

County commissioners discuss Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan

Written by By Rick Abasta Sun Correspondent
Friday, 24 August 2018 06:33



Plan supports local capital infrastructure that benefits community

The McKinley County 2019-23 Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan public hearing took a majority of the meeting time during the Aug. 21 McKinley County Board of Commissioners regular meeting.

Angelina Gray, associate planner with Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments, reported to the commissioners that the ICIP established planning priorities for municipal capital projects.

“This process also supports local entities to for the development of the capital infrastructure that sustains and benefits their community,” she said.

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The New Mexico Department of Finance Administration encourages jurisdictions to participate in this annual process. Gray said senior-citizen facilities must also submit their ICIP for the governing body to assess the critical need of each facility.

Each proposed project includes description, scope of work, priority ranking, proposed funding budget, project budget, phasing information, phasing budget, and operations and maintenance budget.

“Each participating entity must update their project information in the state ICIP database and submit copies of the written approval of the ICIP by a governing body,” Gray said. “The final ICIP report is available on the DFA website.”

Gray said the county should be aware of two upcoming deadlines: Sept. 4 for municipalities and counties, and Sept. 17 for senior citizen facilities. The first and second ICIP meetings were held Aug. 7 and Aug. 21, respectively, but the McKinley County Board of Commissioners has fielded projects and ideas from community leaders and citizens throughout the year.

“The final ICIP will be adopted and submitted on Sept. 4, per guidelines,” Gray said.

According to McKinley County Manager Anthony Dimas, there was still another day remaining on the public comment period for the ICIP. He said the county’s set to begin work on the ICIP in earnest next week.

“At the last meeting, we were asked what roads we had that have right of way and which of those roads were ours,” Dimas said.

Forty projects are listed on the ICIP, ranging from county road improvements, bridge repairs, trail projects and road extensions. Dimas noted the information was cross-referenced for whether or not the county had right of way for road projects.

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Bigger projects, like the Gallup Indian Medical Center replacement, are multi-million-dollar efforts that will not be realized immediately.

McKinley Commissioner Bill Lee asked whether the county has right of way regarding the South Bloomfield Road project.

McKinley County Attorney Douglas Decker said there is indeed right of way; the road in question is a public road with rain, water and sanitation maintenance.

“I think it’s critical at this juncture, with everything that we’ve been discussing, that we make sure that we are prioritizing these items for places that have right of way so we can get work done,” Lee said.

Gray said she contacted the 12 water systems operating under the county regarding updates to their ICIP and only half responded.

“Five of them didn’t respond at all,” she said.

Commissioners will take action on the matter at the final county ICIP submission meeting on Sept. 4.

Meanwhile, also during the Aug. 21 meeting, they unanimously approved Resolution No. AUG-18-051, which authorized the issuance and sale of industrial revenue bonds by McKinley County. The IRB amount is not to exceed \$30 million, and the inducement resolution is for a glove manufacturing operation.

“This resolution authorizes the company to go forward and start buying equipment,” attorney Daniel Allsup said.

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Decker said the resolution was “the first official act of the project,” and that the IRB is only for equipment.

“The real property is being worked on by the Navajo Nation and the state of New Mexico,” he said.

Sharlene Begay-Platero said she’s worked for the Navajo Nation for 28 years and has been on this particular project for the past two.

“We appreciate your support on this endeavor,” Begay-Platero said.

Lee expressed anticipation for new job openings.

“I’m very excited about this project,” he said. “Sharlene, I appreciate your partnership.”

By Rick Abasta
Sun Correspondent