



VILLAGE NEWS

Small Community • Big Possibilities

Volume 24 - Number 8 - August 2020

HELP PLAN THE VILLAGE'S FUTURE

The Village of Los Lunas is updating the Comprehensive Plan and would like feedback from residents.

A Comprehensive Plan is a policy document that sets goals for the future development of the Village for 20 to 30 years in the future.

Comprehensive Plans are developed through research and community input, and set goals for housing, transportation, public services, economic development and more.

They are an important way for community members to let the government know how they want to see their Village grow and develop!

Over the next two months activities will be available online and by mail that you can participate in to help Village planners understand your goals for the Village's future development.

These include a fun magazine-style Personality Quiz to see what your perfect future Los Lunas looks like, and also a mapping activity to see what parts of the Village are important to our residents today.

Visit <https://voll-2040-comprehensive-plan-update-voll.hub.arcgis.com/> to read a copy of the current Comprehensive Plan, and to learn more about the update.

If you don't have internet access call Village Community Planner Alex Ochoa at 505 352-7630 to get a print copy of the activity.

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**United States®
Census
2020**

STILL TIME TO COMPLETE CENSUS

There is still time to complete your 2020 U.S. Census! Due to COVID-19, the deadline to self-respond has been extended to October 31.

Beginning August 11, Census workers will visit households that have not self-responded, and continue to visit up to five times to collect your information. To avoid a knock on the door, fill out the Census by August 11!

So far in Los Lunas, around 65% of households have self-responded, and that number climbs a little every day.

You can track the response rates across the United States with an interactive map at 2020census.gov/en/response-rates.

Every household should have received a postcard with a unique code, or a Census form, or both. You can use the information provided to respond online, by phone, or by mail.

If you have misplaced your Census information, that's ok! You can still respond online at 2020census.gov, or by phone at 844-330-2020. You can respond without a code by providing your official street address.

Questions about the 2020 Census? Contact Erin Callahan, Los Lunas Community Development Director, at 505 352-7659 or callahane@loslunasnm.gov.

MUSEUM CLOSED, GO TO FACEBOOK

The Village Museum of Heritage & Arts continues to be closed, but August events, activities, and presentations can be found on the museum's Facebook page. "Looking Back at History" photos will also be posted daily on the museum Facebook page.

The museum partnered with B&B Stitching from Los Lunas to provide free craft kits for children to design their very own handmade COVID-19 masks.

If you are interested, call 505 352-7720 to reserve a free COVID-19 mask activity kit. Limited supplies available.

Museum staff canceled the Los Lunas Historical Tour and Saints and Sinners Tour due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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POLICE CHIEF TALKS ABOUT DEPARTMENT

The following was prepared by Village of Los Lunas Police Chief Naithan Gurule to inform the public about Village of Los Lunas Police Department procedures. This is a three-part series with the second part to run in the September newsletter and the third in October. The entire article previously appeared in the Valencia County News-Bulletin.

In light of what is happening across the country, I have recently been asked many questions regarding Los Lunas Police Department procedures. I feel there are four important areas in which a department must focus to ensure a healthy and transparent relationship with its community.

These four areas are Body-Worn Cameras, Early Intervention Personnel Systems, Citizen Complaint Systems and Use-of Force Policies and Review Procedures, with training intertwined into each category.

Each of these categories is an important part of a checks and balances type system.

It is also important to understand that any system is only as good as the effort each person puts into it. These measures protect the citizens and the officers, and they significantly reduce lawsuits and settlements.

Body-Worn Cameras

The Los Lunas Police Department has been using body worn cameras for about 10 years. We began with a very simple MUFI brand camera. A few years ago, we began to upgrade with the help of the village's insurance carrier, the New Mexico Municipal League, who offered departments throughout the state reimbursement for the purchase of cameras.

The body-worn cameras benefits are dependent on proper use. The proper usage is dependent on a good policy that department personnel are required to adhere to.

Studies show the benefits of BWC outweigh any challenge an agency might face not having a body-worn camera program. In my experience, the body-worn cameras have been a valuable tool for many different reasons.

The cameras' recordings provide us the opportunity to more thoroughly evaluate officers' tactics. This process is similar to what a coach does to evaluate players, ensuring they continue to be as safe and efficient as possible. We are able to better document crimes and crime scenes with the camera recordings.

The camera recordings have proven to be an invaluable tool when investigating citizen complaints and officer use-of-force cases. More times than not, the camera recordings have exonerated the officers. The use of body-worn cameras has provided a large return on investment because they have helped to reduce the number of lawsuits and settlements.

Early Intervention Personnel System

The Early Intervention Personnel System is designed to proactively and systematically review certain employee work behaviors (uses of force, complaints, sick leave, crashes, failure to activate body-worn camera, awards and commendations) for possible indicators of performance stress-related problems to assist employees who may benefit from departmental intervention.

The emphasis of the EIPS is on training and coaching, and is designed as a system to assist supervisory personnel in evaluating and guiding the employee.

POLICE CHIEF TALKS ABOUT DEPARTMENT cont.

Complaint System

As is stated on our website, "It is the policy of the Los Lunas Police Department to investigate all complaints against department employees and allegations of misconduct within the department. Proper adherence to the provisions of this policy will clear the innocent and facilitate prompt and equitable corrective action."

The Los Lunas Police recognizes community trust is gained through transparency and accountability. Unfortunately, there are still departments in our country that shy away from taking citizen complaints unless a complainant is willing to sign their name on an official complaint form.

The LLPD investigates, logs, and tracks all citizen complaints. Most complaints are investigated by the officer's immediate supervisor, with the more serious complaints being handled by the department's internal affairs.

Our lieutenants have received in-house training related to conducting administrative investigations and are actively involved in most investigations. During any administrative investigation, the investigator will review all evidence available to them, to include body-camera footage, incident reports, witness statements, etc. If necessary, the investigator will interview the officer, but there are instances where the officer will not need to be interviewed.

When body-worn camera footage clearly exonerates an officer of any wrongdoing, there is no need to interview them. For example, recently we had a citizen complain that she was assaulted by one of our officers. The body-worn camera footage from this officer depicted his entire contact with the complainant, and at no time did he use force on the complainant. This was corroborated by witnesses on scene as well as building surveillance from a nearby business.

Nevertheless, this complaint was thoroughly investigated and the complainant was provided with the very evidence we utilized during the investigation.

Once an investigation is completed, and the chief has reviewed its findings, we will notify the complainant in writing. The complaint is then logged into the department's Early Intervention Personnel System.

Chief Gurule will discuss Use-of-Force Policies and Review Procedures in part two of this article in the September newsletter, followed by Questions and Answers about the Los Lunas Police Department in part three in October.



LLPD Chief Naithan Gurule

VIRTUAL SENIOR BINGO PLAYED

The Village Parks and Recreation Department held its first Virtual Senior Bingo in July.

There were non-cash prizes which were donated by sponsors or provided by the Village of Los Lunas. Participants had to have a valid email address and a reliable internet connection because the event was an entirely virtual bingo session.

Village staff will be looking at offering virtual bingo not only for seniors but for others.

Check the Village website, loslunasnm.gov.

**SUPPORT AREA BUSINESSES &
RESTAURANTS WHEN YOU CAN!**

LIBRARY CURBSIDE SERVICE CONTINUES

The Los Lunas Public Library remains closed to the public and will open in phases as the New Mexico Department of Health relaxes the COVID-19 restrictions.

Library patrons are able to place items on hold and retrieve them with contactless curbside pickup. You can place the items on hold here: <https://www.loslunaspubliclibrary.org/> and the library will call you to arrange a pick up time.

The library is also offering curbside printing service through the mobile print App PrinterOn. Patrons can upload a document they wish to print to <https://prineron.net/lpl/print> or download the PrinterOn App onto a smart phone or personal reading device. Call 505 839-3850 if you need assistance.

This year's summer reading program was conducted online and through curbside services. As of July 31st, 208 participants logged 2,620 hours of summer reading.

A special thanks to sponsors: the Friends of the Los Lunas Public Library and Museum of Heritage & Arts, Eastern New Mexico State University, Domino's, Walmart, New Mexico State Library, and the Network of the National Library of Medicine.

For more information on additional programming and events, please call 505 839-3850 or like the library Facebook page.

LOOK LOCALLY FOR A STAYCATION

How about a staycation in the Los Lunas area when you have the opportunity and can do something? Don't know exactly what to do or see? You can find out in the Visitors Guide on the Village website, loslunasnm.gov.

The Visitors Guide includes information about Los Lunas and the Village's partners in creating the Visitors Guide; History and Culture; Art and Culture; Dining; Entertainment; the Outdoors; How to Get to Los Lunas; Geographic Information; and Economic Development.

There is also a directory of places to stay and shop.

The Guide introduction says "While Los Lunas is certainly continuing to grow, our home along the Rio Grande still offers you an intimate, personable look at the stunning outdoors, exciting entertainment, and fulfilling experiences that New Mexico has to offer."

Plan your Staycation in the Los Lunas area.

WATCH OUT FOR REDUCED SPEEDS

Work continues on building a new bridge across the Rio Grande in Los Lunas which has reduced the speed limit on Main Street / NM Hwy 6.

Speed limits will be enforced to keep the community safe.

Obey the speed limit and watch out for construction vehicles.

Village Administration Office: 505 839-3840

LOCAL EVENTS

Monday, September 7, 2020

Labor Day Holiday
Village Offices Are Closed
Garbage Picked Up on Monday
Will Be Picked Up Tuesday, Sept 8

Farmers Market

Tuesdays 4-7 p.m.
3447 Lambros Loop
Across from Smith's
Through mid-October

Veterans Day Program

11 a.m. Wednesday, Nov. 11, 2020
Hosted by
Village of Los Lunas
Los Lunas Invested in Veteran Events (LIVE), Inc.
Blue Star Mothers of Valencia County
New in 2020 --
This will be a virtual event
Watch for details

Attend a Village Council Meeting

August 14 & 27 September 10 & 24
660 Main St NW
Main Street and Don Pasqual
Meetings begin at 6:00 p.m.
These meetings may be conducted electronically, check the village website loslunasnm.gov

APARTMENTS TO BE RENOVATED

The New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority has approved more than \$74 million for eight housing developments in six communities around the state including one in Los Lunas.

A total of 202 apartments will be renovated in Los Lunas and Albuquerque. The 48-unit Encantada apartments will be renovated in Los Lunas.

More than 260 new apartments will be built in Sunland Park, Mescalero, Acoma Pueblo and Albuquerque.

In addition to providing much-needed housing in the communities, officials point out construction activity from the developments is expected to generate \$33 million in income for the communities and support hundreds of jobs.

