitchen and an auditorium.

The year 2000, saw construction of “The Trail

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Ahead…”, monumental size silhouettes depicting a cattle drive, in honor of Jal’s early ranching heritage. This privately funded public art has been featured on television, in magazines and newspapers across the country and has drawn visitors from throughout the world. Today, a 20-foot-tall rocket silhouette sits near the metal cowboys and welcomes visitors to the SystemsGo rocket launch pads. Other recent attractions constructed by the City include Centennial Plaza, honoring Jal’s 100th year, and the new Veteran’s Memorial.

Current plans include new water wells, a new wastewater treatment plant, a new City Hall and Community Center. The Jal Clinic, operated under the Jal Hospital District, serves the community in a state of the art primary care facility. The district is moving forward with the addition of a state of the art dental clinic and pharmacy along with areas for physical therapy, behavioral health and other health care services. The plans are in the final design stage with bids to be let within weeks. A new housing subdivision is being developed as we welcome new residents—the result of unprecedented drilling in the Delaware Basin oil fields west of Jal. In a collaborative effort striving to improve broadband service for health care, city services, residents, businesses, schools and the oil and gas industries, the city and the hospital district along with an area internet provider are moving ahead with a grant proposal for fiber optics for the community. The effort is being supported by the schools, local and area businesses, and the oil and gas industries.

The City of Jal and its residents pay homage to our past as a hardscrabble ranching and boomtown, but work constantly to insure our future as a dynamic and growing oasis in the sands of Southeastern New Mexico.
When the novel coronavirus pandemic reached the U.S. early this year, many patients stopped seeking in-person treatment at The Family Connection, a mental-health provider with offices in Albuquerque, Rio Rancho, Los Lunas and Santa Fe. Even though the business was considered essential and thus permitted to operate during statewide shutdowns, cancellations escalated.

“Initially we were unsure of what it was going to look like,” said Amanda Davison, a licensed marriage and family therapist and company CEO. She and her 32 employees developed a hybrid approach, treating some patients in traditional settings and counseling others using online telemedicine platforms.

“For some of our people it’s been a bigger chal-
lenge” to maintain the patient-therapist relationship at a physical distance. “We’ve had to be cognizant of which modality is best for each patient — trying to be there for whatever they may need from us. For example, our adolescents: This is their modality of communication, so when they’ve been able to really bring us into their world, they’ve done significantly better.”

As protracted shelter-in-place mandates stressed domestic life, the demand for mental-health care increased, Davison said. “The longer it’s gone on and the longer people have spent time with each other, it’s definitely continuing to tap everyone’s reserves.”

And patients weren’t alone in worrying about the impact of a long-term health crisis. Davison feared she would lose the social workers and therapists in her practice if people stopped asking for help.

When Congress passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act in March, providing $2 trillion in economic stimulus to businesses and individuals affected by COVID-19, Davison received information about small-business relief programs from WESST, a statewide small-business development and training nonprofit that helped her create a business expansion plan in 2015.

That information supplemented what Davison learned from her own research on the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), which loaned money to employers who resisted layoffs, and the U.S. Small Business Association (SBA) Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) program. The more details she learned about CARES Act loan provisions, the more Davison shared with her partners at WESST.

“It was pretty tough. We were so early in it, and the applications really did require a lot of patience and reading and resiliency. I spent a lot of really long days and nights reading, asking questions, and getting information anywhere I could because we were so early in the process.”

Her friends at WESST were doing the same thing and appreciated the information.

“I was able to pay it forward and share information with them,” Davison said. “WESST is really good at telling us when they have information and also really good at telling us when they don’t have information and being willing to figure it out. WESST walked alongside us and helped me see that it wasn’t that I just didn’t know the answers. The answers weren’t developed yet. And that helped me understand that I was going to be somewhat of a test case.”

Davison ultimately received two COVID-related emergency loans: a PPP loan through an SBA-approved lender and an EIDL loan via an online application. Not only has it sustained her practice, but now she and her leadership team hope to open a fifth office in southwest Albuquerque where mental-health services are scarce.

A Different Kind of Problem: Ramping Up

Like Davison, Arian Gonzales and her husband, Richard, didn’t know how the pandemic would affect their 20-year-old Albuquerque company and the employees who produce its award-winning salsas.

Fearful that Cervantes Food Products Inc. would be forced to halt production for two months and that they would lose their five employees, the couple contacted DreamSpring—a multi-state community development financial institution (CDFI) based in New Mexico—to apply for a PPP loan.

The emergency loan allowed the Gonzaleses to keep paying their employees while the company spent available cash stocking up on jars, lids and other packaging that was expected to become scarce. And it’s a good thing they did, because the company was deemed “essential manufacturing” under Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham’s emergency order, and demand for its prod-
BUILDING POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS AT WORK

By Joel Garfinkles, Executive Coach

Building positive workplace relationships is vital for career success. Relationships can positively or negatively affect your satisfaction with the job, your ability to advance and gain recognition for your achievements. When you build positive relationships, you feel more comfortable with your interactions and less intimidated by others. You feel a closer bond to the people you spend the majority of your time working with, and you grow your influence in your organization.

However, for a lot of people, relationship building isn’t natural or easy to do. Most refuse to admit this is a concern because it is such a basic, common sense concept. They assume they already know how to do it. Don’t fall into that trap. Everyone – even the most outgoing, engaging personalities – can improve their skills in this critical area. The ten tips listed below are for anyone who wants to build positive workplace relationships.

Apply these tips to interactions with your boss, team members, project managers, senior management, vendors, clients, customers, direct reports and administrators.

1. **Share more of yourself at meetings.**
   One of the best ways to build relationships is to let others know who you are. This can come by sharing your expertise, knowledge and personality at meetings. Other people will either get to know you, like you or want to hear more from you. They will find you more approachable and thus the chance of building relationships begins to occur. If you are fearful to share at meetings, think ahead of time what you want to say so that you are more prepared.

2. **Speak positively about the people you work with, especially to your boss.**
   Get in the habit of speaking positively to others and providing quality feedback about the people who work with. Many times the information that gets shared (whether positive or negative) comes back to the person who is being discussed. People will enjoy hearing that
you have said supportive things about them and will know that you are on their side. That will build trust. Be careful of the workplace gossip that is so prevalent and don’t contribute to it.

3. **Improve your interpersonal skills by supporting other people’s work.**

Having a team attitude gives you a big competitive advantage. Ask how you can get involved with others. This will form a closer connection because you are working directly with someone else to help them meet their goals. They will appreciate your support and get to know you better which is vital to creating a more connected working relationship.

4. **Ask others to become involved in your projects or activities.**

Don’t be afraid to ask others for help and bring them onto your projects. The more they can participate in the activities you are working on, the better you get to know each other. You’ll enjoy working with others in getting more things done.

5. **Write thank you notes.**

Write notes of appreciation to the people who are doing exemplary work, making positive contributions and going above the call of duty. These notes can be hard-written, sent via email or done by voice mail. Send them to people above you, below you or at the peer level. Colleagues like to be appreciated and will feel closer to you by having been noticed and thanked for their contributions.

6. **Initiate conversations by asking questions.**

When we first meet someone it can be a bit intimidating. We often don’t know what to say or how to say it. Asking questions is a great way for you to listen and let the other person share. They will feel closer to you when they have shared about themselves and you demonstrate you’re interested in what they have to say. Then share something about yourself so the relationship becomes a two-way interaction that can help establish a bond.

7. **Initiate repeated interactions and communications.**

An important part to building relationships is to continue interacting with the person you have gotten to know. As you get to know each other better, personally and professionally, you establish a closer connection that can greatly impact your satisfaction.

8. **Participate in activities with others that don’t involve work.**

As you get to know someone, you might find similar interests that may warrant an outside the work activity. This can greatly impact relationships because you are beginning the process toward friendship. Go out to lunch together during the work day or do things in the evenings or weekends. If you are married, you can visit with other couples to establish more connection at work.

9. **Share information.**

The information you share can be directly related to their work or it can be about a subject you know they will enjoy reading. You are thinking of them and helping them with the right information or content.

10. **Introduce yourself at social work events.**

Social events like lunches/dinners with colleagues, retreats, conferences and holiday parties are good places to interact in an informal setting. If you can reach out and introduce yourself to some of the people who you work with or who you want to know better, you’ll find they are more inclined to let down their guard. It will be easier for you to get to know them and for you to share about who you are—and you’ll become more visible as a result.

Building positive relationships often provides increased resources to help you get your job done and to be more efficient. You’ll enjoy greater satisfaction at work, and so will those around you. For these reasons, growing your work relationships is a key component of leadership development! If you want to improve your work relationships, contact Joel for his business and executive coaching services.

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**JOEL GARFINKLE is recognized as one of the top coaches in the U.S., and the author of 7 books, including Getting Ahead: Three Steps to Take Your Career to the Next Level. He has worked with many of the world’s leading companies, including Google, Deloitte, Amazon, Ritz-Carlton, Gap, Cisco, Oracle, and many more. Visit Joel online at Garfinkle Executive Coaching. Subscribe to his Fulfillment@Work Newsletter and receive the FREE e-book, 40 Proven Strategies to Get Promoted Now!**
As more cases of COVID-19, the Coronavirus, are identified in the United States, local leaders must answer the question about their own role in responding to the outbreak. The good news is that cities, towns and villages have longstanding emergency protocols for public health emergencies such as this and now is the time to show leadership.

1. Keep Calm and Clearly Communicate Information to Residents

Historically, the United States public health system is adept at responding to global outbreaks and has done so successfully in the past with SARS, Zika, H1N1e and Ebola, just to name a few. There is no reason to think that Coronavirus will be any different. A key message to your communities must be: prepare but don't panic.

Local leaders must ensure that accurate, timely information is communicated to your residents about your emergency response plans, how residents should be preparing at home and how/when they should seek medical care. Included in the coordination is ensuring that schools are relaying accurate information to parents and families, including messaging that might be helpful for children to understand.

Relying on official sources to guide your efforts, such as the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is critical. Utilize social media, community organizations and official government channels to share health and hygiene recommendations with your residents as well as other pertinent local information.

2. Ensure Coordination Between Local/State Health Departments

While local leaders are on the front lines of the response efforts, effective coordination with state and federal health departments is critical. Ensure that your local health department and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Be sure to identify where more federal funds will be needed to support the local response and communicate that information clearly to all partners, including your federal elected representatives.

3. Take Care of Your Team

As employers, cities, towns and villages must also be examining their own sick leave and telework policies so city employees can stay home when they are sick and remain their until they are fever free for 24 hours. City offices and agencies should utilize CDC workplace posters and fact sheets to help share proper prevention protocol, including handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol (if soap and water are not available).

Cities should be prepared with staffing contingency plans for absenteeism due to the virus. And, don’t forget about your first responders - ensure that they have the latest information and protection to remain on the front lines!

Information on COVID-19 changes rapidly and staying on top of information can be daunting. NLC offers a COVID-19: Local Action Tracker is available on our website at www.nlc.org

About the author: Stephanie Martinez-Ruckman is the Legislative Director for Human Development at the National League of Cities
STATEMENT FROM U.S. CENSUS BUREAU
DIRECTOR STEVEN DILLINGHAM: DELIVERING
A COMPLETE AND ACCURATE 2020 CENSUS COUNT

The U.S. Census Bureau continues to evaluate its operational plans to collect and process 2020 Census data. Today, we are announcing updates to our plan that will include enumerator awards and the hiring of more employees to accelerate the completion of data collection and apportionment counts by our statutory deadline of December 31, 2020, as required by law and directed by the Secretary of Commerce. The Census Bureau’s new plan reflects our continued commitment to conduct a complete count, provide accurate apportionment data, and protect the health and safety of the public and our workforce.

Complete Count: A robust field data collection operation will ensure we receive responses from households that have not yet self-responded to the 2020 Census.

We will improve the speed of our count without sacrificing completeness. As part of our revised plan, we will conduct additional training sessions and provide awards to enumerators in recognition of those who maximize hours worked. We will also keep phone and tablet computer devices for enumeration in use for the maximum time possible.

We will end field data collection by September 30, 2020. Self-response options will also close on that date to permit the commencement of data processing. Under this plan, the Census Bureau intends to meet a similar level of household responses as collected in prior censuses, including outreach to hard-to-count communities.

Accurate Data and Efficient Processing: Once we have the data from self-response and field data collection in our secure systems, we plan to review it for completeness and accuracy, streamline its processing, and prioritize apportionment counts to meet the statutory deadline. In addition, we plan to increase our staff to ensure operations are running at full capacity.

Flexible Design: Our operation remains adaptable and additional resources will help speed our work. The Census Bureau will continue to analyze data and key metrics from its field work to ensure that our operations are agile and on target for meeting our statutory delivery dates. Of course, we recognize that events can still occur that no one can control, such as additional complications from severe weather or other natural disasters.

Health and Safety: We will continue to prioritize the health and safety of our workforce and the public. Our staff will continue to follow Federal, state, and local guidance, including providing appropriate safety trainings and personal protective equipment to field staff.

The Census Bureau continues its work on meeting the requirements of Executive Order 13880 issued July 11, 2019 and the Presidential Memorandum issued July 21, 2020. A team of experts are examining methodologies and options to be employed for this purpose. The collection and use of pertinent administrative data continues.

We are committed to a complete and accurate 2020 Census. To date, 93 million households, nearly 63 percent of all households in the Nation, have responded to the 2020 Census. Building on our successful and innovative internet response option, the dedicated women and men of the Census Bureau, including our temporary workforce deploying in communities across the country in upcoming weeks, will work diligently to achieve an accurate count.

We appreciate the support of our hundreds of thousands of community-based, business, state, local and tribal partners contributing to these efforts across our Nation. The 2020 Census belongs to us all. If you know someone who has not yet responded, please encourage them to do so today online at 2020census.gov, over the phone, or by mail.
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Online orders, 90 percent of which originate outside New Mexico, tripled, and regional grocers, food clubs and other retailers doubled their standing orders.

Arian attributes the increased demand to sequestered people preparing more home-cooked meals. “People aren’t interested in buying four jars at a time now,” she said. “They’re buying 12 jars at a time—and multiple flavors. People are reaching out to find those flavors they grew up with or have fond family memories of.”

Ramping up production required Arian to draw on longstanding relationships with local, family-owned farms to ensure growers could supply a greater volume of raw materials when she needed them.

Knowing DreamSpring’s focus on client relationships also mattered when it came to having confidence that a PPP loan was within reach.

DreamSpring has helped the Gonzaleses obtain three other loans over the years, and Arian has served on several of the nonprofit’s client committees. Even though the couple could borrow money from more traditional institutions given the company’s successful track record, Arian feels the bond she has with DreamSpring is one of reciprocal loyalty.

“We’ve been in business over 20 years now, we’re definitely bankable and we have other banking relationships,” she said. “It’s the feel of family that makes me want to work with DreamSpring even more.”

This support was essential during the chaotic PPP rollout, when loan provisions were vague and it wasn’t clear whether the U.S. Small Business Administration would require repayment even when the funds were used for the intended purpose of helping small businesses sustain payroll.

“DreamSpring offered training and I signed up for all of it,” Arian said. “That’s the value of having knowledgeable partners. This PPP money is earmarked strictly for employees, and that’s where it went.”

Since launching its Relief and Recovery Fund in early April, DreamSpring has funded PPP loans for more than 1,700 businesses. These SBA-backed loans exceed $54 million and are helping hard-working entrepreneurs preserve some 8,700 jobs.

“They’re so supportive of what we do,” Arian said of DreamSpring. “As entrepreneurs, we don’t have the ability to wait four to six weeks for a loan approval. We need the money in a week to 10 days.”

Abundance of Resource Providers
DreamSpring and WESST are just two examples of nonprofit economic development organizations dedicated to helping New Mexico businesses survive the impacts of COVID-19 and thrive during non-pandemic times. The New Mexico Municipal League’s Grow It website lists hundreds more. Learn more at https://growitnm.org/. Start by selecting your municipality under the Municipal Index tab.

Grow It! is an economic development initiative of the New Mexico Municipal League, which partners with the Finance New Mexico project to deliver business-building information and resources to every community in the state.
STOP THE KNOCK
NEW MEXICO

Census takers will soon begin visiting households that have not responded to the 2020 Census. Stop the knock at your door by responding today.

Respond Now at 2020census.gov
or call 844-330-2020

Have you checked your city’s other website lately?

GrowItNM.org/your-city

Events + Resources for your local business community.
All in one place. Continually updated for you.

A New Mexico Municipal League economic development initiative that empowers your municipality.
MainStreet Truth or Consequences Awarded LEADS Grant

Congratulations to MainStreet T or C for being the first MainStreet district to be awarded a New Mexico Economic Development Department LEADS grant! The Local Economic Assistance & Development Support Program (LEADS) supports economic development projects that produce positive outcomes.

MainStreet T or C was awarded $10,637 for their vacant buildings project. Downtown Truth Or Consequences has many vacant buildings it would like to fill in order to create a more viable and attractive commercial district. MainStreet T or C will identify underutilized non-residential properties in the downtown area, engage owners in revitalizing the property, and determine the market potential for each site.

**Support Local Businesses**

**Affected by the Pandemic**

**July 13 - September 7**

**SHOP**
At 5 different Los Alamos County businesses, spending a minimum of $10 at each business. As an incentive to shop at DP Road businesses during the road construction, a receipt from any business located there will count as 2 receipts.

**SNAP**
A legible photo of all 5 receipts, with business, date & amount visible & submit, your photo by email to ufernlie@losalamos.org, including your name and address. Feel free to check out your purchases for privacy.

**SUBMIT**
Once your receipts have been verified, the Chamber will mail you a $10 Chamber Check, redeemable at dozens of local participating Chamber Member businesses.

**Los Alamos Shop, Snap, Submit Campaign**

**Through September 7, 2020**

Los Alamos MainStreet and the Chamber of Commerce are supporting local businesses with this Shop, Snap, Submit campaign.

Support local businesses by shopping local and receive Los Alamos Chamber Checks!

Learn more

**ABQ Artwalk**

**August 7, 2020**

The ABQ Artwalk is hosting artist popups, vendors and performances curbside this Friday. New art is available on their website for curbside pickup the night of the artwalk.

Learn more

NMMS is a program of the New Mexico Economic Development Department.