



# Capitol Buildings Master Plan Las Cruces Area Plan



State of New Mexico  
Capitol Buildings Planning Commission

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# 1. Capitol Buildings Planning Commission (CBPC) Las Cruces Area Plan Overview

## History of the Las Cruces Master Plan

In 2007, the legislature expanded the CBPC's authority to include the Las Cruces area. Planning for the area began in December of that year. In January 2008, the commission endorsed legislation to fund construction of an office building in Las Cruces to house consolidated administrative functions.

The commission has adopted one key planning element for implementation in the Las Cruces area:

- In December 2008, the commission adopted the planning consultant's initial recommendations to develop a consolidated administrative office building. The commission again endorsed legislation to fund construction of an office building in Las Cruces in the 2009 session. Funding for a Las Cruces state office building has not passed the legislature, and development of plans for the Las Cruces area is ongoing.

Recent development in the Las Cruces Area includes:

- A new State Police District 4 office, currently under construction;
- Planning and design for a new Veteran's museum; and
- Completion of various renovations and additions at the John Paul Taylor Juvenile Justice Center.

Additionally, the state recently authorized the transfer of the Camuñez Building in downtown Las Cruces to the City of Las Cruces.

## Current Inventory of State-Occupied Space

### Owned Space

The State of New Mexico owns five large sites in Las Cruces. These sites provide about 545,800 gsf of occupied space and account for 98% of all state-owned space in Las Cruces. These large sites accommodate specialized functions, including:

- The New Mexico Farm & Ranch Museum;
- The John Paul Taylor Juvenile Justice Center;
- Buildings at the Southern New Mexico Correctional Facility (SNMCF);



- New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) District 1 Headquarters and support facilities; and
- The New Mexico National Guard Las Cruces Armory.

Another 12,500 gsf, or 2% of the state's owned space in Las Cruces is in two smaller, stand-alone facilities that also accommodate specialized functions, including:

- The DPS State Police District 4 office; and
- The Department of Workforce Solutions.

Combined, the seven state-owned sites in Las Cruces provide about 558,000 gsf of occupied space (not including colleges and universities). General office space accounts for only 7%, (about 41,000 gsf) of the total.

### **Leased Space**

The state leases approximately 310,000 gsf (247,384 leasable square feet), 27.6% of all state-occupied space in Las Cruces, at an annual lease cost of \$3,430,495. All leased space in Las Cruces is for general office use and houses field offices and regional administrative offices for a wide variety of state agencies.

### **Space Provided by Others**

State agencies occupy space provided by Doña Ana County totaling 252,000 gsf and includes:

- The District Court;
- The District Attorney's office; and
- Department of Health public health offices.

Exhibit 01 summarizes the state-owned, leased and county-provided space occupied by state agencies in Las Cruces.

The current inventory of state-occupied space classifies space into four categories, including:

- Executive - Under Property Control Division (PCD) Purview;
- Executive - Not Under PCD Purview;
- Legislative Space; and
- Judicial Space.

Exhibit 02 illustrates how much state-occupied space in the Las Cruces area falls within each category. The map on Exhibit 03 indicates the location of current owned, leased, and provided space in Las Cruces.

Las Cruces Area Plan

Campus	GSF	Number of Facilities	% SF of Total Owned
Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum	69,823	5	12.5%
John Paul Taylor Juvenile Justice Center	27,722	11	5.0%
Las Cruces Armory	60,125	5	10.8%
NMDOT District 1	20,663	7	3.7%
Southern New Mexico Correctional Facility	367,511	42	65.8%
Other Owned	12,488	3	2.2%
<b>Subtotal - Owned</b>	<b>558,332</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Leased	309,230	31	
Provided	252,177	6	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,119,739</b>	<b>110</b>	

\*Note: Leased space has been converted to an approximate GSF by dividing LSF by 80% (LSF / 0.8 = GSF)

Sources include Risk Management 2010, PCD Inventory 2010, PCD Lease Data 2010, and others.

Does not include Colleges and Universities.

Exhibit 01. Space Occupied by State of New Mexico in Las Cruces (as of May 2011)

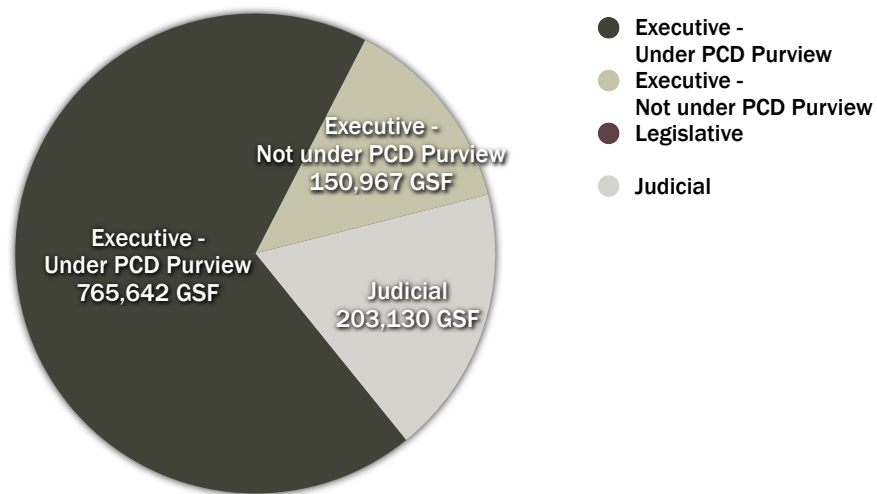


Exhibit 02. Categories of Occupied Space in Las Cruces in GSF

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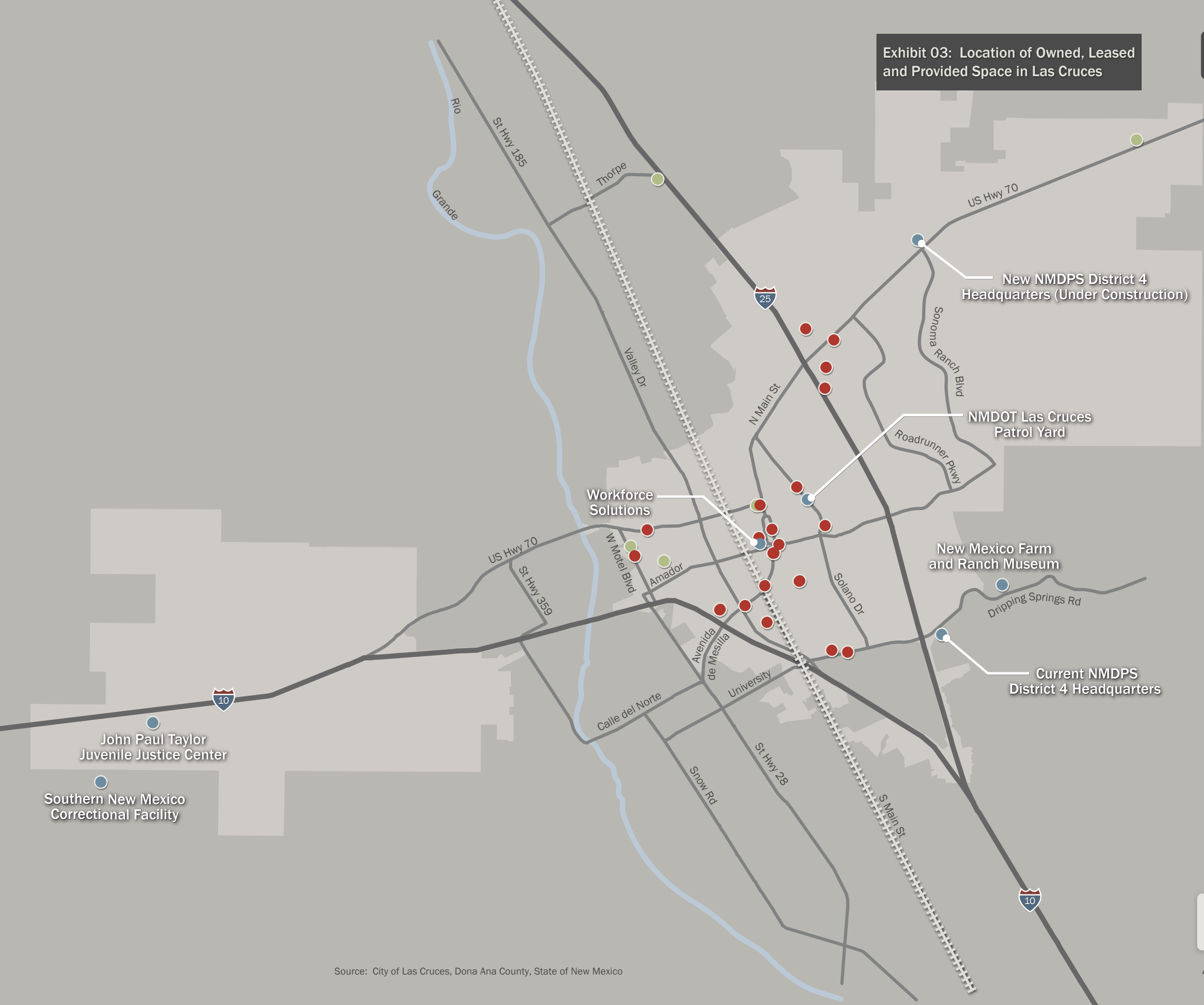




Exhibit 03: Location of Owned, Leased and Provided Space in Las Cruces

Las Cruces Property Ownership

- Owned
- Leased
- Provided by Others
- City Limits
- Major Road
- Interstate
- Railroad



Source: City of Las Cruces, Dona Ana County, State of New Mexico

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## 2. Implementation Strategies for Las Cruces Metropolitan Area

### Las Cruces Area Plan Implementation Strategy

The CBPC adopted the following planning strategies for state facilities in the Las Cruces area:

- Create more state-owned office space in Las Cruces through the acquisition or construction of high quality office space. A team led by ASA Architects conducted a study, commissioned by PCD and completed in 2007, which identified potential groups of agencies to relocate from leased to owned space. The study examined the feasibility of constructing a consolidated state office building and identified and evaluated initial site options. Specific acquisition strategies will be reassessed taking into account change in the commercial real estate market due to the recession.
- Encourage agencies with specialized facilities to develop a comprehensive long-range facilities master plan that identifies capital needs based on the agencies' strategic program requirements.
- Continue to address facility renewal of aging state buildings in a manner that minimizes multiple moves.

While the current economic environment may shift attention toward short-term concerns, long-term benefits remain a high priority. Blending short- and long-term concerns and opportunities in the current challenging fiscal environment is critical. More efficient use of existing state facilities (in lieu of new or additional leases) helps the state realize cost savings. State agencies should:

- Renegotiate existing leases when possible;
- Consider opportunities to acquire high quality existing facilities in a buyer's market; and most importantly,
- Stay the course in the long term on the area plan, advancing planning recommendations.

### 3. Planning Issues and Opportunities

There are several planning issues and opportunities in the Las Cruces Area that reflect the core master planning principles adopted by the CBPC. Key issues and opportunities include:

- ***Provide sufficient state-owned office space.***  
In the Las Cruces area, as in Santa Fe, Albuquerque and Los Lunas, an insufficient supply of state-owned buildings to adequately accommodate state government offices remains a long-range facility planning concern. Many agencies occupy leased space due to the short supply of state-owned office space, resulting in annual sunk lease costs of over \$3.4 million. A study completed by ASA Architects in May 2007 identified significant opportunities for consolidation into state-owned facilities
- ***Provide adequate and colocated space for state agencies.***  
One agency in Las Cruces, the Department of Workforce Solutions, occupies an overcrowded state-owned building. A planned addition will address some of the agencies needs. Additionally, many state-owned buildings at the special-use facilities in the Las Cruces area require significant facility renewal.

Furthermore, the overall planning principles of the CBPC encourage future planning in the area to:

- Achieve an appropriate balance of owned versus leased space to accommodate the needs of state agencies and allow for colocation and consolidation of agencies. At present, leased facilities accommodate nearly all of the general office space needs of the state in Las Cruces;
- Encourage state and local government collaboration in developing state projects for mutual benefit;
- Address historic preservation planning issues in the area. Many of the state's buildings either qualify as historic buildings under federal and state regulations (50 years or older) or are rapidly approaching this age. Further development of the area's inventory needs to identify if there are any existing designated historic buildings or sites that are eligible or will soon be eligible for historic designation. Future planning needs to consider and balance preservation with other needs of the state.

- Integrate sustainable planning concepts into the area plan. Sustainable planning efforts seek to reduce natural resource depletion (with a benefit of also reducing operating expenses), reduce pollution, and ensure healthy indoor environments.
- Comply with current or proposed policies and laws requiring state agencies to complete comprehensive long-range plans that link facility needs to agency strategic and operational plans, and that incorporate facility maintenance planning;
- Address the ongoing challenge to fund deferred maintenance, facility renewal and demolition of state-owned buildings, and to provide surge space to house agencies while existing buildings undergo renovation. The successful implementation of a facility renewal program is particularly challenging in Las Cruces because of the special-use nature of the state's owned facilities;
- Facilitate development and maintenance of a comprehensive database that covers all agencies that own buildings, lease space or occupy county-provided buildings, and that accurately tracks state employees by location;
- Identify and document additional types of assets such as land holdings and water rights; and
- Address the needs of state agencies housed in local government-provided buildings. Because the state does not fund these facilities, ensuring adequate space for state workers is a continuing concern.

## Collaboration in Long-Range Planning for Other State Facilities (non-PCD)

The Capitol Buildings Planning Commission identified and adopted collaboration among state and local government agencies as one of the primary principles to follow in planning for long-range facility needs.

Seeking out opportunities for collaboration in the planning stage becomes critical as state and local governments explore ways to do more with less in a changing economy. Prior to seeking funds for new facility or land acquisitions, state agencies should explore all options and collaboration opportunities that can potentially avoid duplication of capital expenses, including;

- Land acquisition;
- Infrastructure; and
- Sharing of specialized facilities such as training facilities.

In the Las Cruces Area, collaborative planning opportunities exist among several state agencies that occupy state-owned facilities, as well as with local government agencies. In addition to the executive agencies that work with PCD, agencies with facilities in Las Cruces that can potentially benefit from collaboration in long-range facility planning include:

- The Department of Cultural Affairs (New Mexico Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum and the planned New Mexico Veterans Museum);
- The NMDOT (District 1 support facilities);
- The State Land Office (various land parcels throughout the Las Cruces Area);
- New Mexico State University (NMSU) and other higher education institutions in the area; and
- Local government agencies such as the City of Las Cruces and Doña Ana County.

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“Looking East at the Organ Mountains  
as the Sun Sets”

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