

POLICY BRIEF:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

FAST FACTS:

City of Las Cruces Economic Development 2023- Quarter 1

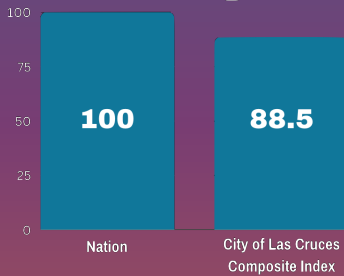


UNEMPLOYMENT
3.0%
-0.6pp YoY

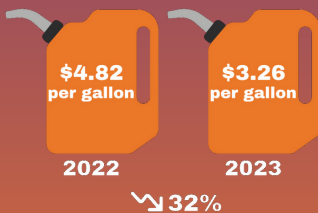


EMPLOYMENT
47,339
+2.2% (+1,034) YoY

Cost of Living Index



Average Price of Gasoline in the Las Cruces Metro



100 Days Toward a Healthy Las Cruces Economy

This Policy Brief highlights some of the many economic policies, processes, and procedures that I will initiate and/or strengthen within my first 100 days of service as your mayor. Together they provide a roadmap to drive community prosperity — a foundational component of my vision of a “Healthy Las Cruces” framework.

Putting a Price on Economic Leakage

Economic leakages happen when we (the people and businesses of Las Cruces) buy goods and services outside of our community. According to the latest data (2021) from the city’s Economic Development Department, Las Cruces loses more than \$3750 million a year to economic leakage. Here’s a quick look at some of the largest, and I believe the most beneficial to address, holes in our economy:

Industry	Est. leakage (per year /millions in US \$)
Private hospitals	226
Nursing and residential care	108
Ambulatory health care services	62
Social assistance	12
Scientific, technical services	462
Telecommunications	242
Motion picture and sound recording	29
Performing arts, spectator sports	45
Educational services, private	158

Stemming the Flow as We Grow

Thanks to our relatively young and growing population, years of forward-looking infrastructure investment, and access to educational and scientific thought leadership, Las Cruces is making great strides toward the sustainable and just economic future we all want and need. As your mayor, I will harness this strength through innovative public/private partnership building to ensure our economy is as diversified and resilient as our community. Industries key to this future, include:

- **Health care:** Growing the number and diversity of health care workers and facilities in Las Cruces so as to keep pace with population growth is among my top priorities.

- **Aerospace/Aviation:** Rapidly expanding opportunities in commercial spaceflight and the increased demand for Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS), the New Mexico Borderplex is rapidly gaining respect in aerospace and space-related industries. As the largest open-air land test range in the country, Las Cruces boasts a valuable competitive advantage for government agencies and private sector firms operating in this industry. *Fun fact: Las Cruces International Airport is the only small community airport in the U.S. to be certified by the FAA to test UAS.*
- **Creative media (film, digital, art, museums):** Las Cruces' vibrant and growing creative community is rapidly becoming a central hub for innovation, technology, research, and business development. As well as supplying an experienced and capable pool of crew, talent, and services available to take advantage of the opportunities for a wide variety of area assets.
- **Green Energy:** With an average of 340 days of sunshine and available land, Las Cruces is ideal for the expansion of solar energy projects. Plus, a good supply of brackish water makes us attractive for algal-fuel production.

Working With What Works

The challenge of building this economic rocket while it is on the launch pad may be daunting to some. But I know we can do it because I have done it. By any measure, the economic impact of my eight years of municipal stewardship representing District 1 (the economic heart of Las Cruces) on City Council has been transformative. Leveraging the benefit of this experience will enable me to hit the ground running on day one by expanding and strengthening some of the many successful economic initiatives that I introduced that have already proven to build individual and community wealth, including:

- Increasing access to affordable and attainable home ownership.
- Revitalization of historic neighborhoods and business districts.
- Size Up, a FREE business intelligence tool available on the City of Las Cruces website.

As well as innovative poverty reduction services and programs, such as:

- [Lift Up Las Cruces](#) a multi-departmental effort of the City of Las Cruces to improve neighborhoods one at a time.
- Workforce Development/Workforce Reintegration online portal providing access to statewide resources.
- Mano y Mano a day labor program that employs individuals experiencing homelessness to support the community by cleaning our City's parks.