

“Initiating and Building on Progress”

In early 2008, the citizens voted for change, with “new leadership and new direction.” And over the past year and a half, there has been a lot of action. I have articulated that mandated change and my administration continue to move forward in a proactive direction to effectively ensure the citizens of Las Vegas a quality city government that provides the essential services for a better quality of life. Today, we have implemented several initiatives to improve our city for the betterment of all Las Vegas residents.

In the upcoming weeks we have planned a governing body retreat for city officials to refocus on the City’s vision and mission. We are defining goals that benefit the community as a whole. Key issues that we will continue to work on include: customer service, accountability, an open and transparent government, water and natural gas service and fees, community collaborative partnerships, citizen involvement, beautification of our community, and master planning. Each of these issues plays an integral part in improving our city government and the services we provide.

Customer Service

Customer service is a core value of our administration. We are dedicated to providing you superior customer service in a timely, efficient and friendly manner; this is a top priority. You deserve to be greeted with a smile, and to be treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. The governing body has approved the purchase of a new phone system and a new information technology system. This system will equip city employees with technology that will allow the employees to communicate effectively. At my direction, all city employees are now wearing a nametag / ID Badges so that customers know the name of a Las Vegas City employee. After all, we are here to serve you.

Budgeting

I will be delivering the budget message to the council and the community at the next budget meeting in late July, the message will outline the major objectives of the City for the next year. The City of Las Vegas has already received the New Mexico Department of Finance Administration’s approval of the budget. Included in the budget is a reduction in utility administration fees. The City will be considering the diversification of the city’s revenue stream. The governing body has approved and the administration is currently implementing a pay plan that will provide employees with fair and equitable pay. In addition, I have directed staff to develop an Investment Policy to ensure taxpayer’s money if properly invested, with preference to local institutions.

Open and Transparent Government

Open and transparent government is also a key objective in my administration. We are dedicated to making certain that city government is clean and translucent. Making information available to you is a priority. A reengineered city web page with helpful links and information is in the works. You can find press releases, city council agendas, minutes and packets, city government happenings, photo galleries and much more. We

are still in the process of expanding our website and it continues to be a work in progress. We encourage you to visit us at our website www.lasvegasnm.gov.

Community Collaborative

Community collaborative partnerships with local, state, Not-for-Profit, and private entities are ongoing and will continue. Recently, The City of Las Vegas and Luna Community College conducted a community collaborative meeting. In this meeting the various community organizations each had an opportunity to talk about the various developments happening within the organizations. This process has opened up the doors for other local agencies within the community to understand the needs and plans for those needs, especially the infrastructure of the City of Las Vegas.

Community Clean Up

The cleanup partnership is another example of a partnership that various agencies can come together and make a difference. In July the community will come together once again to conduct a city wide clean up. This event will be called “Four wards in Four weeks.” In May the city held a community wide clean up and collected over 100 tons of trash. This past October, the Office of the Mayor, along with students of NMHU and many community volunteers, led the efforts to clean the Gallinas River along the walking trail. Now, our residents and visitors are starting to see and enjoy a cleaner and beautiful area to exercise, fish, visit, and enjoy.

Community Involvement

Over the last several months we have had several neighborhood meetings of various natures. We have found that this has been a successful way of engaging the community and meeting with the community to find out what the community wants, needs, or would like to see. In the upcoming months we plan to continue to have meetings in the local neighborhoods. Starting in August, I will begin a continued effort to host, “Coffee with Mayor Marquez”. This will be a forum to share your concerns and solutions of city issues with the Mayor.

Boards and Commissions

The Council and I have added several boards and commissions, and committees over the last year. We have found this to be an excellent way to engage community involvement. We will continue to welcome this type of community involvement. We will work hard at defining the purpose and mission of each of the boards, commissions, and committees to ensure proper use of the volunteer’s time, and their effectiveness. Recently, I have initiated efforts to develop and formulate a Citizens Public Safety Oversight Commission. We will take best practices from cities in New Mexico and Colorado and work hard to address concerns and issues concerning all of us as it relates and Police and Fire Department.

Home Rule Charter Commission

As my continued commitment to give the power of government back to the people, I have appointed, and the city council has approved, the creation of the Home Rule Charter

Commission. The City of Las Vegas is the only governmental entity in the State of New Mexico right now, literally giving citizens the real opportunity to change city government. I encourage all Las Vegans, to attend these meetings and express your ideas. “Let’s change city government TOGETHER!”

Professionalism

Professionalism is a key component of success and each department director will have a professional improvement plan developed for each department. The plan will include projects/concerns/ goals/ and objectives to be successfully completed within a time frame. Each department will develop this and present it to the Mayor and Council. I have also initiated a recognition program for employees, creating an Employee of the Quarter Award.

Master Plan

The City of Las Vegas has applied for Community Development Block Grant funds to develop a new Master Plan for the City of Las Vegas. This plan will be the City’s primary guiding instrument that will set forth policies for growth and development. The Master Plan will incorporate existing planning initiatives, and identify current and future needs in the areas of infrastructure development, water, wastewater, natural gas, solid waste, housing, streets, drainage, community facilities, and airport. Development of the new Master Plan will require extensive public involvement. This will assure that community needs and desires are included in the final document.

Water Rights

At my direction and with the support of the entire City Council, the City of Las Vegas recently reached agreements with Storrie Project Water Users Association, United States Fish and Wildlife, and twelve community acequias on the Gallinas River. The agreements lay the foundation for cooperatively settling longstanding legal disputes on how a limited supply of Gallinas River water is shared. As decades of expensive litigation, showed no concrete results. It is time we all work together, to solve a long-term problem and share the limited water with better management and conservation.

Under my administration, the City of Las Vegas will continue to **“Initiate and Build on Progress”**. After all, I remain “beholden to no one but to you the citizens of Las Vegas.” Have a safe a pleasant summer. Respectfully, Tony E. Marquez, Jr. – Mayor.

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