Dear El Paso County,

As we close the 2013 fiscal year, it is with great honor that I am able to state that thanks to the extraordinary efforts of the entire staff at your County Clerk’s office, there is much progress to report. I was honored to have been entrusted with serving you as your County Clerk seven years ago. Since then, we have taken a journey to modernize your local government services through technology and innovation while safeguarding tax payers’ money in the process. I am especially grateful to our staff for making so many positive changes in our aim to modernize our services over the past few years. Together, we have worked diligently to facilitate the tools needed to make public records more accessible to everyone, bringing transparency at a time in which we need to take all necessary steps to regain the public trust in our County government.

In this fiscal year, we have focused a majority of our efforts in implementing technology and ensuring everyone in our staff is afforded sufficient development to provide the level of service our constituents deserving expect from a 21st century government office. The transformation of business processes in our work flow to expedite our services, the increased accountability in the collection of all court fees, the extension of service hours, and the redaction of private identifying information from public documents, are just some of the many previously set goals that we have been able to accomplish through the harmonious collaboration of many other County departments in an effort to better serve you.

While we can take great pride in how much this office has achieved, our progress does not stop here. We are even more energized with what the future holds for our County services. A future that is centered on you, our primary stakeholder and our main driver for progress.

Delia Briones
County Clerk

“In dealing with the El Paso County Clerk’s Office on both a personal and professional basis, I find that the Office is run efficiently and the staff is both professional and courteous.”

- Richard Wiles

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The El Paso County Clerk measures its success by its quality of service and integrity. Our team is continuously going through cross-training to enrich the collective knowledge base. This empowers our staff to be more successful in our mission to provide you with service. More importantly, our office is committed to promoting diversity in the workplace, providing clear equal-opportunity policies that create a system of fairness in which employees are rewarded and promoted based on performance and customer service, regardless of age, religion, national origin, race, gender, disability or sexual orientation. Educating our organization to uphold good citizenship behavior has been, and will continue to be, a priority for our office that stems from its leadership, its management and our entire staff.

**CONNECTED TO OUR COMMUNITY**

We recognize that our commitment to the public does not end at our office doors; instead, our responsibility continues beyond our doors to safeguard and support the very fabric of our lives: our community. Giving back to the community is a great source of pride at the County Clerk’s Office. This April, our office was thrilled to collect a total of 10,517 lbs. of groceries that were used to assist in the El Pasoans Fighting Hunger Food Bank mission to eliminate hunger. We acknowledge our responsibility towards our taxpayers, and we pride ourselves in the connection of service we can make outside our office. In the past several years we have been fortunate to work with some other organizations through small tokens of our time and efforts, including CASA of El Paso, ALIVIANE and other organizations that provide clothing, and holiday gifts to underprivileged children in the community.
As the central repository for our public records, our office is committed to maximizing efficiencies by implementing state-of-the-art technology to better serve you. With the implementation of new equipment and procedures, customers can obtain public documents in one, single place. A few years ago, constituents would have to submit map/plat requests in one department, walk over to a different building to submit a copy of the request and make a payment with a different county department. This is no longer the case. We have collaborated with all other county entities to consolidate the oversight of these processes under our office, eliminating the waste of your precious time. In addition, new technology has been implemented to attach maps to their respective deeds filed from the year 2006 forward. We are currently working on an ambitious project to upload maps from the time Texas became a state of the United States.

In order to safeguard our public records, we have improved our system of security and quality assurance. In addition, we have upgraded our facilities to create a workspace that houses the collaborative efforts of multiple divisions to enhance our efficiencies.

As the custodian of records for 46 departments, it is imperative that our staff is regularly trained to keep up with the latest statutory mandates and technology innovations. As such, our office is committed to the continuous development of our staff. Enhancing our knowledge base facilitates the deployment of exciting projects in our office and the continuous service improvement that you deserve.

Our office is also very proud to contribute to a greener county government with the implementation of technology to reduce energy consumption. The latest acquisition of a Diesel Box Truck has increased our capacity to transport files, reducing the number of trips from our locations. Our office just acquired a surplus GEM Electric Car for quick deliveries and errands between our archives and the courthouse.
On August 5th, 2013, the much anticipated conversion to the Odyssey software system was deployed, replacing the antiquated J.I.M.S. software. As a result of the conversion, relevant information is now easier to search. Security components have been enhanced, restricting the access to sensitive information to only those that are authorized to have access.

On December 11, 2012, the Texas Supreme Court authorized Docket No. 12-9208, which requires the use of electronic filing in the County Court systems. This E-File system will be implemented in the El Paso County Clerk’s office on January 1st, 2014. The new system allows scanned legal documents to be submitted electronically. What once required the need to drive over to the courthouse and find parking can now be done from the comfort of a lawyer’s office on weekends or even holidays. Once the documents are in the system, they can be pulled up and viewed in Odyssey.

Training, preparation and leadership provide the foundation for a successful organization. Our court staff receives extensive training from several government agencies and associations to ensure our judiciary system receives the appropriate level of support and accuracy. Topics such as Fraudulent Court Documents, Fraudulent Document Filings and Open Records: Public Information Act are some of the recent staff development courses that further our mission to serve you efficiently and effectively.

PROBATE DEPARTMENT

The Probate Department has taken great strides towards providing timely, accurate and cutting-edge services to their customers. In order to satisfy Texas House Bill 3352, our department was tasked with researching the last 20 years guardianship cases to ensure the Department of Public Safety was notified of orders preventing individuals from carrying deadly weapons, ensuring the safety of our community and our state. Given the extraordinary commitment of our staff, Letters of Testamentary/Administration and Letters of Guardianship, can now be issued the same day at our Main Office and the Northeast Annex. The Fort Bliss community has also benefited with the availability of hearings held for Probate cases at the Northeast Annex as well.

Probate employees are always on the look-out for ways to maximize the resources and leadership training seminars available to them. The Department has attended several “Texas College of Probate Judges” Conferences over the past two years and continues to apply their knowledge learned at this valuable program.

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TIME MARCHES ON
OUR VITAL RECORDS, OUR HISTORY

Not long after a major project to digitize all the vital records was completed, a second exciting accomplishment was announced. Last year, the public was invited to attend an Open House, where more than one hundred Vitals books, containing more than one hundred years of El Paso County’s Births, Deaths & Marriages were put on display. These books were chemically preserved and re-bound up to the standards set forth by the U.S. Library of Congress. These state-of-the-art binders are designed to protect El Paso County’s historically vital records in the event of fire or other natural disasters. Preserving generations of history for all residents of El Paso County is something we can all take pride in.

Hard work and dedication continue to pay off, as the Vitals Department was honored for the third straight year. The El Paso County Clerk received the 5-Star merit award from Texas Vital Statistics. This annual award recognizes excellence, dedication, timeliness of filing, use of Texas Electronic Registrar and attendance of trainings/conferences in the field of Vital Registration.

"Delia Briones as County Clerk, through hard work and technological innovation, has brought the operations of the county in the 21st century. Because of her motivation, she makes the office the best it can be. She has created a user-friendly atmosphere for both lawyers and the general public"

- Bob Warach, Attorney at Law
COLLECTION OF COURT FEES
REDUCING YOUR TAX EXPOSURE

Our Collections Department is dedicated to collecting all the fees and fines that originate from court cases. Our staff works diligently when collecting such fees which mitigate our reliance on general tax revenues that are assessed throughout the community. As such, every increase in productivity results in lower taxes for all of us. In an unprecedented collaboration with other elected officials and judges, our office took the initiative to lead the collection efforts of both County and District Courts (family, civil, jury and criminal cases). This consolidation has concentrated all the knowledge base in our office, reducing the duplication of services across different county departments. Our collaboration with the Tax Assessor in preventing past due accounts from renewing vehicle registrations has also resulted in the collection of millions of dollars that would otherwise be passed on to our tax base.

Additional cashiering options within our office have resulted in a convenient one-stop shop that expedites the payment of court fines. Updated office equipment and remodeled offices have also led to improvements in productivity. A redesigned floor-plan has increased the volume of customers which can be served, thereby leading to an increase in collected revenue.

COMMISSIONER’S COURT DOCUMENTS
SUPPORTING GOVERNMENT TRANSPERANCY

Our office has been diligently preparing for the launch of an innovative system to manage Commissioner’s Court records and sessions. This novel system will improve the way agendas are prepared for Commissioner’s Court meetings and simplify the creation of minutes after the meetings are over. This will also eliminate the need for specialized personnel to provide technical conversions, reducing the amount of cost to taxpayers. Starting September, agendas and minutes will be published directly on our website, ensuring all documents related to the decisions held by Commissioner’s Court are immediately available to the public.

The ability to attach embedded videos to our minutes, search and locate agenda items, and make them easily available to the public will support our goal of upholding the much needed transparency to regain our community’s trust in our local government.
PUBLIC RECORDS
REORGANIZED FOCUSING ON YOU

In March of 2013, Official Public Records became the new face for three existing departments including deeds, recording and cashiers. This consolidation of these departments, made possible through cross-training of our staff, capped a series of significant improvements in the way private citizens receive services. Our constituents are now able to simplify their transactions in one single exchange, instruments are now processed within one business day, old records are now fully digitized, more cashiers are available, and forms are accessible on our website. The general public now has the ability to view and obtain copies of foreclosed properties, along with all the other public documents that are filed on a daily basis. Through the use of electronic filing, title companies are able to file instruments without having to set foot in our office, allowing staff to dedicate their time to other members of the general public.

ALL THESE EFFORTS WOULD NOT BE MADE POSSIBLE WITHOUT YOUR TRUST, THE INVALUABLE FEEDBACK YOU LEAVE BEHIND AND OUR CONTINUOUS COMMITMENT TO BETTER SERVE YOU.

Employees of the Open Public Records Department

Employees of the Accounting Department

Professional Administrative staff for the County Clerk’s Office.