



County of Los Alamos

Los Alamos, NM 87544
www.losalamosnm.us

Agenda - Final County Council - Work Session

Tuesday, February 6, 2018

6:00 PM

Fire Station No. 3
129 State Road 4 - White Rock
TELEVISED

1. OPENING/ROLL CALL
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
3. PUBLIC COMMENT
4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
5. PRESENTATIONS, PROCLAMATIONS AND RECOGNITIONS
 - A. [10404-18](#) Briefing to Council by James Robinson, Chair of the Environmental Sustainability Board.

Presenters: James Robinson, Chair of the Environmental Sustainability Board and Angelica Gurule, Environmental Services Manager

Attachments: [A - ESB Update to County Council - Feb 2018](#)
[B - Environmental Sustainability Plan 2017.pdf](#)
6. BUSINESS
 - A. [10253-18](#) Discussion of Tourism Strategic Plan

Presenters: Linda Matteson, Assistant to the County Manager and Susan O'Leary, Councilor

Attachments: [A - LAC Tourism Strategic Plan Rev 2](#)
7. PUBLIC COMMENT
8. ADJOURNMENT

If you are an individual with a disability who is in need of a reader, amplifier, qualified sign language interpreter, or any other form of auxiliary aid or service to attend or participate in the hearing or meeting, please contact the County Human Resources Division at 662-8040 at least one week prior to the meeting or as soon as possible. Public documents, including the agenda and minutes can be provided in various accessible formats. Please contact the personnel in the Office of the County Manager at 663-1750 if a summary or other type of accessible format is needed.



County of Los Alamos

Staff Report

February 06, 2018

Los Alamos, NM 87544
www.losalamosnm.us

Agenda No.: A.

Index (Council Goals):

Presenters:

Legislative File: 10404-18

Title

Briefing to Council by James Robinson, Chair of the Environmental Sustainability Board.

Body

ESB Chair James Robinson will provide a brief presentation regarding past, current and future work plans for the Environmental Sustainability Board.

Attachments

- A - ESB Update to County Council
- B - Environmental Sustainability Plan 2017

Environmental Sustainability Board Update to County Council

James Robinson, Chair
February 6, 2018

Purpose

- ▶ The Environmental Sustainability Board provides public input to the County's Environmental Sustainability efforts such as waste diversion, recycling, and sustainable development.
- ▶ The ESB serves as an advisory board to County Council for matters involving environmental sustainability.
- ▶ The Environmental Sustainability Board replaced the Solid Waste Advisory Board.
- ▶ Authorization: The County Council adopted Ordinance 02-094 in June 2008 establishing the Environmental Sustainability Board.



FY18 Work Plan Accomplishments

- LA Schools Outreach
 - Received RAID Grant to develop Zero Waste Lunch Educational Video
 - Subcommittee with LAPS
- Brush and Bulk Replacement Program Recommended and Accepted
- Conducted recycle audit of residential recycle roll carts
- Hosted Clean Up Los Alamos Day



FY18 Work Plan Accomplishments

- ▶ Provided public outreach and education at the following events:
 - Science Festival
 - Bear Festival
 - County Fair
 - Earth Day
 - 1st Annual Eco Challenge
 - Co+Op Market Anniversary Celebration
 - LAC Green Team Event
 - Farmer's Market
 - Bike to Work Week



EcoChallenge 2017



FY18 Presentations

- ▶ Bear Awareness – Michelle Rosette/NM Game & Fish
- ▶ Food Composting – Walter Dods of Soilutions
- ▶ Carbon Neutrality of LAC – Richard Dunn
- ▶ Famine to Feast – Jaret McDonald
- ▶ Food Waste Collection – Erik Loechell
- ▶ Save As You Throw – Sue Barns
- ▶ GEM*STAR Demonstration Reactor for Los Alamos County – Dr. Charles Bowman
- ▶ Methane Monitoring LAC Landfill – Angelica Gurule
- ▶ C&D Recycling – Green Paso



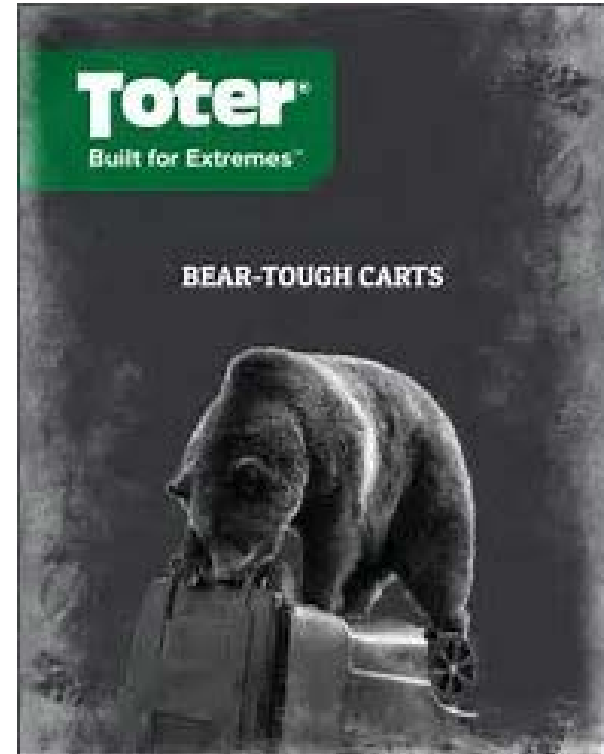
Challenges / Opportunities

- ▶ Balancing costs & revenue
- ▶ Low value of recycled materials
 - Revenue received from recyclable material has disappeared. The tipping fee will increase annually by \$1. Current cost is \$16 per ton.
 - China's "National Sword" Impact on US Recycle Materials
- ▶ Closure of Rio Rancho Landfill, ~ 7 to 8 years
 - Tip fee and transportation cost will increase annually.
- ▶ Landfill Methane Gas above allowable levels
- ▶ Wildlife/Bears
- ▶ Alternate path for waste streams continue to be sought and analyzed
 - Recycling incentives, neighborhood or community food composting, manure collection from stables.



Bear Tough Carts

- ▶ LAC & NM Department of Game and Fish collaboration to procure Bear Tough Carts
- ▶ 65/35 Federal Grant
- ▶ 300 Bear Tough Carts are available
- ▶ Available for \$77 (Original price is \$200)
 - If Game & Fish continues this program, staff will reapply for additional fund as participation warrants.



Bear Tough Cart Cost				
\$200 cost per cart				
\$130 - NMDGF (65%)				
\$70 - LAC (35%)				
Reduced Cost to Customer				
\$77 per cart				
\$70 plus 10% administrative fee per municipal code				



Yard Trimming Roll Carts

- ▶ Feb 14, 2017 – Approved by County Council
- ▶ Feb 2018 – ESB to conduct open forum survey to determine collection frequency of yard trimming and recycle roll carts
 - Options include weekly or bi-weekly collection
- ▶ April 2018 – Final brush collection
- ▶ May 2018 – Recruit equipment operator
- ▶ July 1, 2018 – New program launches



Yard Trimming Roll Carts

- ▶ Implementation Plan:
 - Registration for cart has begun
 - 412 registered
 - Collection truck ordered
 - Roll carts ordered
 - 1 FTE – Equipment Operator –to be recruited May 2018 for July 1 start date.



Save As You Throw

- ▶ ESB developed a subcommittee to research feasibility of SAYT
 - Conducting interview with other SAYT communities to learn about their processes and start up
- ▶ Pros
 - Equitable pricing
 - Dynamic fee structure based on the size of the waste container that the citizen is utilizing
- ▶ Goals
 - Keep the costs of Environmental Services programs as low as possible
 - Reduce material sent to landfill
 - Promotes Recycling/Composting



Environmental Sustainability Plan

► Community Indicators

Sustainability Indicator	Goal	Metric	Performance (2012)	Performance (2016)
Community Indicators				
1. Community greenhouse gas emissions	Decrease greenhouse gas emissions based on 2006 – 2012 average.	Metric tons of CO2e from energy and waste	159,431 metric tons CO2e (baseline; average of 2006-2012 emissions)	125,807 metric tons of CO2e from energy and waste
2. Public transit ridership	Increase annual transit total passenger trips per vehicle per hour of transit operations to 25 by 2020.	Total passenger trips per vehicle per hour of transit operations	20.59 total passenger trips per vehicle per hour of transit operations	13.32 total passenger trips per vehicle per hour of transit operations
3. MSW recycling rate	Meet or surpass EPA MSW recycling rate of 40% by 2020.	% of total waste recycled	22% of waste recycled	24% of waste recycled
4. C&D waste diversion	Achieve 75% diversion of construction and demolition (C&D) materials and debris (waste) by 2020.	% of total C&D waste diverted	64% of C&D waste diverted	83% of C&D waste diverted
5. Quality of residential recycling services	Receive an excellent or good rating from at least 75% of respondents in 2020 survey.	% of residents rating program as good or excellent in Los Alamos County Customer Survey	73% of respondents ranked as excellent or good	89% of respondents ranked as excellent or good



Environmental Sustainability Plan

► Local Government Indicators

Sustainability Indicator	Goal	Metric	Performance (2012)	Performance (2016)
Local Government Indicators				
1. LEED certified County facilities	100% of total County facilities over 5,000 sq. feet shall meet or exceed LEED Silver certification.	% of total County facilities over 5,000 sq. feet that are LEED Silver (or higher) certified	40% of total County facilities over 5,000 sq. feet meet at least LEED Silver certification	60% of total County facilities over 5,000 sq. feet meet at least LEED Silver certification
2. County operations greenhouse gas emissions	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from County operations by 22% or by 2,771 metric tons below the 2012 levels by 2020.	Metric tons of CO ₂ e from energy and vehicle fuel usage	12,597 metric tons of CO ₂	11,458 metric tons of CO ₂ . This is a 9% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions
3. Energy usage of County facilities	Reduce the energy usage of County facilities by 15% per square foot or 19.61 BTU's/square foot below 2012 levels by 2020.	Million BTU's of energy, includes electricity and natural gas usage	72,907 million BTU's. 130.74 BTU's/square foot	66,670 million BTU's. 119.55 BTU's/square foot. This is a 8% reduction in energy usage by County facilities
4. Water usage of County facilities	Reduce potable water usage in Los Alamos County facilities by 20% or 18,252 thousands of gallons below 2012 levels by 2020.	Thousands of gallons of water used by County facilities	91,261 thousands of gallons of water	83,114 thousands of gallons of water. This is a 9% reduction in water usage by the County



Incentive Based Sustainability Program

- ▶ County Council Approved Budget in 2016
- ▶ Collaborating with Atomic City Transit
- ▶ Benefits:
 - Community Wide Program which promotes recycling/composting and public transit ridership
 - Supports economic development by partnering with local businesses to offer incentives
 - Continuous education is key to a successful program
 - Implementation Plan
 - Developed RFP, will solicit for bids in Spring 2018
 - Go Live – Summer/Fall 2018



ESB FY19 Work Plan Goals

Quality of Life

- ▶ Education: Partner with LAPS and UNM-LA; and support, as appropriate, the delivery of their educational services to community standards.
 - Work with LAPS to educate and implement waste diversion programs including reduce, recycle, reuse and composting
 - Work with local organizations/non-profits and government agencies to provide education for wildlife and waste.
- ▶ Environmental Stewardship: Enhance environmental quality and sustainability balancing costs and benefits including County services and utilities.
 - Continue researching Save As You Throw
 - Implement sustainability incentive based program such as Recycle Bank
 - Host annual Clean Up Los Alamos Day
 - Continue researching other glass recycling options
 - Investigate potential for food waste collection



ESB FY19 Work Plan Goals

Quality Governance

- ▶ Operational Excellence: Maintain quality essential services and supporting infrastructure.
 - Update Environmental Sustainability Plan
 - Develop and promote food waste minimization educational materials
 - Monitor composting program
 - Implement Yard Trimming Roll Cart Program
- ▶ Communication: Improve transparency in policy setting and implementation. Utilize social media to engage citizens.
- ▶ Communication: Create a communication process that provides measurable improvement in citizen trust in government, including robust social media presence.





LOS ALAMOS

Environmental Sustainability Plan

Approved by Environmental Sustainability Board on December 21, 2017

Introduction

Appreciation and respect for the natural environment of northern New Mexico has long been a cultural value shared by the residents of Los Alamos County. In 2005, the Los Alamos County Council recognized the public's desire to preserve this environmental amenity through the adoption of "maintain environmental quality" as one of its six core goals.

The County created the Environmental Sustainability Initiative (ESI) in March 2008. This initiative narrowed the County's focus from the broad concept of sustainability to eight focus areas:

- 1) Environmental sustainability policy
- 2) Waste and recycling
- 3) Hydrocarbon independence
- 4) Water
- 5) Land use
- 6) Economic development
- 7) Education and outreach
- 8) Measurement and reporting

Within these eight focus areas, short and long term programs and activities were proposed to enable Los Alamos County to become a more sustainable community. Since then, the County has made significant progress on a variety of short and long term activities identified in the ESI. Policies were passed to ensure sustainability is at the forefront of decisions made now and into the future, and significant infrastructure improvements have occurred, including the formation of the Environmental Sustainability Board. The County has taken actions to educate all of its employees on the importance of sustainability in internal operations with the formation of the County Green Team and County Fleet Team. These teams help ensure that the County government is leading the way in transitioning Los Alamos into a more sustainable community.

In addition, the County Council reinforced the importance of the environment in the 2011 Los Alamos County Strategic Leadership Plan by updating one of the goals to read: "enhance environmental quality and sustainability." Later, at the County Council Workshop on November 16, 2013, County Council asked the Environmental Sustainability Board to consider the definition of environmental sustainability to include the "balance of costs and benefits" in response to the desire to include an evaluation component to the goal. The Environmental Sustainability Board accepted the recommendation. Currently, the 2017 Los Alamos County Strategic Leadership Plan defines the County Council's goal for environmental stewardship as "Enhance environmental quality and sustainability balancing costs and benefits including County services and utilities."

"Enhance environmental quality and sustainability, balancing costs and benefits including County services and utilities."

2017 Los Alamos County Strategic Leadership Plan Goal

With environmental sustainability included in the County Council's Leadership Plan, what remains is the roadmap. In many ways, the County took progressive steps toward the goal, and a cohesive, expanded vision and strategy as laid out in this document, is proposed as the next step.

Definitions

Before laying a framework to work toward the County's environmental stewardship goals, key terms need to be defined as they pertain to the needs of the Los Alamos community. This Environmental Sustainability Plan proposes the following definitions:

Environmental Stewardship refers to management of the environment, with the intent to provide protection or care.

Environmental Sustainability is the ability to continue a defined behavior indefinitely. It is a broad concept that incorporates a variety of criteria including economics and the environment that will enable the community to thrive well into the future. Environmental sustainability is a state that allows for indefinite support of the community, its built and natural environment, its quality of life, and future ecosystem health. In order to achieve environmental sustainability, it requires a balance between the rates of resource depletion and generation, while minimizing the rate of pollution.

Environmental Quality refers to the current state of the natural environment.

Purpose

The Environmental Sustainability Plan establishes a roadmap for accomplishing the Council's goal to "enhance environmental quality and sustainability, balancing costs and benefits including County services and utilities." This plan outlines a set of quantifiable goals, referred to as sustainability indicators, chosen after balancing the costs and benefits. In addition, the plan outlines a strategy for tracking progress for each of the sustainability indicators and thus measuring Los Alamos' progress toward reaching the Council's goal. The Environmental Sustainability Plan will be updated every two years in order to track progress, evaluate strategies, and when needed, modify or develop new strategies based on data and experience, which is important for attaining the sustainability goals outlined in this document.

Scope

All indicators and goals in this plan apply to the community of Los Alamos County; however, Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) energy and water usage is not included in the data reported. The decision to exclude LANL energy and water usage from this plan was based on several reasons:

1. Being a Department of Energy facility, LANL must follow federal mandates that would supersede any local goal developed in this plan.
2. LANL has their own environmental sustainability plan called "Long-Term Strategy for Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability."

On the other hand, LANL waste generation and diversion numbers are included, since LANL is a major commercial customer for Los Alamos County. Almost all waste generated at LANL, excluding radioactive and other special waste, is disposed at the Los Alamos County Eco Station. The County is also responsible for the collection of solid waste and recycling from a few LANL facilities located throughout the community. Given the amount of integration in terms of waste and recycling services, LANL is included in Los Alamos County commercial customer data.

Relation to Energy and Water Conservation Plan by Department of Public Utilities

The Environmental Sustainability Plan is a separate plan from the Los Alamos County Department of Public Utilities Energy and Water Conservation Plan (DPU Plan). The information presented in the DPU Plan is specific to the utility systems operated by the Department of Public Utilities: water, natural gas and electricity. The DPU Plan is a requirement of operating the utility system and it identifies goals for water, natural gas and electricity usage. The goals and baselines used in the DPU Plan are also used in the Environmental Sustainability Plan to demonstrate how the County is reducing energy and water usage. The Environmental Sustainability Plan looks beyond the areas of energy and water usage by establishing goals in other areas crucial to creating a more environmentally sustainable community. For a visual representation of how these plans relate see Figure 1.

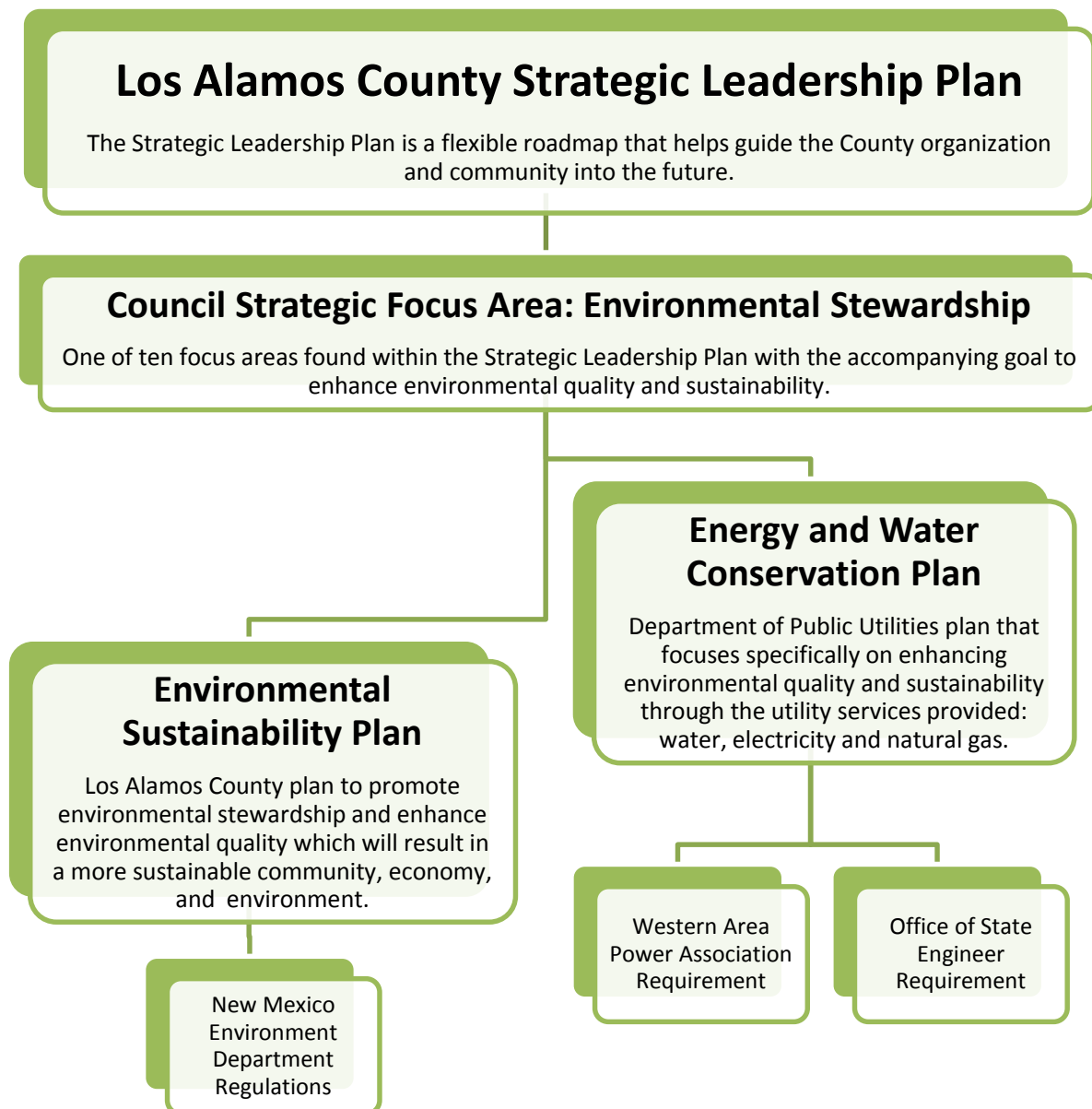


Figure 1: Flow chart showing the relationship of the Environmental Sustainability Plan to Council's Strategic Leadership Plan and the Energy and Water Conservation Plan.

Sustainability Indicators

The Environmental Sustainability Plan includes two distinct categories of sustainability indicators: Community Indicators and Local Government Indicators. These indicators will serve as the County's measuring stick, enabling the County to quantify progress in reaching its sustainability goals. The sustainability indicators incorporated into the Environmental Sustainability Plan are identified in **Table 1** below.

Sustainability Indicators	
Community Indicators	
1.	Community Greenhouse Gas Emissions
2.	Public Transit Ridership
3.	Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) Recycling Rate
4.	Construction & Demolition (C&D) Waste Diversion
5.	Quality of Residential Recycling Services
Local Government Indicators	
1.	LEED Certified County Facilities
2.	County Operations Greenhouse Gas Emissions
3.	Energy Usage of County Facilities
4.	Water Usage of County Facilities

Table 1: Sustainability indicators for Los Alamos County Community and Local Government.

Although the sustainability indicators do not cover all aspects of sustainability, they do represent the major focus areas adopted by Los Alamos County Council in the Environmental Sustainability Initiative. This plan represents these focus areas with the least number of indicators possible to enable easier and more effective understanding of County goals, and increase the ease of public education. The following is an analysis of each sustainability indicator via three sections:

- (1) The **goal section** presents the goal that the County is striving to obtain. Goals were selected based upon research on actions being taken by federal, state, and local entities across the country, and input from knowledgeable individuals within the County.
- (2) The **performance section** provides quantitative and qualitative information on how the community is performing in each indicator. Community wide indicators have a baseline year of 2006, based on data availability. The local government indicators have a baseline year of 2012. The local government indicators have a different baseline as a result of the major changes that have occurred since 2006 in the County.
- (3) The **strategy section** provides a brief description of proposed actions that will enable the community to reach the established goal for each indicator.

Sustainability Indicator	Goal	Metric	Performance (2012)	Performance (2016)
Community Indicators				
1. Community greenhouse gas emissions	Decrease greenhouse gas emissions based on 2006 – 2012 average.	Metric tons of CO2e from energy and waste	159,431 metric tons CO2e (baseline; average of 2006-2012 emissions)	125,807 metric tons of CO2e from energy and waste
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3. Energy usage of County facilities	Reduce the energy usage of County facilities by 15% per square foot or 19.61 BTU's/square foot below 2012 levels by 2020.	Million BTU's of energy, includes electricity and natural gas usage	72,907 million BTU's. 130.74 BTU's/square foot	66,670 million BTU's. 119.55 BTU's/square foot. This is a 8% reduction in energy usage by County facilities
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Table 2: List of sustainability indicators with corresponding goals, metrics and performance

Community Indicators

Community Indicator 1: Community Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Goal: Decrease greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions based on 2006 – 2012 average.

Performance: This measure includes greenhouse gas emissions from electricity usage, natural gas usage and solid waste generation. **Figure 2** shows total energy usage, including electricity and natural gas, for Los Alamos County by customer class from 2007 to 2016. The emissions that resulted from energy usage for the same time period can be found in **Figure 3**. Greenhouse gas emissions from natural gas usage were determined by utilizing World Resource Institute (2008), GHG Protocol tool for stationary combustion, Version 4.0.

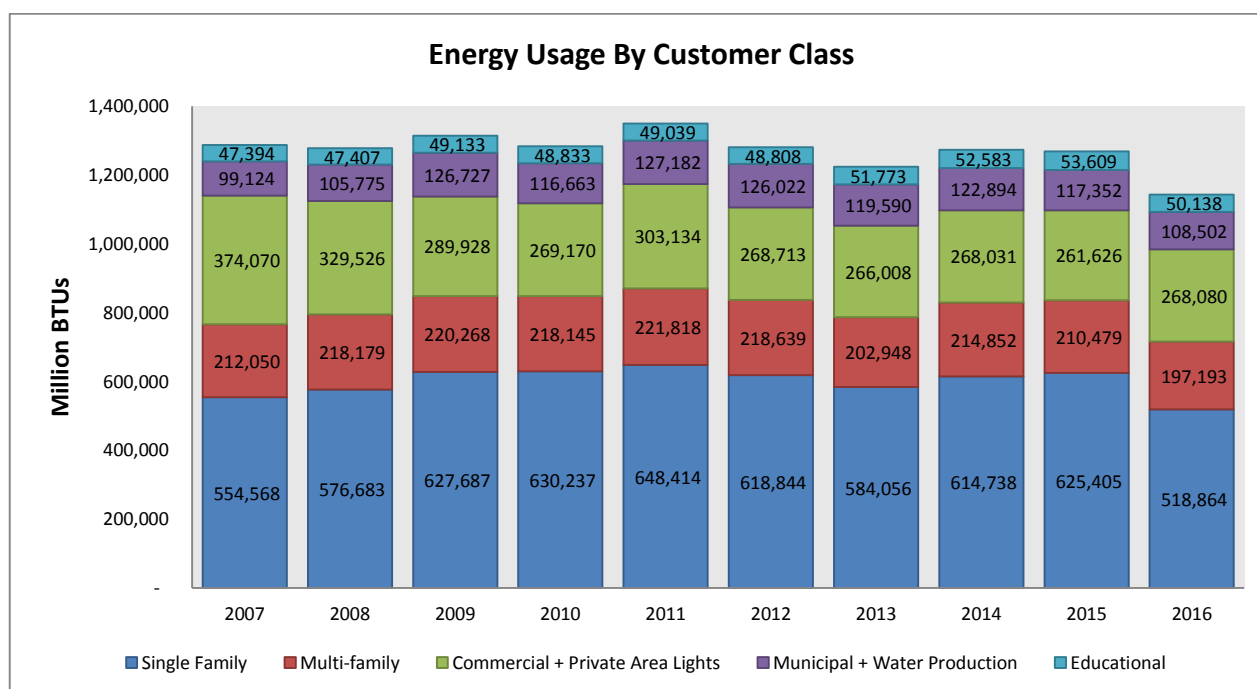


Figure 2: Los Alamos County energy usage which includes natural gas and electricity usage from 2007 – 2016.

Greenhouse gas emissions from solid waste include the emissions from the disposal of municipal solid waste generated by the community and LANL; this does not include the disposal of any non-routine waste from LANL. When waste is deposited in the landfill it breaks down over a 20-plus year timeframe and emits greenhouse gases, specifically methane.

When determining emissions generated from solid waste stored in landfills this plan utilizes the cumulative emissions estimation methodology. Emissions from solid waste were found using the methodology presented in Chapter SW.4 Community-Generated Waste Sent to Landfills of the ICLEI Community Protocol. The International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) is a global network of local governments dedicated to sustainability, resilience, and climate action. Waste from Los Alamos County is currently shipped a distance of 89.4 miles to landfills in Rio Rancho, NM.

Figure 3 summarizes Los Alamos County greenhouse gas emissions from electricity usage, natural gas usage and the disposal of solid waste. The seven year average usage is 159,431 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents. The County, in conjunction with LANL, has recently undertaken two major renewable energy projects that enable the County to receive electricity without creating harmful greenhouse gas emissions. The first project was the installation of a low-flow turbine at the Abiquiu hydroelectric facility. This turbine generates an additional 6,468 MWH of electricity from a renewable energy source on an annual basis. The other renewable energy project was the installation of a 1 MW solar array on the closed Los Alamos County landfill through a partnership with the Japanese agency NEDO.

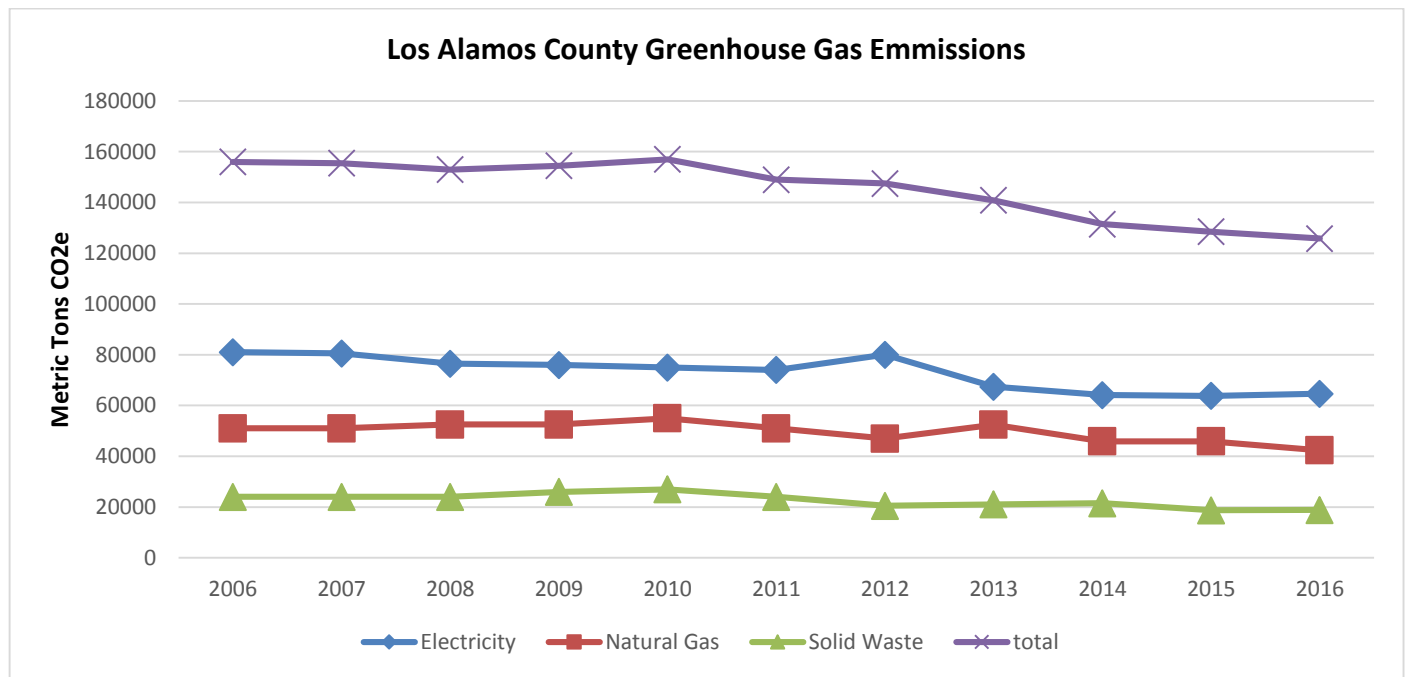


Figure 3: Los Alamos greenhouse gas emissions in metric tons of Carbon Dioxide equivalents for 2006 – 2016.

Strategy: The strategy for decreasing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions is inherently tied to reducing solid waste along with reducing electricity and natural gas usage. The County should continue to shift the power supply from hydrocarbon electricity sources toward renewable energy sources (see Department of Public Utilities Energy and Water Conservation Plan).

Community Indicator 2: Public Transit Ridership

Goal: Increase annual transit total unlinked trips per revenue hour 25 by 2020.

Performance: Total passenger trips per vehicle per hour of transit operations is an industry standard used to measure the efficiency and impact of public transit systems. It is determined by dividing the annual ridership by the hours the buses are on route. Atomic City Transit began service in October 2007 and had steady ridership through 2013. Ridership increased 120% from approximately 255,000 riders in 2007-2008 (the first full year of operation) to over 562,000 in 2011-2012. Services have also expanded with the addition of AM/PM peak service in 2008, the addition of routes that serve the Eastern Area neighborhoods and Pajarito Cliffs Site in 2010, and seasonal shuttle service to Bandelier National Monument. From the first full year of operation through 2013, the number of passenger trips per vehicle per hour of transit operations has been approximately 20. For 2014 and subsequent years the ridership

numbers have decreased, but are still above the national average as depicted in **Figure 4**. The performance indicator from July 1, 2015, through June 30, 2016, is 13.32 passenger trips per vehicle per hour of transit operations. Although the trend is a decrease in trips per hour since 2013, reaching double-digits in unlinked passenger trips per revenue hour is considered to be a successful ridership program in the transit industry. The other important factors that can be correlated to this decrease in ridership are lower fuel prices as well as an extensive service plan implementation changing almost every route. A drop in ridership is typical when making such changes until the ridership understands how to use the new timetables and services.

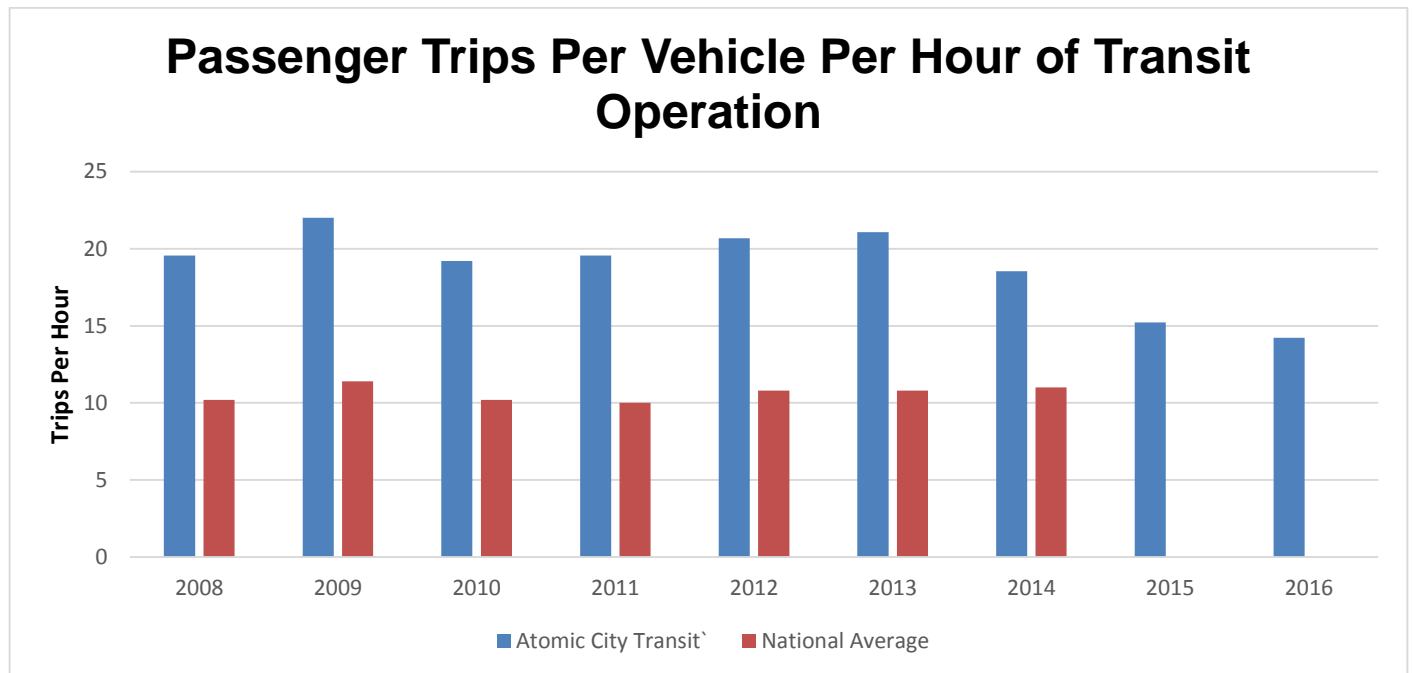


Figure 4: Atomic City Transit passenger trips per vehicle per hour of transit operations compared to the national average. Atomic City Transit ridership includes fixed-route and dial-a-ride services. National average comes from the 2016 Transit Fact Book, Small Urban & Rural Transit Center, 2015 and 2016 data not yet available.

Strategy: In 2014 the County added services that have reduced the amount of personal vehicle miles travelled. The County also partnered with the National Park Service to provide ongoing shuttle service to Bandelier National Monument, which is provided annually from Memorial Day weekend through the end of October. The County is also focused on increasing rider amenities. New bus shelters have been installed throughout the community, with more planned in the future. Automated vehicle location and analytic software was implemented beginning in 2014 to assist transit users in connecting with transit services, as well as transit management in measuring performance and making adjustments to the service where needed – all of which is designed to increase passenger trips per vehicle per hour of transit operations sustainability indicator. Technology advancements that had been implemented in late 2015 include ACTracker on the Atomic City Transit website, which provides real time transit data, including the locations of buses on their routes and a Trip Planner that enables individuals to plan their own trips using a variety of modes; digital message displays at major transit stops; MyStop mobile app on both Apple and Android devices; QR Code on bus stop signs, which leads users to the website; and, for those who do not have a smart phone, SMS texting capability at bus stop signs to obtain next-bus information at individual stops. A comprehensive transit study and five-year plan was completed by an outside contractor and approved by the County Council early in 2015. The plan made recommendations for route and schedule adjustments, as well as vehicle requirements for the service, and was

implemented in early 2016.

Community Indicator 3: MSW Recycling Rate

Goal: Meet or surpass EPA MSW Recycling Rate of 40% by 2020.

Performance: Environmental Services handles all waste and recycling functions for the community of Los Alamos and processes the majority of routine municipal solid waste (MSW) and recycling from Los Alamos National Laboratory. In 2012, Los Alamos County recycled 17% of all municipal solid waste received. Since 2012, the County has taken action to increase recycling and waste diversion. In 2014, the County expanded the mixed recycle program to include plastics #1 through #7, instead of only plastics #1 and #2. In 2014, the recycle rate was reported to NMED as 19.1%, and increased to 24.4% in 2016. The expansion of the mixed recycle program is expected to have a significant impact as now there are more opportunities to recycle plastic products. The County's recycle rate is still below the national average recycle rate of 34.6%.

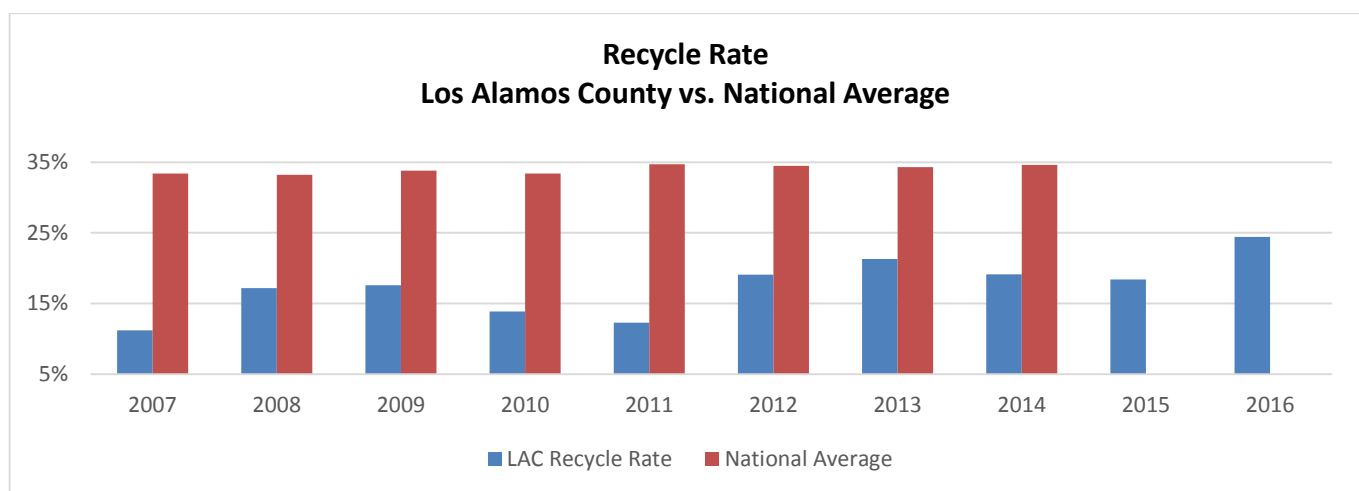


Figure 5: Los Alamos County recycling as percentage of total waste generated from 2007 to 2016 versus national average for same time period, 2015 and 2016 data not yet available. This measurement does not include Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) sludge, asphalt, concrete, clean dirt, or construction and demolition debris.

To determine the recycle rate, the following categories of recycle material are included: residential curbside recycling, commercial recycling, Los Alamos National Laboratory recycling, recycling at the Sullivan Field and Overlook Park convenience centers and recycle received at the Eco Station. The scope of materials included in the standard Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) recycle rate include: routine solid waste, food scraps, glass containers, lead-acid batteries, aluminum/tin/steel cans, other ferrous metals, consumer electronics, household hazardous waste, light bulbs, brush and wood pallets, tires, paper product, plastics #1 through #7, and oil. This measurement does not include Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) sludge, asphalt, concrete, clean dirt, or construction and demolition debris.

Strategy: In order to effectively increase the recycling rate in Los Alamos County it is important to have an understanding of the waste stream. Two waste audits were performed in March 2016 and September 2016 to better understand the composition of the waste stream and to identify the materials that make up a large percentage of the waste stream in order to direct effective diversion strategies. **Table 3** shows the results of the audits performed in 2016. It is also important to note that in September 2017 a survey of approximately 500 homes was conducted to better understand the participation rate of recycling. The survey found that 65% of residents set out there recycle bins

on a weekly basis. Los Alamos County's recycling program is voluntary so more outreach on the importance of recycling may help increase the recycling rate in Los Alamos County.

SORTED MATERIALS	March 25, 2016 Weight in (lbs.)	September 29, 2016 Weight in (lbs.)	Total Weight (lbs.)	Percentage of Material Total
Total Sorted Waste	6,280	8,170	14,450	100%
Food	880	1,580	2,460	17%
Yard Trimmings	720	1,340	2,060	14%
Mixed Recycling	400	600	1,000	7%
Glass	400	475	875	6%
Cardboard	180	20	200	1.4%
Trash	3,700	4,025	7,725	53%

Table 3: Results of waste audits performed on residential municipal solid waste.

Figure 6 is a breakdown of the U.S. waste stream for 2010. More than half of the waste typically generated falls into the categories of paper, food scraps, and yard trimmings, making these materials important areas to focus recycling efforts. Other opportunities to explore are incentive based programs such as RecycleBank as well as to continue to educate the public regarding reduce, reuse and recycle.



The reestablishment of a composting program in Los Alamos County has recently enabled the County to better capture organic yard trimmings. In 2013, the County implemented a fully functioning windrow composting facility in Bayo Canyon at the site of the old wastewater treatment plant.

The windrow composting facility has the potential to provide opportunities to expand beyond organic yard trimmings and accept food scraps which will keep more materials out of the landfill and further decrease greenhouse gas emissions. The County will continue to investigate the addition of food scraps to the composting stream to ensure it will not negatively affect the quality of the finished compost product and/or cause operational problems. A food scrap composting program could also accept soiled paper, which is not currently being recycled.

The County also worked to increase local business participation in the recycling program. An analysis was

performed, identifying a handful of businesses that were estimated to generate a decent amount of recyclables who were not recycling due to cost. In response, the County decreased the commercial recycling rates to incentivize more commercial recycling. Outreach and education to businesses informing them about these adjusted rates and the benefits of recycling will continue.

The County glass drop-off recycle program started in late September 2012, and has certainly helped increase the

recycle rate. Initially, the glass recycle program was estimated to divert 100 tons of glass from the waste stream on an annual basis. In 2012, the County recycled 54.81 tons of glass, by 2016, glass recycling increased to 194.38 tons. The glass is crushed and then given away for free for use in landscaping and other projects. The County also uses the crushed glass in a variety of different projects including fill material for roads for street projects.

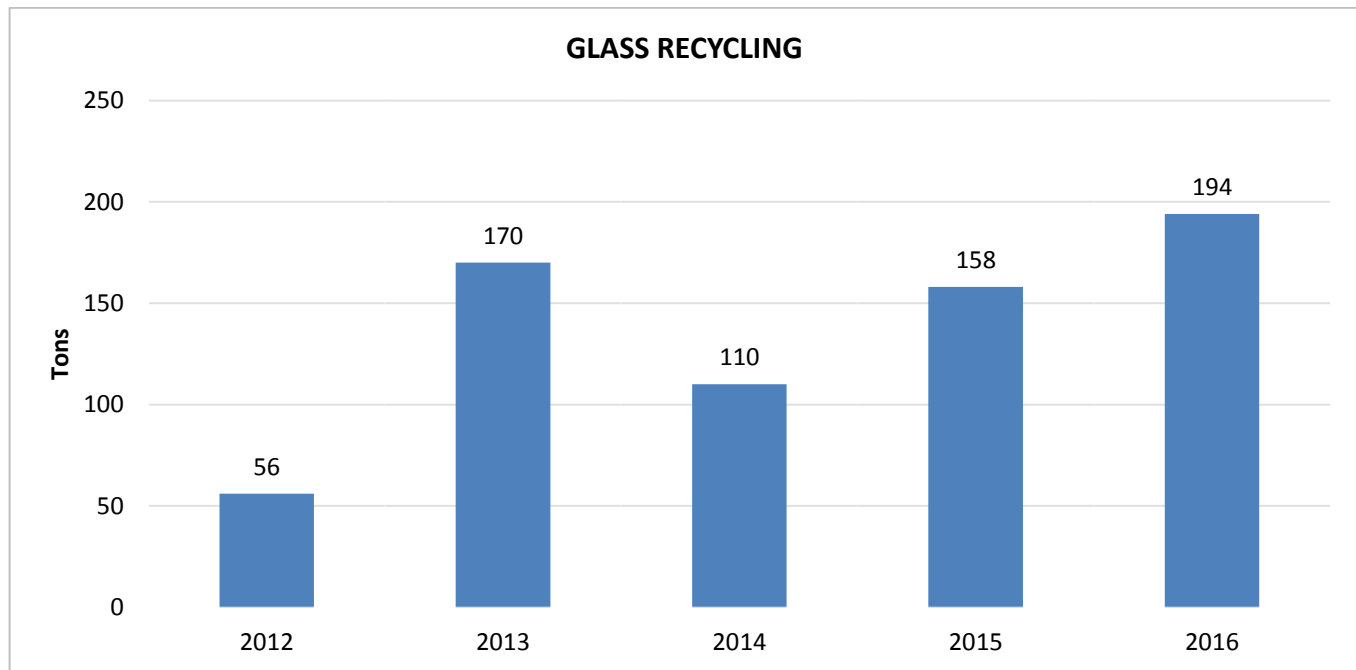


Figure 7: Total amount of glass recycled in tons from 2012 – 2016. Glass is sent to Santa Fe and crushed into cullet for landscaping and used as fill for other projects.

The public was asked to prioritize other possible strategies to reach the goal of a 40% recycling rate by 2020. Input was collected during two public meetings and through an online survey, **Table** shows the results.

Rating	Recommended Strategy	Total Score
1	Increase materials accepted in curbside mixed recycling	100
2	County reuse center	96
3	Save-As-You-Throw (SAYT)	72
4	Curbside collection of organic yard trimmings	71
5	Mandatory commercial recycling	70
6	Commercial glass recycling pickup	64
7	Landfill ban	19

Table 4: Results of prioritization exercise in which public was asked to rank their three favorite strategies to reach recycling goal.

The County recently pursued the recommended strategies rated #1 and #2 in Table 4. A new Material Recycling Facility was constructed in Albuquerque that accepts commingled materials including plastics #3 through #7, paperboard, aluminum and tin cans and mixed paper products. In 2014, Los Alamos County expanded the list of materials accepted in curbside mixed recycling including plastics #1-#7, aluminum and tin cans, and mixed paper products. The County also opened a reuse center located at the Eco Station. The reuse center accepts all gently used items and is another opportunity to divert waste from the landfill. Residents can place items for reuse such as tires, old sewing fabric, dishes and furniture. Other residents can collect items from the reuse area free of charge.

Recommended strategy #3, Save-As-You-Throw (SAYT), has been reviewed briefly by the Environmental Sustainability Board (ESB) and requires more research and analysis as well as public comment. A SAYT program charges variable rates dependent upon the amount of waste generated by each customer, thereby financially incentivizing waste reduction. SAYT programs have been successfully adopted in cities across the country and around the world and are found to be a very effective means of increasing waste diversion. The cities who have adopted the SAYT strategy have realized a 50% waste reduction. The County and ESB are currently analyzing the option of switching to a SAYT system. The County and ESB will utilize the results of the prioritization exercise in future program planning and development.

Recommended strategy #4, curbside collection of organic yard trimmings, was approved by County Council in February 2017 and the program is expected to roll out at the beginning of FY19. This program will eliminate the quarterly brush and bulk item collection program and is expected to significantly reduce the amount of organic yard trimmings entering the waste stream which is currently 14% (1,017 tons/yr) of total material sent to landfills.

Community Indicator 4: Construction & Demolition Waste Diversion

Goal: Achieve 75% diversion of construction and demolition (C&D) materials and debris by 2020.

Performance: The Eco Station receives the majority of the construction and demolition materials generated throughout the County and within the LANL complex. In 2012, approximately 64% of construction and demolition materials was diverted from the landfill. By 2016, approximately 83% of construction and demolition waste was diverted from the landfill. The concrete and asphalt were crushed and reused in a variety of construction projects including roads and streets projects. To calculate the C&D diversion rate the following materials are included: C&D debris, asphalt, concrete, shingles, gypsum (drywall), and carpet.

Strategy: Environmental Services will evaluate the current marketing approach to target construction contractors to expand the customer base and increase all opportunities to capture C&D materials at the Eco Station. The County offers a discounted tipping fee of \$5.00 per ton for clean asphalt and concrete. As a result of marketing and financial incentives, the C&D diversion rate reached 83% in 2016 surpassing the goal of 75%. The Environmental Sustainability Board will continue investigating other opportunities to divert C&D waste such as roof shingles and lumber.

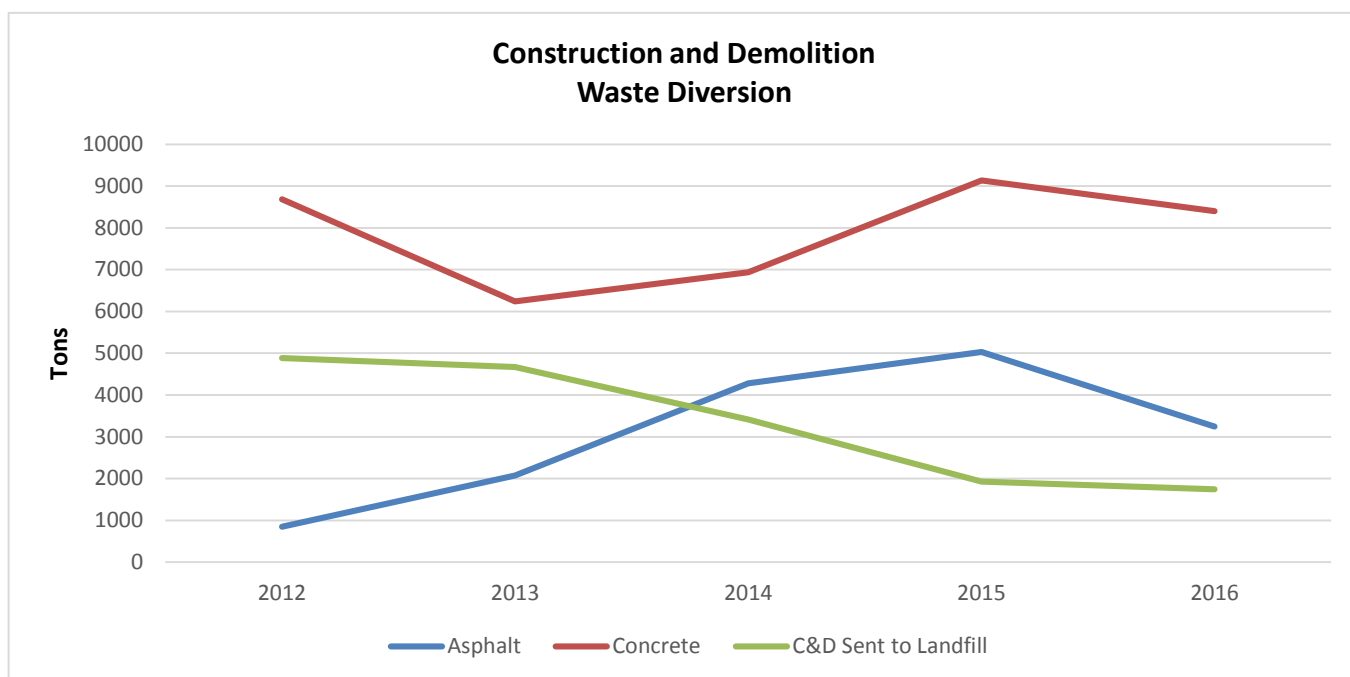


Figure 8: Total asphalt, concrete and construction & demolition disposed of at Eco Station from 2012 – 2016.

Community Indicator 5: Quality of Residential Recycling Services

Goals: Receive an excellent or good rating from at least 75% of respondents in 2020 survey.

Performance: Performance for this measure is based on responses to the following statement in the community survey conducted every other year: Quality of residential recycling services. **Table 5** shows citizen responses to the statement in the 2010 - 2016 surveys.

Do you feel the quality of residential recycling services is:	2010	2012	2014	2016
Excellent	16%	12%	36%	46%
Good	50%	61%	52%	42%
Fair	24%	22%	10%	7%
Poor	8%	5%	1%	1%

Table 5: Responses from 2010 to 2016 community survey question regarding the quality of the residential recycling services

Before 2014 Los Alamos County only accepted plastic #1 and #2, paper goods (newspaper, office paper, magazines, etc.), aluminum cans, and corrugated cardboard for recycling. In 2014, with the construction of the Friedman Recycling facility in Albuquerque the County was able to add plastics #3 - #7 as well as ridged plastic toys, hard/soft back books, phone books, and cereal/cracker boxes. This change increased the citizen satisfaction with residential recycling services and brought us well above the goal of 75% of residents rating the quality of residential recycling services as excellent or good.

Strategy: County staff will continue to work collaboratively with community groups to increase awareness and citizen education in terms of recycling. Over the past several years, the County has had great success partnering with

community groups to develop new programs and increase the effectiveness of existing programs. The work of County government teams focused on the topic of sustainability will also assist greatly in increasing awareness internally, and generating more educated employees who can interact with the community. The publication and annual updates to this document will be integral in raising citizen awareness and participation in the community sustainability programs.

Local Government Indicators

Due to many recent changes to County facilities it was determined that in order to accurately set local government goals 2012 should be used as the baseline year for facilities-related indicators. For non-facility related measures 2006 is utilized as the baseline.

Local Government Indicator 1: LEED Certified County Facilities

Goal: 100 percent of new County facilities over 5,000 sq. feet will meet or exceed LEED Silver certification.

Performance: Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) is an internationally recognized green building certification system developed by the US Green Building Council. With the completion of the Judicial Complex and Pajarito Cliffs Site in 2010, approximately 40% of the total square footage of County facilities was at least LEED Silver Certified. The Pajarito Cliffs Site and the Municipal Building was awarded LEED Gold and the County will continue to strive towards LEED Gold when cost effective. In 2015, the County completed construction of the Los Alamos Nature Center, a 6,000 square foot building which was awarded LEED Gold certification. In 2016, the Los Alamos Community Building (now the Los Alamos Teen Center) was remodeled and is working toward LEED Silver Certification. Due to the Environmental Sustainability Initiative, the County increased the percentage of total building square footage that is LEED certified from 0 to 60%.

Strategy: All new County buildings over 5,000 square feet will meet or exceed the LEED Silver building standards. As old buildings are replaced, LEED Silver certified or better facilities will take their place.

Local Government Indicator 2: County Operations Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Goal: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from County operations by 22% below 2012 levels by 2020.

Performance: This measure includes emissions from fuel usage in County vehicles, and electricity and natural gas usage in County operations, **Table 6**. One common measure that was not included is emissions from waste due to the fact that there is no accurate way to ascertain County government waste from total County waste figures.

		Electricity (MWH)	Natural Gas (MMBTU)	Gasoline (Gallons)	Diesel (Gallons)	Total Emissions
2011	Usage	10,084	36,501	163,762	141,594	11,493
	Emissions (Metric Tons)	6,300	2,169	1,441	1,583	
2012	Usage	11,014	37,581	183,378	167,164	12,597
	Emissions (Metric Tons)	6,881	2,233	1,614	1,869	
2013	Usage	10,628	42,725	151,487	122,065	11,876
	Emissions (Metric Tons)	6,639	2,539	1,333	1,365	
2014	Usage	9,977	38,165	144,245	131,490	11,240
	Emissions (Metric Tons)	6,233	2,268	1,269	1,470	
2015	Usage	9,779	32,500	143,097	145,507	10,927
	Emissions (Metric Tons)	6,109	1,931	1,259	1,627	
2016	Usage	9,435	32,952	153,035	174,324	11,458
	Emissions (Metric Tons)	6,130	2,180	1,346	1,802	

Table 6: County electricity, natural gas and vehicle usage and the resulting greenhouse gas emissions for 2011 - 2016.

Through the formation of the Green Team, the County has created a centralized body to work on developing policies and implementing specific sustainability initiatives to reduce energy and fuel usage. The team is comprised of County employees from a wide range of County departments and divisions tasked with creating a more sustainable County government. This team has also spawned a new team focused specifically on greening the County vehicle fleet. This internal team, combined with ideas and support provided by the Environmental Sustainability Board will ensure that the sustainability efforts of the County continue to move forward.

Strategy: Because buildings play a significant role in energy usage, they also play a significant role in greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, when focusing on reducing emissions, the County must utilize the strategies mentioned in the following section focused on the energy intensity of facilities. Another approach the County is pursuing is the installation of on-site renewable energy systems at County facilities. On-site renewable energy systems generate electricity from a renewable source such as sun or wind, and result in no greenhouse gas emissions. These sources can be used in place of carbon intensive electricity that results in high levels of greenhouse gas emissions. On-site renewables in the form of solar thermal panels to generate hot water are currently in use at the new Justice Center, Animal Shelter and at the Eco Station.

Local Government Indicator 3: Energy Usage of County Facilities

Goal: Reduce the energy usage of County facilities 15% per square foot below 2012 levels by 2020.

Performance: Energy usage is a measure of the total annual amount of purchased energy used in County facilities; this includes natural gas and electricity, **Figure 8**. In 2012, County facilities utilized a total of 130.74 BTU's per square foot of energy; 46% from electricity and 54% from natural gas. This was a 6% increase from the 123.45 BTU's per square foot of energy used in 2011. In 2014, County facilities utilized a total of 125.82 BTU's per square foot. This is a 4% decrease from the 130.74 BTU's per square foot of energy; 45.6% from electricity and 54.4% from natural gas used in 2012. In 2016, County facilities utilized a total of 119.56 BTU's per square foot of energy; 46.4% from electricity and 50.6% from natural gas. This is a 5% decrease from the 125.82 BTU's per square foot of energy used in 2014. Total

energy use reduction from 2012 to 2016 is 8%

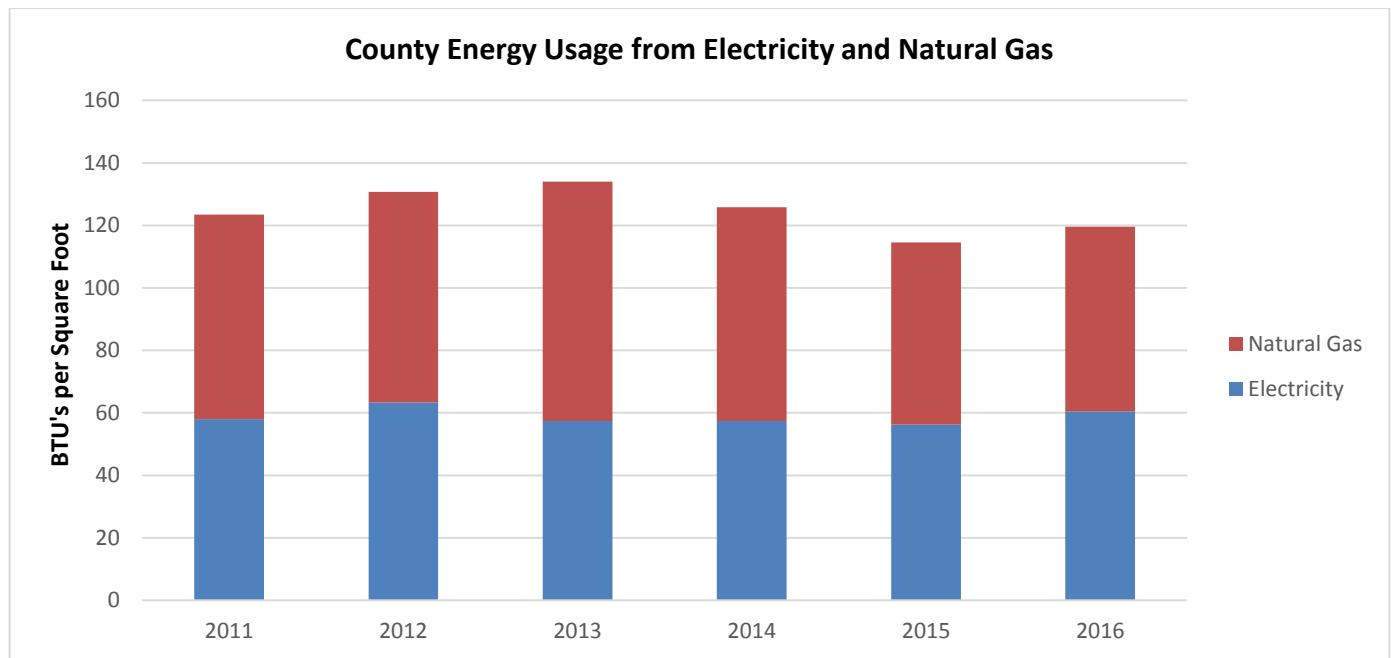


Figure 9: County facilities energy usage in millions of BTU's 2011 - 2016

One policy that will continue to greatly assist in minimizing emissions resulting from energy usage is the County Green Building Policy. This policy reduces energy usage by ensuring that all new County facilities are built in a way that maximizes energy efficiency and promotes alternative transportation. The County also performed building assessments and energy audits on all county facilities expected to be in operation into the foreseeable future. These audits identified approximately 50 potential modifications and energy management changes that have a simple payback of less than ten years. Implementing these changes will greatly reduce building energy usage and save the County money.

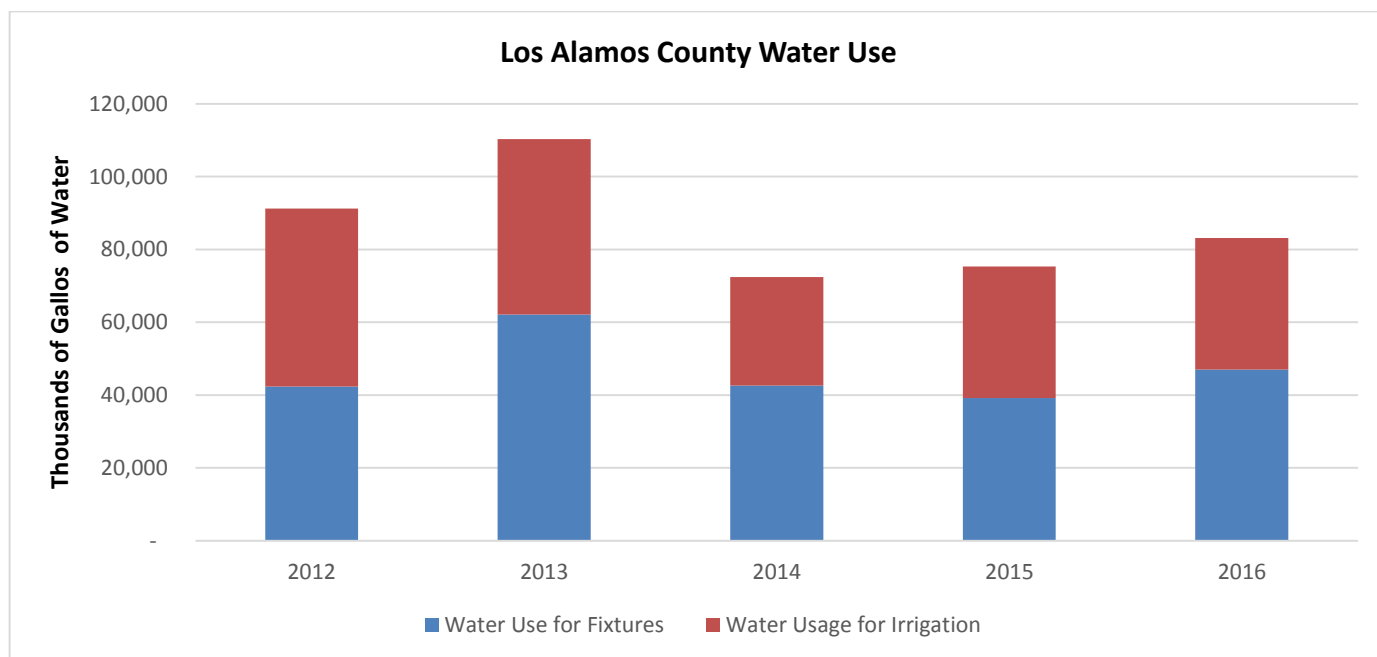
Strategy: The County must ensure that the Green Building Policy continues to be implemented, thereby ensuring new facilities are energy efficient. In terms of existing facilities, the County needs to enact the energy saving measures identified in the recent energy audits. These energy saving measures may come with a high upfront cost, but all identified measures will pay themselves off within ten years and result in more efficient and greener County infrastructure. The implementation of these energy saving measures in conjunction with the building assessment strategy used by the County will ensure existing facilities are performing efficiently.

Creating energy efficient facilities is only part of the solution since it is the behavior of building occupants that leads to a significant portion of energy usage in County facilities. Therefore, the County will continue to educate its employees in order to reduce inefficient behaviors, such as reminding County employees to turn off their computers at the end of the work day in order to help reduce electricity usage. The amount of education and information disseminated to County employees will increase, spearheaded by the Green Team. Changing wasteful and inefficient behaviors such as leaving the light or computer on when not in the office, or using a space heater during the cooler months, can have a noticeable impact on energy usage, and can also help develop behaviors in employees that will save them energy and money at home.

Local Government Indicator 4: Water Usage by County

Goal: Reduce potable water usage in Los Alamos County facilities by 20% below 2012 levels by 2020.

Performance: In 2012 water fixtures in County facilities used 42,337 thousands of gallons of potable water, while 48,923 thousands of gallons of potable water were used for irrigation of County parks and other green space. In 2016 water fixtures in County facilities used 46,972 thousands of gallons of potable water, while 36,142 thousands of gallons of potable water were used for irrigation of County parks and other green spaces. This is a 2% increase of use by water fixtures and a 26% decrease from use for irrigation. Overall, the total reduction in water usage was 9% from 2012 usage. The Parks Division continues to take proactive measures to help minimize the water needs per acre of grass. Frequently aerating grassy areas and planting grass species best fit for the local environment ensure that a beautiful landscape is created while minimizing water use.



Strategy: Reduce the amount of water used by indoor water fixtures and for irrigation through the installation of timers and evapo-transpiration sensors, and expand the availability of an effluent water supply system that will increase the acreage that can be irrigated with effluent water. Reducing water use will require thorough facility water audits and irrigation audits in order to identify potential areas to be converted from high water use to low water use without negatively affecting community usage of facilities and/or significantly increasing labor requirements.

Plan Update Process

A report will be published every two years collaboratively by the Environmental Services Division and Environmental Sustainability Board, updating the County's progress towards the established goals. The report will contain updates on the sustainability indicators, provide information on accomplishments and cite any necessary adjustments to strategy as a result of unsatisfactory performance. The Environmental Sustainability Plan is meant to be a very dynamic document allowing for the addition of new goals or significant changes to current goals. Critical analysis of goals and strategies on a biennial basis by the Environmental Services Division and Environmental Sustainability Board will ensure that issues of environmental sustainability are continually at the forefront of importance in Los Alamos County, guiding the community toward a sustainable future.



County of Los Alamos

Staff Report

February 06, 2018

Los Alamos, NM 87544
www.losalamosnm.us

Agenda No.:	A.
Index (Council Goals):	* 2017 Council Goal – Economic Vitality – Build the Local Tourism Economy
Presenters:	Linda Matteson, Assistant to the County Manager and Susan O'Leary, Councilor
Legislative File:	10253-18

Title

Discussion of Tourism Strategic Plan

Board, Commission or Committee Recommendation

The Tourism Work Group endorsed the Tourism Strategic Plan in its current form at the recent meeting on January 31, 2018. Members of the Tourism Work Group will be present at this work session to discuss their recommendation.

Body

In January 2017, Council created the strategic priority goal, "Build the tourism economy." Following this Council direction, a Request for Proposal (RFP) was advertised for tourism strategic planning services on January 22, 2017 and closed on February 28, 2017. Eleven (11) responses were received and evaluated. Design Workshop, Inc. was selected by the selection committee on the basis of several factors including experience and qualifications. The resulting agreement was approved by Council in April and the eight month planning process began in May 2017. The highlights of the agreement include five public forums, eight steering committee meetings, baseline analysis, creation/maintenance of project website and creation of strategic/action plan.

The formation of a steering committee is necessary for success of this project. The Steering Committee (now known as "Tourism Work Group") was appointed by Council in May and consists of 20 passionate and dedicated citizens including representatives from our attractions and NPS superintendents that serve as liaisons to the group. To date the work group has met eight times with two more scheduled.

Design Workshop has completed the following:

- Reviewed over 60 reports and studies submitted by staff and TWG ranging from 2016 Comprehensive Plan to NM Tourism annual reports.
- Creation of project website: losalamostourismplan.com
- Consultant convened four focus groups focusing on Downtown Vitality/Visitor Services; Recreation Attractions and Activities; Cultural Attractions and Events; and Economic Vitality Action Team (65 invited; 38 participated)
- Baseline Analysis report completed
- Meeting with NM Tourism Department-Secretary Latham
- Two public forums held: 9/6/17 and 11/8/17; on-line survey also used as follow-up to September meeting

-
- Council presentation at October Work Session
 - Creation of draft Tourism Strategic Plan
 - Council presentation of draft plan at December 19, 2017 meeting

After the December Council meeting, the draft plan was available on the tourism project website and public was invited to submit their comments. The Tourism Work Group reviewed the draft plan as well and provided their feedback separately. All feedback from Council, TWG, and public was compiled into a Comment Log and evaluated as to how, and if, the input should be incorporated into the Tourism Strategic Plan.

The feedback mainly centered on the following items:

- Relocation of the Los Alamos Visitor Center and criteria used for selection of possible locations
- Institutional Structure
- Incorporation of partners, by name, into recommendations
- Addition of fifth strategic priority, "Improve community quality for residents, businesses, and LANL."
- Rewording of third focus area to: "Enrich our attractions and downtowns + Celebrate the natural beauty"
- Clarification and revision of Chapter 2 section on Lodgers' Tax and Gross Receipts Tax revenues and hotel occupancy data.
- Report format changes in Executive Summary and Chapter 4

As a result of all the feedback, the plan was revised accordingly and is Attachment A.

Members of the Tourism Work Group, County staff, and Becky Zimmermann of Design Workshop will be present at the Work Session to answer questions and provide clarification on the revised Tourism Strategic Plan to ensure the plan's readiness for final consideration by Council later in the month.

Attachments

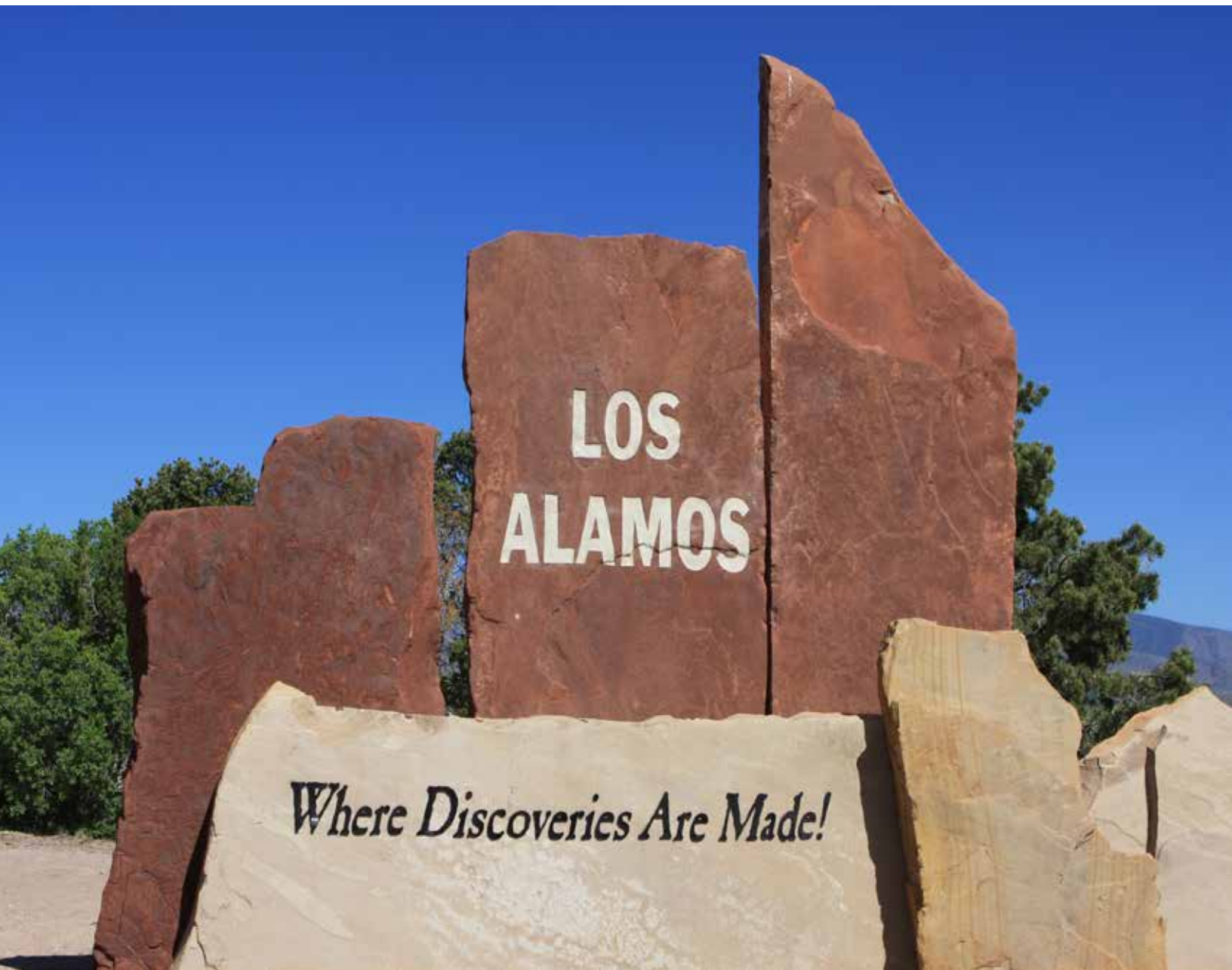
A -Tourism Strategic Plan Rev 2



LOS ALAMOS TOURISM STRATEGIC PLAN

DRAFT

January 31, 2018



Gateway to Los Alamos
Photographer: Leslie Bucklin

Cover Image
View of Pajarito Plateau Mesas +
Sangre de Cristo
Photographer: Leslie Bucklin

For those who never stop questioning what's possible,
Los Alamos County, in the elevated outdoors
of Northern New Mexico, and home to the Los Alamos
National Laboratory, is where some of the world's best brains
power the breakthroughs that shape our world,
so you are challenged to think bigger and live brighter.

- Los Alamos Brand Platform



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

LOS ALAMOS COUNTY COUNCIL

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Chris Chandler, Vice Chair
James Chrobocinski, Councilor
Antonio Maggiore, Councilor
Susan O'Leary, Councilor
Rick Reiss, Councilor
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Valles Caldera National Preserve
Charlie Strickfaden, Superintendent
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Alamos Site Manager for Manhattan
Project National Historical Park

*A special thank you to UNM-LA for use of
Student Center for first public forum.*

*All images courtesy of Leslie Bucklin unless
noted otherwise.*

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

LOS ALAMOS: WHERE DISCOVERIES ARE MADE!

Los Alamos is in a position to harness the economic impact of tourism development by using it as a **driver** to grow and diversify the local economy and as a **catalyst** for increased options for the local community.

The *Los Alamos Tourism Strategic Plan* has been developed as a practical roadmap detailing the strategies and actions needed to promote tourism as an economic driver for Los Alamos and White Rock. It builds on previous efforts and integrates the recent branding and wayfinding plans the County is currently implementing.

The plan assesses Los Alamos' strengths and weaknesses regarding tourism, and focuses on key action items that are expected to make substantial positive future impacts. It develops and provides recommendations based on the desires of the County and local community members, as well as the Community Vision and Goals adopted by the Los Alamos County Council, as expressed in the *2016 Los Alamos County Comprehensive Plan* and the community engagement process for this plan.

Tourism is a growing sector of the economy nationally and in New Mexico. The state is experiencing annual growth in the number of visitors (local, regional and out-of-state) and in visitor spending. Visits to National Parks, including Bandelier National Monument have been increasing for the last five years. Tourism exists today in Los Alamos. As more people learn about the beautiful environment, outdoor recreation, intriguing history, scientific discoveries and its position as a gateway to three National Parks, more visitors will come to Los Alamos.

Today, community leaders must decide if they are going to let tourism evolve haphazardly or to be strategic in driving the type of tourism that is wanted, which will diversify the economy and support additional restaurants and retail stores that the local community desires.



Ashley Pond Park

The strategic direction for the future of tourism in Los Alamos has four focus areas:



CREATE + MARKET AN INVITING COMMUNITY



INCREASE THE CAPTURE OF VISITOR DOLLARS



ENRICH OUR ATTRACTIONS AND DOWNTOWNS
+ CELEBRATE THE NATURAL BEAUTY



OPERATE WITH INTENTIONAL LEADERSHIP, PUBLIC
AND PRIVATE INVESTMENT & PARTNERSHIPS

Each of these areas of focus are defined with their intent, desired outcome, goals and tactics related to marketing, programming, physical improvements, infrastructure investments and policy changes for implementation in the next 10 years.

While there appear to be unlimited wants and needs for time and dollars for tourism development in Los Alamos, the top five priorities that the County can begin to focus on immediately include:

- Increase lodging supply and options
- Modify tourism institutional structure
- Make marketing efforts more effective
- Enhance guest experiences
- Improve community quality for residents, businesses and LANL

Priority action items relating to each of these categories include those that require staff time only and those that require direct investment/expenses. The lists on the facing page describe each of these actions.

Implementing these, along with the other action items included in this plan will improve tourism as an economic driver to help Los Alamos diversify its economy and sustain community quality of life.



PRIORITY ACTIONS REQUIRING STAFF TIME

1. Form and activate Tourism Implementation Task Force.
2. Transition to County Tourism Division with a County Tourism Manager, as part of the County Manager's office.
3. Adopt ordinance for Airbnb and VRBO rentals to include in Lodgers' Tax assessments.
4. Continue to improve Los Alamos' presence with New Mexico True including additional content for online presence, creating an "Atomic Trail" as an addition to their other five trails, and utilize support and grants offered by New Mexico Tourism Department.
5. Explore the feasibility of, and grant opportunities for, expansion of Atomic City Transit service to provide weekend service (for Downtown Trolley).
6. Aggressively continue to explore hotel development incentive options, identify desirable locations for future lodging development (particularly full-service hotel), prepare hotel investor/developer pitch package, create targeted list, and meet with potential developers/operators.
7. Contact regional and national tour operator and travel agencies currently active in New Mexico to coordinate services and trips to Los Alamos. Focus on tour group itineraries with overnight stays in Los Alamos.
8. Reduce blight in the downtown districts through targeted and responsive commercial property maintenance and implementation of the County's Code Enforcement Program.
9. Expand specific strategies and actions to increase partnerships with regional economic development entities (e.g., Santa Fe, Taos, Angel Fire, the Pueblos) to grow visits to Los Alamos.
10. Improve approval, permitting, resources and assistance to community groups and organizers for events.

PRIORITY ACTIONS REQUIRING DIRECT INVESTMENT/EXPENSES

1. Improve the appeal, function and content of the visitlosalamos.org website and social media platforms.
2. Fund and implement the Los Alamos Brand Action Plan.
3. Fund and implement Wayfinding Plan Phase 1 directional and informational signage to improve visitor navigation.
4. Implement Fuller Lodge interpretation plan to enhance visitor experience. Expand hours Fuller Lodge is staffed to meet guest needs.
5. Improve visitor centers' experience and effectiveness. At White Rock Visitor Center, create interactive and experiential displays, improve aesthetics, and provide conveniences visitors expect (i.e., beverages, snacks, sunscreen).
6. Relocate Los Alamos Visitor Center and furnish with interactive and engaging information dissemination.
7. Continue to implement the MainStreet and Creative District events that draw visitors and provide additional activities that encourage extended stays.
8. Support and create multi-day events, like "trail festivals", with marketing support and potential funding assistance.
9. Implement County plans for extensions, upgrades, maintenance and new trails that benefit visitor and residents. Increase funding and staffing to address trail maintenance and improvements.
10. Collect visitor data through agreement with attractions, hotels, merchants and event organizers. Analyze visitor information and its influence on future decision-making regarding visitor marketing, services and facilities.





1. TOURISM STRATEGIC PLANNING

COMMUNITY VISION INCLUDES TOURISM

LOS ALAMOS COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN VISION STATEMENT

The community today has looked ahead to the next 10, even 20 years, and this is what it sees:

Los Alamos will continue to have a small town feel, while improving economic vitality that will bring significantly more choices for residents in local retail, restaurants, and recreational opportunities. There will be more and varied choices for housing, including senior housing and continuing care, smaller units, and affordable housing. Increased tourism will be a benefit to the community through promotion of diversity and growth of the local economy. The community will eliminate blight. It will protect and enhance open space and trails.

2016 Los Alamos County Comprehensive Plan

CONTEXT

People from all over the world come to Los Alamos to learn about the WWII Manhattan Project and its place in American and world history, to discover the Ancestral Pueblo culture that thrived in the area for 400 years, and to explore the vast and pristine natural resources of the surrounding area.

Los Alamos is located on the Pajarito Plateau, at 7,355 feet altitude and is surrounded by public lands, including National Parks and Forest.

Tourism has been a component of the Los Alamos economy for many years. Influenced by the top-secret operations of the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), in the past many potential visitors perceived Los Alamos as gated and not open to them. As more people learn about the history, beauty and attractions of the area, visitation is increasing.

The County has engaged in multi-faceted tourism marketing and visitor services for many years, increasing efforts in the last five years. In 2012, the New Mexico Tourism Department launched the *New Mexico True* brand. This branding has helped increase visitation and visitor spending throughout New Mexico.

From 2012–2015, total visitation to the state increased by 1.45 million (from 32.55 million to 34 million). From 2012–2016, visitor spending increased from \$5.7 billion to \$6.4 billion. In 2016, tourism generated \$642 million in state and local taxes and 92,000 jobs statewide are sustained by visitor spending. These statistics point to the fact that the tourism industry is a growing and sustainable contributor to New Mexico's economy.

Los Alamos is the gateway to three National Parks that are less than a 30-minute drive. Each of these parks provides three very different experiences.

LOS ALAMOS COUNTY POPULATION

Los Alamos Townsite:
~10,500 residents

White Rock:
~6,500 residents

Los Alamos National Laboratory:
~11,200 employees

LOS ALAMOS COUNTY OVERVIEW

Los Alamos County, founded in 1949, uniquely has both county and municipal authority and powers. Los Alamos County has also adopted a home rule charter. Under this Charter, the Council is the governing body of the County. At 109 square miles, it is the smallest county in New Mexico.

The County includes residential community clusters in the Los Alamos Townsite and White Rock, Los Alamos National Laboratory and a portion of Bandelier National Monument. Los Alamos county is surrounded by National Forest, National Parks, neighboring Pueblos and other Federal lands.

DOCUMENT TERMINOLOGY

Throughout this document, the following terms will be used to refer to the various geographies:

Los Alamos County or County = government entity

Los Alamos = general area, including Los Alamos and White Rock

Los Alamos downtown = commercial core

White Rock downtown = commercial core

Local community or community = residents and business owners in Los Alamos and White Rock

Los Alamos New Mexico website: www.losalamosnm.us/quick_links/about_los_alamos; *Los Alamos National Laboratory website:* www.lanl.gov/about/facts-figures/index.php

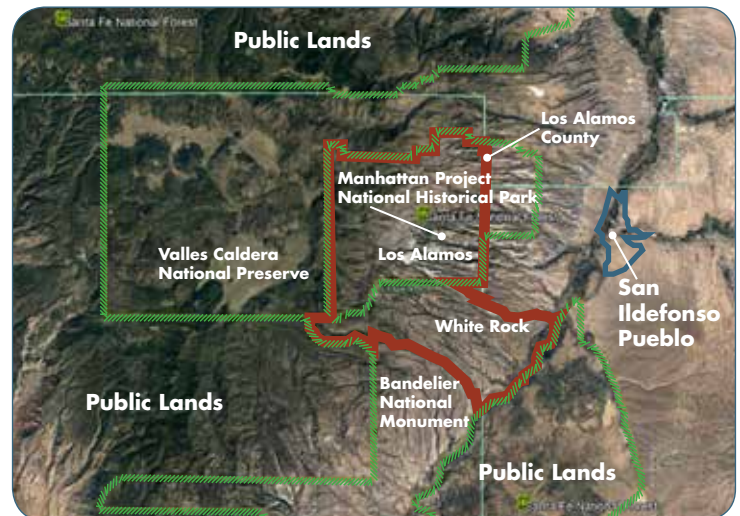
Bandelier National Monument showcases the cliff dwellings and cultural history of the Ancestral Pueblo people. Los Alamos County's boundary is contiguous with San Ildefonso Pueblo. This pueblo, along with others in the region, add to the diverse culture of North Central New Mexico. Bandelier also has designated wilderness areas with hiking and camping.

Valles Caldera National Preserve is a vast, natural 90,000-acre, 13-mile wide environmentally rich land with abundant wildlife, created by a volcanic eruption 1.25 million years ago.

The recent addition of the Manhattan Project National Historical Park (MPNHP) to the National Park System is expected to bring more visitors to the Los Alamos area. The Manhattan Project National Historical Park explores the history of the top-secret WWII atomic energy program. This is further enhanced by the Los Alamos History Museum, Fuller Lodge and the Bradbury Science Museum.

There are many other natural and built assets that are attractive to visitors, such as the Pajarito Mountain Ski Area, Los Alamos Nature Center, 100-plus miles of hiking/biking/equestrian trails, scenic overlooks, sporting events and festivals.

Visitors are guests, and the local community has a role, to serve as hosts to these guests. While many local attractions have the potential to entice visitors, strategically and systematically deciding how to best utilize facilities, enhance amenities and optimize tourism economic development to benefit the local community and visitors will be critical for the future success of tourism in Los Alamos.



Los Alamos and White Rock are gateways to three National Parks, providing a variety of outdoor activities, cultural attractions and ways to learn about history.



The Los Alamos Farmers Market, which started in 1970, offers fresh produce and local crafts to market goers every year.



The Bradbury Science Museum offers visitors the chance to explore interactive exhibits, highlighting the Los Alamos National Laboratory's historic and current research projects.

MARKETING, BRANDING + WAYFINDING

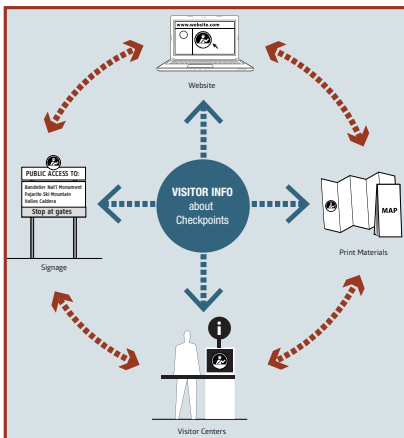
In 2015, Los Alamos was designated a New Mexico True destination and regularly hosts the governor, the tourism secretary and the tourism commission at several events each year. This designation, along with representation on the New Mexico Tourism Department's North Central Region Board, has also increased Los Alamos' visibility, since the County is now part of the comprehensive marketing efforts led by the State.

Capitalizing on this, Los Alamos County has been working to manage and enhance its own marketing efforts to position Los Alamos as a tourist destination. The 2016 *Los Alamos County Comprehensive Plan* demonstrated public support of several County Council priority goals that relate to enhancing tourism. Implementation of this Tourism Strategic Plan will help the County achieve its goals.

As part of the process of managing and enhancing marketing efforts for visitors, the County directed branding and wayfinding processes in 2016, which are currently being implemented. These initiatives led to an integrated plan that will provide information to visitors to make it easier for them to find their way around town and to learn about what Los Alamos has to offer. These efforts integrate perfectly with the Tourism Strategic Plan, as both are focused on strategic enhancements. A summary of the Wayfinding project can be found in Volume II.

Similar to this tourism effort, the County and the Economic Vitality Action Team (EVAT) are currently updating the Economic Vitality Strategic Plan, which is complementary to this effort.

LOS ALAMOS
where discoveries are made



Los Alamos brand;
merje Environments + Experiences Design Development presentation diagram

COUNTY COUNCIL STRATEGIC GOALS



Operational Excellence



Communication



Economic Vitality
Financial Sustainability



Intergovernmental
Relations



Housing/Lodging



Quality Cultural +
Recreational Amenities



Education



Mobility



Environmental
Stewardship

85%

of the 2016 *Comprehensive Plan* survey respondents
**support increased
tourism as a driver of
economic development**

PURPOSE

This Los Alamos Tourism Strategic Plan will help unify ongoing tourism efforts and position the County to optimize tourism economic development for the benefit of the local community. It will guide and provide direction to the County and partners when making decisions relating to tourism, community investment, cultural opportunities and physical development.

Ultimately, this plan will help the County PROACTIVELY **DEVELOP** AND **MANAGE** TOURISM in order to preserve, enhance and improve this special place "where discoveries are made!"

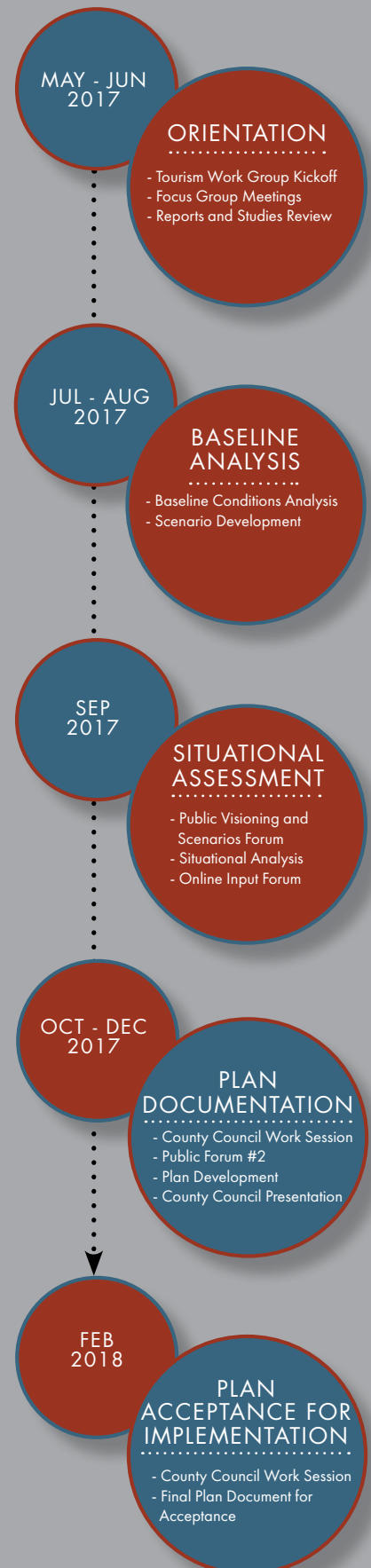
Los Alamos has an opportunity to leverage its natural and built assets, rich history and three National Parks to create economic diversity and enhance what already exists. This plan will assist the County in ensuring the long-term enhancement and viability of the built and natural environments, as well as its historical, cultural and scientific heritage.

Implementing the recommendations of this plan, along with other County and community initiatives, will result in an improved visitor experience and enriched quality of life for the local community.

"Tourism plays a vital role in diversifying our state's economy. More people visiting New Mexico means more dollars going into our communities..."

New Mexico Governor Susana Martinez

PROJECT TIMELINE



PROCESS

The 2016 *Los Alamos County Comprehensive Plan* created the foundation for the development of a strategic plan to add tourism as an economic driver. Based on the comprehensive plan's vision for tourism, an eight month planning process was completed to inform the final Tourism Strategic Plan.

SOURCES OF INPUT

COMMUNITY



- Focus group meetings
- Public forums
- Online survey
- Previous studies + reports

LEADERSHIP

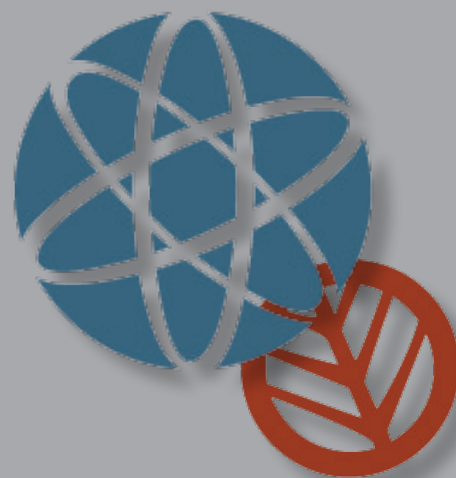


- County Council
- County Project Team
- Lodgers' Tax Advisory Board
- Tourism Work Group
- Economic Vitality Action Team

INDUSTRY EXPERTISE



- Design Workshop
- Signage + wayfinding
- Los Alamos branding
- NM Tourism Department



TOURISM WORK GROUP

The Tourism Work Group, appointed by the County Council, served as an advisory body to the County Council and planning consultants. The group met eight times throughout the process to help guide plan development, review progress and provide feedback on the status of the plan. The group also ensured that the interests of the community-at-large, as well as tourism stakeholders, were considered throughout plan development.

The group included 20 members comprised of representatives of businesses, attractions, local organizations and the local community. Three representatives from the National Park Service served as liaisons to the group.

TOURISM STRATEGIC PLAN WEBSITE

A project website was created to provide information about the planning process. Content was updated periodically throughout the project as new information was generated. The website included:

- A description of the project background, process and schedule
- An email link and comment form to collect feedback
- Project documents and downloadable presentation files and notes
- Links to online surveys
- Calendar of public and County Council meetings
- Links to social media and other resources

www.losalamostourismplan.com

FOCUS GROUPS

Three Focus Group meetings were conducted to help the planning team understand current conditions and to identify issues for the Los Alamos Tourism Strategic Plan to address. Approximately 80 subject matter experts and community members representing a variety of perspectives were invited to attend and provide their insight. Discussion sessions were organized around the following topics:

- Downtown vitality and visitor services
- Cultural attractions and events
- Recreation attractions and activities

The focus groups provided valuable information and perspectives. Three key items that were consistently raised in the discussions, included:

- Numerous ingredients exist for tourism development
- Lack of lodging is an impediment to multi-day visitors
- Some visitor services and facilities deficiencies also negatively impact residents (e.g., limited dining options and hours of operation, lack of activities at night, trail maintenance needs).

FOCUS GROUP COMMENTS

"We are a center for world-changing history and science"

"Our natural scenery is amazing, vistas are breathtaking"

"So many outdoor activities to participate in"

"There are hidden treasures and discoveries to be found"

"We are family friendly with a small town atmosphere"

BASELINE ANALYSIS

The consultant team began reviewing relevant plans and studies to inform its understanding of past and current planning efforts, as well as future community goals. Synthesizing this information with input received at the Strategic Kick-off meeting and the Focus Group meetings, the planning team created a Baseline Analysis report and a Situational Assessment to serve as the analytical foundation for the Tourism Strategic Plan. These reports are available in Volume II of this plan.

A detailed analysis of the current status of aspects impacting tourism was conducted under the following categories:

- Visitor Facilities + Resources
- Institutional Systems
- Market + Economics



Public Forum #1: over 100 attendees participating in keypad polling.

SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT

The baseline analysis identified several factors of importance in defining the direction of this plan to build the local tourism economy:

- Los Alamos has many assets and attractions that create a solid foundation for tourism development. Being a gateway to three National Parks, having outdoor recreation options, stunning scenery, a long and rich science history, and ancient history are key assets.
- Limited accommodations result in Los Alamos being able to primarily serve only day visitors.
- There are limited connections (e.g., trails, signage) between assets and attractions.
- Los Alamos County currently pays for most of all tourism marketing and services for the area.
- The current tourism and marketing services structure is spread among several County divisions and contractors without a central point of responsibility.
- The brand “Where discoveries are made!” creates intrigue, can be flexibly applied to many things, and is a solid foundation on which to build the marketing message and deliver a positive experience.
- Based on feedback, the visitor centers provide basic information and need to be experientially improved.
- Today’s visitors expect many dining and shopping options. An increase in visitors will help support extended hours for existing businesses and help develop new businesses.
- Housing for employees supporting businesses serving visitors has been raised as a concern in Los Alamos. The County is actively working to develop a mix of affordable housing.

PUBLIC FORUM #1: VISIONING

The first of two public forums was held on September 6, 2017 to discuss the planning process with the Los Alamos community. It also gave residents, business owners and other stakeholders the opportunity to provide their perspectives, ideas and understanding of the current state of tourism, impacts of tourism, and what they envision for the future of tourism in Los Alamos. Over 100 people attended this visioning session, and 211 people responded to the online survey.

Four alternative scenarios were presented to solicit input from the Tourism Work Group and community to help answer the following questions regarding tourism:

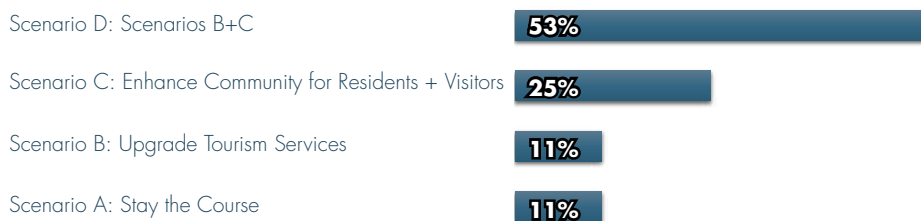
Where are we going? What do we want to do?

The alternative futures explored at the forum were:

- Scenario A: Stay the Course
- Scenario B: Upgrade Tourism Services for Day Visitors
- Scenario C: Enhance Community for Residents + Day & Destination Visitors*
- Scenario D: Increase Day Visitors + Target Destination Visitors*

Feedback from this forum was used to gain a deeper understanding of various points of view and values regarding tourism. Based on keypad polling and online survey results, a majority of participants were in favor of utilizing *Scenario D: Increase Day Visitors + Target Destination Visitors* to develop the focus areas and action items for the plan.

Which Scenario do you think best supports the community vision set forth in the Comprehensive Plan?



Public Forum #1 Keypad Polling question

FORUM #1 ELEMENTS

MEETING PURPOSE

- Educate the public about Los Alamos' tourism current conditions and trends
- Present scenarios of optional courses of action to direct tourism efforts
- Gain an understanding of concerns, opportunities, values and needs
- Collect additional ideas or information regarding strategies

MEETING ACTIVITIES

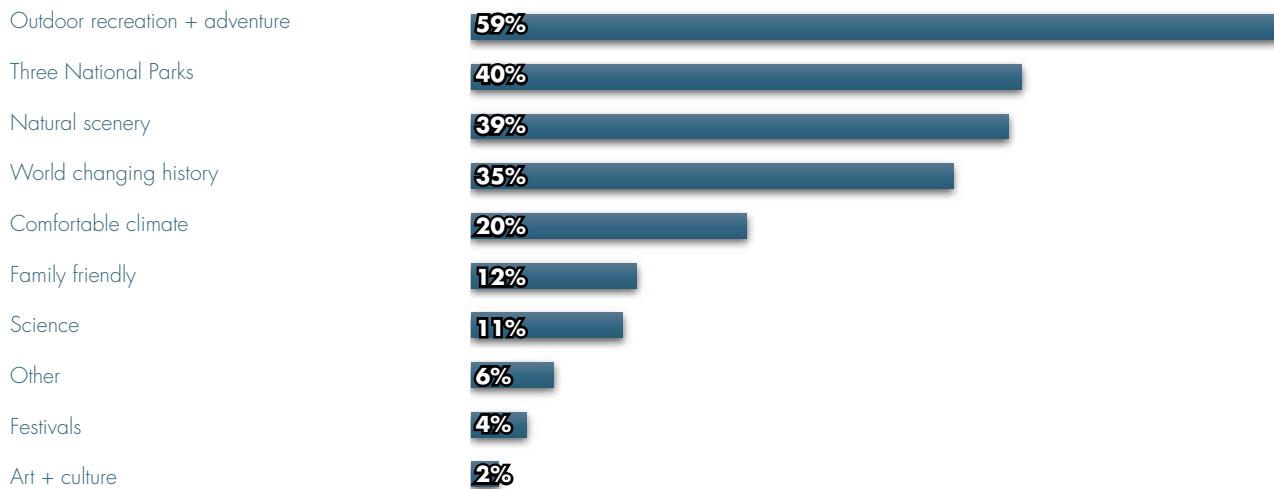
- Presentation with live keypad polling
- Postcards telling a friend why they should visit Los Alamos
- Comment Cards
- Online survey posted for those who could not attend in person

* Destination visitors are overnight visitors

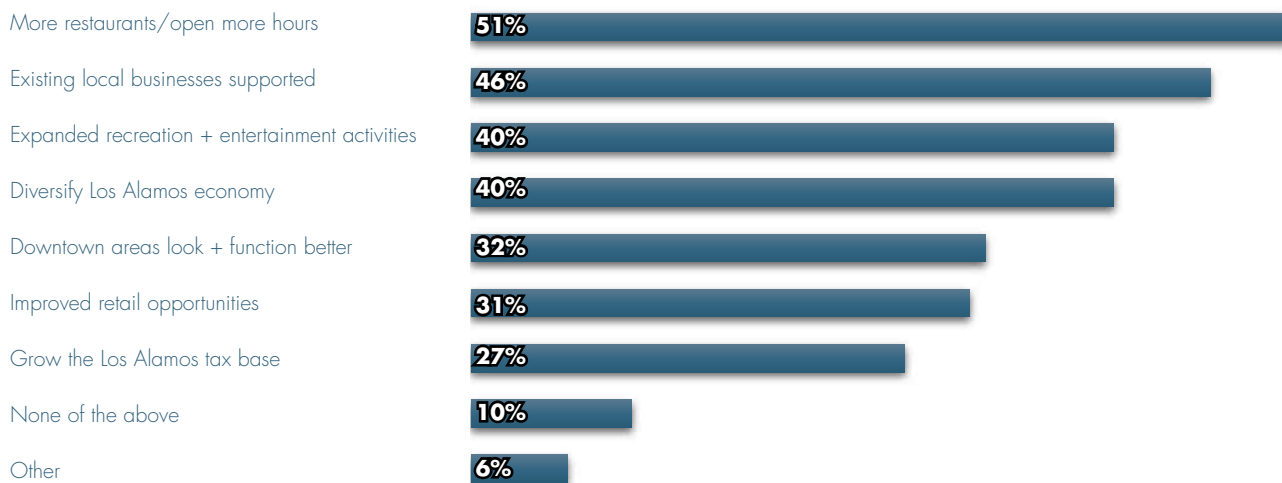
LIVE KEYPAD POLLING + ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

Seventeen questions were asked during the presentation and participants at the meeting shared their responses via keypad polling. With this technology, everyone attending the meeting could see the results in real time. Those who did not attend the meeting were able to respond via online survey. Below are the combined results for three key questions.

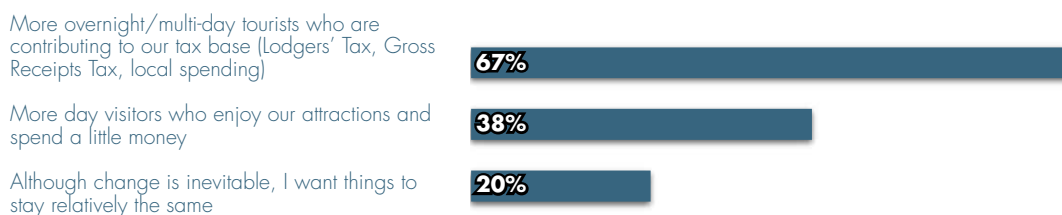
What might you tell a friend are the top two reasons to visit Los Alamos?



What are the most important outcomes for the community if the County implements an improved tourism plan?



In five years, what would you like to see related to tourism?



PUBLIC FORUM #2: INFORM

A second public forum, held on November 8, 2017, gave residents, business owners and other stakeholders the opportunity to learn about the direction of the Tourism Strategic Plan and comment on the four focus areas and various goals derived from this input.

Attendees were given the opportunity to provide feedback and ideas for potential action items under the four focus areas that will frame the plan recommendations.

CHOSEN COURSE OF ACTION

Tourism as an economic driver in Los Alamos will be achieved by attracting day and destination visitors. This option benefits both the local community and visitors by providing the elements necessary to create the appropriate infrastructure to accommodate both day visitors and overnight visitors.

Given the various inputs, four Tourism Focus Areas will guide the development and implementation of a series of near-, mid- and long-term tourism action items for Los Alamos, which are discussed in detail in Chapters 3 and 4.

TOURISM FOCUS AREAS



CREATE & MARKET AN INVITING COMMUNITY



INCREASE THE CAPTURE OF VISITOR DOLLARS



ENRICH OUR ATTRACTIONS AND DOWNTOWNS
+ CELEBRATE THE NATURAL BEAUTY



OPERATE WITH INTENTIONAL LEADERSHIP, PUBLIC
& PRIVATE INVESTMENT & PARTNERSHIPS

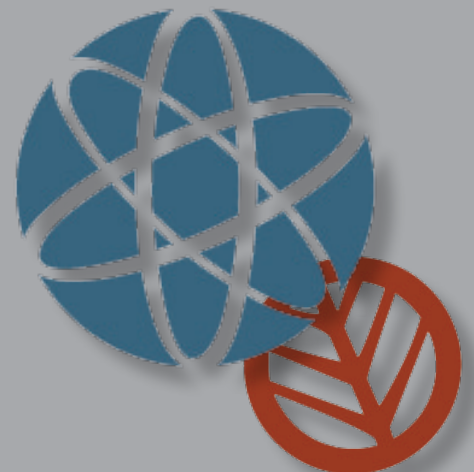
FORUM #2 ELEMENTS

MEETING PURPOSE

- Provide an update on plan progress to date
- Provide an opportunity for the public to provide input on plan focus areas and action items

MEETING ACTIVITIES

- Presentation with live keypad polling
- Exhibit boards detailing action items under each of the four focus areas
- Visitor attractions map input
- Comment cards





Exploring Alcove House at Bandelier National Monument

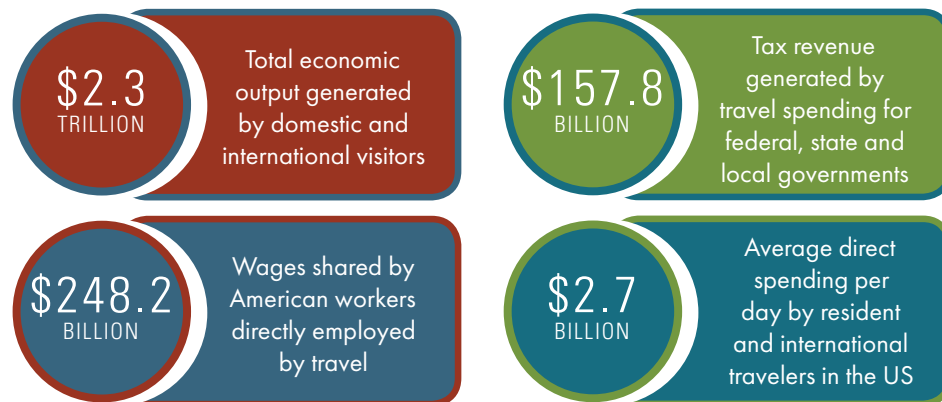


2.TOURISM TODAY AND PROSPECTS FOR LOS ALAMOS

NATIONAL TRAVEL + TOURISM TRENDS

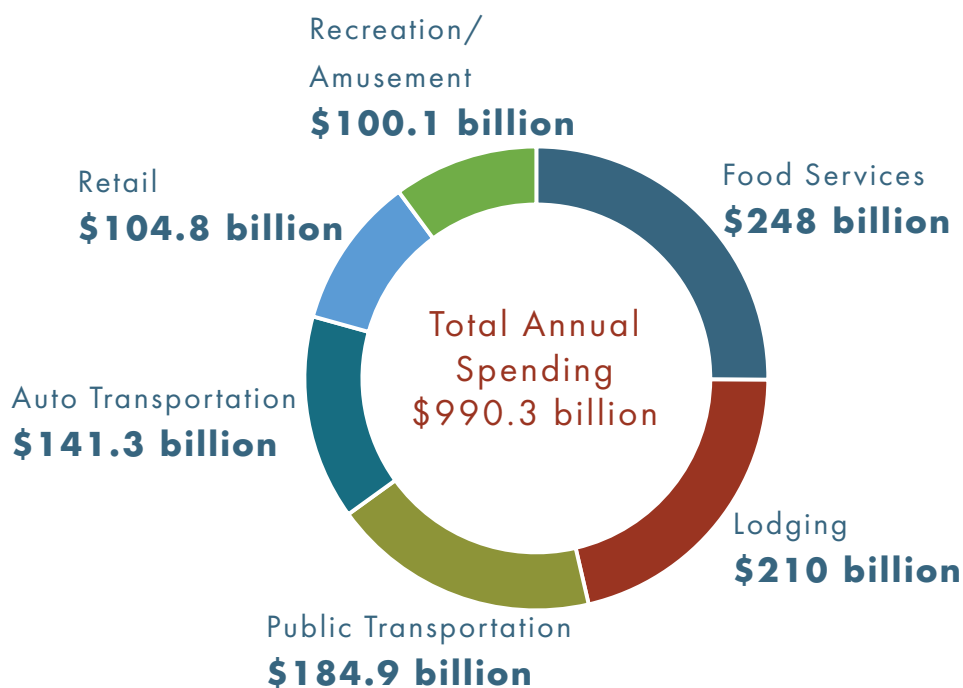
The tourism industry is a growing and sustainable contributor to the economy throughout the United States. The total contribution of travel and tourism to GDP was 8.1 percent in 2016. Understanding national tourism trends can help Los Alamos anticipate changes, look to the future and capitalize on opportunities to enhance tourism locally.

TRAVEL INDUSTRY IMPACT



U.S. TRAVEL SPENDING

(includes leisure + business travel)



JOB CREATION

- In 2016, travel and tourism directly supported 5,486,000 jobs (3.6% of total employment). This is expected to rise to 7,074,000 jobs in 2018 (4.3% of total employment).
- 15.3 million jobs (direct + indirect and induced) are supported by travel in the U.S. – 8.6 million (approximately 78%) of these are directly supported.



2016 TRAVEL + TOURISM TRENDS

Major trends that impacted the industry in 2016 include:

- Alternative accommodations (e.g., Airbnb)
- Travel agents and packaged travel increasing in popularity because there are too many choices for potential travelers to sift through on their own
- Interest in 'unplugging' when traveling and getting away from technology

TOP 5 U.S. LEISURE ACTIVITIES

- Visiting relatives
- Shopping
- Visiting friends
- Fine dining
- Rural sightseeing

1.7 billion leisure person-trips (one person on a trip away from home overnight in paid accommodations) were taken by U.S. residents in 2016

STATE + REGIONAL TOURISM

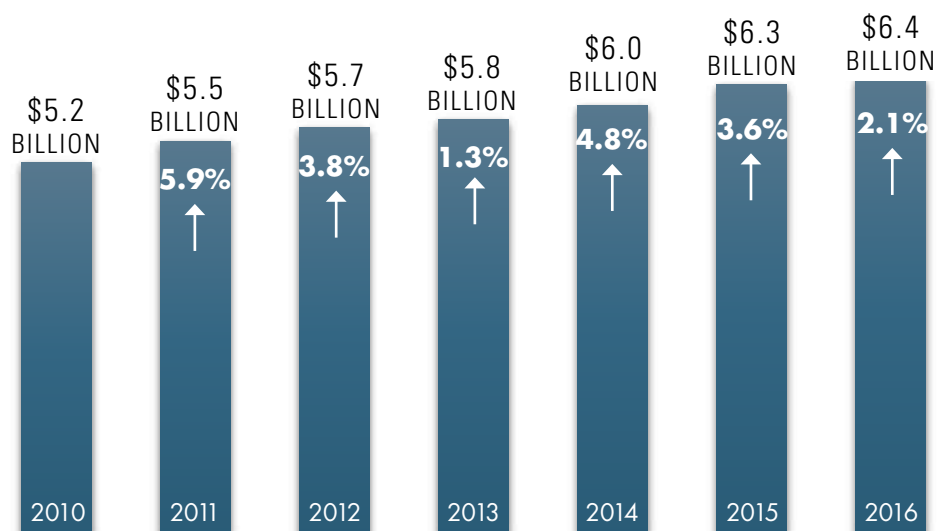
New Mexico's economic pillars are its natural resources, tourism, retail trade and federal government spending. The tourism industry is a growing contributor to New Mexico and Los Alamos economies. As visitation continues to increase, the local community will benefit from visitors' economic contributions.

STATE TOURISM STATISTICS

NEW MEXICO VISITATION SETS RECORD IN 2016



NEW MEXICO VISITOR SPENDING: 2010 - 2016



The three largest sectors for visitor spending in New Mexico in 2016 were: Lodging (31%); Food + Beverage (23%); Retail (17%)

*New Mexico Tourism Department, 2016 Annual Report
+ Nov 16, 2017 Website Press Release*

TOP 5 NM VISITOR ACTIVITIES

- Shopping
- Visiting Landmark/historic site
- Fine Dining
- Visiting National/State park
- Visiting a museum

*New Mexico Tourism Department,
Visitor Profile 2014-2015*

OUT OF STATE VISITORS

In 2016, approximately **24 million tourist trips, or 70% of all trips**, in New Mexico were made by out-of-state visitors

*New Mexico hits tourism record,
Albuquerque Journal, July 6, 2017*

HOUSEHOLD TAX OFFSET

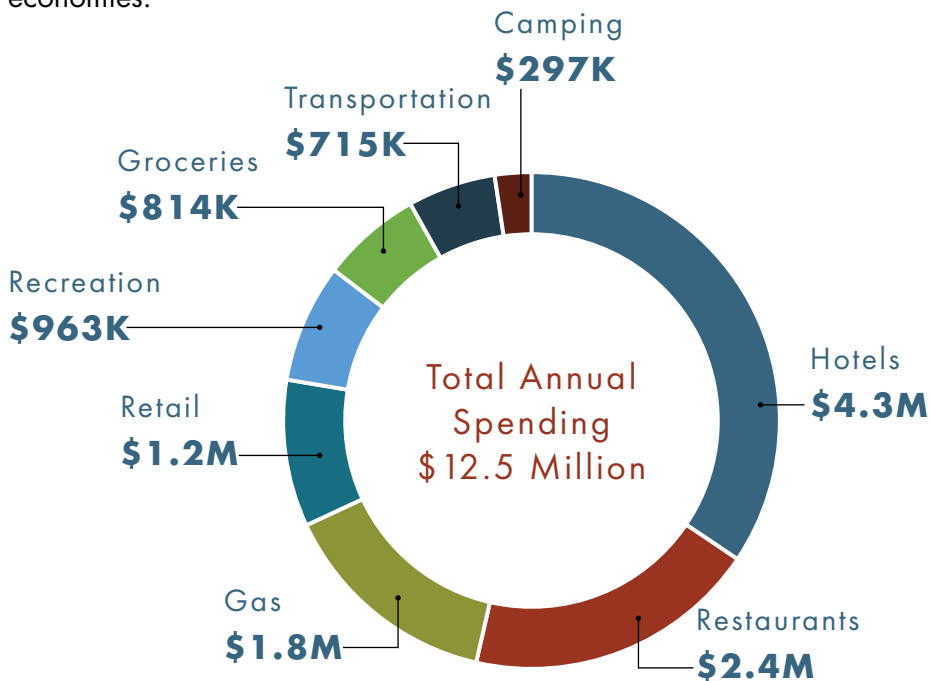
Direct visitor spending in 2016 **offset the household tax burden by \$841**

*New Mexico Tourism Department:
New Mexico True Website
Nov 16, 2017*

REGIONAL TOURISM STATISTICS: NATIONAL PARKS

BANDELIER NATIONAL MONUMENT VISITORS SPEND MONEY IN LOCAL GATEWAY REGIONS

In 2016, 198,500 park visitors spent approximately \$12.5 million in local gateway regions while visiting Bandelier National Monument [see side bar]. This added \$15.8 million in economic output to local gateway economies.



VALLES CALDERA NATIONAL PRESERVE

In 2016, Valles Caldera experienced a 10 percent increase in visitors over 2015, attracting approximately 50,000 people.

MANHATTAN PROJECT NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

According to the National Park Service, in 2016, undefined park visitors spent an estimated \$728,000 in local gateway regions while visiting Manhattan Project New Mexico. These expenditures supported a total of 9 jobs, \$361,400 in value added, and \$671,700 in economic output in local gateway economies.

NATIONAL PARK LOCAL GATEWAY REGIONS

Gateway Regions are the areas directly surrounding National Park Service sites - typically within 60 miles

Gateway economies include the cities and towns where visitors typically stay and spend money while visiting NPS sites.

In New Mexico, total visitor spending in National Parks local gateway regions has risen from \$81.1 million in 2012 to \$108.4 million in 2016, a 34% increase.

This spending has ripple effects outside of the parks. Jobs, labor income, value added and economic output throughout the state have directly benefited from this spending.

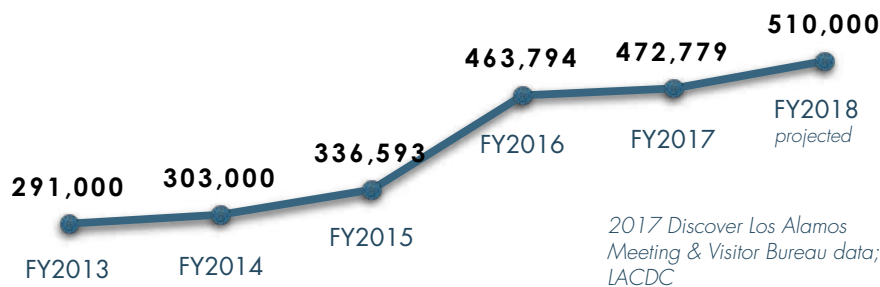
Capitalizing on the fact that Los Alamos is a gateway to three National Parks is a critical way to promote tourism. Lodging accounts for the largest share of park visitor spending. The County needs more hotels to increase the capture of visitor dollars and to support local businesses as park visitation increases.

All data on this page from National Park Service website: www.nps.gov/subjects/socialscience/vse.htm; 2016 Visitor Spending Effects Report

LOS ALAMOS TOURISM

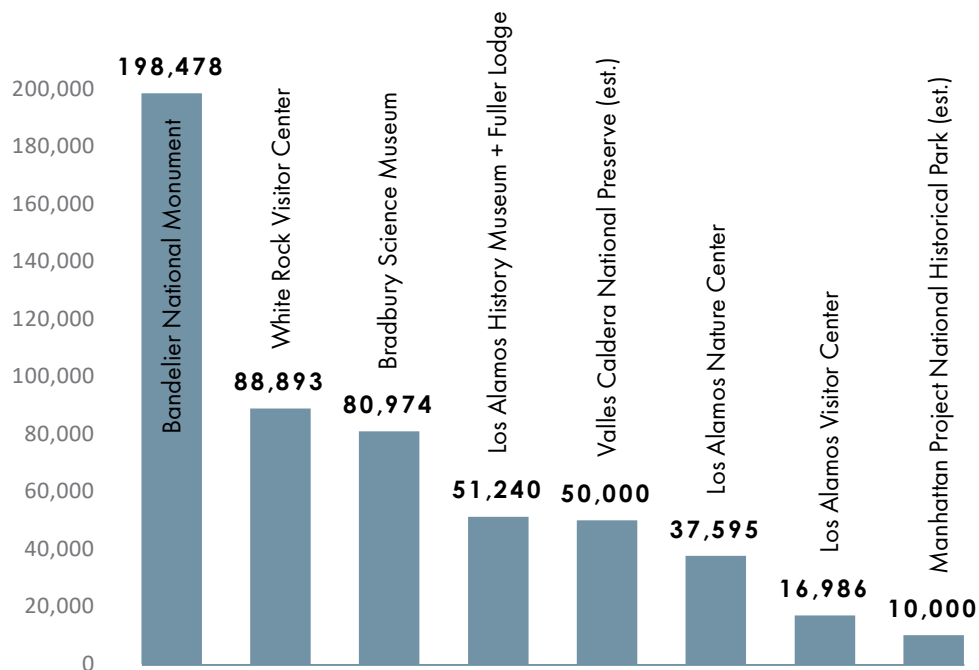
TOURIST VISITS TO LOS ALAMOS

Tourist visits to Los Alamos have been on the rise since 2013. With the recent addition of the Manhattan Project National Historical Park, visitor numbers are projected to increase even more, making it a critical time to strategically think about how to manage these visits, maximize economic returns, and provide experiences that bring people back.



VISITATION: ATTRACTIONS

Bandelier National Monument continues to be the most visited attraction near Los Alamos. Many visitors to Bandelier National Monument, White Rock Visitor Center and Valles Caldera National Preserve do not travel to downtown Los Alamos or other attractions.



2016 Discover Los Alamos Meeting & Visitor Bureau data; LACDC

DAY TRIPPERS

82 out of 100 visitors surveyed reported they visited Los Alamos for less than a day.

Discover Los Alamos Meeting & Visitor Bureau: June 2017 Report

VISITOR ACTIVITIES

Los Alamos has **3 of the top 5 activities** visitors in NM engage in:

- #2: Landmark historic sites
- #4: National Parks
- #5: Museums

(#1: Shopping, #3: Fine Dining)

New Mexico Tourism Department 2016 Visitor Profile

VISITLOSALAMOS.ORG

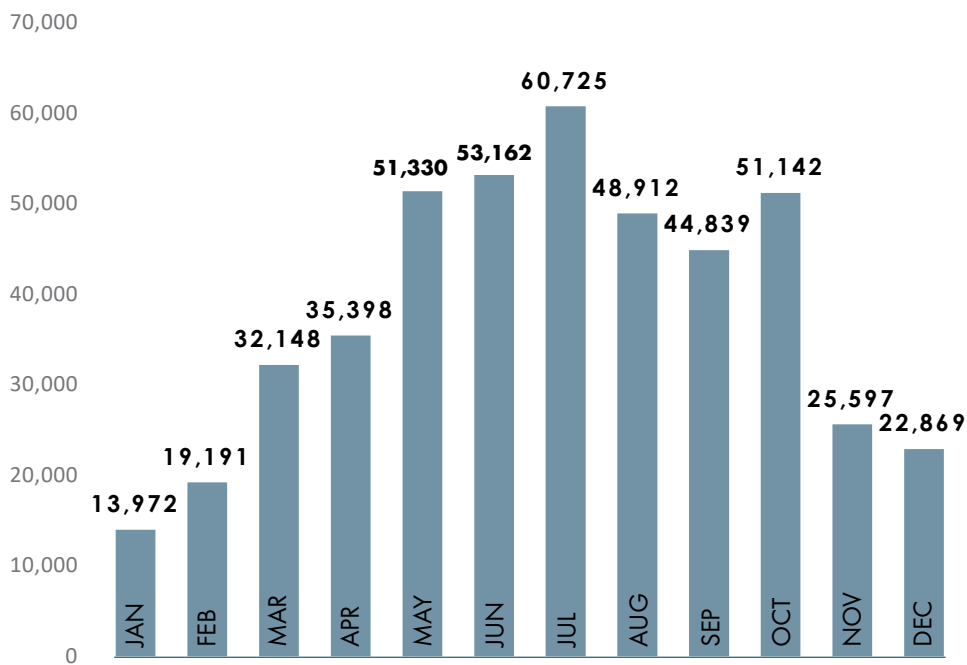
175,354 Visit Los Alamos website views in FY2017, up from 42,500 in FY2016.

Los Alamos FY2018 Tourism Marketing Plan

VISITATION: SEASONAL

The peak time for tourism visits to Los Alamos attractions is May to October. Typically the four months of November, December, January and February, combined, experience slightly more visitation than the month of July alone.

In 2017, visitation to attractions peaked in July, with 60,725 people visiting at least one of the following locations: Los Alamos Visitor Center, White Rock Visitor Center, Los Alamos Nature Center, Bandelier National Monument, Bradbury Science Museum, and/or Los Alamos History Museum.



COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AS TOURISM ENTREPRENEURS

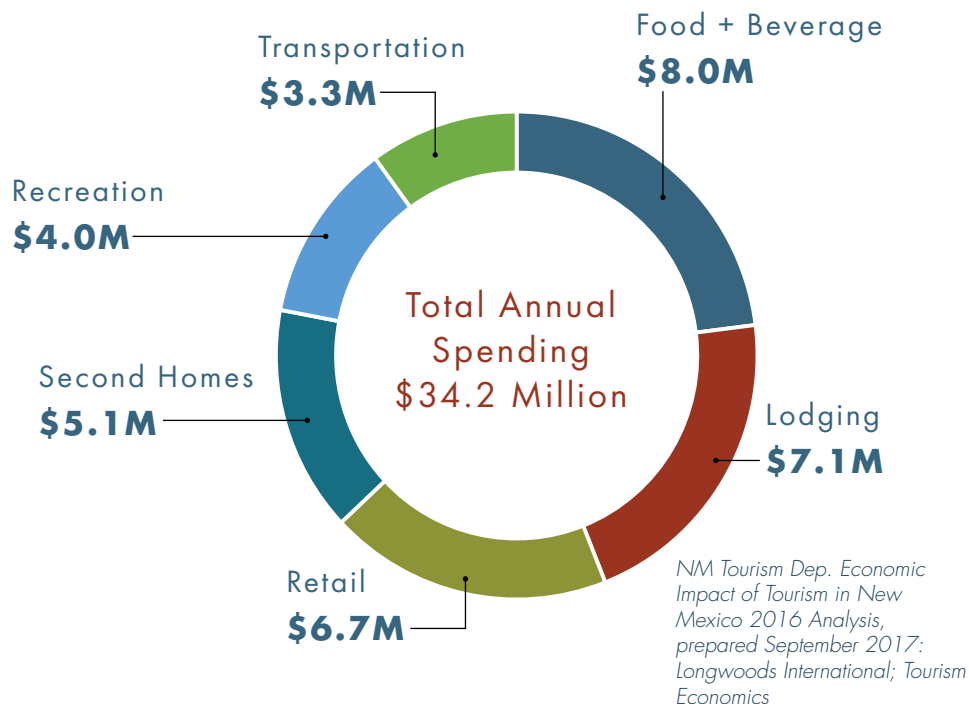
Los Alamos has a history of community-based organizations and entrepreneurs contributing to visitor and resident experiences. A few example results of creativity, entrepreneurship, fundraising, and collaborative partnering include:

- Los Alamos Historical Society: Manhattan Project National Historical Park
- Nature Center: Pajarito Environmental Education Center (PEEC)
- Pajarito Mountain Ski Area: Los Alamos Ski Club and successors
- Craft beer startup: Bathtub Row Brewing Co-Op
- Music offerings: Los Alamos Concert Association

LOS ALAMOS COUNTY VISITOR SPENDING

LOS ALAMOS COUNTY VISITOR SPENDING BY INDUSTRY

In 2016, visitors to Los Alamos County spent \$7.1 million on lodging (majority of demand comes from LANL-related business travel), \$8.0 million on food/beverage, \$6.7 million on retail, \$4.0 million on recreation and \$3.3 million on transportation. In total, visitors spent \$34.2 million, the same amount they spent in 2015, or 0% growth.



POWER OF THE VISITOR DOLLAR

As visitation to Los Alamos increases, so does the amount of money visitors spend. If the number of overnight visitors increases, the economic impact can be significant. This spending has both direct and indirect impacts in terms of County revenue, jobs generated, and infrastructure improvements that benefit both visitors and the local community.

LOS ALAMOS COUNTY VISITOR IMPACT TOURISM EMPLOYMENT

TOURISM EMPLOYMENT			
Year	Direct	Total (Direct, Indirect Induced)	County Tourism Dependence
2016	357	991	6.5%
2015	353	949	6.2%
2014	331	805	5.2%
2013	345	833	5.2%
2012	366	930	5.6%

New Mexico Tourism Department Economic Impact of Tourism in New Mexico 2016 Analysis, prepared September 2017: Tourism Economics

DISCOVER LOS ALAMOS MEETING & VISITOR BUREAU

According to the Discover Los Alamos Meeting & Visitor Bureau monthly report for June 2017, visitors came most often from the following locations:

New Mexico Cities:

- Albuquerque
- Alamogordo
- Belen
- Espanola
- Farmington
- Las Vegas
- Rowe
- Santa Fe
- Taos
- Truth or Consequences

States:

- Arizona
- California
- Colorado
- Florida
- Ohio
- Oregon
- Pennsylvania
- Texas
- Washington State

Countries:

- Australia
- Canada
- England
- Japan
- Netherlands

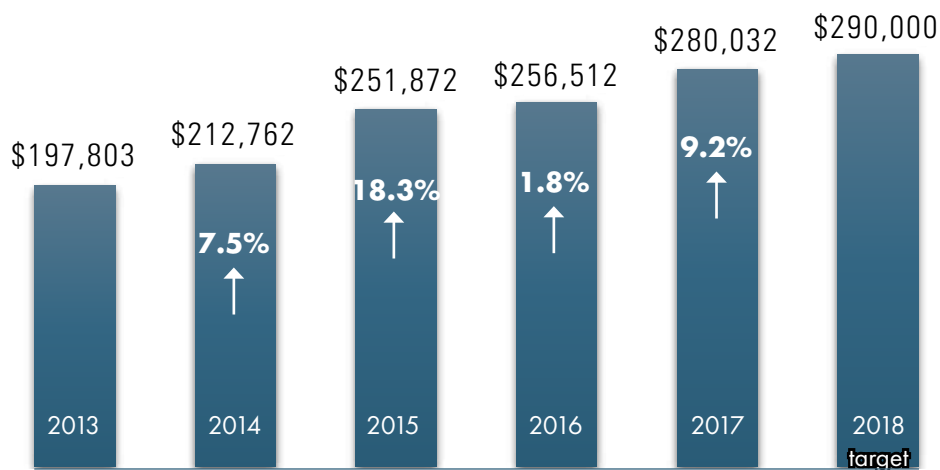
*Numbers of visitors from each location were not included in report.

HOW VISITORS CONTRIBUTE TO LOS ALAMOS COUNTY REVENUE

Direct economic impact from tourism to Los Alamos County revenue comes from the Lodgers' Tax and Gross Receipts Tax.

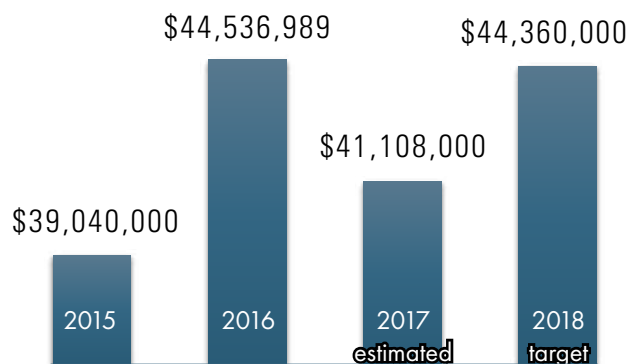
LODGERS' TAX REVENUES

Lodgers' Tax is a tax charged to people using commercial, short-term lodging accommodations. This tax revenue must be used for advertising, publicizing and promoting tourist attractions and facilities in and around Los Alamos. Lodgers' Tax revenues have been increasing since 2013. In 2017, revenues increased approximately 9% from 2016, despite a decrease in number of available hotel rooms.



GROSS RECEIPTS TAX REVENUES

Gross Receipts Tax (GRT) is imposed on businesses on the sale of goods and services. Both the local community and visitors are subjected to this tax. It accounts for 67% of the total General Fund budgeted revenues for Los Alamos County. For the last six months of 2017, the GRT rate was 7.31%. Most GRT revenue comes from LANL. Rates in New Mexico range from 5.50 to 9.25%.



NEW MEXICO LODGERS' TAX COLLECTION

Lodgers' Tax Receipts by County FY2015-2016:

- Los Alamos (5%): \$256,512
- Eddy (5%): \$76,644
- Grant (5%): \$63,928
- Lincoln (4%): \$49,066
- Luna (5%): \$2,755
- Rio Arriba (3%): \$67,053
- Sandoval (5%): \$13,678
- San Miguel (5%): \$29,828
- Santa Fe (5%): \$385,103
- Sierra (3%): \$5,553
- Socorro (3%): \$2,334
- Taos (5%): \$332,269

Lodgers' Tax Receipts by Selected Northern NM Municipalities FY2015-2016:

- Angel Fire (5%): \$278,512
- Bernalillo (3%): \$120,377
- Grants (5%): \$369,928
- Las Vegas (4%): \$305,374
- Santa Fe (5%): \$6,959,827
- Socorro (5%): \$426,520
- Taos (5%): \$1,151,943
- Taos Ski Valley (5%): \$334,423

Los Alamos County 2018 Biennial Budget - Proposed; Lodgers' Tax Report FY2016, State of New Mexico Finance + Administration; Gross Receipts Tax Rates Schedule, State of New Mexico Taxation & Revenue Dept.

LOS ALAMOS HOTEL OCCUPANCY: SMITH TRAVEL RESEARCH (STR) REPORT

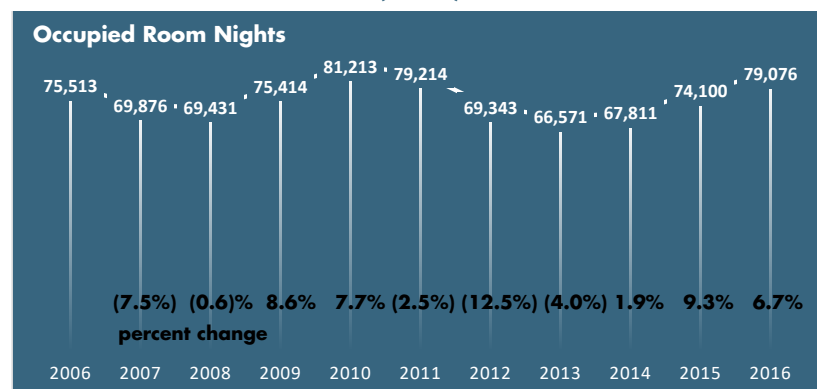
Currently, three hotels and three bed and breakfast establishments compose the stock of lodging inventory in Los Alamos, with 238 total rooms. Hilltop House closed in December 2014 and Motel 6 closed in May 2015. Recreational vehicle and campground locations are provided near the National Parks. Historically, hotel occupancy rates for the Los Alamos market have ranged from 50.9% to 73.6% and the average daily rate has trended upward, according to a 2017 HVS Consulting & Valuation Occupancy study referencing STR data. By comparison, the U.S. hotel industry reports a 65.7% average occupancy rate in 2017, and New Mexico a 63.5% average occupancy rate, according to the June 2017 Rocky Mountain Lodging Report.

Occupancy first peaked in 2006 when a new entity assumed management of Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), resulting in significant temporary demand by LANL contractors and visitors. The lowest occupancy rates between 2008–2013 are a result of the national recession and wildfires in 2011 that caused evacuation of the town and destruction of a portion of Bandelier National Monument that was again impacted by flooding in 2013.

Increases in occupancy have occurred since that time. The increases are attributed to growth at LANL, new National Parks in the area, the “New Mexico True” marketing campaign, closure of two hotel properties and overall strong economy.

Year-to-date 2017 data illustrates continued strengthening in occupancy and a roughly \$4 gain in average rate. A portion of demand related to LANL and nearby recreational offerings is reportedly diverted from this market and typically stays in Santa Fe. The tables below and on the following page provide additional context for hotel occupancy and revenue changes per a 2017 HVS Market Study.

LOS ALAMOS HOTEL HISTORICAL SUPPLY + DEMAND TRENDS (STR)



Average Annual
Compounded
Change
2007-2010: 5.1
2010-2016: (0.4)

Year to Date through July
2016 | occupied room nights: 44,516
2017 | occupied room nights: 45,123; % change: 1.4%

2017 HVS Market
Study Through
Occupancy and
Average Rate

NEW MEXICO HOTEL OCCUPANCY JUNE 2017

Los Alamos

- Rooms Nights Available: 7,140
- Occupancy: ~73.6%

Albuquerque

- Room Nights Available: 239,991
- Occupancy: 76.8%

Farmington

- Room Nights Available: 26,871
- Occupancy: 72.9%

Las Cruces

- Room Nights Available: 31,021
- Occupancy: 66.6%

Santa Fe

- Room Nights Available: 109,622
- Occupancy: 79.9%

Taos

- Room Nights Available: 19,695
- Occupancy: 71.4%

Southeast NM

- Room Nights Available: 27,150
- Occupancy: 78.0%

Other NM

- Room Nights Available: 27,840
- Occupancy: 66.3%

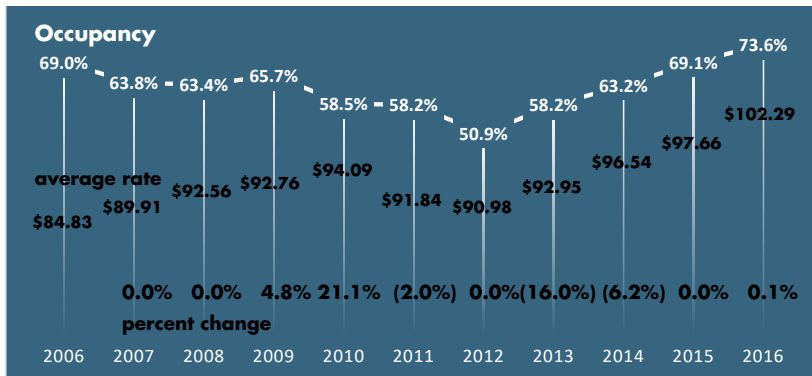
Los Alamos data: took rooms available (238) and multiplied by 30 (# of days in June); Other locations: Rocky Mountain Lodging Report, June 2017

STR DATA LIMITATIONS

“It is important to note some limitations of the STR data. Hotels are occasionally added to or removed from the sample; not every property reports data in a consistent and timely manner.

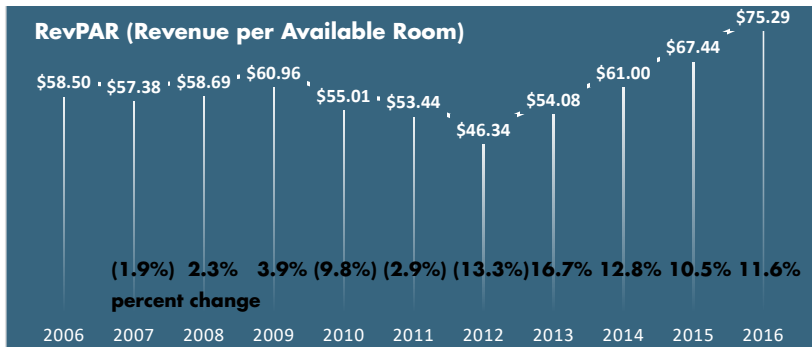
These factors can influence the overall quality of the information by skewing the results, and these inconsistencies may also cause the STR data to differ from the results of our competitive survey.

Nonetheless, STR data provide the best indication of aggregate growth or decline in existing supply and demand; these trends have been considered in our analysis. Opening dates, as available, are presented for each reporting hotel in the graphs to the left.”



Average Annual
Compounded
Change
2007-2010: 1.5
2010-2016: 1.4

Year to Date through July
2016 | occupancy: 71.4%; average rate: \$100.54
2017 | occupancy: 72.2%; average rate: \$104.36; % change: 3.8%



Average Annual
Compounded
Change
2007-2010: (1.4)
2010-2016: 5.4

Year to Date through July
2016 | RevPAR: \$71.81%
2017 | RevPAR: \$75.30; % change: 4.9%

Hotels Included in Sample HVS 2017 Market Study	Competitive Status	# of Rooms	Year Affiliated	Year Opened
Comfort Inn & Suites Los Alamos	Primary	55	Oct '09	Dec '97
Hampton Inn Suites Los Alamos	Primary	73	Dec '02	Dec '02
Holiday Inn Express + Suites Los Alamos Entrada	Primary	86	Nov '09	Nov '09
Atomic City Hotel (former Hilltop House)	Secondary	0	Nov '17	Jan '68
Homewood Suites Santa Fe North *	Secondary	81	Feb '05	Feb '05

* Note: Homewood Suites is located in Santa Fe County but is considered part of the Los Alamos hotel market area, and was included in the HVS 2017 Market Study. Bed and breakfast accommodations are not included in STR data.

LOS ALAMOS TRANSPORTATION

As in many mountain communities, access to Los Alamos is relatively limited. Two state roads (NM4 and NM 502) provide entry to Los Alamos and White Rock, in a loop formation connecting both communities. NM 502 connects Los Alamos with US 84/285, leading to Santa Fe. The Los Alamos County Airport is a general aviation facility. No airlines currently serve this airport. The closest locations for commercial flights are the Santa Fe Municipal Airport and Albuquerque International Sunport.

Los Alamos County's Atomic City Transit (ACT) operates public transit throughout Los Alamos, connecting to White Rock, and also operates a shuttle bus from White Rock Visitor Center to Bandelier National Monument. Free bus service is provided from 6am to 8pm, Monday to Friday, on seven routes, with a Dial-a-Ride service available until 9pm. This includes a downtown circulator trolley providing service between LANL and downtown Los Alamos every 30 minutes, with peak service provided every 15 minutes mid-day.

There is no transit service on weekends, the peak days visitors are in the area. The only exception to this is the running of the Bandelier shuttle, which operate seven days per week from mid-May to mid-October. The *2015 Los Alamos Comprehensive Transit Study* concluded that it is not viable to extend transit service through the weekend, due to lack of demand from students and workers, the system's main ridership.

Los Alamos is a Bronze Award Bicycle Friendly Community through the League of American Bicyclists. Currently, there are three dedicated bicycle lanes in Los Alamos. Right-of-way stripes are painted on Canyon Road while Central Avenue, one of downtown Los Alamos' main arterial roads includes sharrows. White Rock also has dedicated bicycle lanes and offers a multi-use trail. The Canyon Rim Trail, located approximately 1.8 miles from downtown Los Alamos, is a 2.7 mile asphalt surface multi-use trail for all skill levels. The Canyon Rim Trail provides an out and back option for hiking, nature trips, birding and mountain biking. It connects several mountain bike and multi-use trails in the area.

Sidewalks exist on key roads in Los Alamos and White Rock, and the downtown Los Alamos Historic Walking Tour provides a self-guided activity that promotes walking. While it is possible to walk to many of the attractions in downtown Los Alamos, distances between destinations can be long for visitors. There are several parking lots available to visitors, but they are spread out and signage will be improved with the implementation of the Wayfinding Plan.

ATOMIC CITY TRANSIT

Atomic City Transit operates a downtown circulator trolley that provides service between LANL and downtown every 30 minutes, Monday–Friday, from 6:15am – 7:13pm. Peak services is provided every 15 minutes, Monday–Friday, from 11:00am - 12:58pm.



The trolley operating in winter months.

Atomic City Transit also operates a free shuttle bus from the White Rock Visitor Center to Bandelier National Monument. The shuttle runs approximately every 30 minutes during the week and every 20 minutes on weekends, from 9:00am - 3:00pm.



The Bandelier Shuttle waiting for passengers at Bandelier National Monument.



Fuller Lodge
Photographer: Vint Miller

ISSUES + OPPORTUNITIES

Los Alamos is at a crossroads. Visitors are coming. Community members can let tourism happen to them, or they can be strategic in driving the types of visitors and economic impact desired.

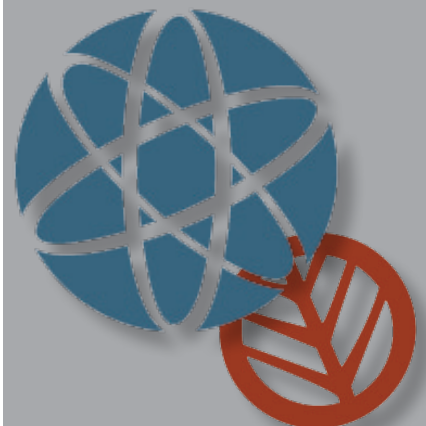
- Los Alamos has many assets and attractions that create a solid foundation for tourism development. Being a gateway to three National Parks, having outdoor recreation options and stunning scenery, having a long and rich science history, and an intriguing ancient history are key assets that many communities would love to have.
- Limited accommodations result in Los Alamos being able to serve primarily only day visitors.
- There are several well-used, multi-use trails in Los Alamos that local community members and visitors use for walking, hiking, mountain biking and horseback riding. Improvements to existing trails and better connections between all trails can help enhance the trail system.
- The Los Alamos County Economic Development Fund and Lodgers' Tax revenue pay for most of all tourism marketing and services for the area.
- Current tourism institutional structure lacks a central point of contact and responsibility. The County outsources tourism marketing and services to several contractors; which results in a lack of leadership, consistency, and responsiveness.
- The new Los Alamos brand "Where discoveries are made!" creates intrigue, can be applied to many things, and is a solid foundation on which to build the marketing message and deliver a positive experience.
- Today's visitors expect many dining and shopping options. An increase in visitors will help support extended hours for existing businesses and help develop new businesses.

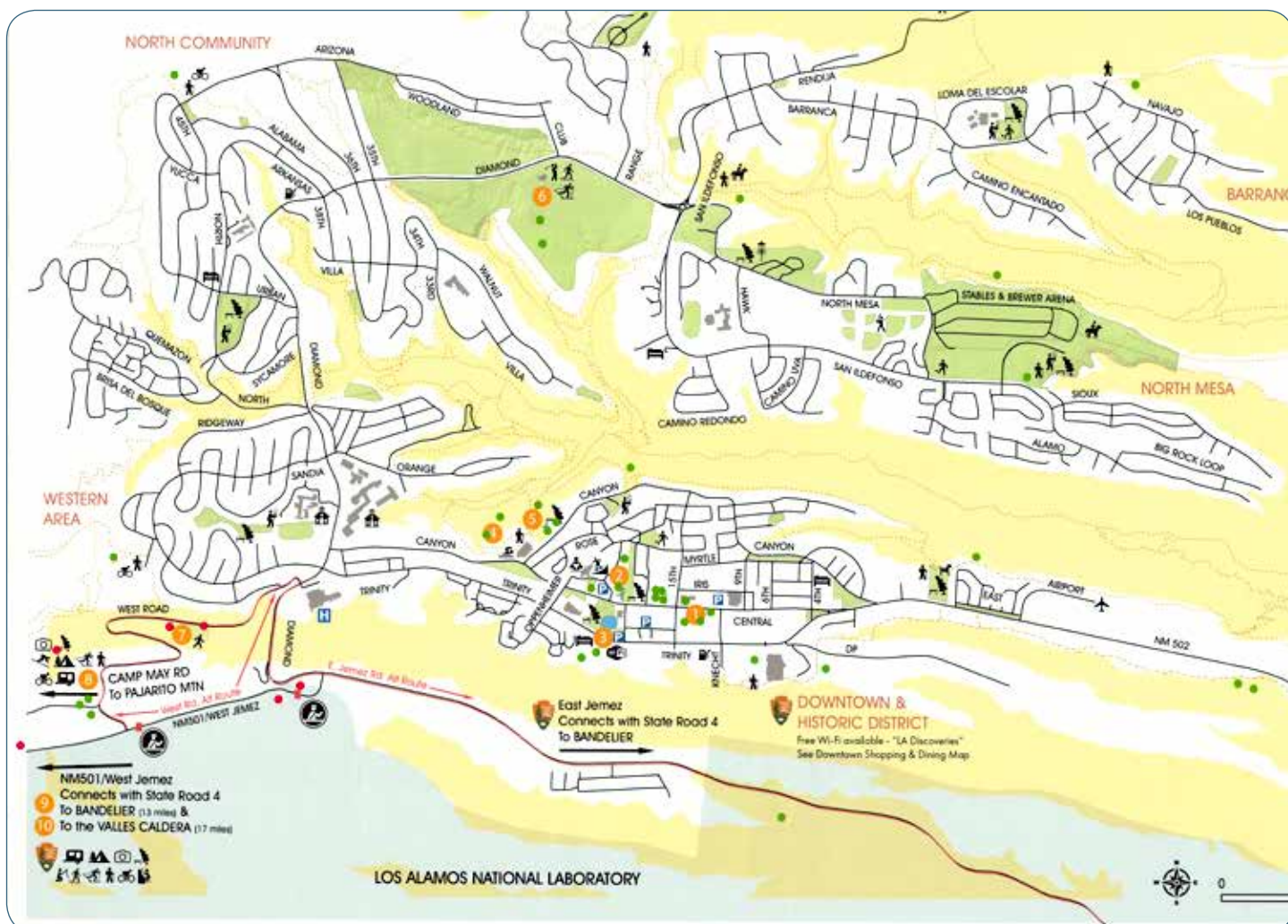
This Tourism Strategic Plan provides tactics Los Alamos County can use to leverage the community's strengths and begin to implement the infrastructure necessary to increase the impact of tourism as an economic driver.

PUBLIC FORUM #2 MAPPING EXERCISE

Participants at the second public forum were asked to place green dots in areas of Los Alamos and White Rock that currently work well for the local community and visitors and red dots in areas where improvements need to be made on large print versions of the visitor maps (shown on the facing page).

The dots indicate that people appreciate the close proximity of amenities in downtown Los Alamos, but recognize that connections to both Pajarito Mountain and White Rock could be improved. Dots also indicate that the trails in White Rock need improvement and better trail connections would be beneficial to the local community.





Public Forum participants placed green and red dots in specific locations on the Los Alamos and + White Rock visitor maps.





3. STRATEGIC DIRECTION

View from White Rock Canyon Rim Trail of White Rock Canyon
overlooking the Rio Grande River



FOCUS AREAS

Encouraging and supporting the Los Alamos tourism economy has been an evolving effort, with the public and private sector participating on both a local and regional scale. The Tourism Strategic Plan addresses and calibrates these efforts under four areas of focus. It is not a comprehensive wish list, but instead provides a strategic and clear path to direct efforts for the next decade.

The Focus Areas are:



1 | **CREATE + MARKET** AN INVITING COMMUNITY



2 | **INCREASE** THE CAPTURE OF VISITOR DOLLARS



3 | **ENRICH** OUR ATTRACTIONS AND DOWNTOWN + CELEBRATE THE NATURAL BEAUTY



4 | **OPERATE** WITH INTENTIONAL LEADERSHIP, PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INVESTMENT & PARTNERSHIPS

Each of the Focus Areas in this section includes an intent and desired outcome, along with the following:

- **GOALS:** broad, primary outcomes
- **STRATEGIES:** approaches to achieve goals
- **TACTICS:** tools used or steps to take in pursuing strategies
 - NT = Near-term (0 - 3 years)
 - MT = Mid-term (3 - 5 years)
 - LT = Long-term (5 - 10 years)

Strategic priorities are addressed in Chapter 4, which describes near-term actions and includes relative costs and potential funding sources for each action.

LOS ALAMOS NATIONAL LABORATORY

Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) is the primary economic contributor to Los Alamos.

The County should continue to serve the needs of LANL and its visitors and not do anything that puts its significant economic contribution to the County in jeopardy.



View of LANL facilities on United States Department of Energy grounds.



1 | CREATE + MARKET AN INVITING COMMUNITY

INTENT

The Strategic Tourism Plan provides the opportunity to examine how Los Alamos tourism marketing is perceived by potential visitors, evaluate its effectiveness in reaching target audiences, and understand how information meets their needs. It is also the opportunity to examine the impressions a place and the local community make on visitors. Visitors are already coming to Los Alamos, mostly for the three National Parks. Los Alamos could better capture the benefits of being a gateway community by giving attention to the impressions formed prior to arrival and experiences of these guests during their visit.

The three strongest components of Los Alamos' tourism offerings are outdoor recreation, history and science. Focusing on building and enhancing these three aspects is essential to the near and mid-term outlook, before stretching tourism marketing efforts to other aspects that visitors enjoy, such as the arts, music, team sports, western lifestyles, shopping and specific family-oriented attractions. Los Alamos has a strong collection of attractions and the creation of additional attractions should not be the first priority. Rather, adding accommodations and improving visitor services should be the primary focus for improved experiences.

DESIRED OUTCOME

Improved trip planning, increased hotel booking, improved first impressions, improved visitor conveniences, and increased repeat visitation.

GOAL 1.1 FOCUS OUR MARKETING EFFORTS TO REFLECT OUR COMMUNITY TO TARGETED VISITORS

FOCUS ON MARKETING 'OUTDOOR RECREATION, HISTORY AND SCIENCE' AS THE THREE CORE DESTINATION ASPECTS OF LOS ALAMOS

- Provide specific marketing to visitors at the three National Parks to showcase the primary outdoor recreation, history and science attractions in Los Alamos, as well as hospitality services. Marketing methods include: providing information on NPS shuttles, educating NPS visitor contacts about offerings and hours, and providing information on websites in which National Park visitors plan their trips. (NT)
- Create a promotional video to showcase outdoor recreation, history and science activities and events in Los Alamos. (NT)
- Work with Pajarito Environmental Education Center (PEEC) to develop local films about nature, outdoor recreation and history to show at the Planetarium. (NT)
- Improve and expand targeted marketing to science aficionados and people curious about science with the promotion and evolution of ScienceFest. Honoring contemporary scientific discoveries could also be a way to build the reputation of the festival beyond the immediate region. Market LANL's DisruptTech, a celebration of the disruptive technology created by Los Alamos scientists, with ScienceFest to create connections between the target markets for each event. (NT, MT)

- Support ongoing County partnerships with the Los Alamos Historical Society and Bradbury Science Museum in their collaborations with the Manhattan Project National Historical Park. (NT, MT, LT)
- Promote the Los Alamos Trails app to visitors (before they arrive and while they are visiting). (NT)

IMPROVE LOS ALAMOS TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY WEB AND SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE, AND IDENTIFY WAYS TO MAXIMIZE EXPOSURE TO TARGET MARKETS

- Implement or contract work to improve the function and appeal of the *visitlosalamos.org* website and social media platforms including the following:
 - Redesign the website to highlight outdoor recreation, history and science attractions and events. (MT)
 - Incorporate a promotional video(s) into the website. (NT)
 - Improve the calendar of events website feature to highlight categories of interest (e.g., outdoor recreation, history, science). Add a search engine so visitors can identify events of interest to them. Two-way link the calendar to other regional and state visitor calendars. (NT)
 - Implement the Wayfinding Tools recommendations for technology integration, such as map features, apps and kiosks to communicate information. Update online maps and website information to include communication of public parking locations and attraction information linked to common navigation websites/apps. (NT, MT)
 - Prepare an analytical report of Los Alamos tourism web and social media tracking for monthly evaluation. (NT)

- Improve Los Alamos' presence within New Mexico True online opportunities by requesting the following changes:
 - Add the three National Parks and Los Alamos attractions, along with a promotional video, to the North Central region page of the New Mexico Tourism Department website. (NT)
 - Utilize aspects of the Los Alamos visitor guide and website to update the descriptions and resources on the New Mexico True website. (NT)
 - Replace the photographs of Los Alamos with higher quality images that promote outdoor recreation, history and science offerings. (NT)
 - Feature more Los Alamos attractions within the New Mexico True topical areas such as outdoor adventures, trails and festivals. (NT)
 - Provide photography for the New Mexico True Instagram feed. (NT)

ENHANCE REGIONAL MARKETING EFFORTS

- Improve and expand New Mexico True branding and marketing opportunities and develop content to provide to the New Mexico Department of Tourism. (NT)
- Designate an "Atomic Trail" route (starting at 109 East Palace in Santa Fe and terminating at Fuller Lodge) with partners such as the Los Alamos History Museum to include on the New Mexico True website. (MT)
- Market Los Alamos as a home base to stay while exploring nearby retreats and other areas of interest (Jemez Springs, Abiqui, Ojo Caliente, Taos, Santa Fe, Northern New Mexico Pueblos). (NT)

- Leverage marketing dollars with participation in Northern New Mexico Air Alliance. (NT, MT)
- Strategically place and improve print tourism information materials where visitors are planning trips to encourage them to extend their stay. (NT)
- Market and coordinate with local, regional and national tour operators, travel agencies and hotel concierges. (NT, MT)
- Expand marketing to National Park Service visitors to increase awareness of, and drive visitation to, the many amenities in Los Alamos. (NT)
- Create marketing partnership with Heritage Hotel and Resorts or similar boutique hotel family of properties, encouraging day trips from their properties to Los Alamos area attractions. (NT, MT)
- Explore partnerships with nearby Pueblos. (NT)

COORDINATE LOCAL MARKETING EFFORTS TO BETTER INFORM VISITORS

- Implement the Los Alamos Brand Action Plan and provide LANL personnel and Los Alamos community members with marketing messages and information so they can serve as “ambassadors” for the community and its assets, and be welcoming to visitors. (NT, MT)
- Fund and continue to implement the Los Alamos Brand Action Plan. (NT)
- Integrate marketing efforts between attractions and local businesses to improve visitor awareness of all Los Alamos offerings. This includes encouraging participation in Brand Action Plan Visitor Journey A2D training (Arrival to Departure customer service, ambassador and docent training, local attractions training), and providing promotional information at attractions and local businesses. (NT, MT)
- Provide multi-day, themed packages for visitors to simplify their trip and combine discounts. (NT)

- Consolidate the amount of print materials produced for visitors, anticipating that they will primarily refer to digital materials until they are within the County. Provide greater distinction between print materials produced primarily for a local audience and create materials more directed toward the visitor experience. (NT)
- Include video marketing of Los Alamos on the Bandelier visitor shuttle bus (with app option for sound). (NT)
- Utilize a promotional video at visitor attractions to showcase the variety of activities available. (NT)
- Reorganize and revamp local information on the *visitlosalamos.org* website relevant to visitors regarding group event accommodation, retail, dining, services and entertainment to ensure ease of access for users. (NT)
- Market a “hotel packet” provided to hotels that includes the printed orientation map, recently developed by Wayfinding consultant, of Los Alamos shopping, dining and attraction options and a brochure of recreational opportunities. (NT)
- Create “I’m only here for a little while, what hikes should I do?” brochure. (NT)

GOAL 1.2 ENHANCE THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A GOOD FIRST IMPRESSION BY PROVIDING AN EASY TO NAVIGATE AND WELCOMING SETTING

IMPROVE LOS ALAMOS AND WHITE ROCK VISITOR CENTERS AND FULLER LODGE

- Relocate the Los Alamos Visitor Center to a more visible place better associated with visitor arrival and attractions. (NT, MT)
- Modernize displays at both visitor centers to be interactive and experiential. (MT)
- Improve the display and sharing of visitor information brochures with a more tailored and organized display of complete trip experiences for Los Alamos. (NT)

- Sell limited convenience items (i.e., refreshments) at both visitor centers to meet visitor expectations. (NT)
- Provide additional restrooms at the White Rock Visitor Center, along with picnic and outdoor play facilities. (MT, LT)
- Enhance White Rock Overlook Park by adding interpretive signage, entry features and landscape design. (MT)
- Implement Fuller Lodge interpretation plan to enhance visitor experience. (NT)
- Expand Fuller Lodge hours and provide a clear point of contact for information to better meet visitor needs. (NT)
- Implement the Los Alamos Brand Action Plan Visitor Journey A2D training for workers and local community members to welcome visitors. (NT)

ENHANCE LOS ALAMOS' ROLE AS A GATEWAY TO THREE NATIONAL PARKS

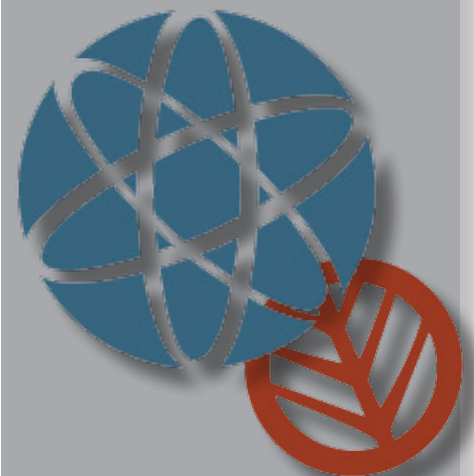
- Promote the branding slogan "Gateway to Three National Parks" consistently in key locations that encourage visitor awareness of all three parks and the gateway community (i.e., NPS locations and websites, lodging websites, visitor center, signage, and guest contact points). (NT, MT, LT)
- Continue to support Manhattan Project (including MPNHP) national branding and marketing effort with partners LACDC, Los Alamos Historical Society, Visit Tri-Cities, and Explore Oak Ridge. (NT, MT, LT)
- Develop access and market the Manhattan Project National Historical Park as part of Los Alamos with partners NPS, LANL, DOE, Los Alamos Historical Society, the State of New Mexico and the New Mexico Congressional delegation. (NT, MT, LT)
- Create an agreement between NPS and the County to include the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory National Historic Landmark District into the official boundaries of the park. (MT)
- Work with LANL and DOE to implement wayfinding recommendations to the security checkpoint. (NT)
- Promote the local "friends of" the National Parks groups as community volunteer opportunities. (NT)

VISITORS PREFER PEDESTRIAN- FRIENDLY PLACES

A recent survey by the National Recreation and Parks Association shows a significant number (42 percent) of Americans prefer visiting places that are pedestrian-friendly and easily walkable.

This national survey finding points to the importance of community design and ease of navigation in a visitor's initial location decision making, as well as decisions to extend or repeat a visit.

Source: www.nrpa.org/About-National-Recreation-and-Park-Association/press-room/new-survey-park-and-recreation-amenities-popular-among-vacation-goers/



ENHANCE ALL MOBILITY OPTIONS TO MAKE VISITOR TRAVEL EASIER AND ENCOURAGE OPTIONS OTHER THAN PERSONAL VEHICLE USE

- Improve bus connectivity and extend trips from the three National Parks to downtown Los Alamos, White Rock and nearby outdoor recreation areas by sharing transit information, increasing capacity and expanding to weekend service. (NT, MT, LT)
- Work on providing transfer system that brings visitors from Bandelier to Los Alamos to encourage them to spend time in Los Alamos. (NT, MT, LT)
- Add Atomic City Transit bus stop at Tsankawi in collaboration with BNM. (MT, LT)
- Continue to research available government funding to support the Bandelier Shuttle and potential extensions and capacity to support ridership needs. (NT, MT)
- Develop, in conjunction with the Transportation Board, a means for supporting the logistics of providing transit for larger scale events and festivals. (MT, LT)
- Prioritize, phase, fund and implement Wayfinding Plan Phases 1A + 1B for improved signage and visitor navigation. (NT)
- Coordinate with partners to organize additional walking tours with tour guides (e.g., History Museum). (NT)
- Create a walking tour app for downtown Los Alamos. (NT)
- Implement smart parking technology (i.e., real time parking and transit information and signage) and an online parking app. (LT)
- Improve visitor maps to highlight trails that best serve visitors and provide connections to attractions and add information about the trails app. (NT)
- Encourage NM DOT to complete the paving of NM Highway 126 (eight unpaved miles remaining) as part of the Jemez Mountain Trail National Scenic Byway. Work with Sandoval County to market the Byway to all types of users, including motorcyclists and bikers. (MT, LT)
- Support a bike-share program that is accessible for visitors. (MT)
- Evaluate feasibility of Los Alamos Regional Multi-Use Trail, a 30-mile bike and hike trail connecting Los Alamos and Bandelier National Monument. (NT, MT, LT)

LOS ALAMOS DOWNTOWN VISITOR CENTER RELOCATION

The Visitor Center in downtown Los Alamos is currently not a positive visitor experience. A shopping center is not where visitors look for, nor expect to find, visitor information. In addition, the current space is very limited and is crammed with tables and walls filled with information pamphlets, rack cards and brochures. There is no space for interpretive displays or elements to intrigue the visitors.

The primary purpose of a visitor center is to provide visitors with orientation and information on the area's attractions, lodging, businesses, services and other things relevant to tourism. Interpretive and educational information stimulate interest and enhance the visitor experience. Visitor centers should be a one-stop, physical location that is welcoming, personal, and provides all of the necessary information that is current, accurate and trustworthy. Where feasible, visitor centers are often integrated with services of Federal, state, or local agencies in the same geographic area.

Visitor centers also serve an important role in data collection. It is imperative to understand whom you are serving, what they want, and how they behave so that the destination can remain competitive and develop over time in response to the market. A destination information center can act as a central point in capturing, analyzing, and supplying this essential tourism data to the County and local stakeholders so that they understand the current situation and start a dialogue on how to appropriately develop, market, and sell the destination. A few of the things that can be included in the survey are length of stay, places they plan on visiting, trip expenditure, etc.

Along with the locations in the chart below, other locations that the County deems feasible should be considered. For example, the Post Office could be a possible location for the Visitor Center.

		CRITERIA				
		AT KEY DECISION POINT (often located at intercept location on the edge of town)	EASY + ADEQUATE PARKING	COUNTY OWNED PROPERTY	CO-LOCATION WITH MPNHP VISITOR CENTER	COST TO IMPLEMENT
LOCATIONS	FULLER LODGE (West Wing)	X	X	X	X	\$
	1010 CENTRAL (in front of Municipal Building)	X	X	X		\$\$\$
	PROPERTY AT ENTRANCE TO TOWN	X				\$\$\$
	ASHLEY POND (site of old Municipal Building)		X	X	X	\$\$



2 | INCREASE THE CAPTURE OF VISITOR DOLLARS

INTENT

Los Alamos is not currently capturing the maximum benefit of visitor spending. Hotels, restaurants, retail and recreation expenditures are the major categories for National Park gateway communities in the region. However, Los Alamos currently has limited options to capture this visitor spending.

There are a few hotels in the County with a collective total of 238 rooms. Occupancy rates have increased over the past decade and some hotels are often at capacity. However, there are no luxury and/or full-service hotels with the amenities that appeal to many visitors, including quality accommodations and services for business travel, meeting rooms, food and beverage services, spas, or in-house family entertainment. Filling this accommodation gap will make the greatest impact in increasing the capture of visitor dollars.

Festivals and events can be an important catalyst for tourism and can foster a positive image of a destination. Festivals provide an opportunity to encourage multi-day experiences, especially when accommodations, attractions, services and amenities provide more reason to extend a stay. Local communities play a vital role in tourism development through festivals. Events often start with a community focus and are then discovered by visitors. Rather than rely on this chance discovery, it is recommended that Los Alamos be intentional with the promotion of events and efforts to engage visitors in activities that highlight the key themes of outdoor recreation, history and science.

DESIRED OUTCOME

Increased visitor spending through overnight, extended and return visitation. Improved reputation for Los Alamos' hospitality and events that draw visitors.

GOAL 2.1 IMPROVE LODGING AND HOSPITALITY INFRASTRUCTURE, PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

INCREASE LODGING OPTIONS TO SUPPORT A HIGHER NUMBER OF OVERNIGHT VISITORS

- Continue to identify and engage hotel developers and operators to create full-service lodging and boutiques in Los Alamos. (NT, MT, LT)
- Create a development package for potential new lodging locations and coordinate an incentives program including (NT, MT):
 - Continue to identify desirable locations for future lodging development.
 - Prepare and coordinate design of a development packages for each site to promote development opportunities, infrastructure and design expectations.
 - Provide site-specific incentives for lodging development as applicable such as providing needed infrastructure connections and construction-ready preparation (including appropriate zoning and site environmental cleanup).
 - Explore hotel development incentive options such as land donations, infrastructure investments, tax abatement and/or favorable financing to attract a developer to construct a full-service hotel in downtown Los Alamos.
- Identify parcels for new RV parks in both Los Alamos and White Rock using criteria established by MPNHP Transportation sub-committee. Issue an RFP for an operator(s). Identify and facilitate a business to invest, develop and manage a new, high-quality, full-service RV Park for anticipated increase in tourism. (NT, MT)

- Work with public land managers to identify locations for future camp sites that minimize environmental impacts and provide an ideal experience for visitors. (MT)
- Adopt an ordinance to require informal tourism accommodations, such as Airbnb and VRBO rentals, to pay Lodgers' Tax. (NT)

IMPROVE HOSPITALITY BY PROVIDING SERVICE INDUSTRY TRAINING

- Implement hospitality training to assist local community members and service industry workers with how to truly welcome guests to Los Alamos. This training should include Visitor Journey A2D training, including customer service, ambassador and docent training, local attractions training. (NT, MT)
- Encourage the creation of a Hospitality Institute with UNM-LA degree program, certificate and seminars. (LT)

GOAL 2.2 ENHANCE MULTI-DAY EVENTS TO ENCOURAGE OVERNIGHT VISITATION

PROVIDE ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR EVENT MARKETING AND HOSTING

- Create an event fund and marketing support opportunities so event organizers can apply for grant assistance through an application process. Investigate the best process for collaboration with other grant opportunities, such as LACDC small projects promotion grant and New Mexico Tourism marketing promotion grants. (MT)
- Select highly attended events in Santa Fe, Albuquerque and Taos (e.g., Balloon Fiesta, Indian Market) and host complementary events in Los Alamos at the same time to leverage traffic already coming nearby and draw visitors to Los Alamos. Market these events aggressively to regional and national markets. (NT, MT)
- Utilize recommendations from the Los Alamos Brand Action Plan for incorporating the brandline "Where discoveries are made" in event marketing. (NT)

RV PARK EXAMPLE: GRANBY, CO

The Town of Granby, Colorado acquired land that was part of a failed real estate development called Shorefox in 2014. After marketing a portion of the land to an RV operator, the Town selected Sun Communities (a Michigan company specializing in RV Parks) to purchase 30 percent of the parcel.

The Town recently approved a long-term tax sharing agreement between Granby and Sun Communities, whereby Sun Communities will cover infrastructure costs up front and be reimbursed over the course of several years.

The funds used to reimburse Sun Communities for infrastructure costs at Shorefox will come directly from taxes assessed on commerce and recreational activities on the Shorefox property. The funding will not come from tax revenue generated outside the Shorefox parcel.

ENHANCE SCIENCE EVENTS, AND PROMOTE LANL STATUS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO ENCOURAGE OVERNIGHT VISITATION

- Enhance ScienceFest by better defining its purpose, desired outcome and niche in attracting visitors. Incorporate contemporary science achievements, and host an awards ceremony and/or symposium. Make the event more experiential for visitors so they can interact with the science and engineering work, including scientific team competitions. Create a more consistent theme and message to help draw more people from outside the region. Provide better clarity and signage regarding the locations that activities take place. (NT, MT)
- Explore the viability of hosting a high-tech retreat event to attract private sector talent to discuss application of LANL innovations. (MT)
- Create two additional dedicated science events, promoted regionally and state-wide. (MT)
- Leverage the Nature Center and Planetarium as part of science events and activity offerings. (NT)

ENHANCE OUTDOOR RECREATION EVENTS TO ENCOURAGE OVERNIGHT VISITATION

- Work with Pajarito Mountain Ski Area to develop opportunities to expand year-round, on-mountain activities. (MT)
- In the creation of community activity offerings, be mindful of how to promote activities to visitors and engage them in the low visitation seasons and in the evenings (e.g., winter recreation, late night ice skating). (MT)
- Support and create events that last for longer periods of time, like “trail festivals” with a variety of events (e.g., running races, mountain bike competitions, kids’ events). (MT)
- Encourage High Altitude Endurance organization(s) to host six events per year (e.g., mountain biking, long-distance road biking, skiing, trail running, marathons, triathlons). (MT)

CREATE NEW, AND ENHANCE EXISTING, EVENTS WITH A FOCUS ON SHARING HISTORY AND CULTURE TO ENCOURAGE OVERNIGHT VISITATION

- As the Manhattan Project National Historical Park is fully implemented, create an annual event to celebrate the “behind the fence” experience of the “Secret City”. (MT, LT)
- Leverage existing cultural and historical activities, such as Los Alamos Historical Society lecture series and Historias de Nuevo Mexico annual conference and determine how to market and expand. (NT, MT)
- Determine expanded partnership and collaboration with Los Alamos Historical Society that would result in increased visitation to Los Alamos History Museum. (NT, MT)

CREATE FACILITIES THAT SERVE THE COMMUNITY, AS WELL AS ENCOURAGE OVERNIGHT VISITATION

- Add a multi-use event space that supports 300 people and accommodates business meetings, community events and destination event space. (LT)
- Explore opportunities to create and expand activity participation (indoor and outdoor recreation facilities). (MT)
- Develop entertainment options with evening/ weekend hours geared toward young adults and millennials, as well as older visitors. (MT)

MOST POPULAR OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES IN THE U.S.

Running, jogging and trail running are the most popular outdoor activities in the U.S., engaging 14.8% of all adults (25 years and greater) and 24.3% of all youth. Investment in the creation of world-class mountain biking facilities has shown significant economic returns in locations such as Fruita and Durango, Colorado.

US Outdoor Recreation Participation Topline Report 2017



3 | ENRICH OUR ATTRACTIONS AND DOWNTOWNS + CELEBRATE THE NATURAL BEAUTY

INTENT

Los Alamos is fortunate to be adjacent to three National Parks, to be surrounded by a landscape of natural beauty that invites exploration and to be the home of museums that share a world-changing and unusual history. These aspects should be further enriched to meet visitor expectations and improve the visitor experience.

In terms of the built environment, Los Alamos was not established, nor were buildings originally developed, with visitor appeal in mind. The “towns” have slowly evolved with adaptations. While these adaptations have been positive, Los Alamos must still address deficiencies in its services and built environment to provide a higher quality experience for visitors, which will also benefit the local community.

Visitors notice many of the same things residents often complain about, such as limited business hours, lack of dining and retail choices, unattractive or vacant buildings, and the condition of recreation amenities. In recent years, Los Alamos County has been investing in efforts to address these issues by participating in the New Mexico MainStreet program and improving recreation trails.

DESIRED OUTCOME

Improved visitor experience and increased draw of Los Alamos through selective investments in capital improvements that benefit the local community and visitors. Retained community quality of life and leveraged visitation that encourages services and improvements the local community desires. Improved community quality throughout Los Alamos for residents, businesses, and LANL.

MAINSTREET PROGRAM

Los Alamos MainStreet is designated by the New Mexico MainStreet program (NMMS), under the New Mexico Economic Development Department, managed by the Los Alamos Commerce & Development Corporation. The program’s mission is to create a strong economic business climate while preserving cultural and historic resources. Two MainStreet Economic Transformation Strategies are aligned with tourism strategies:

1. Promote and encourage niche tourism by capitalizing on Los Alamos’ historic and scientific significance.
2. Create a strong entrepreneurial support environment.

Los Alamos is one of only eight state designated Arts & Cultural Districts, due to the strong influence of science and history on its arts and cultural district.



Recent MainStreet program improvements include banners, street furniture and landscape enhancements along Central Avenue.

GOAL 3.1 INVEST IN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS THAT BENEFIT BOTH LOCAL COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND VISITORS.

EXPAND RECREATIONAL OFFERINGS THAT ATTRACT VISITORS AND IMPROVE THEIR EXPERIENCE

- Pursue County planning efforts for extensions, upgrades, maintenance and new trails that benefit visitors and local community members of all activity skill levels. (NT, MT, LT)
 - Pursue mountain bike trail projects for all skill levels on County-owned land. (MT, LT)
 - Increase funding and staff to address trail maintenance and improvement deficiencies. (NT)
 - Continue to expand Canyon Rim Trail to 20th Street and beyond, described as the “High Priority Multi-Use Corridor” in the Bicycle Transportation Plan, to connect users with many of our attractions. (MT, LT)
 - Continue to implement the downtown pedestrian/bike path to connect visitors to attractions and improve wayfinding. (NT, MT)
 - Connect White Rock to Los Alamos via recreation trails and include integrated interpretive signage. (LT)
 - Connect trails to Rio Grande River in White Rock. (MT, LT)
 - Continue to partner with the National Park Service to create trail linkages between the three National Parks and Los Alamos, including a Valles Caldera Rim Trail. (MT)
 - Develop partnership with the Santa Fe National Forest to find mutually beneficial ways to enhance the trail network in the National Forest, to establish trail connections between Pajarito Mountain and Los Alamos. (MT, LT)

- Make improvements to Overlook Park, including adding facilities needed to host tournaments. (MT, LT)
- Add informational kiosk at Overlook Scenic View area. (NT)
- Encourage and support improvements to Pajarito Mountain facilities, especially as they relate to developing mountain biking trails and water pipeline. (NT, MT)
- Create opportunities for more year-round activities at Ashley Pond with new amenities, such as a warming hut, determined by Ashley Pond Site Assessment. (MT)
- Capitalize on the dramatic nature of White Rock Canyon and Tent Rocks by promoting the fact that there are a variety of historic and cultural artifacts of the Native Puebloan culture in the area that will be of interest to visitors (if the County will invest substantially in the maintenance and cleanup of these areas). (NT, MT)
- As part of a County start-up incubation initiative, provide business innovation space to incentivize tourism support services, e.g., outdoor industry companies and outfitters (manufacturing and technologies). Continue to support Project Y. (MT, LT)

GOAL 3.2 MAKE DOWNTOWN LOS ALAMOS AND WHITE ROCK CENTER AESTHETICALLY PLEASING AND WELCOMING TO VISITORS

DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT APPROACHES TO IMPROVE THE APPEARANCE OF COMMERCIAL AREAS. ENCOURAGE INFILL OF VACANT COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS AND BEAUTIFICATION IN THE CORE AREAS OF LOS ALAMOS TO CREATE A VIBRANT AND WALKABLE EXPERIENCE.

- Promote CIP funded priority beautification of Deacon Street in downtown Los Alamos. (NT, MT)

- Paint the Los Alamos logo (similar to Central/15th Street intersection) on the NM4/Sherwood Boulevard intersection in White Rock, once signalization is implemented and home construction begins on A-19-A tracts. (MT, LT)
- Ensure adherence to the Los Alamos County Downtown and Mixed-Use District Development Standards. Provide greater guidance and requirements for pedestrian environments and connectivity, streetscape and landscape requirements. (MT)
- Reduce blight by enhancing appearances and property values in the downtown districts through targeted and responsive commercial property maintenance and implementation of the County's Code Enforcement Program. (NT, MT)
- Stimulate redevelopment in the downtown districts by supporting strategic development partnerships that will result in mixed uses that include new housing units. (MT, LT)
- Referencing the 2012 Los Alamos Downtown Sidewalk + Streetscape Assessment report, improve the appearance and function of Trinity Drive by participating with NMDOT in a streetscape improvement project. Maintain a connection between Trinity Drive to the Canyon Rim Trail. (MT, LT)
- Encourage redevelopment of the Longview development in White Rock and consider its visual appeal and walking comfort for visitors. (MT, LT)

MAXIMIZE MAIN STREET AND CREATIVE DISTRICT PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES, SERVICES AND VISIBILITY

- Continue to promote the expansion of the Los Alamos MainStreet District to include White Rock Center. (NT)

- Expand Los Alamos Creative District boundaries to include more attractions and businesses, providing events and other incentives to pursue the 10/10/10 goal of supporting 10 retail and 10 dining/treat establishments, with 10 of those businesses staying open evenings and weekends within the district. (MT, LT)
- Continue to implement the MainStreet and Creative District events that draw visitors and provide additional activities that encourage extended stays. (NT)
- Continue to partner with local businesses and incentivize their participation in the MainStreet and Creative Districts. (NT)

EXPAND EATING AND SHOPPING OPTIONS TO MEET VISITOR AND RESIDENT EXPECTATIONS

- Conduct an updated retail gap study to identify products and services that are in demand and not available, and develop a plan to address the gaps. (MT)
- Continue to proactively meet with commercial realtors, Kroger and the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) representatives to identify leads. Research and understand needs, including incentives and building improvements to recruit new retail. (NT, MT)
- Encourage more outdoor marketplace activities through policy changes to County zoning requirements, to effectively solicit vendors, including food trucks, and create a market street with vendor infrastructure, possibly at Central Park Square, Deacon Street, Ashley Pond or similar location. (MT, LT)
- Incentivize short term leases for pop-up stores, seasonal retail and weekly markets to fill vacant spaces. (NT)

GOAL 3.3 MANAGE POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF TOURISM TO RETAIN COMMUNITY QUALITY OF LIFE

PROACTIVELY DEVELOP PLANS TO MITIGATE IMPACTS THAT TYPICALLY OCCUR WITH VISITOR NUMBER INCREASES

- With improved parking information, shared parking and traffic demand management, a parking structure in downtown Los Alamos is not needed now, and may not be needed in the future. (NT)
- Incorporate the recommendations from the Wayfinding Study with respect to parking:
 - Name all parking lots. (NT)
 - Provide parking information for visitors in many places (e.g., website, visitor guide, visitor centers, kiosks). (NT)
 - Implement directional signage plan to provide consistent path that guides visitors to areas where they may park. (MT)
 - Implement parking lot arrival signs that state parking lot name and give clear direction to nearby attractions and destinations. (MT)
- Consider the use of technology, such as digital signs and apps, to inform people of parking locations, availability and policies. (MT)
- Provide or require event traffic demand management and parking staff for festivals to manage increased traffic. (NT, MT)
- Provide multimodal options as alternatives to individual cars, e.g., transit, bicycle, pedestrian, electric vehicle support. (MT, LT)
- Engage the County Environmental Sustainability Board, County Green Team and County Fleet Team in the planning of events with a regional draw to ensure sustainable operations practices are employed.
- Support the County's efforts to increase the number and variety of housing supply. (NT, MT, LT)
- Direct visitors to trailheads that have greater capacity to handle higher levels of use to minimize environmental harm. (NT)
- Protect scenic views from obstructions that reduce the appeal for visitors, e.g., billboards, signs, telecommunications towers. (NT, MT, LT)
- Proactively address capacity regarding future demand for water, wastewater and other infrastructure. (MT, LT)
- Measure and report community indicators as recommended in Chapter 4. (NT, MT, LT)

SCENIC AMERICA AS A QUALITY TOOL FOR LOS ALAMOS

Scenic America (scenic.org) is a national non-profit that helps citizens safeguard the scenic quality of America's roadways, countryside and communities. The organization believes that scenic conservation occurs with:

- an educated citizenry;
- a group of committed scenic activists;
- a business community that understands the economic value of beauty; and
- public policy that defends natural beauty and distinctive character.

Los Alamos could potentially partner with Scenic America to protect scenic quality and promote open space conservation.



4 | OPERATE WITH INTENTIONAL LEADERSHIP, PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INVESTMENT + PARTNERSHIPS

INTENT

The organizational structure and management of tourism efforts takes a different form in communities throughout the country as a result of varying opportunities, governmental structure, leadership, stakeholders and funding sources. Entities involved in providing marketing, visitor services and acting as liaisons between visitors and local accommodation service providers in Los Alamos include:

1. Los Alamos County: Tourism marketing support is funded through the Economic Development Fund and the Lodgers' Tax Revenue fund. The County contracts services for visitor centers operations and tourism marketing services. The table below provides a description of the existing tourism contracts held by the County.

CURRENT COUNTY TOURISM CONTRACTS

COUNTY CONTRACT	SCOPE OF SERVICES	PRODUCTS	CONTRACTOR	FUNDING SOURCE
Visitor Center Operations and Management Services	Staff and volunteers assisting guests within a 50-mile radius in creating a positive experience in the Los Alamos area through website content, phone and face-to-face orientation, visitor guide/materials distribution, and welcome bags for large groups.	Visitor centers staff, volunteers, displays, materials and restrooms; Visitlosalamos.org; Group welcome services; Pet sitting	LACDC dba Discover Los Alamos Meeting & Visitor Bureau	EDF, LTR*
Tourism Marketing Services	Marketing experts using advertising, PR and social media via traditional and digital platforms to attract target visitors outside a 50-mile radius, including NMTD's marketing opportunities.	Destination awareness through: print, broadcast, digital ad placements and campaigns; Earned media placements through: media releases and strategic media distribution; Facebook posts/contest-campaigns; Visitor conversion opportunities through destination prize packages and visitor guide requests.	Griffin and Associates (Albuquerque)	EDF, LTR
MainStreet Services (see description on p. 41)	Provide implementation, programming, coordination and management services for the MainStreet program in an effort to provide business development and downtown revitalization on a community at the grassroots level.	Coordination of County directed programs, projects and special events, including funding and logistics. Programs and events include: ScienceFest, community events (Halloweekend, WinterFest, etc.), Farmers Market, Creative District events.	LACDC dba Los Alamos MainStreet, LLC	EDF
Brand Implementation Consulting	Branding experts	Los Alamos Brand Action Plan Implementation	HK Advertising/The Idea Group of Santa Fe	EDF
Brand Execution	Los Alamos County operational costs for brand execution	Examples: promotional items, brochures, giveaways for events, advertising, etc.	LAC/EDD	EDF

* EDF = Los Alamos County Economic Development Fund, LTR = Los Alamos County Lodgers' Tax Revenues

2. Los Alamos Commerce and Development Corporation (LACDC): A private, not-for-profit 501(c)6 organization established in 1983, the LACDC operates a variety of programs and provides services that are intended to promote economic vitality in Los Alamos including:
 - Los Alamos Chamber of Commerce: membership program of the LACDC
 - Discover Los Alamos Meeting & Visitor Bureau: LACDC, through a contract with Los Alamos County, provides operational support to the Los Alamos and White Rock Visitor Centers
 - Los Alamos MainStreet District Program
 - Los Alamos Creative District
 - Property Operation and Real Estate Portfolio (LA Research Park and the Small Business Center, along with others)
 - Los Alamos Business Assistance Services/ Project Y

3. Tourism attractions and service providers: In Los Alamos, the National Park Service and the County are the primary providers of places and services that attract visitors. This group also includes Pajarito Recreation (operator of Pajarito Mountain Ski Area), LANL (operator of Bradbury Science Museum), Los Alamos Historical Society (operator of the Los Alamos History Museum campus), PEEC (operator of the Nature Center), Bathtub Row Brewing Co-Op and Santa Fe National Forest. State government/industry partnerships are listed in the table below.

DESIRED OUTCOME

Improved efficiency and quality of delivery of visitor services. Expanded funding sources and investments based on potential for economic return. Determination of whether new institutions or collaborations are needed.

STATE GOVERNMENT/INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

ORGANIZATION	SCOPE OF SERVICES	PRODUCTS
New Mexico Tourism Department	County Marketing Specialist serves as 1 of 7 board directors representing destinations and businesses in New Mexico's North Central Region, participating in cooperative marketing campaigns and events to attract international travelers to the North Central Region; Works with Griffin and Associates in partnership with LACDC's Marketing Communications Office to pursue NMTD grants to fund complementary media buys, events and programs; Participates in NMTD marketing, education and advocacy events, serving as a designated New Mexico True Destination for press conferences and Tourism Commission meetings for the Governor and Tourism Secretary.	National reach and awareness through NMTD extended media buys and events; Recognition by state government and tourism industry leaders as high-value destination.
New Mexico Hospitality Association	County marketing specialist is an association member and destination champion, participating in all tourism and hospitality events; Regularly submit and win Top Hospitality and Tourism (HAT) Awards for tourism professionals, programs and materials.	Recognition by state government and tourism industry leaders as high-value destination; Recognized by state tourism industry professionals for tourism professionals, materials and programs.

TOURISM MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE OPTIONS

TOURISM MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Focusing on tourism as an important economic driver is relatively new for Los Alamos. As a result, it currently lacks an effective institutional framework that can lead tourism development, represent diverse community interests and consolidate currently disjointed efforts. An integrated management structure can lead the implementation of the Tourism Strategic Plan and proactively pursue the type of visitors that benefit the community.

Communities that are partially or entirely tourism-dependent utilize a wide variety of institutional structures to deliver tourism marketing, facilities and services. These are frequently based on state, county, and city and/or other local influences and factors related to the types of funding used, specific management and staff systems, and the support the organization is able to garner from its members and constituents.

There are many ways to structure tourism marketing, facilities and services. The three most appropriate for consideration include: maintaining the current structure, forming a new entity, or creating a County Tourism Manager position.

OPTION 1: MAINTAIN CURRENT STRUCTURE

Los Alamos County employs one full-time staff member and parts of several other employee staff time to tourism efforts. The majority of the tourism-related responsibilities are contracted to third parties. Modifications to RFPs and contract agreements could result in minor improvements, as has been explored in previous contract updates. However, the lack of leadership and control will continue to be a weakness in driving tourism development most effectively for Los Alamos. The challenges of restrained County input and oversight, cross-partner coordination, and value and responsiveness in the delivery of services creates a less than optimal situation and outcome.

Tourism marketing and activities currently get done through multiple entities such as the Economic Development Division, Community Services Department and the County Managers Office, as well as several contractors. In combination, these structural elements tend to create a weaker foundation from which to address tourism development and promotion in a world of rapidly changing market conditions, where responsiveness can distinguish winners from losers in the game of market share. Keeping tourism marketing and delivery as is is not recommended.

OPTION 2: FORM A NEW ENTITY

One type of institutional structure often utilized to transfer responsibility outside of a municipal or County government, is a new association or quasi-public entity for tourism and hospitality services. This formation is typically the result of the need to represent diverse interests, such as resort associations, hospitality industry, local businesses and public land managers, that collectively experience high volumes of visitation and regional scale. This entity's primary purpose/business should be tourism development and have no other significant revenue from other business interests.

Currently, the tourism sector is not of a scale that would create a successful new entity. For example, more hotels and business who are dedicated to tourism development is required. Therefore, a new entity is not recommended for Los Alamos at this time.

OPTION 2 EXAMPLE

The North Lake Tahoe Resort Association (NLTRA) is a 501(c)(4) non profit public benefit corporation, established under the laws of the State of California and registered to do business in the State of Nevada. The NLTRA's adopted mission is to promote tourism and benefit business through efforts that enhance the economic, environmental, recreational and cultural climate of the area.

The NLTRA is an association of related and coordinated services provided to their members and the community at large. These services include operation of the North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce and the Tahoe North Visitors and Convention Bureau. The NLTRA has an agreement for services with Placer County. Through this agreement, the NLTRA receives Placer County Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) funds to provide a full spectrum of management activities for tourism marketing and visitor services for businesses of the North Lake Tahoe area.

The NLTRA also serves as a partner with Placer County and other local organizations and agencies in the development and funding of infrastructure, transportation and strategic planning projects designed to enhance tourism and community quality of life for the benefit of all in the North Lake Tahoe region. To guide its work, the NLTRA has developed and adopted the North Lake Tahoe Tourism and Community Investment Master Plan (June 2004) which has also been adopted by the Placer County Board of Supervisors.

OPTION 3: CREATE COUNTY TOURISM DIVISION + MANAGER POSITION

None of the current County Departments or Divisions, such as Economic Development, Community Services or Communications and Public Relations, has a mission and focus to effectively drive the demands and needs of tourism and visitor services. A more centralized decision-making and accountability structure is necessary to effectively address the strategies to be implemented pursuant to this Tourism Strategic Plan. Creation of a County Tourism Manager within the office of the County Manager, reporting directly to the County Manager, will centralize decision-making with respect to tourism issues. As required to implement tourism initiatives, the County will need to allocate existing resources, personnel and contracted services under the direction of the County Tourism Manager. Implementation of this Tourism Strategic Plan will also necessitate, initially and over time, a review of the sufficiency and efficiency of marketing, sales, social media, visitor services and facilities management, including oversight of all tourism related contract services. Consolidation of decision-making, with related resource allocation, will allow for better cost analysis and accountability for tourism related costs and provide a more streamlined implementation process for adoption of strategic directions. The Office of the County Manager will be able to provide comprehensive tourism budgeting, planning and goal achievement information to the Council. Finally, it is contemplated, as discussed in Goal 4.2, that some form of the Tourism Work Group be reconstituted as a Tourism Implementation Task Force to ensure continued citizen input and advice on tourism related issues.

The consolidation of tourism decision-making and direction of tourism related resources in a County Tourism Manager position, will, in the short run, expedite consolidated and cost-effective leadership for implementation of this Tourism Strategic Plan. As the process of implementation proceeds and the County analyzes its tourism improvement efforts, the County will have the option to maintain this structure, modify this County Tourism Manager office structure, switch to a full County department

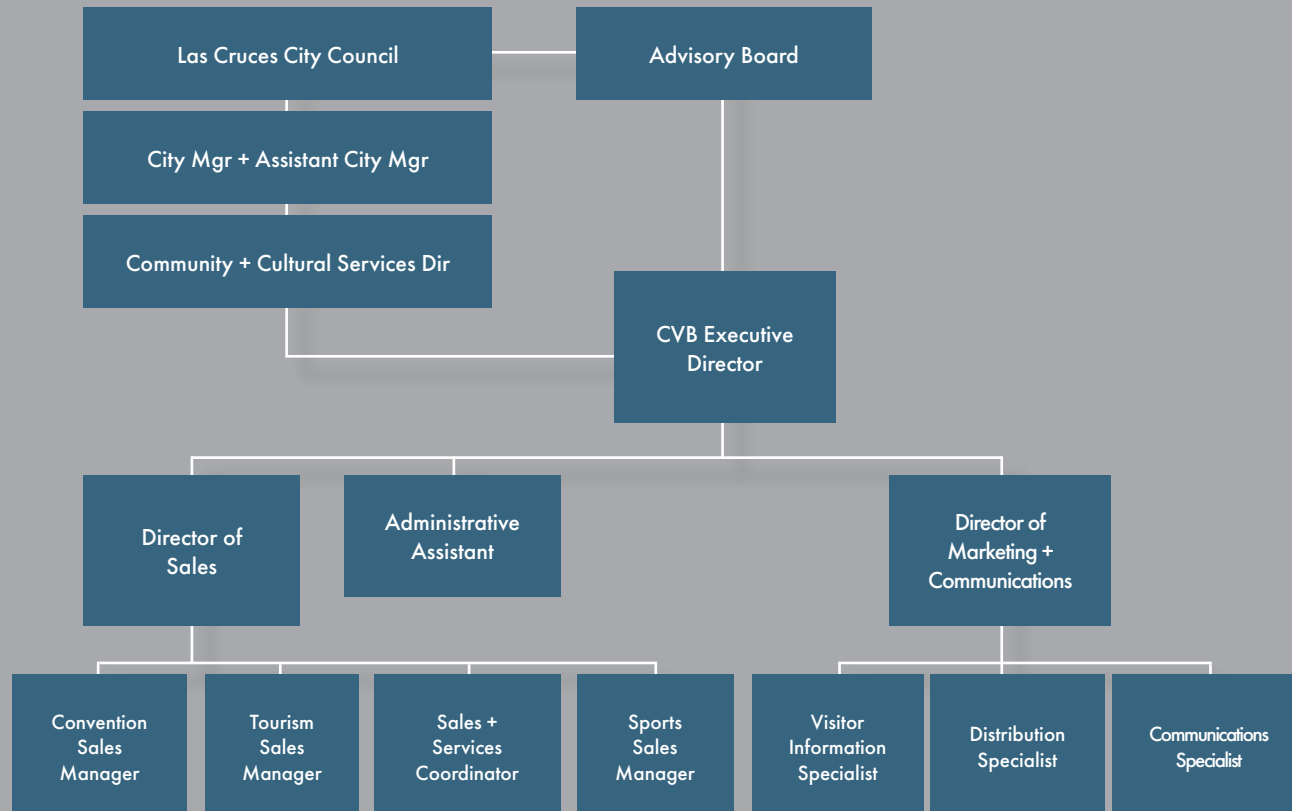
to provide expanded services and responsibilities or convert to a new entity, as described in Option 2. The function of Option 3 is to provide the County with effective and flexible options, while still providing the leadership necessary for successful implementation.

OPTION 3 EXAMPLE

The Las Cruces Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB), established by the City of Las Cruces in 1986, is the official tourism marketing department for the City of Las Cruces. The CVB serves as a catalyst for the area's hospitality industry, working in concert to build a year-round destination that offers a quality experience to all visitors as well as sustainable economic and social growth for the local community. Toward this end, the CVB plays a leading role in defining and branding Las Cruces as a desirable destination, offering a variety of activities, attractions and events now and in the future.

The CVB works nationally and internationally to enhance travel and tourism to Las Cruces and the immediate surrounding area. Five full-time sales staff members work to target the meetings and conventions, sports, and group travel markets in Arizona, Texas and New Mexico with research-driven marketing programs touting sports, arts and culture, food-based opportunities and year-round sunny weather. The CVB also partners with local attractions and industry partners to develop initiatives that strengthen the travel and tourism market within the city.

VISIT LAS CRUCES CVB ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



GOAL 4.1 CULTIVATE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS TO ENSURE OPERATIONAL SUCCESS

AT A LOCAL LEVEL, INVEST TIME AND FUNDING IN RELATIONSHIPS THAT SERVE TOURISM GOALS

- Continue to partner with National Park Service superintendents and staff. (NT)
- Continue to partner with local contractors, including PEEC, the Los Alamos Historical Society and the Los Alamos Arts Council, all of which contribute significant private funding to attract visitors to Los Alamos. (NT)
- Expand efforts with LANL to benefit the community, including improvements to LANL guest experiences prior to their arrival in Los Alamos, and the engagement of LANL employees in special events. (NT, MT)
- Continue to work with major landowners on redevelopment plans. (NT, MT)
- Improve approval, permitting, resources and assistance to community groups and event organizers. (MT)
- Engage outfitters and tour operators in opportunities to promote their services to visitors. (NT, MT)

COLLABORATE WITH REGIONAL AND NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS TO PROMOTE TOURISM AND IMPROVE VISITOR OFFERINGS

- Expand specific strategies and action plans to increase partnerships with regional economic development entities, such as Santa Fe, Taos, Albuquerque, Angel Fire, Red River and Pueblos, to grow visits to Los Alamos. (NT, MT)
- Explore ways to partner and collaborate with Northern Rio Grande Heritage Area to enhance visitor experience and education of entire region. (MT)

REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY EXAMPLE: ALBUQUERQUE, NM

Albuquerque's Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency is responsible for infill development in established Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas (MRAs), and in accordance with the centers and corridors approach to development outlined in the *Comprehensive Plan* and the City of Albuquerque's goals.

The centers and corridors concept provides a rational framework for the efficient allocation of public and private resources, concentrating on land uses for greater efficiency, stability, image, diversity and control. MRAs, centers and corridors are the areas where problems caused by lack of investment and deterioration have created the need for special intervention on the part of the City.

This is an example of a New Mexico Redevelopment Agency. It is a good precedent for Los Alamos County to follow, providing additional tools to reduce blight through redevelopment, should the County choose to create a redevelopment agency.

- Continue to participate in the New Mexico Hospitality Association. (NT)
- Explore opportunities to promote Pajarito Mountain through Ski New Mexico. (NT, MT)
- Participate in Northern New Mexico Air Alliance. (NT, MT)
- Continue to participate in and implement the results of the Stronger Economies Together (SET) Strategic Plan for the Mid Central Rural Corridor, involving Sandoval and Bernalillo counties. Develop and coordinate regional tourism opportunities through this planning effort. (NT, MT)
- Continue to participate in the State of New Mexico Tourism Department's marketing, promotion, programs and activities. (NT, MT, LT)

GOAL 4.2 SUPPORT THE EFFICIENT IMPLEMENTATION OF TOURISM EFFORTS BY MODIFYING INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES

CREATE A COUNTY TOURISM MANAGER POSITION AND DESIGNATE OR REALLOCATE STAFFING TO SUPPORT CURRENT CONTRACT WORK IN-HOUSE

- Reallocate staff efforts for tourism to a new County Tourism Manager under the County Manager's Office. (NT)
- Create tourism marketing, communication, and event support position(s) to support the County Tourism Manager to reallocate current contract efforts to a more centralized and responsive position. A transition period of 12-24 months to initiate this change should include structuring of new contracts accordingly. (NT, MT)
- Create a Tourism Implementation Task Force to advise the new County Tourism Manager and County Council. The membership of this Task Force will tie representation to economic interests and allow for wide participation of the tourism industry. Transition a subset of the Tourism Working Group to fulfill this role. (NT, MT)

COUNTY TOURISM MANAGER ROLES + RESPONSIBILITIES

COUNTY TOURISM MANAGER

- Lead and oversee implementation of the Tourism Strategic Plan
- Visitor Facilities/Destination Development (i.e., visitor facilities, transportation, economic development, redevelopment activities)
- County visitor facility management and operation
- Grant and funding sources lead
- Legislative affairs
- Contractor management
- Be responsible for marketing and visitor services:
- Tourism marketing/promotion (graphic design, web support, content creation, strategy, branding implementation):
 - Visitor activities program and special events (e.g., MainStreet program coordination including ScienceFest, recreation events)
 - Attractions and merchants coordination
 - Visitor contact/information facilitation
 - Visitor center operations/staffing contracting
 - Research and performance measurement

- Issue RFPs written to address the Tourism Strategic Plan action items identified for contract support (e.g., visitor survey, Wayfinding Plan Implementation Phases 1A and 1B). (NT, MT)

REDIRECT FUNDING SOURCES AND GRANT SEEKING EFFORTS TO THE NEW INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE

- Transition budget oversight of Lodgers' Tax revenue and a portion of the Economic Development Funding to County Tourism Division in the context of the Tourism Strategic Plan. (NT, MT)
- Include measurable performance criteria but allow the County Tourism Manager and the Tourism Implementation Task Force to determine investment decisions and recommend annual budgets. (NT, MT)
- Lead the pursuit of grants, such as New Mexico Tourism, to coordinate partner efforts. (NT)

SUPPORT CENTRALIZED VISITOR CONTACT

- With improvements to the White Rock Visitor Center and relocation of the Los Alamos Visitor Center, new locational opportunities to better support centralized visitor contact are provided. County Tourism Staff and/or contracted visitor information services would be housed in this new Los Alamos Visitor Center location. (MT, LT)

MODIFY OR CREATE POLICIES AND GOVERNING AGENCIES TO IMPLEMENT THE TOURISM STRATEGIC TACTICS

- Explore the creation of a Redevelopment Agency to implement redevelopment and beautification efforts. (MT)

GOAL 4.3 SECURE AND OPTIMIZE PUBLIC + PRIVATE FUNDING BASED ON STRATEGIC CRITERIA

TIE BUDGETS AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS TO GOALS THAT CAN BE QUANTITATIVELY MEASURED.

- Collect visitor data through a periodic survey to measure performance and help calibrate marketing efforts and visitor services. (NT, MT)
- Improve methods of collecting visitor information at attractions, hotels and from merchants. (MT)
- Require data collection of marketing outreach efforts with analysis of return on marketing dollars spent. (NT, MT)
- Prioritize investment opportunities that offer the most value to residents and local businesses. (NT, MT, LT)
- Include an ROI (return on investment) calculation in making investment decisions for tourism projects. (NT, MT, LT)

GROW FUNDING FOR TOURISM EFFORTS FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES

- Generate more Lodgers' Tax revenue through the development of additional lodging accommodations. (MT, LT)
- Adopt ordinance for Airbnb and VRBO rentals to include in Lodgers' Tax assessments. (NT)
- Continue to secure New Mexico Tourism grants and seek additional state economic development grants. (NT, MT, LT)
- Continue to advocate for funding of New Mexico Main Street Capital Outlay Grant program. Identify qualifying projects and partners for grant opportunities when they become available. (NT, MT, LT)



Skiers headed up Pajarito Ski Mountain on the lift

Streetscape improvements and crosswalk branding installation
in downtown Los Alamos at 15th Street + Central Avenue





4. IMPLEMENTATION + ACTION PLAN

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The top priorities of the Strategic Tourism Plan to begin addressing immediately are:

- Increasing lodging supply
- Modifying institutional structure
- Making marketing efforts more effective
- Enhancing guest experiences
- Improving community quality for residents, businesses and LANL

The focus areas and goals presented in Chapter 3 provide definition and a long-term view of how these priorities fit together. The tactics from Chapter 3 have been filtered through these five priorities in order to provide a more strategic approach in the Action Plan.

Considerations for the implementation of these Strategic Priorities include:

LODGING

Increasing lodging will have the greatest impact on capturing more visitor spending. Los Alamos County has a role in attracting and facilitating the creation of lodging from a private sector developer. Creating new hotel properties can be a lengthy process from soliciting developer interest, preparing the land for development, gaining development approvals to final construction. Los Alamos should target full-service and boutique categories to fill current gaps in lodging accommodations. Selection of locations and careful planning of the infrastructure and connections to visitor attractions will also determine the long-term success of new accommodations.

INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE

Operating under the same institutional structure will continue to have the same results as the current weaknesses in leadership, coordination, communication and strategic direction. This chapter identifies the near-term actions needed to modify the current structure by creating a County Tourism Division. The transition time should be 12–24 months and new contracts moving forward should be structured accordingly. As the Los Alamos tourism business sector grows, institutional structure can be converted to an entity outside of County government.

MARKETING

Marketing tools and audiences rapidly change, requiring adaption of methods and directing a new strategic approach. The Action Plan identifies near-term actions needed to revise current marketing efforts. Continued evaluation of marketing effectiveness and expansion in tourism offerings will create the need for updating strategy and actions.

GUEST EXPERIENCES

The Action Plan identifies some of the short term, relatively easy things to improve guest experiences. Initial planning stages are recommended to begin immediately for capital improvement projects, such as relocation of the Los Alamos Visitor Center, that will require a longer time investment to fully implement.

COMMUNITY QUALITY

This Tourism Strategic Plan, the 2016 Los Alamos Comprehensive Plan and the County Council Strategic Goals all align to improve the community and the quality of life for people who live and work here. Implementing this Action Plan will benefit residents and businesses with more dining and retail, beautification of downtowns, improved and well maintained trail system, increased visitor-generated revenue for businesses and County budget, and other investments made in the community that residents and visitors will appreciate.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN

The following Implementation Action Plan provides near-term action items (0–3 years) the County can begin to implement immediately, organized according to the four focus areas presented in Chapter 3 and the Strategic Priorities on the facing page.

The Action Plan tables include:

- Description of actions
- Responsible parties and partners
- Relative costs
- Potential funding sources
- Implementation timing

Following the Action Plan, performance measures are recommended for tracking the outcomes of implementing the plan. Recommendations for metrics, and how they can be collected and reported, are also included. This chapter concludes with Next Steps that provides prioritized actions requiring time and those requiring funding.

ACTION PLAN TABLES KEY

The acronyms below are used in the following Actions tables under Responsible Parties + Partners and Funding Sources:

- ACT = Atomic City Transit
- CIP Fund = Capital Improvement Projects Fund
- DOE = Department of Energy
- EDF = Los Alamos County Economic Development Fund
- LAC = Los Alamos County
- LACDC = Los Alamos Commerce & Development Corporation
- LAHS = Los Alamos Historical Society
- LAMS = Los Alamos Main Street
- LANL = Los Alamos National Laboratory
- LTR = Los Alamos County Lodgers' Tax Revenues
- NMTD = New Mexico Tourism Department
- NPS = National Park Service
- TWG = Tourism Work Group
- TBD = To Be Determined



GOAL 1.1: FOCUS ON OUR MARKETING EFFORTS TO REFLECT OUR COMMUNITY TO TARGETED VISITORS

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE PARTY AND PARTNERS	RELATIVE COST	FUNDING SOURCE	IMPLEMENTATION TIMING
Meet with NPS Superintendents to develop marketing strategies and coordinate efforts.	LAC, NPS, Marketing contractor	Staff Time	—	Quarterly
Fund and implement the Los Alamos Brand Action Plan. Implementation includes infusing the brandline: "where discoveries are made" into marketing efforts.	LAC, brand implementation contractor	\$50,000	EDF	2018
Commission the creation of a promotional video to showcase "where discoveries are made" including: outdoor recreation, history, and science activities and events in Los Alamos.	LAC, media contractor	\$30,000	LTR	2018
Create a targeted marketing plan for attracting science enthusiasts to Los Alamos.	Marketing contractor or LAC	\$10,000	LTR	2018
Implement or contract work to improve the function and appeal of the visitosalamos.org website and social media platforms	Marketing contractor or LAC	\$20,000	LTR	2018
Improve Los Alamos' presence within New Mexico True online opportunities by providing content and requested changes.	Marketing contractor or LAC	Staff Time	—	2018
Implement New Mexico True branding and marketing opportunities and develop content to provide to the New Mexico Department of Tourism.	Marketing contractor or LAC	Staff Time or contract	—	2018-2020
Designate an "Atomic Trail" route and planned itinerary (starting at 109 East Palace in Santa Fe and terminating at Fuller Lodge, passing through other Los Alamos historic sites) to include on the New Mexico True website. Develop maps, imagery and descriptions to be used in marketing efforts. Refer to other NM trails in marketing packages.	LAC, TWG, LAHS, NMT, marketing contractor	\$10,000	LTR	2018
Ensure good visibility with participation in Northern New Mexico Air Alliance.	LAC	\$50,000	EDF	2019

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE PARTY AND PARTNERS	RELATIVE COST	FUNDING SOURCE	IMPLEMENTATION TIMING
Contact regional and national tour operators and travel agencies currently active in New Mexico to coordinate services to Los Alamos.	LAC or marketing contractor	Staff Time	—	Quarterly
Ongoing contact with Santa Fe, Albuquerque and other regional hotel concierges.	LAC or marketing contractor	Staff Time	—	Quarterly
Contact Heritage Hotel and Resorts, or similar boutique hotel family of properties, to create marketing partnership, encouraging day trips from their properties to Los Alamos area attractions.	LAC	Staff Time	—	Quarterly
Encourage participation in Brand Action Plan Visitor Journey A2D training and provide promotional information at attractions and local businesses.	LAC, brand implementation contractor, hospitality industry	Included Above	—	2018
Develop multi-day, themed packages for visitors to simplify their trip and combine discounts.	LAC or marketing contractor, hospitality and service industry	Staff Time	—	2018
Change the focus of marketing material creation from print to online. Inventory all marketing and promotional collateral to ensure consistent look and message.	LAC or marketing contractor	Staff Time	—	2018
Coordinate with attractions and shuttle bus services to show Los Alamos promotional videos.	LAC or marketing contractor, attractions	Staff Time	—	2019
Market a “hotel packet” provided to hotels that includes a printed brochure/map of Los Alamos shopping and dining options.	Marketing contractor or LAC, Brand Action Plan Implementation	\$10,000	LTR or EDF	2018 with Quarterly Updates



GOAL 1.2: ENHANCE THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A GOOD FIRST IMPRESSION BY PROVIDING AN EASY TO NAVIGATE + WELCOMING SETTING

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE PARTY + PARTNERS	RELATIVE COST	FUNDING SOURCE	IMPLEMENTATION TIMING
Determine a better location for the Los Alamos Visitor Center by evaluating the potential for sites to be utilized, and develop a conceptual design and management for the development or building renovation.	LAC	\$50,000	EDF	2019
Relocate the Los Alamos Visitor Center to a place better associated with visitor arrival and attractions. Develop construction/renovation and interior design plans and complete construction.	LAC	\$500,000 - \$2,000,000	CIP Fund	2020
Modernize the White Rock Visitor Center displays to be more interactive and experiential.	LAC	\$100,000	General Fund	2018
Provide additional restrooms and vendor space at the White Rock Visitor Center, along with picnic and outdoor play facilities. Sell refreshments and logo/souvenir items.	LAC	\$50,000	CIP Fund	2019
Implement Fuller Lodge interpretation plan to enhance visitor experience.	LAC, LAHS	TBD	Possible grants	2018
Expand Fuller Lodge hours and provide a clear point of contact for information to better meet visitor needs.	LAC	\$15,000	General Fund	2018
Create an agreement to include the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory National Historic Landmark District into the official boundaries of MPNHP.	LAC, NPS	Staff Time	—	2018
Share transit information with visitors and coordinate transfer at the White Rock Visitor Center from the Bandelier shuttle to Los Alamos bus services.	LAC, ACT, NPS	Staff Time	—	2018
Increase capacity of the Bandelier shuttle to handle demand.	ACT, NPS	\$250,000	Federal Grants	2019
Explore the feasibility of, and grant opportunities for expansion of Atomic City Transit service to provide weekend service.	LAC, ACT	Staff Time	—	2019

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE PARTY + PARTNERS	RELATIVE COST	FUNDING SOURCE	IMPLEMENTATION TIMING
Improve bus connectivity and extend trips from the three National Parks to downtown Los Alamos, White Rock and nearby outdoor recreation areas.	LAC, NPS	\$50,000	EDF	2019
Fund and implement Wayfinding Plan Phase 1A for improved signage and visitor navigation.	LAC	\$225,800	General Fund	2018 - 2019
Fund and implement Wayfinding Plan Phase 1B.	LAC	\$105,000	General Fund	2020 - 2021
Create a walking tour app for downtown Los Alamos.	LAC	\$250,000	LTR	2019
Improve visitor maps to highlight trails that best serve visitors, and provide connections to attractions and add information about the trails app.	LAC or marketing contractor	\$10,000	LTR	2018
Provide a letter to NM DOT encouraging the paving completion of NM Highway 126 as part of the Jemez Mountain Trail National Scenic Byway.	LAC	Staff Time	—	2018



GOAL 2.1: IMPROVE LODGING + HOSPITALITY INFRASTRUCTURE, PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE PARTY + PARTNERS	RELATIVE COST	FUNDING SOURCE	IMPLEMENTATION TIMING
Continue to identify desirable locations for future lodging development and promote these to encourage full-service lodging and boutique hotels to select Los Alamos.	LAC	Staff Time	—	2018
Continue to explore hotel development incentive options such as land donations, infrastructure investments, tax abatement and/or favorable financing to attract a developer to construct a full-service hotel in downtown Los Alamos.	LAC	Staff Time	—	2018
Prepare and coordinate design of a development package for each site to promote development opportunities, infrastructure and design expectations.	LAC	\$5,000	EDF	2018
Identify parcels for new RV parks in both Los Alamos and White Rock. Issue an RFP for an operator(s). Identify and facilitate a business to invest, develop and manage a new, high-quality, full-service RV Park for anticipated increase in tourism.	LAC, development and management partner	\$2,000	—	2018
Encourage UNM-LA to provide a Hospitality Institute with degree program, certificate and seminars.	UNM-LA	Staff Time	—	2018



GOAL 2.2: ENHANCE MULTI-DAY EVENTS TO ENCOURAGE OVERNIGHT VISITATION

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE PARTY + PARTNERS	RELATIVE COST	FUNDING SOURCE	IMPLEMENTATION TIMING
Create an event fund and marketing support opportunities so event organizers can apply for grant assistance through an application process.	LAC, LA MainStreet Program	\$50,000	LTR	2018
Enhance ScienceFest by better defining its purpose, desired outcome and niche in attracting visitors.	Visitor services, LAC, LANL, LAMS, LACDC	Staff Time	—	2018
Work with operator of Pajarito Mountain Ski Area (PMSA) to develop opportunities to expand year-round, on-mountain activities.	PMSA, LAC	Staff Time	—	Ongoing
Support and create events that last for longer periods of time, like “trail festivals”, with a variety of events.	LAC, event providers, marketing	\$100,000	LTR	2019
Assist endurance organization(s) with event hosting by providing marketing support with special event funding application.	LAC, partnerships	Staff Time	LTR	Ongoing
Explore opportunities to incentivize developing a multi-use event space that supports 300 people and accommodates meetings, community events and destination event space.	LAC, LACDC, private partnerships	\$20,000	EDF	2020



GOAL 3.1: INVEST IN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS THAT BENEFIT BOTH LOCAL COMMUNITY MEMBERS + VISITORS

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE PARTY + PARTNERS	RELATIVE COST	FUNDING SOURCE	IMPLEMENTATION TIMING
Implement County plans for extensions, upgrades, and maintenance of existing and new trails that benefit visitors and local community members of all activity skill levels. Increase funding and staff to address all trail maintenance and improvement deficiencies.	LAC	TBD	TBD	Ongoing
Make improvements to Overlook Park, including facilities needed to host tournaments.	LAC	\$100,000	CIP Fund	2019



GOAL 3.2: MAKE DOWNTOWN LOS ALAMOS + WHITE ROCK AESTHETICALLY PLEASING AND WELCOMING TO VISITORS

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE PARTY + PARTNERS	RELATIVE COST	FUNDING SOURCE	IMPLEMENTATION TIMING
Ensure adherence to the Los Alamos County Downtown and Mixed-Use District Development Standards. Provide greater guidance and requirements for pedestrian environments, connectivity, streetscapes and landscaping.	LAC, Urban design consultant	\$75,000	General Fund	2018
Reduce blight in the downtown districts through targeted and responsive commercial property maintenance and implementation of the County's Code Enforcement Program.	LAC	Staff Time	—	Ongoing
Referencing the 2012 Los Alamos Downtown Sidewalk + Streetscape Assessment report, improve the appearance and function of Trinity Drive by participating with NMDOT in a streetscape improvement project. Maintain a connection between Trinity Drive to the Canyon Rim Trail.	LAC, NMDOT, design consultant	\$75,000	NMDOT and General Fund	2019
Continue to implement the MainStreet and Creative District events that draw visitors and provide additional activities that encourage extended stays. Continue to partner with local businesses and incentivize their participation in the MainStreet and Creative District.	LAC, MainStreet Program	\$50,000	State Grants and EDF	Ongoing



GOAL 4.1: CULTIVATE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS TO ENSURE OPERATIONAL SUCCESS

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE PARTY + PARTNERS	RELATIVE COST	FUNDING SOURCE	IMPLEMENTATION TIMING
Expand efforts with LANL to partner more with community and visitor activities, events and services.	LAC, LANL	Staff Time	—	Quarterly
Improve approval, permitting, resources and assistance to community groups and organizers for events.	LAC, events management	Staff Time	—	2019
Expand specific strategies and action plans to increase partnerships with regional economic development entities (e.g., Santa Fe, Taos, Albuquerque, Angel Fire, Red River, Pueblos) to grow visits to Los Alamos.	LAC, and regional partners	Staff Time	—	2018
Explore ways to partner and collaborate with the Northern Rio Grande Heritage Area (NRGHA) to enhance visitor experience and education of entire region.	LAC, NPS, NRGHA	Staff Time	—	2018
Continue to participate in and implement the results of the Stronger Economies Together (SET) Strategic Plan for the Mid Central Rural Corridor, involving Sandoval and Bernalillo counties. Develop and coordinate regional tourism opportunities through this planning effort.	LAC, SET partnerships	Staff Time	State Grant	Ongoing
Continue to participate in the State of New Mexico True Tourism marketing, promotion, programs and activities.	LAC, NMTD	Staff Time	State Grants	Ongoing



GOAL 4.2: MODIFY INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES TO SUPPORT THE EFFICIENT IMPLEMENTATION OF TOURISM EFFORTS

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE PARTY + PARTNERS	RELATIVE COST	FUNDING SOURCE	IMPLEMENTATION TIMING
Explore the creation of a Redevelopment Agency to implement redevelopment and beautification efforts.	LAC	Staff Time	—	2018
Transition to County Tourism Division, hire County Tourism Manager, structure new tourism contracts accordingly.	LAC	Staff Time	—	2018–2019
Transition the Tourism Work Group to form a Tourism Implementation Task Force to advise the new County Tourism Division.	LAC, TWG	Staff Time	—	2018-2019

REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY EXAMPLE: PLACER COUNTY, CA

The Placer County Board of Supervisors created a Redevelopment Agency to develop and manage community improvement projects relating to economic development and infrastructure improvements in its project areas – in this case Tahoe City, Kings Beach, and Tahoe Vista. In addition, the agency has county wide responsibilities for the Workforce Housing Program.

In order to maximize benefits to the community, the agency has worked with the downtown business community (its targeted area to develop projects and programs specifically to improve long-term economic conditions). The resultant strategic plans and expenditures have been approved by the agency board of directors.

The Resort Association is an association of businesses from a much broader geographic and business base. It also encompasses the downtown areas that are the primary focus of the Redevelopment Agency. It has membership income as well as Transit Occupancy Tax (TOT) revenue allocated to it by both the Board of Supervisors and North Lake Tahoe Tourism and Community Investment Master Plan. Its charter includes an infrastructure element that, although broader than the agency's area of responsibility, has a significant area of correlation.

As a result, the Redevelopment Agency and the Resort Association are natural partners on economic development and infrastructure projects that positively affect the downtown areas of Tahoe City, Kings Beach and Tahoe Vista.



GOAL 4.3: SECURE AND OPTIMIZE PUBLIC + PRIVATE FUNDING BASED ON STRATEGIC CRITERIA

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE PARTY + PARTNERS	RELATIVE COST	FUNDING SOURCE	IMPLEMENTATION TIMING
Contract the creation of a visitor intercept interview survey instrument and methodology.	LAC, survey consultant	\$50,000	LTR	2018
Conduct visitor intercept interview surveys at local attractions to measure performance and help calibrate marketing efforts and visitor services.	LAC, volunteers (NPS friends groups) or survey consultant, attraction contractors	\$20,000	LTR	Biannual
Develop an agreement with attractions, hotels, merchants and event organizers for the collection of visitor information. Visitor data may be collected through electronic questionnaires, kiosks, online purchase records, or registration records. Standardize reporting methods.	LAC, key attractions, hotels, event organizers	\$50,000	LTR	2018
Analyze and report visitor data to provide return on investment information.	LAC or survey consultant	Staff Time	—	Biannual
Develop capital improvement budgets for tourism projects, prioritizing investments that provide the most value to residents and local businesses. Include ROI calculations.	LAC	Staff Time	—	Annual
Adopt ordinance for Airbnb and VRBO rentals to include in Lodgers' Tax assessments.	LAC, Lodgers' Tax Advisory Board	Staff Time	—	2018
Monitor and advocate for funding of NMTD. Continue to apply for New Mexico Tourism grants and seek additional state economic development grants.	LAC and partners	Staff Time	—	Biannual
Continue to monitor and advocate for funding of New Mexico Main Street Capital Outlay Grant program. Identify qualifying projects and partners for grant opportunities when they become available.	LAC, LA Main Street	Staff Time	—	Biannual

INFORMATION COLLECTED IN VISITOR PROFILE + SATISFACTION SURVEYS

Methods for data collection of visitor characteristics and satisfaction levels involve conducting surveys to obtain responses through intercept interviews and kiosks located in key visitor locations. Because visitation often varies for communities seasonally, conducting a survey for more than one period a year is advised.

The types of information typically collected in these surveys include the following:

- Demographic Characteristics: age, gender, income, household status, country and zip-code of origin.
- Trip Characteristics: duration (overnight, seasonal resident, day visitor), accommodations, travel companions and party, repeat visitation, and transportation method.
- Trip Activities and Events: purpose of visit, activities participate in, attractions visited and special events.
- Expenditures: expenditures by type, total spending per destination.
- Information: sources used to gather information about the area, information that influenced visitation decision.
- Satisfaction with Experience: satisfaction ratings (friendliness of people, vacation value, amenities/ things to do, customer service, accommodations, restaurants), additions desired, preference attributes.

AIRBNB LODGING TAX

In 2017, Airbnb started collecting hotel occupancy tax in jurisdictions that require that tax to be collected for short-term accommodations. The tax is now a line item that guests see on their reservations, just like an ordinary hotel bill.

Previously, hosts were required to collect and remit the tax to the local jurisdiction. Los Alamos should ensure, and revise if necessary, that it is clear in the ordinance that created the Lodgers' Tax, that it applies to rentals such as Airbnb and VRBO.

Some communities with large visitor populations and hundreds of Airbnb properties, such as Avon, Colorado, have created new ordinances that designate which areas or neighborhoods that this type of short term rental is permitted and areas not allowed.

NEXT STEPS: PRIORITY ACTION ITEMS

The actions in Chapter 4 range from simple to complex. Some are more important than others. This plan also recognizes that Los Alamos County is preparing a maintenance-type budget, which is flat to the Adopted FY2018 budget, until the Los Alamos National Laboratory Management and Operation contract is completed and uncertainties concerning future revenue are eliminated.

Prioritizing actions, which can be started immediately after plan acceptance, serve as catalysts to create a positive momentum of accomplishments. Top priority actions should:

1. Work toward achieving one or more Strategic Priorities.
2. Make a positive impact on improving the visitor experience and community quality of life.
3. Work toward increasing overnight visitation.

The most important actions that require staff time and those that require direct costs or capital improvements are listed on the facing page.



Public Forum #2 attendees participating in mapping exercise.

PRIORITY ACTION ITEMS REQUIRING STAFF TIME

1. Form and activate Tourism Implementation Task Force.
2. Transition to County Tourism Division with a County Tourism Manager, as part of the County Manager's office.
3. Adopt ordinance for Airbnb and VRBO rentals to include in Lodgers' Tax assessments.
4. Continue to improve Los Alamos' presence with New Mexico True including additional content for online presence, creating an "Atomic Trail" as an addition to their other five trails, and utilize support and grants offered by New Mexico Tourism Department.
5. Explore the feasibility of, and grant opportunities for, expansion of Atomic City Transit service to provide weekend service (for Downtown Trolley).
6. Aggressively continue to explore hotel development incentive options, identify desirable locations for future lodging development (particularly full-service hotel), prepare hotel investor/developer pitch package, create targeted list, and meet with potential developers/operators.
7. Contact regional and national tour operator and travel agencies currently active in New Mexico to coordinate services and trips to Los Alamos. Focus on tour group itineraries with overnight stays in Los Alamos.
8. Reduce blight in the downtown districts through targeted and responsive commercial property maintenance and implementation of the County's Code Enforcement Program.
9. Expand specific strategies and actions to increase partnerships with regional economic development entities (e.g., Santa Fe, Taos, Angel Fire, the Pueblos) to grow visits to Los Alamos.
10. Improve approval, permitting, resources and assistance to community groups and organizers for events.

PRIORITY ACTION ITEMS REQUIRING DIRECT INVESTMENT/EXPENSES

1. Improve the appeal, function and content of the visitosalamos.org website and social media platforms.
2. Fund and implement the Los Alamos Brand Action Plan.
3. Fund and implement Wayfinding Plan Phase 1 directional and informational signage to improve visitor navigation.
4. Implement Fuller Lodge interpretation plan to enhance visitor experience. Expand hours Fuller Lodge is staffed to meet guest needs.
5. Improve visitor centers' experience and effectiveness. At White Rock Visitor Center, create interactive and experiential displays at improve aesthetics, and provide conveniences visitors expect (i.e., beverages, snacks, sunscreen).
6. Relocate Los Alamos Visitor Center and furnish with interactive and engaging information dissemination.
7. Continue to implement the MainStreet and Creative District events that draw visitors and provide additional activities that encourage extended stays.
8. Support and create multi-day events, like "trail festivals", with marketing support and potential funding assistance.
9. Implement County plans for extensions, upgrades, maintenance and new trails that benefit visitor and residents. Increase funding and staffing to address trail maintenance and improvements.
10. Collect visitor data through agreement with attractions, hotels, merchants and event organizers. Analyze visitor information and its influence on future decision-making regarding visitor marketing, services and facilities.

COMMUNITY INDICATORS

Developing a suite of indicators to monitor goals, implementation progress, and impacts relating to tourism development will be beneficial for Los Alamos. A monitoring program tracks progress, informs decision-making and ensures accountability toward goals.

Key sources of information that should be used to compile the monitoring and reporting results include data from: Los Alamos County (multiple departments); Discover Los Alamos Meeting & Visitor Bureau; Los Alamos Community Perception Survey; local utility providers; New Mexico Department of Transportation; and other sources. The County's Environmental Sustainability Plan (ESP) dictates tracking and updating measurements every two years for nine sustainability indicators. This ESP, and updates, will provide an avenue for consideration and incorporation of additional indicators of environmental impacts and sustainability related to increased tourism.

The Tourism Strategic Plan recommends that Community Performance Indicators initially be implemented to monitor two areas:

- Enhancing the Visitor Experience
- Enriching Community Life

Enhancing the Visitor Experience:

- Visitor satisfaction
- Visitor attendance at visitor centers and key attractions
- Number of room nights

Enriching Community Life:

- Quality of life
- Overall resident satisfaction
- Satisfaction with recreation opportunities, facilities and trails
- Effectiveness of environmental sustainability program
- Quality of services
- Sense of safety

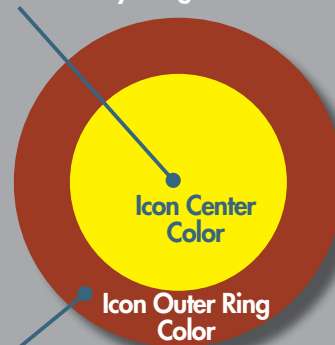
The addition of Community Performance Indicators would help augment current tracking of visitor numbers, spending and Lodgers' Tax receipts. As monitoring becomes more systematic, the County may want to consider performance indicators in additional areas, such as ensuring economic vitality, partnering for success and additional environmental metrics.

TRACKING PERFORMANCE INDICATORS EXAMPLE: RESORT MUNICIPALITY OF WHISTLER, BC CANADA

Community performance indicators, based on guiding priorities, provide measurement of, and guidance for various Whistler initiatives. Whistler communicates performance indicators on their website as demonstrated in the graphic below. The center color shows the indicator activity, while the outside ring measures performance relative to the targets. Tracking progress toward or away from the vision, allows the community to celebrate and build on successes and course correct when necessary.

STATISTICAL TREND LEGEND

- Desired direction
- Undesired direction
- No change, or statistically insignificant change



PERFORMANCE RELATIVE TO TARGET LEVEL

- Satisfied with current level of performance
- Not satisfied with current level of performance
- Desired target level unknown

PERFORMANCE EXAMPLE

- Parks & Trails
- Village Ambiance & Atmosphere
- Impact of Events & Festivals

www.whistler.ca/municipal-gov/community-monitoring/community-performance-indicators

SUMMARY

Tourism as an economic driver has many positive impacts to a community. Los Alamos has historically been heavily dependent on LANL as its economic driver. Through implementation of a strategic plan, Los Alamos has the opportunity to significantly diversify its economic base through tourism. A tourism economy needs to be carefully planned and the impacts of tourism growth carefully managed.

- All visitor related activities being done by Los Alamos County should be re-evaluated with these Focus Areas and Strategic Priorities in mind.
- Visitors generate sales and hotel tax (in New Mexico, gross receipts and Lodgers' Tax).
- Visitors support local businesses, especially retail stores and restaurants. In many towns, the local, permanent population is not large enough to sustain good restaurants and a variety of retail stores.
- A sustainable tourism economy is one that supports the long-term interests of the local community and visitors.
- When tourism grows haphazardly, the community may not be equipped to deal with population growth, change in land use patterns and demand on infrastructure (i.e., water, sewer, roadways).
- While tourism is not intended to be a significant economic driver in Los Alamos, the support and maximization of the tourism industry will enhance the quality of life for the local community by making available amenities that may not otherwise be available in a town of this size.



Central Avenue winter lights

