



County of Los Alamos

BCC Meeting Minutes - Draft

Environmental Sustainability Board

1000 Central Avenue
Los Alamos, NM 87544

*David Hampton, Chair; Erik Loechell, Vice-Chair; Sue Barns; Carly Blair; Shannon Blair;
Joseph Chandler
and Jack Grow; Members*

Thursday, July 16, 2026

5:30 PM

1000 Central Avenue - Council
Chambers

NOTE: This meeting is in person and open to the public. However, for convenience the following Zoom meeting link and/or telephone call in numbers may be used for public viewing and participation. Please click this URL to join:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85656951187>

1. CALL TO ORDER - ROLL CALL

5:30 p.m. Member Lochell absent.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion to approve the agenda for the Environmental Sustainability Meeting of July 16, 2026, approved unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

21945-26 Approval of June 18, 2026, Environmental Sustainability Board Minutes

Presenters: David Hampton

Motion to approve the Environmental Sustainability minutes of June 18, 2026, approved unanimously.

5. BOARD BUSINESS

21946-26 Discussion and Possible Action on Recommendation from Environmental Sustainability Board on Proposed Single-Use Plastic Bag Ban Ordinance

Presenters: David Hampton

Member Shannon Blair gave a brief overview on the proposed single-use plastic bag ban ordinance.

Angel Meng, Sustainability Office Student Intern, a brief history of the plastic ban, and also gave main themes from opponents and supporters.

Public Comment:

Valerie Shelly – Alternatives – what have other communities done vs. persuasive logic. “How can we persuade other to use reusable.”
Council – Big Bully to get their way. What evidence is there for Council to work with stakeholders to use alternative.

Michael Iblin – Government overreach to protect the environment, multiple studies that show banning bas has a net negative impact due to manufacturing of reusable bags. Provided attachment.

Jason Chappel – Store lead Smith’s as citizen concerned about small biz. How do you define success? How do we address plastic use. Need greater clarity on fees – what’s the purpose? Education and personal responsibility.

Joyce Anderson – Save the Big Los Alamos – opposed trade-offs of reusable alternative – environment. Bags have a function. In 2024 Albuquerque rescinded bag band. In the ordinance under burden the penalties were punitive and under the 5th amendment they are cruel and unusual punishment.

Elizabeth Jones – Reuses bags in various ways, educate on reusable bags.

Lyle Skofield – Statistics – majority of people would prefer this not to happen.

Dawn Marie Maldonado – Echoes opposition, whats the goal? Litter? More cleanup day’s biodegradable options? Have we investigated? Not the governments place to ban. We love our bags.

Jody Benson – Micro Plastics dangerous to humans, environmental, animals. Likened it to smoking cigarettes.

Celeste Rafin – 12 bags/week = 624 plastic bags per household \$4.9M = 5M bags per year. 100K to buy bags = 1 bag.

Jane Young – Switzerland no ban its part of culture, take a bag. Not a big deal.

ESB members gave their views on the plastic ban ordinance.

Member Grow motioned that the Environment Sustainability Board recommend that County Council not adopt the draft ordinance and authorize the chair to work with staff to prepare a memo summarizing the Boards concerns second by Member Chandler.

Motion passed unanimously 6-0

21958-26

Quarterly Climate Action Plan Implementation Update

Presenters: Angelica Gurule

Sustainability Manager Angelica Gurule gave the quarterly Climate Action Plan Implementation update that will be presented to County Council and asked for the Board's feedback.

6. REPORTS

A. Chair's Report - David Hampton

None.

1). Board of Public Utilities - Sue Barns/Shannon Blair/Carly Blair

None.

2). Transportation Board - David Hampton

None.

3). Parks and Recreation Board - Erik Loechell

None.

4). Council Liaison Report - Melanee Hand

Councilor Hand reported on Council meetings, items one being the new County website and how it relates to ESB is that on the website there will performance metrics for every part of the County all related to the Leadership Strategic Plan that all rolls down to work plans and to meet the Boards goals. Also had a presentation on the Comprehensive Plan that will be ready as a draft in the upcoming months and the plan is to be completed by the end of this calendar year. Had an overview of the focus area called Operational Excellence. Most relevant for ESB was a discussion and possible request for the ESB to evaluate expanding recyclable for single use plastics, the motion to request ESB further evaluate of how we recycle single use plastics. The motion was voted down 4-3, there will probably be further discussion.

B. Working Groups and Steering Committee**5). Los Alamos Sustainability Alliance - Sue Barns**

None.

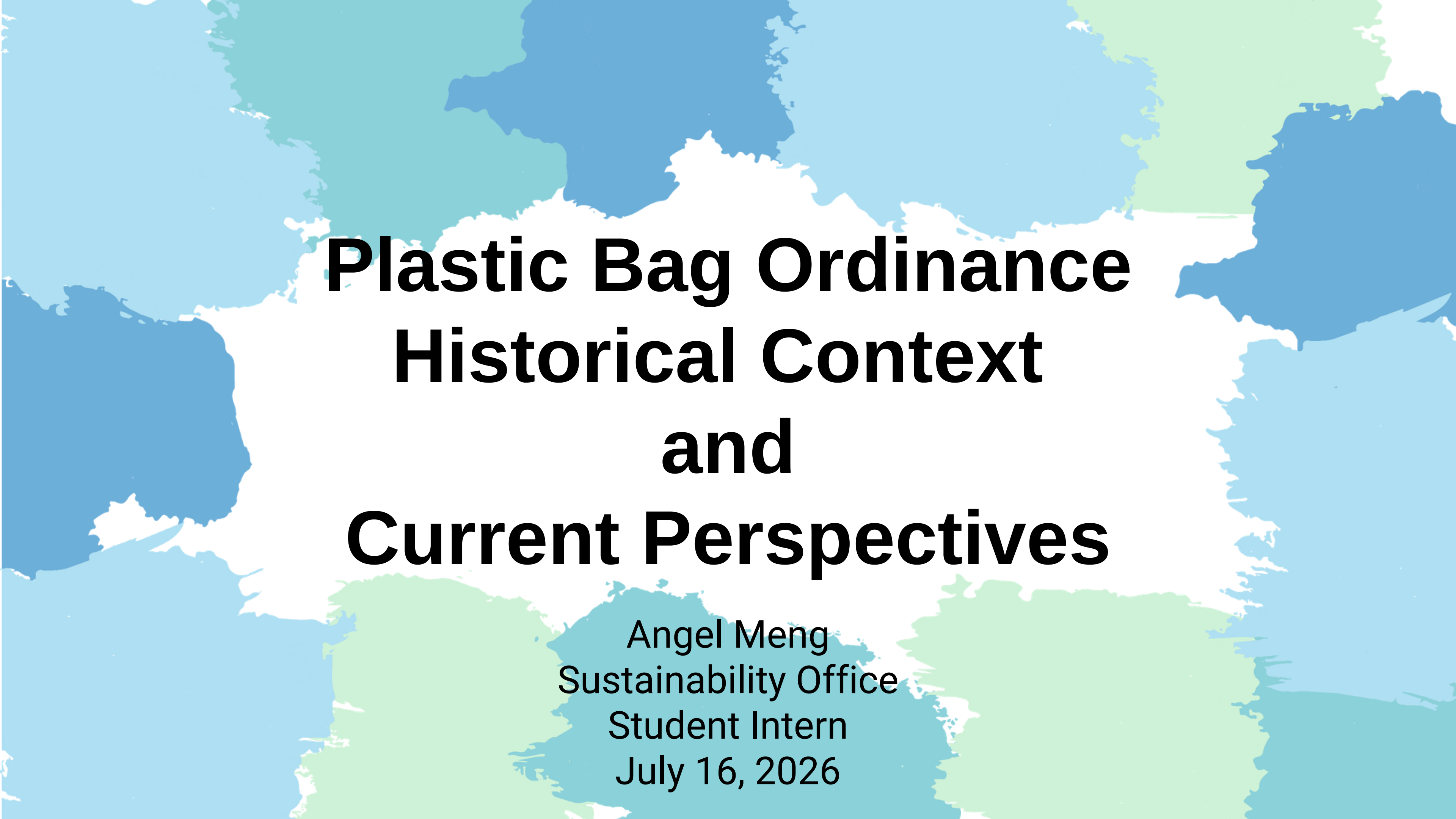
6). Education and Outreach Work Group**7. PREVIEW OF UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS****Josh Silva - Biosolids Composting Update**

Next month Josh Silva - Biosolids Composting Update

8. ADJOURNMENT

7:08 p.m.

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 Community Services Administration Office at 662-8163 if a summary or other type of accessible format is needed.



Plastic Bag Ordinance Historical Context and Current Perspectives

Angel Meng
Sustainability Office
Student Intern
July 16, 2026

History of Plastic Ban Ban (2015)

- Citizen petition requesting a plastic bag ban and a \$0.10 paper bag fee

- County Council directed ESB to conduct public outreach

- 80.1% out of 251 participants opposed a plastic bag ban

- 72.2% out of 252 participants opposed reducing the distribution of single-use bags

- Resulted in ESB recommending education rather than regulation

History of Plastic Ban Ban (2019)

- Second citizen petition sought to ban plastic bags, straws, and Styrofoam

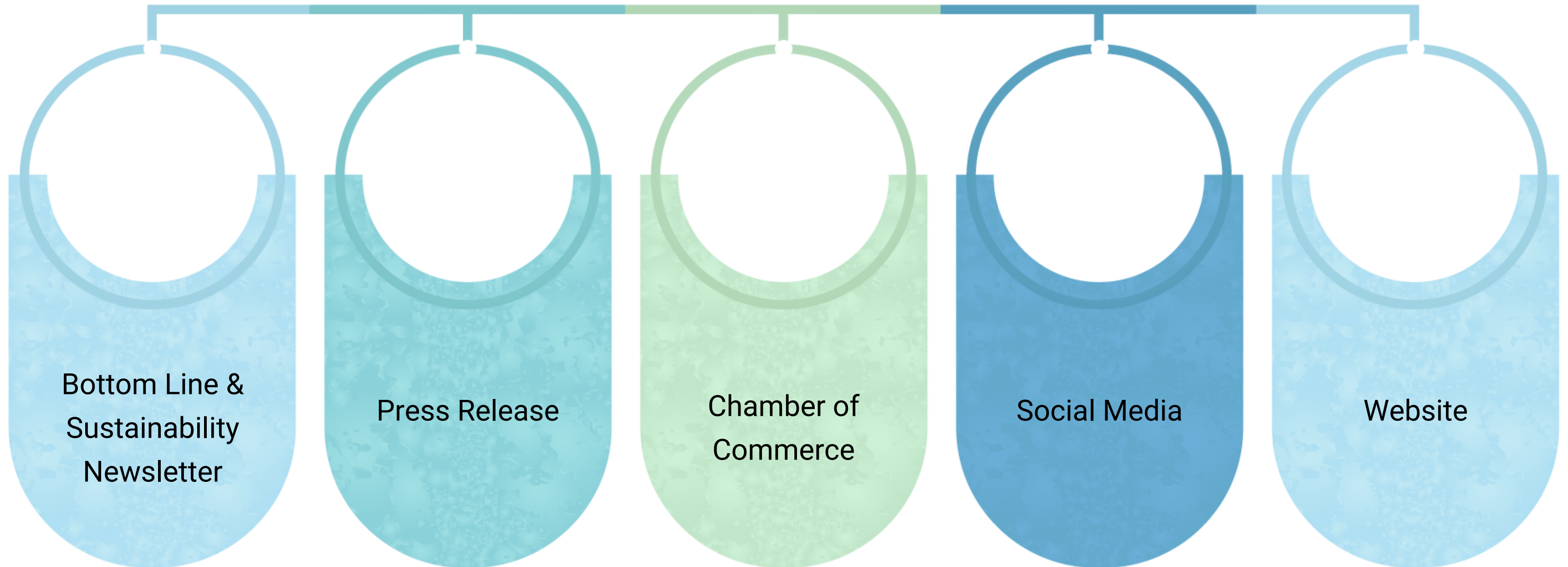
- Council instead focused on waste reduction initiatives, largely due to the COVID-19 virus, where reusable bags were banned from Smith's to reduce spread of disease

History of Plastic Ban Ban (2025-2026)

- In 2025, Council asked ESB to evaluate recyclability, alternatives, costs, and impacts of single-use plastic bags

- In 2026, Council directed ESB to develop a single-use plastic bag ordinance, resulting in the draft ordinance currently under consideration

Outreach



Overview of All Comments



- Total of 213 comments were collected (Email, Cognito Forms, Facebook Commentary)



- 66% in opposition



- 28% in support



- 4% gave general feedback



- 3% have a neutral stance

Overview of Comments Excluding Facebook



- Total of 110 comments were collected (Email, Cognito Forms)



- 49% in opposition



- 43% in support



- 7% gave general feedback



- 1% have a neutral stance

Main Themes from Opponents

Single-Use Plastic Bags are not “Single-Use”

- Bags are reused for small trash cans, pet waste, packing materials, cleaning messes, general household use
 - People will simply buy single-use plastic bags online if banned from stores
-

Government Overreach vs. Personal Choice

- Issue should be left to individual choice rather than govt. mandates
 - Limits personal freedom
 - Unnecessary govt. regulation
-

Main Themes from Opponents

Businesses and Citizens

- Increased costs for small businesses already struggling
 - Increased costs for customers already on low incomes
 - Administrative complexity
-

Education Instead of Regulation

- Encourage voluntary reusable bag use
 - Educate residents
 - Incentives instead of bans
 - Many shared the sentiment that “people who want reusable bags already use them”
-

Main Themes from Opponents

Only Addresses Small Part of Plastic Waste

- Why grocery bags are being targeted while items such as plastic packaging, food containers, bottles, remain widely used
-

Education Instead of Regulation

- How would enforcement occur
 - Whether resources should be spent policing bags
 - Whether the punishment fits the crime
-

Main Themes from Supporters

Reduces Plastic Pollution (most common)

- Litter reduction
 - Wildlife protection
 - Cleaner community
 - Risk to long-term health through microplastics
 - Risk to wildlife
-

Encourage Reusable Bags

- Reusable bags are easy to use
 - Many people already use them
 - The community can adapt quickly
-

Main Themes from Supporters

Aligns with Climate and Sustainability Goals

- Reducing waste and single-use plastics
 - Reducing carbon footprint
 - Creating a cleaner community in Los Alamos
-

Other Communities Have Succeeded

- Argument that residents adapt after a short adjustment period
 - Referenced other locations that have successful plastic bag bans such as Las Cruces, Santa Fe, San Diego, Colorado
-

The background of the slide is composed of several large, overlapping brushstrokes in various shades of blue and green. The strokes are thick and have a textured, painterly appearance. The colors range from a light sky blue to a deep navy blue, and from a pale mint green to a slightly darker teal. These strokes are arranged in a way that they frame the central text, with some strokes extending towards the edges of the slide.

Thank You



Climate Action Plan Implementation Update

Los Alamos County Council
Angelica Gurule | August 4, 2026

What Council Adopted

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- 2026 Strategic Leadership Plan – Environmental Stewardship, Climate Action and Resiliency
 - Implement the roadmap for reducing greenhouse gas emission, achieving a carbon neutral energy supply, and increasing climate resilience
- Achieve carbon neutrality by 2050
- Become a carbon-neutral electric provider by 2040
- Phase out natural gas for:
 - County operations by 2050
 - Community by 2070



Climate Action Plan Metrics



CARBON
NEUTRAL
BY 2050



OUR GOALS

Website: <https://www.losalamosnm.gov/Government/Initiatives/Sustainability-and-Conservation-Initiatives>

At-a-Glance Progress

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Year 1 (FY26) and Year 2 (FY27) Progress Overview

13 total climate actions

- 1 completed
- 5 ongoing
- 4 in progress
- 3 upcoming

Completed Actions

- **Fleet Conversion Plan and CommunityWide EV Charging Plan**
 - Plan was accepted by Council in October 2025
- **FY26 County transitioned to 5 EV's**
 - 2 Facilities
 - 1 Parks
 - 2 DPU
 - 1 Hybrid– Motor Pool
- **FY27 County plans to transition to 2 EV's**
 - 1 Library
 - 1 Assessor
 - 1 Transit Admin
 - 1 DPU



Ongoing Actions

6

Expand Community Partnerships

- Currently exploring Extended Producer Responsibility at the statewide level

Encourage community-energy efficiency and electrification retrofits

- Energy Efficiency Kit Workshop at PEEC
- Water and Energy Conservation Plan public engagement (5 days)
- Co op's Birthday Bash
- PEEC Earth Day: Time of Use
- Farmer's market, making time of use work for you
- Chamber Fest



Ongoing Actions

7

Conduct recycling and composting outreach and education

- Provided a Zero Waste Station at the Jemez Mountain Trail Run and collected
 - 326lbs of compostable materials
 - 14lbs of aluminum
 - 33lbs of glass
 - 49lbs of cardboard
 - 167lbs of mixed recycle
 - 71lbs landfilled
- Collaborating with PEEC on rain barrel workshop, reusing old trash roll carts
- Participated in PEEC & County Earth Day and Farmer's Market



What's Actively Underway

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Expand electric energy resiliency

- **Foxtail Flats 170MW Solar Array and 80MW Battery Storage Under Construction**
 - Estimated Completion Date: April 2027 (50%) and June 2027 (100%)
 - Site clearing and grubbing completed and 20% of staking has been completed



ATTACHMENT A



What's Actively Underway

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Promote Electric Vehicle Adoption

- Direct Current Fast Chargers at Mesa Public Library
 - Estimated completion date: October 2026
 - Partially funded by NMDOT Grant Funds



ATTACHMENT A

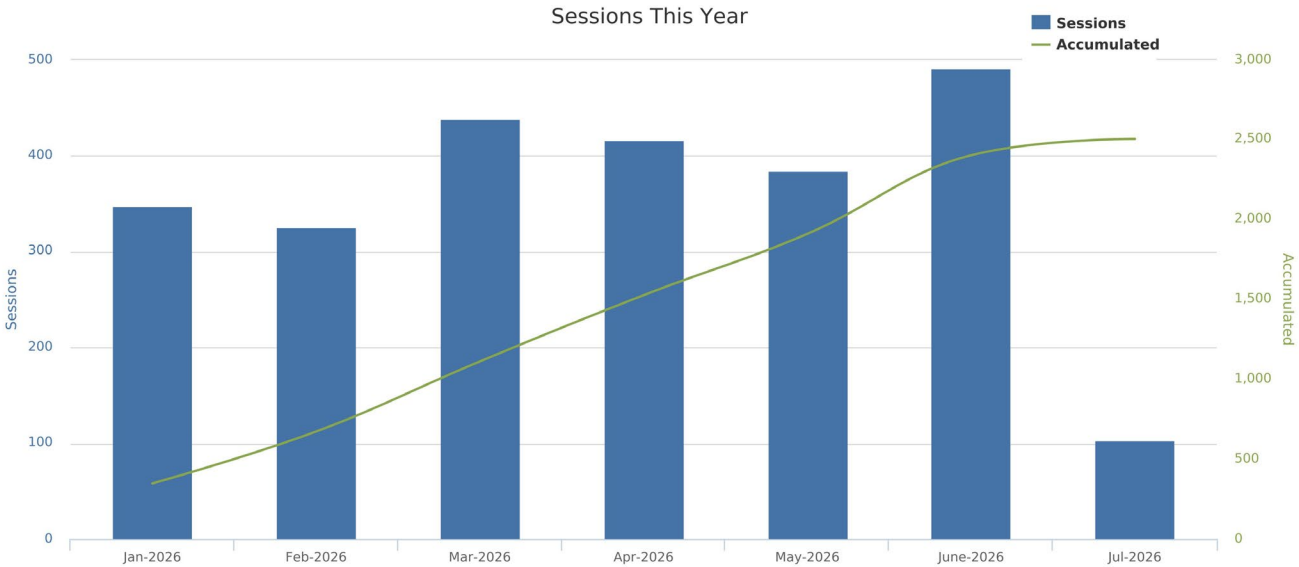


Electric Vehicle Chargers Report

ChargePoint Charger Financial Analysis

	JAN	FEB	MAR
Gross Revenue	\$ 2,463.43	\$ 2,291.87	\$ 3,128.32
Replacement	\$ 601.00	\$ 601.00	\$ 601.00
10% Service Fee	\$ 246.22	\$ 228.95	\$ 312.63
Maint Fee	\$ 650.00	\$ 650.00	\$ 65.00
Cellular Service	\$ 28.00	\$ 28.00	\$ 28.00
Elec Expense	\$ 2,545.29	\$ 3,085.70	\$ 3,569.85
Net Income	\$ (1,607.08)	\$ (2,301.78)	\$ (1,448.16)

Municipal Building EV Charger Utilization



What's Actively Underway

11

- **Public Climate Education Campaigns**
 - Estimated completion date: October 2026
 - Give a Shift campaign launched at Earth Day & Water Festival
 - Climate Action Bingo



What's Actively Underway

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ATTACHMENT A

- **Adopt Green Building Standards**
 - **Goal:** Promote fossil fuel reduction in new residential, commercial, and municipal construction by adopting a green building performance standard
- Eli Isaacson, Community Development Director will provide an update on this item.



What's Coming Next

13

- Finalize Request for proposal (RFP) to establish a food composting collection and management services
- Develop RFP to conduct a vulnerability assessment
- Develop RFP to conduct residential energy audits
- Promote green stormwater infrastructure and low-impact development
- Expand mixed-use, transit-oriented development policies
- Support the local food system

Environmental Sustainability Board

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- Environmental Sustainability Board has three members with terms expiring July 31, 2026
- Developing recommendation for the Proposed Plastic Bag Ordinance
- Hosted Water and Energy conservation education at the PEEC/DPU water festival
- Hosting booths at Farmer's Market monthly – sharing info on Give a Shift Climate Action Campaign
- Contributing to implementation of Climate Action Plan



ATTACHMENT A



Thank you! Questions?

Contact Information:

Angelica Gurule
Angelica.Gurule@losalamosnm.gov

