



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mora County Complex Construction is Underway

(Mora, NM) - Construction crews are busy working to complete the current phase of construction on the Mora County Complex. Paula Garcia, Mora County Commission Chairwoman, said, "The people of Mora County have waited a long time for a new building. After years of planning and hard work to get the project moving, it is rewarding to see progress on construction."

Mora County worked collaboratively with several state agencies to plan, design, and construct the interior and site work for the Complex. After a previous commission completed the building shell in 2010, new commissioners in 2011 had to grapple with an unfinished project. By building partnerships, particularly with the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), Mora County was able to secure resources for partial construction of the building.

"Mora County had to show a willingness to correct mistakes of the past and to allow experts to assist us. We partnered with AOC to provide oversight on budgets, spending, and project management," said Garcia. "We are now seeing the results of our collaboration with the construction of county offices and a new Magistrate Court."

Two phases of construction are scheduled to be completed before the end of 2018. First, county offices will be completed by September and will house county offices including the County Clerk, County Assessor, County Treasurer, Probate Judge, Department of Motor Vehicle, and Planning and Zoning. Second, a new Magistrate Court will start construction shortly thereafter and is scheduled to be completed by December of 2018.

Prior to construction of offices and the court, Mora County completed a necessary phase of structural remediation. An engineering assessment conducted by the County revealed that lateral bracing of the walls of the building was inadequate. The structural corrections were completed in 2017. Within a few months, Mora County filed a lawsuit against the architect and contractor for the shell phase and demanded that they pay Mora County for the costs of the structural corrections. That lawsuit is pending.

Mora County secured resources from various sources to move forward with the project. The State Legislature and Governor Martinez contributed \$1.8 million in Capital Outlay. Mora County issued bonds on a Gross Receipts Tax and generated another \$2.2 million for the county offices. A 30-year lease with the Administrative Office of the Courts enabled the County to finance an additional \$2.4 million for construction of a Magistrate Court. Additional funds are needed to complete offices for some county officials including the Sheriff, EMS, Manager, and Public Health. The source of those funds has not yet been determined.

“The people of Mora County deserve a safe and healthy facility for conducting county business and for access to justice through the courts. The portable buildings that currently house the court and county offices are rapidly deteriorating and it is imperative that the new building be completed,” said Garcia. “We are finally seeing progress on the Complex. We also need to document our lessons learned about the challenges of building infrastructure in rural communities.”

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Caption: Chairwoman Paula Garcia and County Manager Elmer Martinez meet with Arnold Leslie, Project Superintendent with HB Construction.



Caption: Construction crews from HB Construction are working to complete county offices in the Mora County Complex.