

**Henry P. Roybal**  
*Commissioner, District 1*

**Anna Hansen**  
*Commissioner, District 2*

**Rudy N. Garcia**  
*Commissioner, District 3*



**Anna T. Hamilton**  
*Commissioner, District 4*

**Hank Hughes**  
*Commissioner, District 5*

**Katherine Miller**  
*County Manager*

June 8, 2021

Dear Association Members,

I am pleased to be coordinating in a Land Use Working Group consisting of the Santa Fe Area Home Builders Association, the American Institute of Architects - Santa Fe Chapter, the New Mexico Roofing Contractors Association, and Santa Fe Association of Realtors to improve our service in the Growth Management Department at Santa Fe County.

Throughout this pandemic it is clear that the construction industry continues to thrive and support our economy, our permit desk has continued to accept appointments and issue permits, though we have been slowed with reviews, inspections and coordination with other Departments and outside entities.

It is in all of our best interests to make our process transparent and issue permits within a reasonable timeframe, we have made some recent improvements to the process and we are always looking at ways to improve it further.

The County has many specific rules and requirements and we are here to help you through the process, as part of this I would like to highlight a few things we are trying to do to streamline the process:

- The first is to remind everyone of our courtesy inspection and our availability to assist prior to a permit being submitted. From a review a legal lot of record to a review of the legality of existing structures to on-site inspection of properties with difficult terrain, we are available to assist.
- We have found that the use of an appointment system has been efficient in keeping an application moving and allows staff time to review and process submitted permits, we hope to keep to this system.
- Submittal checklists for various types of residential permit applications are available on our website at <https://www.santafecountynm.gov/pages.php?pageID=824>
- We are in the process of choosing an on-line permit system and have included this in our budget for this coming fiscal year, I am pleased that the Commission have supported the request and we hope to move forward with our procurement process soon, having drafted a scope and identifying potential contractors. This will do several things, firstly it will allow you to submit on-line, your information can be saved for additional permits you may submit, you will be able to check status and it will expedite the existing process of scanning or copying plans and emailing or mailing them out to others for review. As we roll this out, we will work

with SFAHBA and the other groups to “test” the system, we are hoping we can test by the end of this year.

- Our GIS capabilities have now been made more available to our Growth Management staff and we have the ability to produce topo, identify floodplains, drainage and slope areas for properties.
- We will also be reviewing our web page, how can we make the permit page easier to find and navigate. Informational videos are another area we are exploring in order to provide assistance to clients by covering topics like how to check you have a legal lot of record, how to identify if there are unpermitted structures on the property, options for developing property with difficult terrain etc. We will continue our work with your groups to develop and make those assets available to the public along with and other training opportunities

Permits can get delayed when the submittal is not complete and there can be many reasons for this. Contacting us early on in the design stage can greatly assist with minimizing this. We can help make sure your application is acceptable and won't be subjected to avoidable delay. We have design and zoning regulations throughout the County and 13 community districts, all with their own rules. It is important to know what rules apply to the property being developed as well as whether the property is a legal lot and has existing legal structures.

Lastly, I seldom hear directly about permit issues, and when I do the applicant or agent has become frustrated. If you are having a problem, don't understand the rules, cannot get a call back etc., I would appreciate knowing this. I have a policy that all my staff return calls within 24 hours. There may be times a staff member has been sick and your message did not get picked up, even though we try to change voice messages and forward phones in those circumstances, things can get missed. Our team is here to help so I am including emails and phone numbers to the management team:

Paul Kavanaugh (Building and Development Supervisor)

Phone: (505) 995-2716.

Email: [pkavanau@santafecountynm.gov](mailto:pkavanau@santafecountynm.gov)

Vicki Lucero (Building and Development Manager)

Phone (505) 986 6222.

Email: [vlopez@santafecountynm.gov](mailto:vlopez@santafecountynm.gov)

Penny Ellis-Green (Growth Management Director)

Phone (505) 986 6221

Email: [pengreen@santafecountynm.gov](mailto:pengreen@santafecountynm.gov)

Ideas from you are welcome, please coordinate these through the Working Group so we can review as a team. I look forward to continuing to work with this Group to provide a better customer service for all.

Sincerely



Penny Ellis-Green

Santa Fe County, Growth Management Director