

Strengths

(Highest Rankings listed first)

1. Agriculture and Dairy (10 votes)
2. Natural Resources (7 votes)
3. Diverse Economy (6 votes)
4. Educational Opportunities (5 votes)
Military (5 votes)
5. Available Land (Real Estate) (3 votes)
Rail and Air Service, Trucking (3 votes)
Robust Tourism (3 votes)
6. Growing Communities, Population (2 votes)
7. Climate (1 vote)
Entrepreneurial Spirit (1 vote)
Low Property Taxes (1 vote)
Strong Community Ties (1 vote)

Challenges

(Highest Rankings listed first)

1. Water (11 votes)
2. Aging Infrastructure (10 votes)
3. Qualified Workforce (9 votes)
4. Lack of Amenities/Entertainment (4 votes)
5. Governmental Over-reach (3 votes)
Lack of Legislative Understanding of Rural Needs (3 votes)
State Rankings (Low) (3 votes)
6. Funding (2 votes)
7. Attract New Industries/Jobs (1 vote)
Lack of Specialized Healthcare (1 vote)
Population Growth (Weak) (1 vote)

Key Data

Area	Strengths	Challenges
Demography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 0-29 age group higher ✓ Median household income is highest, rising ✓ Poverty level/rate getting lower ✓ Median household income rising ✓ Aging population increasing ✓ Population growth (increasing) ✓ Migration into the region ✓ Young workforce ✓ Higher income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Poverty level still high ✓ Aging population ✓ Lack of diversity ✓ Meeting health needs of aging population ✓ Population increase (international), questionable education
Human Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ High school diploma rate is higher ✓ We have the population ✓ Graduating more students than the rest of the state ✓ Graduating from college ✓ Young available workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Low Patent applications ✓ Higher drop out ✓ Lower higher education degrees and unskilled labor ✓ We have more drop-outs ✓ Higher percentage of kids with no or some high school ✓ Leaving the state
Labor Force	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Average Earnings are higher ✓ Southeastern New Mexico earnings are higher than the rest of the state ✓ Southeastern New Mexico lower unemployment rate ✓ Commuter numbers look stable between the years ✓ Commuters coming in is a plus ✓ Younger work force 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ High unemployment rate, rate skyrocketed ✓ Potential younger labor force (commuters) leaving the state - workforce migration ✓ Aging labor force ✓ Lack of communication skills and work ethic

Opportunities

(Listed in alphabetical order)

Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Attract agriculture-related business or subsidiary business with our strong agricultural base (vertical integration)
Buildings / Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Redevelop/repurpose abandoned and vacant buildings
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Look at funding needs and possibilities
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Repair/replace/update aging infrastructure ✓ Positive broadband connectivity
Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Become more efficient in how we use our natural resources ✓ Wind and solar to serve other industries
Quality of Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Offer incentives to large retail, big box ✓ Need more amenities
Recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Create Regional Recycling Centers
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Attract businesses that ship out or receive products ✓ Capitalize on railway and major highway system
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Seek out and explore technologies to secure long-term renewable water supplies ✓ Continue work on water resources ✓ Provide and sustain water
Workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Develop and/or increase number of vocational programs ✓ Teach skills specifically related to local industry ✓ Qualified workforce ✓ Vocational and life skills training for workforce ✓ Create a culture that strives for personal success