

DRAFT REPORT  
OCTOBER 18, 2016 **V.3**

COMPREHENSIVE  
**PLAN**  
LOS ALAMOS COUNTY 2016









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# RESOLUTION



# CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	v
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	xi
VISION.....	xiii
<b>1. INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 PURPOSE OF THE PLAN.....	3
1.2 THE PLANNING PROCESS.....	4
1.3 THE CORE THEMES.....	5
1.4 THE PLANNING AREA .....	6
1.5 HOW TO USE THIS PLAN .....	9
1.6 HISTORY OF PLANNING.....	10
<b>2. PLANNING CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>13</b>
2.1 HISTORY & LAND USE .....	15
2.2 DEMOGRAPHICS .....	21
2.3 HOUSING .....	25
2.4 LOS ALAMOS NATIONAL LABORATORY.....	29
2.5 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.....	33
2.6 TRANSPORTATION.....	37
2.7 UTILITIES.....	41
2.8 OPEN SPACE .....	47
<b>3. CORE THEMES - GOALS, POLICIES AND STRATEGIES .....</b>	<b>55</b>
3.1 HOUSING, NEIGHBORHOODS & GROWTH.....	57
3.2 DEVELOPMENT, REDEVELOPMENT & DOWNTOWN .....	73
3.3 OPEN SPACE, TRAILS & MOBILITY.....	87
<b>4. FUTURE LAND USE .....</b>	<b>101</b>
4.1 PURPOSE OF FUTURE LAND USE MAP.....	103
4.2 FUTURE LAND USE MAP .....	109
<b>APPENDIX.....</b>	<b>113</b>
A.1 GLOSSARY.....	114
A.2 LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	116
A.3 STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP GOALS .....	117
A.4 COUNTY UTILITY MAPS.....	123
A.5 OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT .....	128



# Executive Summary

In 2015, Los Alamos County undertook completion of a new comprehensive plan. The original comprehensive plan, adopted in 1987, laid the foundation of the new plan, as did work by the community through subsequent plans and efforts, many of which have been adopted by County Council.

The County has accomplished many of the goals established by the community in the past. This record of success fueled by continued community involvement allows the County to set new goals and develop new strategies going forward. Work on the current plan began with outreach to the community, starting in late 2015. This process enabled the community to discuss desires for the future and the appropriateness of the goals and direction approved by the County Council's 2016 Strategic Leadership Plan.

The current plan recognizes two aspects of the community as central and iconic elements of the identity of Los Alamos County: history, specifically recent history since the advent of the Manhattan Project and the role that history has played in the establishment of the community's strength in science, technology and intellectual capital; and environment, the spectacular physical setting of the County and the integral nature of that setting in every aspect of life in the County.

The comprehensive plan is a policy document, based on community input and the broad outlines of the goals of the Strategic Leadership Plan, and offering a multifaceted set of potential strategies for Council and community consideration.

Recognizing that the purpose of the comprehensive plan is to guide the physical development of the County, the plan focuses on goals and policies that relate to the growth, appearance and land uses on property in the County.

In the process of developing the plan, several core issues consistently appeared to be of paramount importance to the community. The plan is organized around these core elements. The elements are based on the desire for greater economic development, a strong commitment to neighborhood preservation, and protection of open space. Accordingly, the community has established three key areas as central to the identity, the values, and the issues facing Los Alamos over the coming years, illustrated on the following page.



The community has established the following three key areas as central to the identity and the values of Los Alamos. These three areas are the core themes of the comprehensive plan, introduced on page 2.

### HOUSING, NEIGHBORHOODS and GROWTH

The plan supports:

- Planning for modest growth
- Providing more choices in housing, especially downtown
- Protecting the character of existing residential neighborhoods

### DEVELOPMENT, REDEVELOPMENT and DOWNTOWN

The plan supports:

- Redeveloping vacant and blighted areas
- Focusing development priorities downtown
- Guiding development to property in and around current boundaries

### OPEN SPACE, TRAILS and MOBILITY

The plan supports:

- Protecting virtually all existing open space
- Maximizing connectivity for open space, trails and pedestrian ways
- Supporting street and infrastructure design for safety and comfort of all users

In order to better articulate the goals, policies and strategies related to these three core areas, the plan adopts a Future Land Use Map illustrating broad directions of future growth and desirable land uses.

The comprehensive plan provides direction and context to guide land use and growth, while setting forth the principles

of preserving and enhancing community values. Finally, this comprehensive plan is part of a larger and continuing process to periodically review and update the collective community vision for land use in the County. The plan is intended to be modified in the future as the needs and desires of the community change.

Los Alamos is known for its world-changing science and technology, its high-altitude recreational opportunities, small town friendliness and feel, and spectacular natural setting. It is a relatively young community that was created out of a boys' ranch camp beginning in 1917. It started as a community for the scientists who were recruited to work on developing the first atomic bomb. At the time, it was thought of as temporary. Now, some 65 years later, Los Alamos is here to stay.

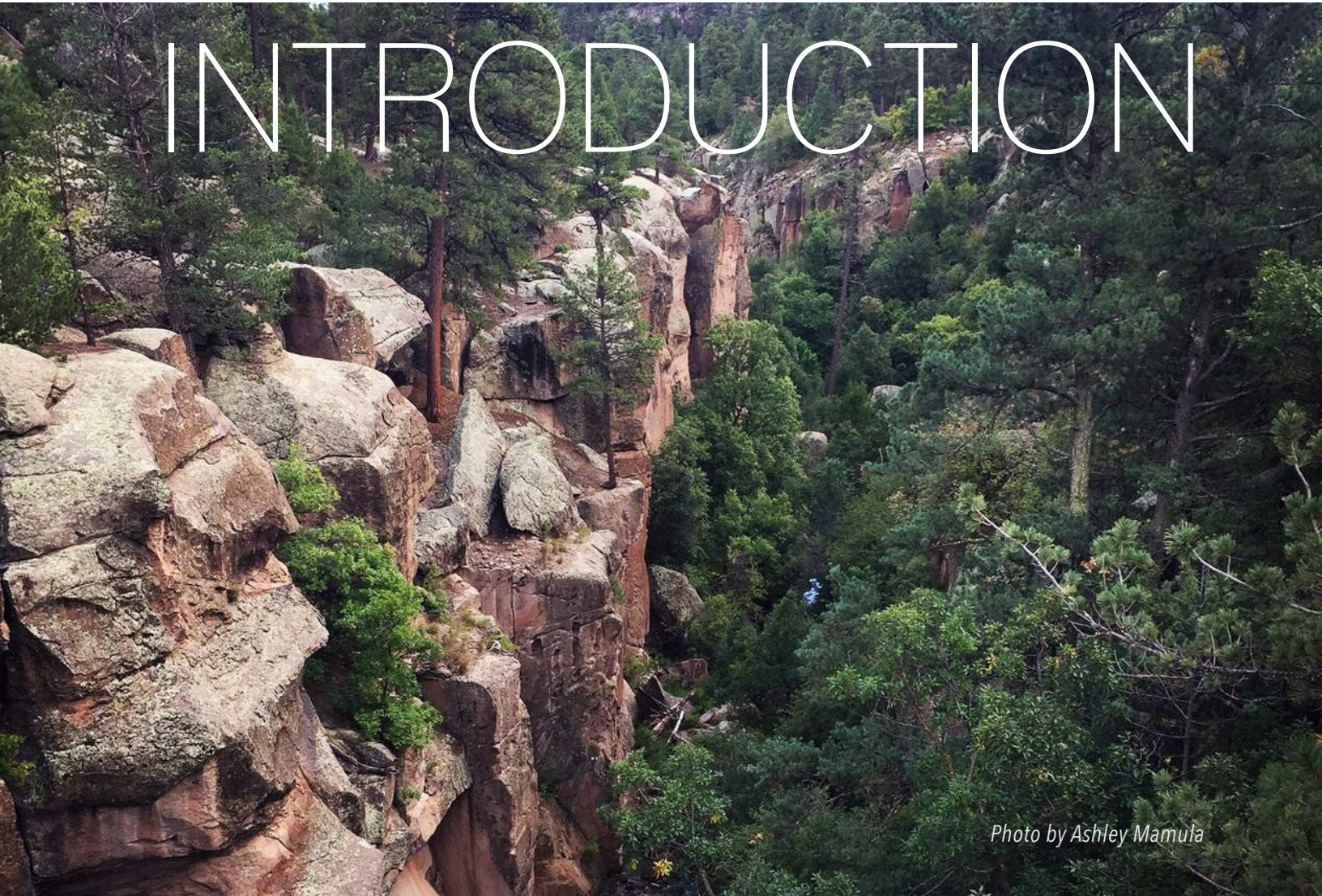
## **Vision Statement**

The community today has looked ahead to the next ten, even 20 years, and this is what it sees: Los Alamos will continue to have a small town feel, while improving economic vitality 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.



1

# INTRODUCTION



*Photo by Ashley Mamula*

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## 1.1 Purpose of the Plan

The Los Alamos County 2016 Comprehensive Plan is a high-level, long-range policy document that will guide decisions about the physical development of the County.

The comprehensive plan is intended to be a living document that should and will change to accommodate and reflect new circumstances, technology, natural and cultural forces, and the evolving vision of its citizens.

This document replaces the prior Comprehensive Plan (1987), Los Alamos County Vision Statement and Policy Plan (2005), Historic Preservation Plan Element (2008), Los Alamos Downtown Element (2009), Economic Vitality Strategic Plan (2010) and White Rock Center Element (2012). It serves as the unified statement of goals and policies for the future growth, development, preservation and aspirations for the County.

In addition to formalizing the goals and policies related to future growth, the plan presents various strategies for how the policies can be advanced and the goals achieved. These strategies are neither exhaustive nor prescriptive. They are a collection of ideas, some of which are from previously developed documents. Others are the result of current public participation in a variety of forums.

The comprehensive plan articulates the vision, the goals, and the aspirations of the community. The plan also aims to be practical and useful for its many users. Adopted as a part of the comprehensive plan is the County's first official Future Land Use Map. It represents visually the plan's goals and policies, especially as they relate to land use. It describes land use categories in broad terms to allow flexibility while depicting the agreed upon and general direction of future growth.

The County Council and Planning and Zoning Commission will use the policies in the plan, together with the Future Land Use Map, to guide and inform its decisions on requested policy changes, as well as development proposals. County staff, especially within the Community Development Department, will consider conformance with plan policies when reviewing applications. Members of the community will find assurance in plan policies and the map about what to expect by way of change and also neighborhood preservation. Developers and individual applicants will use the plan and the map as a guiding framework when preparing and presenting land use applications.



## 1.2 The Planning Process

In 2015, the Los Alamos County Council directed the Planning and Zoning Commission, with support from the Community Development Department (CDD), to produce an update to the County's comprehensive plan. While some sections of the plan had been updated over several previous years, other sections still dated to the last complete revision in 1987. The Vision Statement and Policy Plan adopted by Council in 2005 served as the consensus document for planning policy for ten years. The Council adopted subsequent long-range policy plans, including the 2016 Strategic Leadership Plan, which forms the basis for the goals and many of the policies in the 2016 comprehensive plan. The Council also directed staff to engage the services of a consultant to create and implement a public outreach and participation process, and to complete that process and the new plan within 12 months.

The County retained Architectural Research Consultants, Incorporated (ARC) of Albuquerque, NM, to perform a broad-based public outreach and participation process over the course of 12 months. The Planning and Zoning Commission led development of the comprehensive plan and Community Development Department (CDD) staff primarily performed technical and professional work. ARC provided facilitation and analysis of public input, as well as some technical and graphic support.

Additionally, ARC established and hosted a web site featuring the comprehensive plan. It provided regular updates of activities, meetings and plan development. It also contained an informal opinion survey, results of two statistically valid random sample surveys, and links to former and current related County documents. It offered the opportunity for citizens to request email updates and notifications, and access to all plan documents, including previous work related directly and indirectly to the comprehensive plan. Historic documentation was also available on the County's CDD comprehensive plan web page.

Work on the new plan was divided into three phases or rounds. In addition to review of prior documents, Round 1 consisted of individual interviews with key community leaders, launch of the comprehensive plan web site, and three public meetings. The goal of Round 1 was to confirm the vision as previously outlined in the 2005 Vision Statement and Policy Plan, and in the 2016 Strategic Leadership Plan, and to identify those issues of key concern to the community. A series of white papers which identified and described existing conditions later became the planning context of the plan. A statistically valid survey (please see the Appendix) was mailed to 3,000 randomly sampled addresses in the County and, along with the community outreach meetings, helped establish the core themes of the plan.

Round 2 focused on those key areas of interest and need identified in Round 1. A second series of three public meetings considered those specific areas and were more technical. The results of these meetings, along with much of the work previously accomplished, helped to create draft goals, policies and strategies for the comprehensive plan. A second statistically valid survey (please see the Appendix) also mailed to 3,000 randomly sampled addresses, confirmed public agreement with the draft goals and policies, which then formed the heart of the plan presented in the Core Themes chapter.

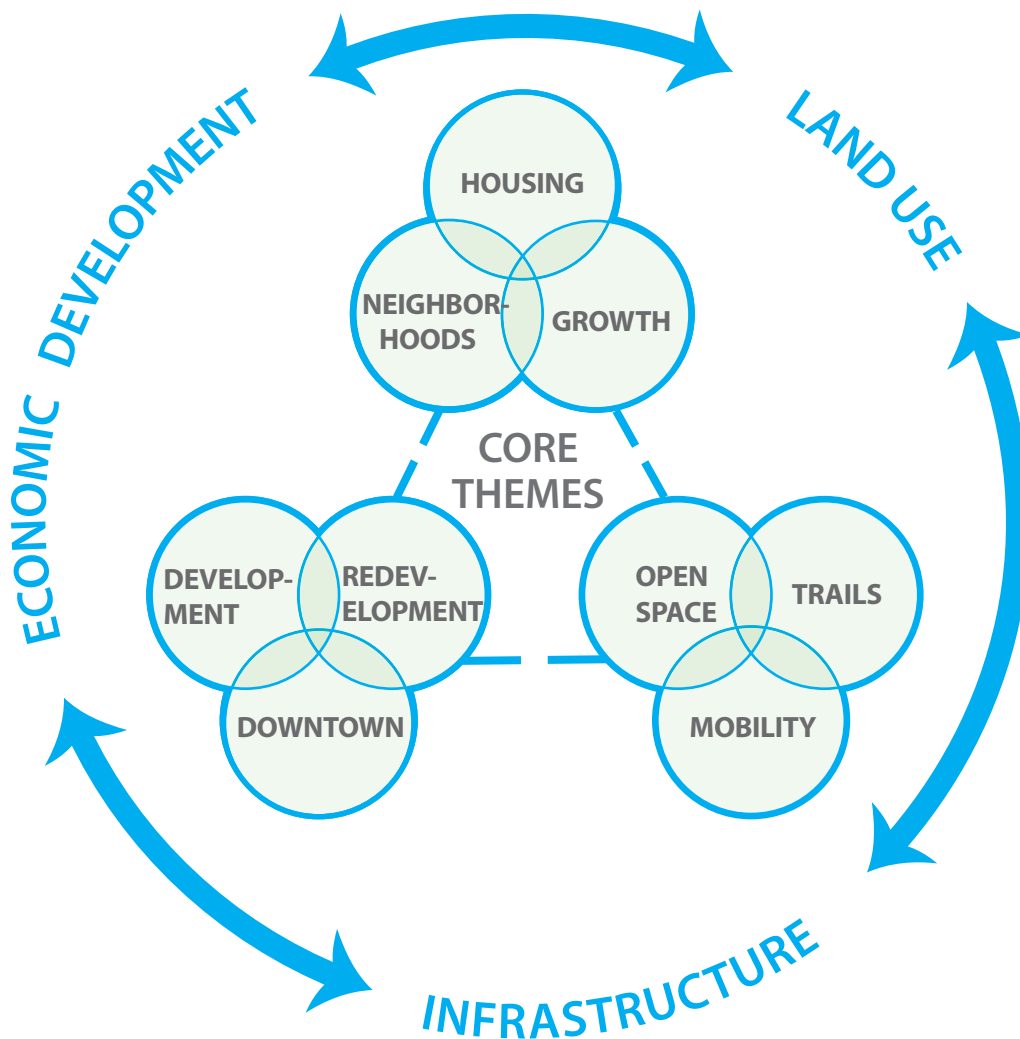
Round 3 consisted of review and adoption of the plan. The Planning and Zoning Commission recommended approval of the plan to Council, and Council adopted the new plan by resolution on \_\_\_\_\_, 2016.

## 1.3 The Core Themes

The core of the plan is organized around three subject groupings.

The extensive public outreach process that initiated planning for the 2016 comprehensive plan confirmed strong community agreement on core values, interests and aspirations of Los Alamos. The issues of greatest interest to the community were those that bound people together, those on which there were strong but consistent opinions, those which the community sought either to change or to preserve. Those issues led to the core themes of the plan and determined its structure.

Recognizing that there was significant overlap among the subject areas, as well as with a number of the goals as stated in the Strategic Leadership Plan, the plan integrates all the themes and the sub-themes within each, with three distinct and consistent dimension considerations. These dimensions help to sort and define the various policies and possible strategies. The dimensions are: economic development, land use and infrastructure.



## 1.4 The Planning Area

Los Alamos County has a total area of 109 square miles, consisting almost entirely of land, with no significant bodies of water. The vast majority of land, 94 square miles, or nearly 86%, is federally owned. The two population centers, Los Alamos Townsite and White Rock, are each census-designated places, or CDPs, which means that the Census Bureau assembles data for each place separately, in addition to data for the County as a whole.

The Townsite of Los Alamos is located on the Pajarito Plateau, on a series of mesas, separated by deep canyons. Volcanic eruptions 1.4 to 1.1 million years ago formed the plateau. The canyons were carved by water running down a portion of the Jemez Mountains, which are part of the southernmost extension of the Rocky Mountains. Los Alamos has developed primarily along the flat mesa tops at an elevation of 7,300 feet.

White Rock is located at the base of the mesa at approximately 6,400 feet. It has the same geographic foundation created by the flow from the two Valles Caldera eruptions and sits at the top of White Rock Canyon, carved through basalt and tuff by the Rio Grande. Across the river to the east rises the Caja del Rio plateau. Farther downstream, the canyon narrows and is flooded by Cochiti Dam Reservoir. The area at lower elevation and further distance from the mountains than the Los Alamos Townsite experiences lower humidity and higher temperatures. White Rock has more of a desert-like landscape often associated with southern New Mexico.

The community is constrained geographically by its setting on the several mesas and in the multiple canyons which establish physical limitations and constraints to future growth.

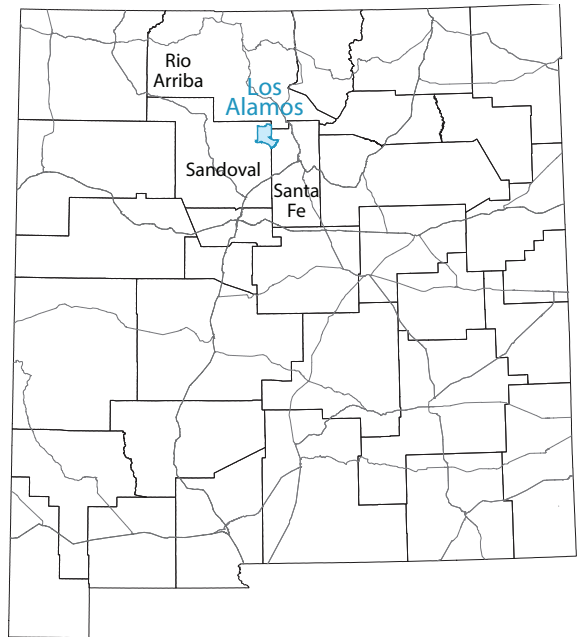
The population of the County has hovered around 18,000 for close to the past 30 years, with distribution consistently split into two-thirds for the Los Alamos Townsite and one-third for White Rock.

Los Alamos is home to the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), founded during World War II, and one of the largest science and technological institutions in the world. LANL employs approximately 10,000 people, 66% of whom, according to the LANL web page, commute daily from surrounding communities.. LANL operates under the jurisdiction of the Department of Energy and is located almost entirely on federally owned land. While the County does not have administrative or regulatory jurisdiction over the Laboratory, it shares some services and infrastructure with LANL. The federal government built nearly all the Townsite's original infrastructure and many of the residences, which were later turned over to the County and to private residents, respectively.

Los Alamos consistently ranks at the top of lists of best places in the country to live. It has clean air, low crime, and the lowest child poverty rate in the state. It regularly ranks as the highest per capita income location in the country, has high levels of education, excellent public schools, and a spectacular geographic setting.

The map opposite shows the location of the County in relation to adjacent counties and within the state. Los Alamos is the smallest County in New Mexico. The federal government originally administered it at the time of the Manhattan Project, until it became an incorporated City-County form of government in 1949.

*Location Map of Los Alamos County within the State of New Mexico*



*Map of Los Alamos County*





## 1.5 How to Use this Plan

As a policy document for the future physical development of the County, a number of different users will use the comprehensive plan to help guide development decisions.

**The County Council.** The comprehensive plan supplements the County Council's adopted Strategic Leadership Plan with more specific policies, particularly in the area of land use. It is a longer term document, looking ahead 20 years, giving broader goals, long-range assumptions and policies. Council will periodically review and amend the plan as needed to ensure that it remains current and relevant. Council will use the Strategies section of the plan to direct staff from various departments to pursue or support projects that further the vision and goals of the plan, to develop programs, or to create other more specific plans in various categories. Council will use the plan to support development review decisions, including rezoning requests, changes to the Future Land Use Map, text amendments to this document or to the Development Code, and for guidance in reviewing appeals. Goals expressed in the plan will also help inform Capital Improvement Project (CIP) spending decisions. In addition, and through the adoption of long-term goals, the comprehensive plan provides continuity and justification for future councils when making land-use decisions.

**The Planning and Zoning Commission.** P&Z will use the plan as guidance in the review of almost all public hearing cases: changes to text; rezoning; changes to the Future Land Use Map; special use permits; site plans; and subdivisions. Conformance with the goals of the plan will be paramount in their decision making. Additionally, plan policies may direct code amendments brought forward for P&Z consideration, and the Future Land Use Map will guide location of zoning districts.

**County Staff.** The Community Development Department will use the plan in preparing code amendments, proposed changes to the zoning map, and providing recommendations to County Council and the Planning and Zoning Commission on various cases such as special uses or rezoning.

**The Public.** The plan will be useful to the public as both a reference document and as assurance of the County's intent to preserve or develop certain lands. The plan's policies and projections for future growth provide safeguards for residential neighborhoods in terms of appropriate land uses and intensities of development.

**Developers/Applicants.** In establishing land use and other policies that describe County priorities for growth, the plan provides criteria for applicants for development approvals to follow when formulating specific proposals and establishing support for their approval. The plan helps to guide developers and individual applicants toward fair and predictable decisions, while balancing private interests with community goals.

## 1.6 History of Planning

The following summary describes Los Alamos' long-range planning for the physical development of the community since the County was formed in 1949. Each plan has helped to influence the community's growth.

### 1957 Long-Range Plan

- The United States Atomic Energy Commission prepared the Long Range Land Use Plan for Los Alamos, New Mexico. This plan established major uses within the County, including the northern, western and eastern areas, and the community center area. At that time, the federal government still owned land in Los Alamos. The plan established public facilities, including the airport, golf course, stables and fairgrounds. One of the plan recommendations that was not acted upon was the removal of the Sundt and Denver Steel houses that were built for Manhattan Project staff and were considered temporary housing.

### 1963 Comprehensive Plan

- Well-known planner/architect Leo A. Daly prepared the first comprehensive plan for Los Alamos County following the Los Alamos Community Transfer Law signed into law by President Kennedy in 1962, which authorized transfer of federal land in the community of Los Alamos to private ownership and local control. This plan recommended expanding the community center and adding housing, along with procurement of additional federal lands for future needs. The transportation element established a hierarchy of roads. The plan also recognized the potential for Los Alamos to be a center for tourist attractions, including the Pioneer Center, Pueblo Indian culture sites and Bandelier National Monument.

### 1976 Comprehensive Plan

- Los Alamos County staff prepared this plan as an update to the Daly plan, establishing goals and policies to guide plan recommendations. It focused on commercial and educational development, transit service, and designating sites for public schools and a college or university. It recognized that housing was a major problem and specifically recommended building low- and moderate-income housing.

### 1984 Comprehensive Plan (not adopted)

- County staff initiated a comprehensive plan to revise the 1976 plan, including the addition of a set of goals organized by land use, transportation, housing, environment, economy, parks and recreation, utilities, civic center, County services and facilities, and capital improvements.

### 1987 Comprehensive Plan

- Architectural Research Consultants, Incorporated developed a detailed plan that included goals and policies. Elements of the plan are land use/housing, commerce and industry, public facilities and transportation. This plan remains the last adopted County comprehensive plan. It also includes area master plans for the White Rock Civic Center District, Western Perimeter Area and Rendija Canyon. The plan advocated establishing design standards, a quantitatively rigorous approach to establishing new residential areas, and preservation of Manhattan Project-era historic sites. It recommended multimodal transportation systems and examined various loop roads.

- The County has realized many policy recommendations, including: broadening the County's regional shopping center function (particularly for Smith's Marketplace), relocating the Bradbury Museum to downtown, developing the Western Perimeter area, exploring development of the Pueblo Canyon shelf area, and redeveloping portions of Civic Center for higher densities. The plan also recommended that the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and LANL master planning-transfer various properties to private ownership, increasing the supply of low- and moderate-income housing, and developing an integrated land development code. The County did not act on a recommendation to develop Rendija Canyon.

### 2004 Los Alamos County Comprehensive Plan (not adopted)

- Facilitator Carl Moore led this planning project to address community vision, land use and community character. Implementation recommendations included revisions to the Land Development Code, and development of master plans for downtown White Rock and Los Alamos Medical Center, a historic preservation plan, recreational trail plan, and transportation plan. The effort relied upon extensive citizen participation, and the visioning work served as the basis for the 2005 vision statement and policy plan.

### 2005 Los Alamos County Vision Statement and Policy Plan (adopted)

- This plan established a 14-theme policy framework that serves as a thematic foundation for the County goals that County Council adopted in the Los Alamos County Strategic Leadership Plan 2016 Update. Thematic categories included: engage citizenry, diversify the economy, update infrastructure, expand education, diversify housing, enhance youth activities, preserve our past, improve recreation,

protect the environment, provide health care, work together, improve mobility, revitalize downtown, and act regionally.

- Since 2005, the County has developed individual elements and master plans, but has not attempted to develop a comprehensive plan until the current effort, which began in 2015. These adopted documents included the Historic Preservation Plan Element (2008), Los Alamos Downtown Element (2009), Economic Vitality Strategic Plan (2010), and White Rock Center Element (2012). Other adopted plans relevant to the comprehensive plan include the Affordable Housing Plan (2010), Creative District Plan (2012), Open Space Management Plan (2015), and Transit Study (2015). Since the County did not incorporate these documents into a unified plan and some are dated, one of the tasks of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan was to evaluate and update these potential plan components as needed and integrate them into the new comprehensive plan format as appropriate.

### 2016 Comprehensive Plan

- County Council gave direction in 2015 to create a new comprehensive plan as a high-level policy document to guide future development of the County. In February 2016, the Council adopted the 2016 Strategic Leadership Plan, providing more specific and focused goals, including: maximizing opportunities related to the Manhattan Project National Historical Park; maximizing use of County-owned land; improving the quality of existing housing combined with developing appropriate infill housing; supporting environmental stewardship and enhancing recreational opportunities; and pursuing land transfers.

*Sources: Los Alamos Comprehensive Plan 1987, which included ARC's review of information on plans developed prior to 1986; ARC's review of plans developed since 1987.*

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# 2

# PLANNING CONTEXT



County of Los Angeles, Horizon Broadcasting/www.SantaFe.com, Los Alamos National Bank, LA Daily Post, De la Crème Italian Cream Sodas, KRSH AM 1490 & KRSH FM 107, Los Alamos Medical Center, Rayburn Design, Lou Santoro State Farm Insurance, Animal Clinic of Los Alamos, Holiday Inn Express, Pajarito Greenhouse, Pajarito Mountain Ski Area, Longview Self Storage, Skip Weckstung, CR Fox, LA Commerce & Development Corp., Rob & Kimber Heineman, Dal Norte Credit Union, Los Alamos Monitor, Plateau Property Management, Smith's Marketplaces, LA Chamber of Commerce, New Mexico Consortium

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# 2.1

## PLANNING CONTEXT: HISTORY & LAND USE

LOS ALAMOS TOWNSITE,  
WHITE ROCK, COUNTY  
LAND AREA AND LAND  
STATUS

# Historic Land Use

## Los Alamos Townsite

Los Alamos, or the Townsite, is built on four roughly parallel mesas in the east central part of the County. Archaeological and historic evidence of Native American residence in the area dates back to approximately the 10th century. Homesteading in the 19th and 20th centuries was largely for the purpose of summer grazing of livestock. In 1917, Detroit businessman Ashley Pond II started the Los Alamos Ranch School, a boys' school, named after the Cottonwood trees that dominated the landscape. In 1942, the Department of War used the power of eminent domain to take over the school and other homesteads in the area to establish a secret location for the Manhattan Project, which designed the first atomic bomb, deployed in World War II.

Much of the housing that remains in place to this day was for the scientists and support staff for the Manhattan Project.

## White Rock

Located some five miles south and east of the Los Alamos town center on the hill, White Rock is very much a family-oriented community with an area of 7.2 square miles and a population of approximately 5,631 people, many of whom are either employed by or retired from Los Alamos National Laboratory.

The White Rock community was established in 1947, when the Atomic Energy Commission acquired land from the U.S. Forest Service to build a temporary community for construction workers. That community was abandoned by 1953, and by 1958, all of the original buildings had been demolished or removed. The second White Rock community began in 1963.

The most significant distinguishing physical feature of White Rock is its location on the eastern edge of White Rock Canyon. The canyon averages 1,000 feet in depth, and was carved by the Rio Grande River. The rugged beauty of the canyon enhances its recreational opportunities, such as hiking and climbing. The canyon is also home to three endangered bird species as well as several rare plant species.

While the commercial center of White Rock thrived during the 1980s, it experienced a steady decline beginning in the early

1990s. With substantial financial support from the County Council, the community has invested significant resources in revitalization. In 2012, the Council adopted the White Rock Center Element as a part of the comprehensive plan for Los Alamos County. Evidence of revitalization includes the new fire station built in 2007; visitor center constructed in 2012; the new public library and the relocated and updated teen center, opened in 2015; and ongoing senior center renovation and expansion efforts in 2016.

## County Land Area

At 109 square miles, Los Alamos County is the smallest County in the state. The County has two population centers: Los Alamos, also known as the Townsite, and White Rock. Together, they comprise the political entity as an incorporated municipal/County government. The County is also home to the Los Alamos National Laboratory, or LANL. However, except for certain offices leased to LANL by private owners within the County, LANL properties and functions are predominantly located on federally owned land, outside the jurisdiction of the County. Los Alamos County owns over 6,000 acres, of which 4,000 acres are dedicated to open space.

## Land Ownership

Prior to 1963, private land did not exist within County boundaries. Three federal agencies owned all the land: the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), and the National Park Service (NPS). This unusual pattern of land ownership was a direct result of the establishment of the Manhattan Project's Site Y at Los Alamos in 1942. To maintain secrecy at the site, the AEC, through the power of eminent domain, took all surrounding parcels of land to further the war effort. This property included the Los Alamos Ranch School for Boys, dozens of homesteads on the Pajarito Plateau, and lands within the Santa Fe National Forest and Bandelier National Monument. When Los Alamos grew and established permanent facilities, the AEC saw benefits in selling housing to private owners and transferring land and infrastructure to the local government. The AEC completed disposal of AEC housing and infrastructure by 1968.

In 1964, the voters approved an amendment to the New Mexico Constitution which allowed the County to form as an "Incorporated County," providing the right to self-govern and

establish its own laws. This power, known as “home rule,” authorizes the County to annex territory, plan and plat land use and development, create and enforce zoning laws and regulations, designate historic districts and landmarks, regulate utilities and other franchises, contract for services, issue debt via bonds, grant licenses or permits, and exert other well recognized governmental functions providing for the safety, health, and welfare of its citizens.

State of New Mexico law authorizes the County to “adopt, amend, extend and carry out” a comprehensive plan. Generally, the comprehensive plan is to provide for the “coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the municipality” which will “in accordance with existing and future needs, best promote health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity or the general welfare as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development.” NMSA 1978 § 3-19-9 (A). As a planning document, the comprehensive plan is not an ordinance. Rather, it is adopted by resolution of the County Council, on recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

*Land Ownership Portions in Acres*

Los Alamos County Land Ownership

Ownership/Management Type	Areas (Square Miles)	Area (Acres)	Portion of County
U.S. Forest Service	45.25	28,960	41.4%
U.S. Department of Energy	38.31	24,518	35.0%
National Park Service	10.41	6,662	9.5%
Indian/Tribal	0.06	38	0.1%
Private	15.29	9,786	14.0%
County Open Space	~6.25	4,000	5.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>109.32</b>	<b>69,965</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Bureau of Land Management Land Ownership GIS coverage, 2012

*Comparative Existing Land Use*

Existing Land Use in Los Alamos Townsite and White Rock

Land Use Category	Land Area (Acres)		Portion of Land Area	
	Los Alamos	White Rock	Los Alamos	White Rock
Single Family Residential	893	1,438	12%	42%
Multi-Family Residential	299	27	4%	1%
Residential Open Area	19	4	0.3%	0.1%
Mobile Homes	42	0	1%	0%
Commercial	1,578	34	21%	1%
Schools	188	31	3%	1%
Golf Course	164	0	2%	0%
Parks and Recreation	245	189	3%	5%
County - government functions and adjacent open space	3,800	1,665	51%	48%
Quasi-Public	37	32	1%	1%
Vacant Parcels	142	27	2%	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,408</b>	<b>3,448</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Los Alamos County Assessor's Office 2014 parcel GIS data, analyzed by ARC.

## Existing Land Use

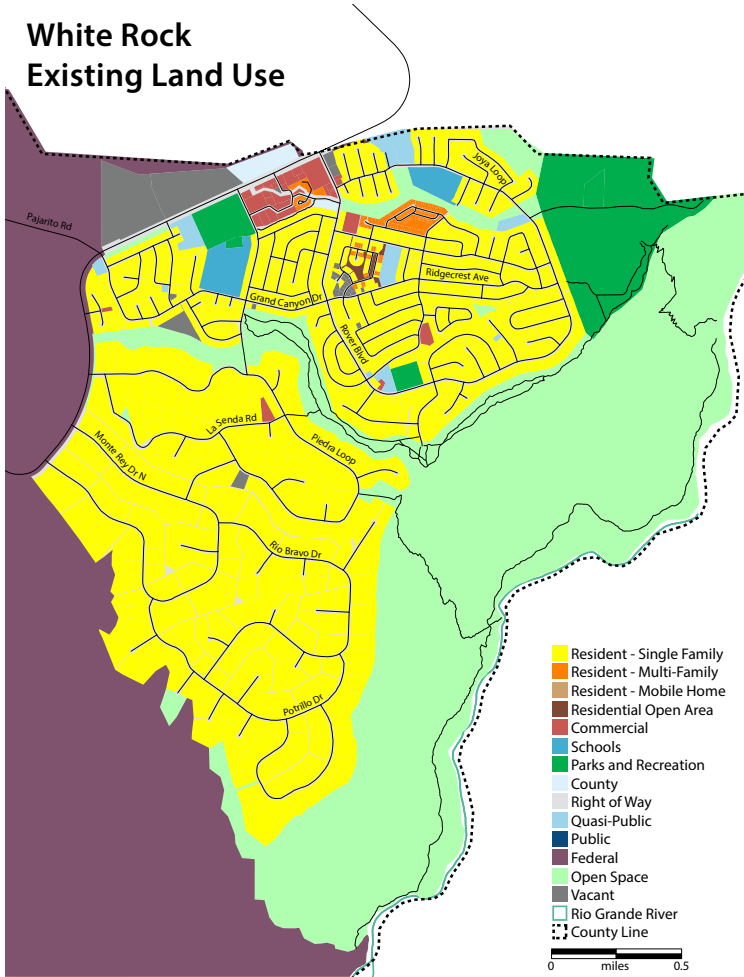
The following maps depict existing land use in the Los Alamos Townsite and White Rock, benchmarking current conditions. Residential lands are characterized by building types: single family houses, multi-family dwellings, and mobile homes. Commercial uses are mostly in the two downtowns. Public lands are divided into various categories. Both maps also show vacant lands.

White Rock consists mostly of medium- and low-density residential, with several schools and County sites. The community has a relatively small commercial area. Both communities possess abundant County open space on their peripheries.

## County-Owned Land

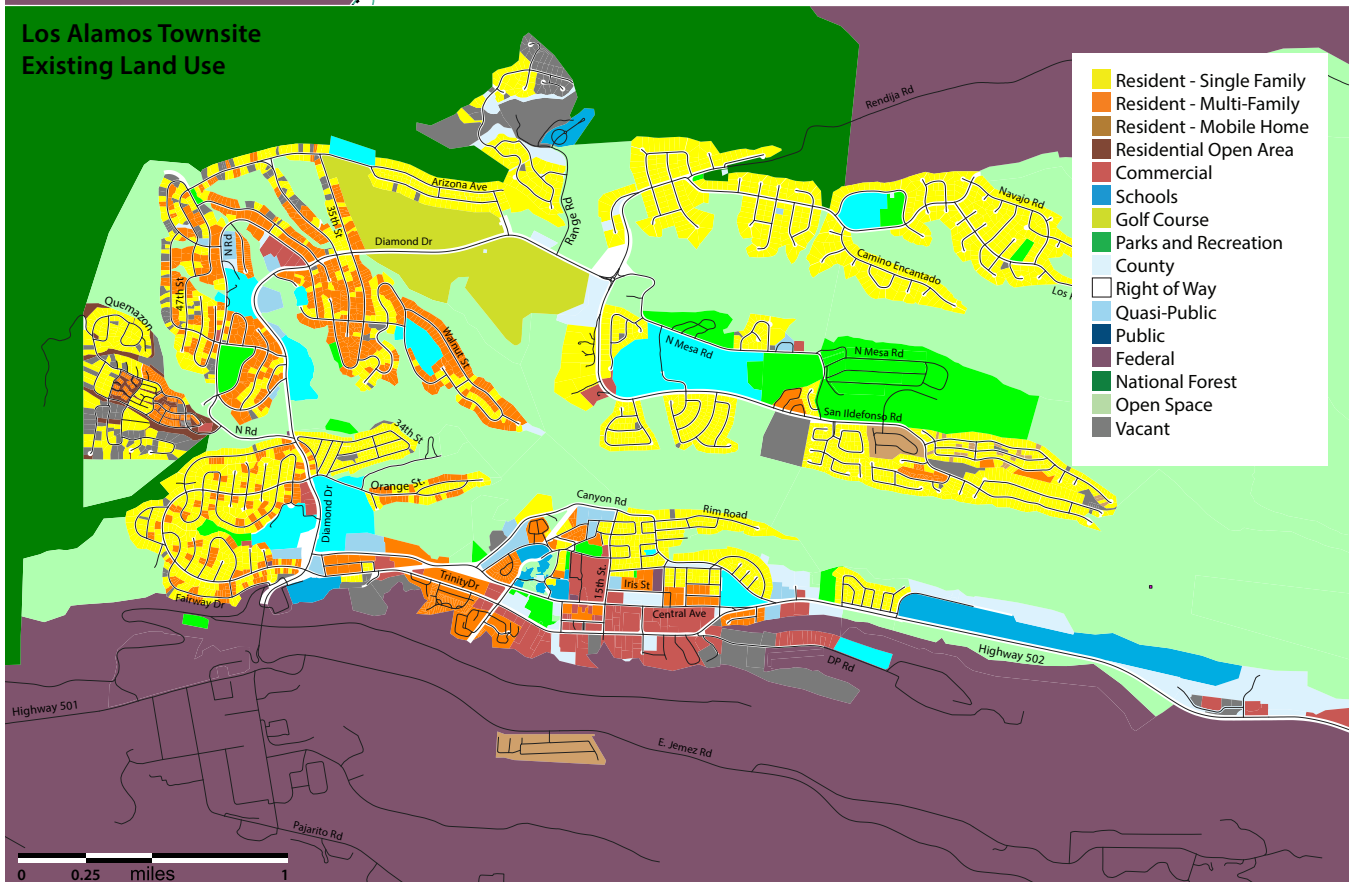
Los Alamos County owns and manages properties, most of which are designated for open space. Use of additional lands is for parks, County public buildings, and the golf course. A few tracts are currently vacant (*see the following maps*).

### White Rock Existing Land Use



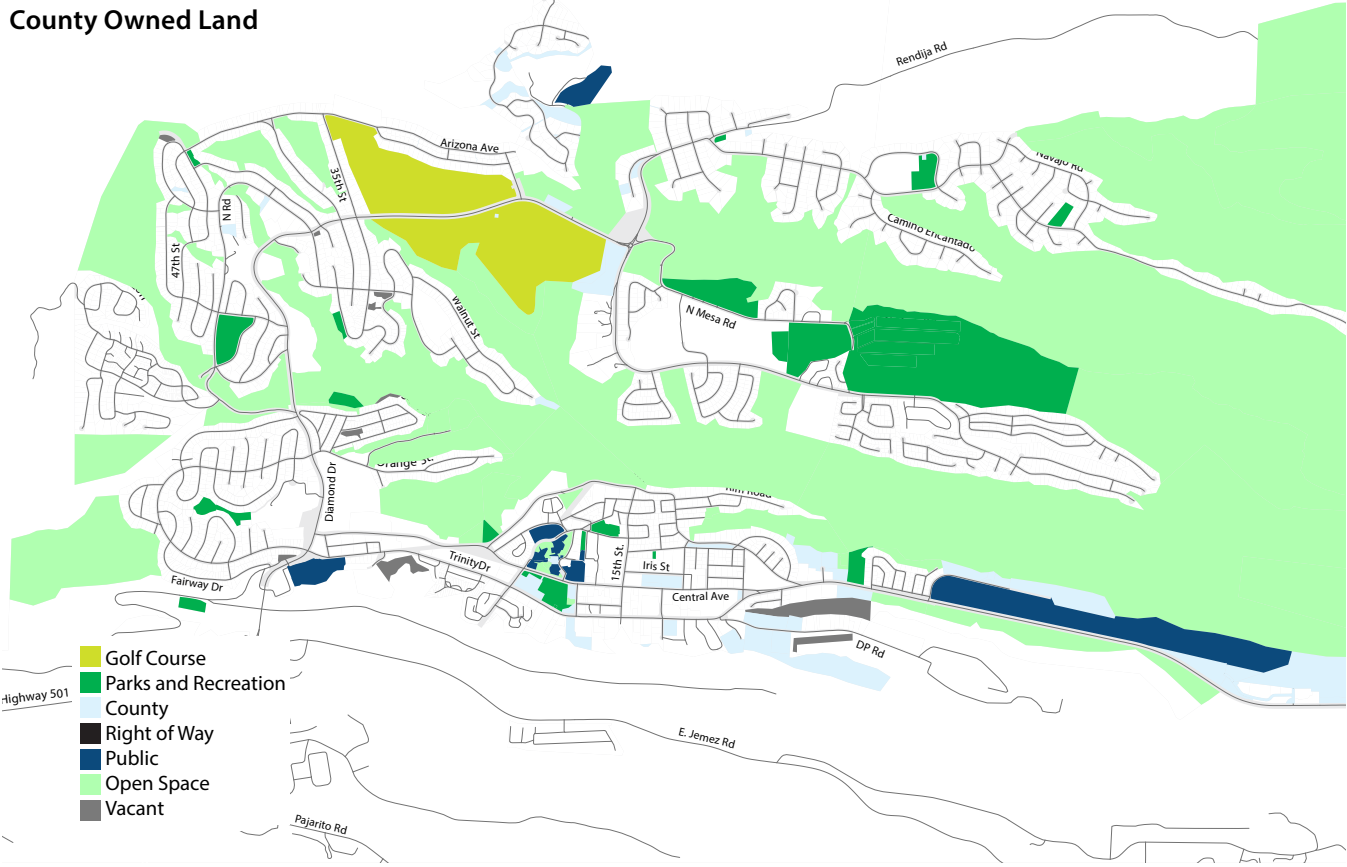
Map of Existing Land Use in White Rock (right) and Los Alamos (below)

### Los Alamos Townsite Existing Land Use

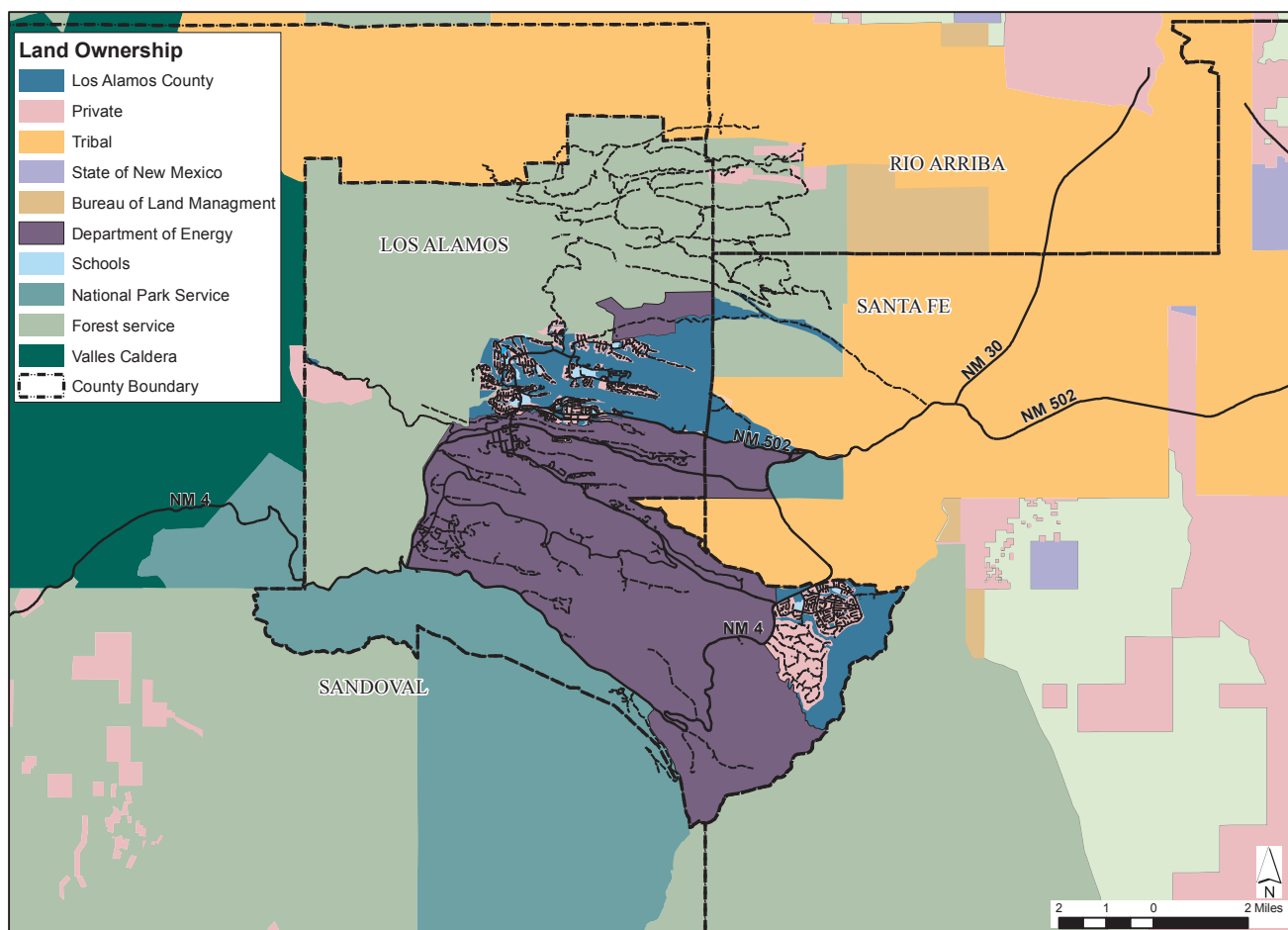


Map of County-Owned Property

**Los Alamos Townsite  
County Owned Land**



Map of Ownership of Land in the County





# 2.2

## PLANNING CONTEXT: DEMOGRAPHICS

LOS ALAMOS COUNTY  
POPULATION, GROWTH &  
CHARACTERISTICS

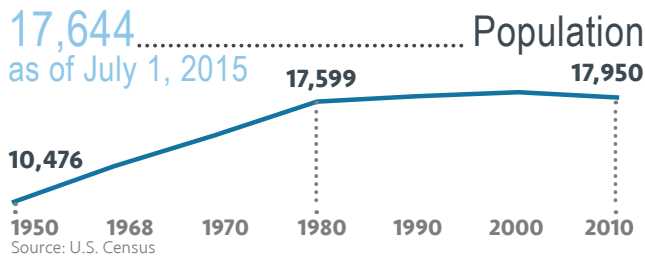
# Population

The information in this section is from the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau or the American Communities Survey 2010-2014 where available.

## Historic Population

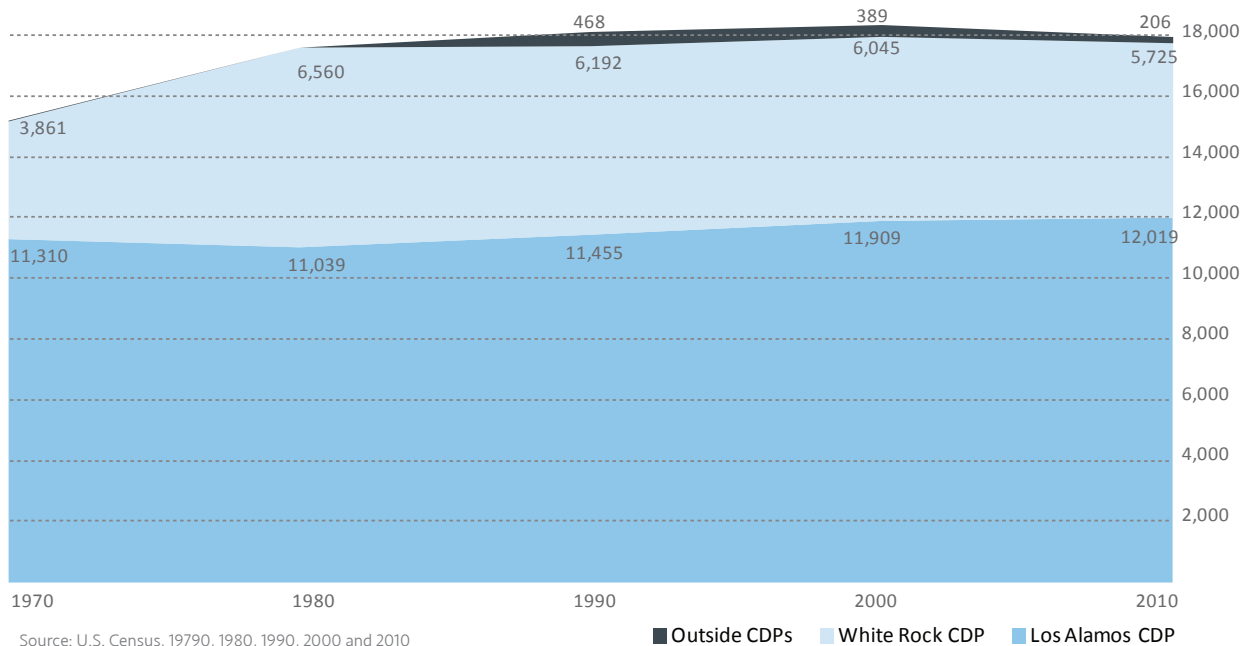
As of July 1, 2015, the population of Los Alamos County was estimated at 17,644. That number decreased approximately 0.33% between 2010 and 2015, but has hovered around 18,000 for the past 30 years, after a steady and significantly higher growth rate for about 30 years prior to that (1950 - 1980).

Historic County Population 1950-2010



Historic County Population 1970-2010

## Los Alamos County Population: 1970 to 2010

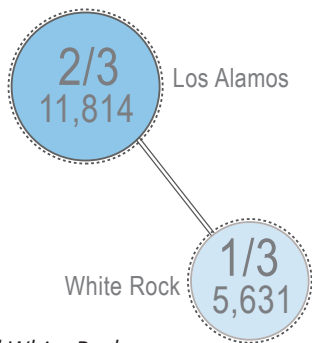


In 1964, Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), or the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory as it was then called, published in its newsletter, *The Atom*, an article, "The Next Twenty Years - A Special Report on the Comprehensive Plan for Los Alamos County." It predicted a range in population growth for Los Alamos for the year 1985, with the mid-range population projection of 25,720, and high range of over 30,000. As it turned out, the population of the County never reached 20,000.

## Projected Population

The most recent available population projections from the University of New Mexico (UNM) show an expected gradual decline through 2040. However, in 2008, the same source, UNM, projected a population increase to 21,000 by 2035. In light of the difficulty of projecting population increases or decreases, especially in a community where the vast percentage of jobs has been tied to a single employer, the comprehensive plan has taken a different approach. Rather than project a certain amount of growth, the plan prepares for a modest amount of growth, aiming to achieve a total County population of 20,000 over the next several years. The first random-sample community survey strongly supported this approach.

## Selected Population Characteristics



*Los Alamos and White Rock Populations Compared*

## Population Distribution

Approximately two-thirds of County population resides in the Los Alamos Census Designated Place (CDP) (11,814 in 2015) and one-third live in the White Rock CDP (5,631 in 2015).

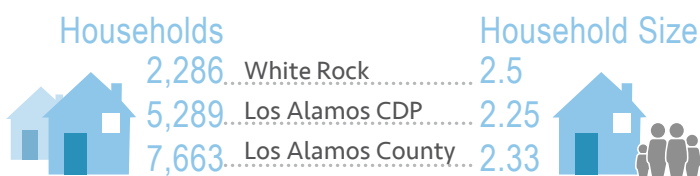
## Density

Los Alamos County ranks second in New Mexico for density (165 persons per square mile) after Bernalillo County (571 persons per square mile). Los Alamos CDP, with 526 persons per square mile, is more dense than White Rock, with 339 persons per square mile.

## Households and Household Size

Households tend to be larger in White Rock than in the Townsite and household distribution follows population distribution, generally one-third in White Rock, two-thirds in the Townsite.

*Household and Household Size Compared*



Source: U.S. Census, 2010

## County Median Age

County population has 5.3% children under 5 years of age, fewer than the national average of 6.5%, and more older people (15% over 65 years and older) than the national average of 13% nationally. (Source: U.S. Census, 2010)

The median age in Los Alamos County has increased from 33.1 years of age in 1980 to 37.8 in 1990, 40.8 in 2000, and to an estimated 43.1 in 2014. (Source: U.S. Census ACS 5-year Estimates, 2010 to 2014 and Los Alamos County Affordable Housing Plan, 2010)

*Median Age History*



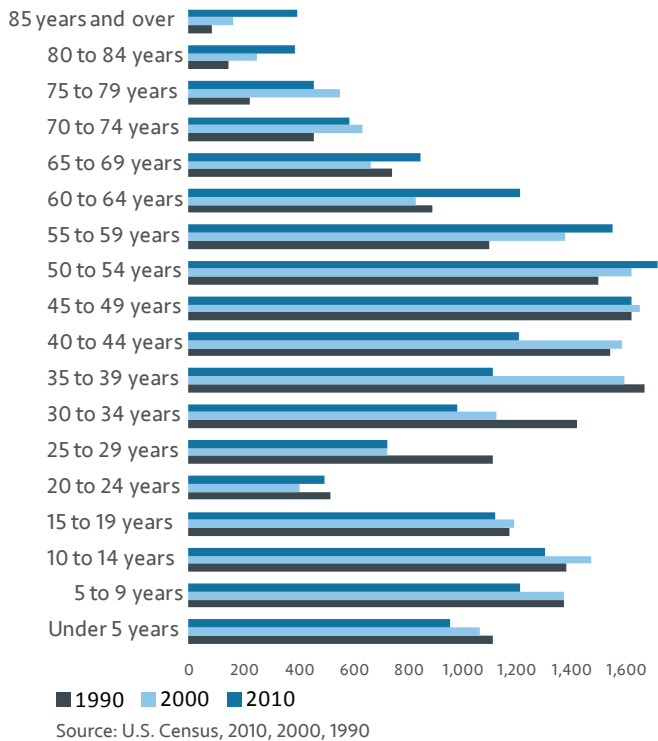
The proportion of the population under age 24 declined from 31% in 1990 to 28% in 2010.

While increasing median age is a national and statewide trend, in Los Alamos, aging of the population is occurring at a faster pace than is typical in other New Mexico communities.

Source: Los Alamos County Affordable Housing Plan, 2010

# Population Age Distribution

County Age Distribution, 1990-2010



Hispanic or Latino. Less than 1% of the population of Los Alamos County is African Americans, compared to 13% in the state. The proportion of the population of Asian descent is only slightly higher than generally in the state (6% versus 5.4%).

## Diversity

The Los Alamos and White Rock CDPs are in the lowest quartile for diversity. The diversity index measures the percentage of a population that are from different racial and ethnic groups and is measured comparatively, with a ranking of 100 being the most diverse. White Rock is in the 16th percentile and Los Alamos in the 21st.

## Education

Not surprisingly, education levels are high in Los Alamos; 64.3% of residents aged 25 and up have a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to less than 30% in the state.

Los Alamos County and New Mexico Education Levels

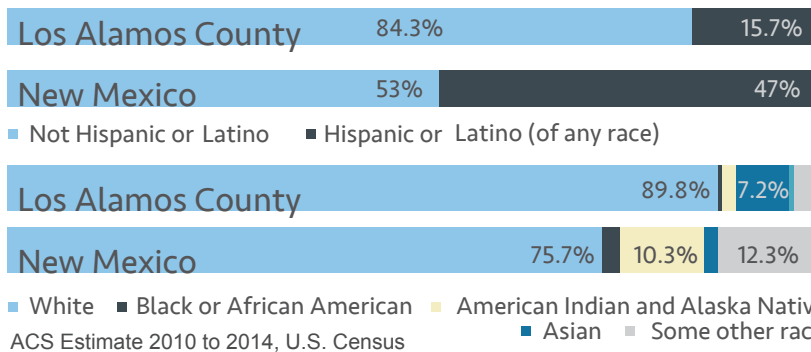


Residents aged 25+  
 ■ With a Bachelor's degree or higher

## Ethnicity

In 2010, 89% of County residents identified as "white alone, not Hispanic or Latino." This identification is markedly different from the rest of the state, which is nearly 50%

County and State Ethnic Populations Compared





# 2.3

PLANNING  
CONTEXT:  
HOUSING

# Housing

## Housing Supply

*Note: The information in this section is from the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau data, or the American Communities Survey (ACS) 2010 - 2014 estimates, where available. In all cases, the information is the most recent.*

Los Alamos County had 8,354 housing units (5,863 in Los Alamos Townsite and in 2,491 in White Rock) in 2010. This number generally splits along the lines of population: two-thirds in the Townsite and one-third in White Rock, with slightly more units in the Townsite, reflecting the greater number and percentage of apartments and condominiums in that location. White Rock has a higher percentage of home ownership (over 86.7%) than does Los Alamos (62.4%). Rental rates are relatively high, at an estimated median gross rent of \$939/month in Los Alamos and \$1,214 in White Rock (ACS 2010-2014). The higher White Rock rent appears to reflect rental of single-family houses vs. smaller apartments or condominiums in Los Alamos. This premise is borne out

by household size, with 2.5 persons per household in White Rock compared to 2.25 in Los Alamos CDP.

Los Alamos County has proportionally more attached housing and fewer mobile homes compared to the state as a whole.

At \$121,000, housing is relatively expensive in Los Alamos County, compared to average values in New Mexico. However, this figure should be considered relative to median household income. Housing costs 76% more in the County, while the median income is nearly three times higher in the County compared to the state.

### Historic Housing Supply

#### Los Alamos County and CDPs Housing: 2000 and 2010

Geographic Area	Housing Units		2000-2010 Average		Household Size		2000-2010
	2000	2010	Change	Annual Rate	2000	2010	Change
Los Alamos County	7,497	8,354	857	1.1%	2.43	2.33	-0.10
Los Alamos CDP	5,110	5,863	753	1.4%	2.31	2.25	-0.06
White Rock CDP	2,282	2,390	108	0.5%	2.71	2.50	-0.21
County Outside CDPs	105	101	-4	-0.4%	4.46	3.85	-0.61
<b>New Mexico</b>	<b>780,579</b>	<b>901,388</b>	<b>120,809</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	<b>2.63</b>	<b>2.55</b>	<b>-0.08</b>

\*Census Designated Places (CDP) are concentrations of population identified by the United States Census Bureau for statistical purposes. CDPs are delineated for each decennial census as the statistical counterparts of incorporated places, such as cities, towns, and villages

Source: U.S. Census

### Proportion of Housing Types

#### Housing Units by Type

Housing Type	Los Alamos County		New Mexico	Difference
	Number	Portion of Total	Portion of Total	Portion of Total
Single Family	6,209	74.5%	68.5%	6.0%
Duplex	491	5.9%	1.9%	4.0%
Multi-Family	1,365	16.4%	12.9%	3.5%
Mobile Homes	264	3.2%	16.7%	-13.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,329</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	

Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

## Value of Housing

The median value of owner-occupied housing in the County, or estimated home value, is \$280,700 in Los Alamos Townsite and \$266,200 in White Rock (ACS 2010-2014).

### County and State Housing Compared

#### Comparison of Housing Value and Household Income

	Median Value of Housing	Median Household Income
Los Alamos County	\$280,700	\$124,048
New Mexico	\$159,300	\$44,968
% Greater In Los Alamos County than State	176%	276%

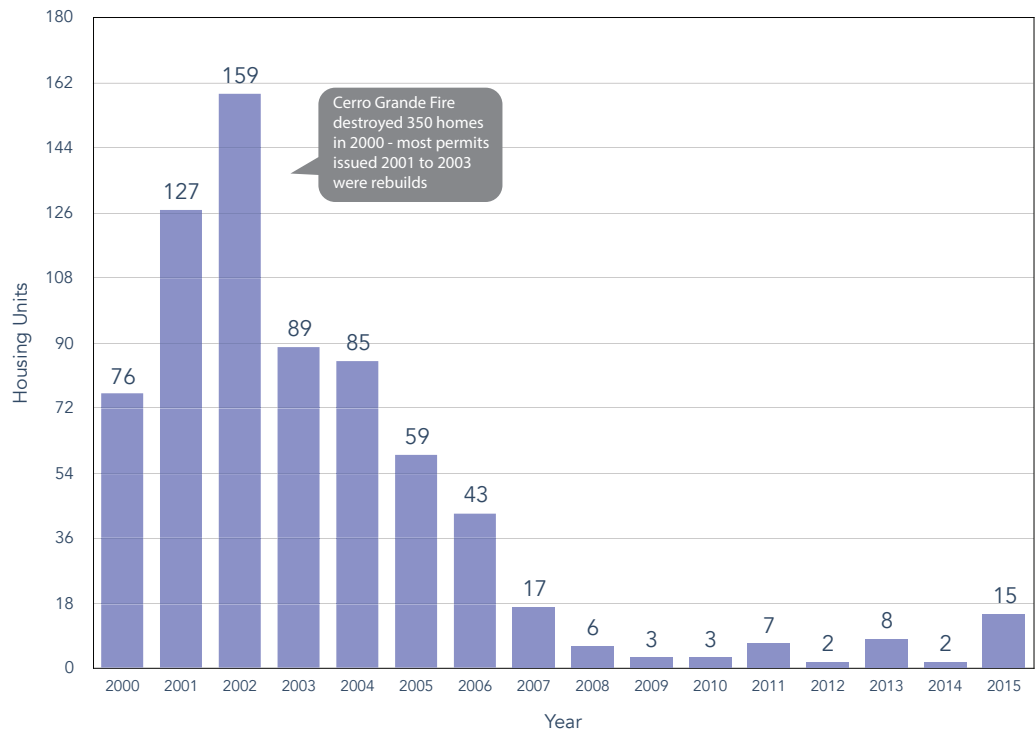
Source: U.S. Census American Communities Survey 2010-2014 Estimates

## New Housing Development

Both locations have seen little growth in housing starts. The County issued two building permits in Los Alamos Townsite for new single-family homes in 2014 and none for White Rock during the same year. The number of permits grew to ten new homes in Los Alamos Townsite and three in White Rock in 2015, and continues to show an upward trend in housing starts.

### County Residential Permits Issued

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMITS ISSUED IN LOS ALAMOS COUNTY: 2000-2015



## Age of Housing Stock

The housing stock in Los Alamos County is relatively old. Half of the housing units in the County were built between 1940 and 1969, compared to 25% built during the same time in the state. Housing built since 1970 constituted 50% of Los Alamos County's stock, but 70% of the total state's housing stock.

As reported in the Los Alamos County Affordable Housing Plan, 2010, the majority of the rental apartment housing stock in Los Alamos is 50 to 60 years old.

### Proportion of Housing Ages

#### Age of Housing Structures in Los Alamos County and New Mexico

Year Built	Los Alamos County		New Mexico	Difference
	Number	Portion of Total	Portion of Total	Portion of Total
2010 or later	5	0.1%	1.0%	-0.9%
2000 to 2009	1,065	12.8%	16.3%	-3.5%
1990 to 1999	518	6.2%	17.7%	-11.5%
1980 to 1989	1,035	12.4%	17.2%	-4.8%
1970 to 1979	1,507	18.1%	18.1%	0.0%
1960 to 1969	1,617	19.4%	10.1%	9.3%
1950 to 1959	1,807	21.7%	10.3%	11.4%
1940 to 1949	759	9.1%	4.2%	4.9%
1939 or earlier	16	0.2%	5.3%	-5.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,329</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	

Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

## Affordable Housing Needs

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has established the following definitions for low, very low, and extremely low income.

- Low Income .....A person earning 50-80% AMI\*
- Very Low Income.....A person earning 30-50% AMI\*
- Extremely Low Income.....A person earning 30% or less of AMI\*

\* AMI (Area Median Income) is established by HUD annually and adjusted for family size.

These definitions are important because they are tied to state and federal grant and loan programs for home ownership, housing rehabilitation programs, and rental assistance.

The 2010 Affordable Housing Plan identified four separate affordable housing needs in Los Alamos County:

- Affordable rental housing
- Housing rehabilitation support for households
- Affordable for sale / ownership housing
- Special needs housing, including transitional and permanent supportive housing

The conclusions of that report cite the importance of public participation in developing affordable housing programs. Note that the local economy would be well served through the implementation of workforce housing programs to expand housing choice; and look to support in the comprehensive plan for ways to promote affordable housing alternatives and choices in the community.



# 2.4

## PLANNING CONTEXT: LOS ALAMOS NATIONAL LAB DEMOGRAPHICS

LOS ALAMOS NATIONAL  
LABORATORY (LANL)  
PROFOUNDLY INFLUENCES  
THE COMMUNITY.

# Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) Demographics

## General Background

As the impetus for establishing Los Alamos County and as the main employer in the County, Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) profoundly influences the community, including its land use pattern, economy, activities and prospects for the future.

The Laboratory was established in 1943 as part of the Manhattan Project to design and build an atomic bomb. Today, the Laboratory's stated mission is "to develop and apply science and technology to ensure the safety, security, and reliability of the U.S. nuclear deterrent; reduce global threats; and solve other emerging national security and energy challenges."

LANL employs approximately 10,000 people (10,827 in 2015). The workforce numbers include regular employees (Los Alamos National Security, LLC, or LANS, 7,465), SOC LLC (protective force services contractors, 357), contractors (407), students (1,300), unionized craft workers (943), and post-doctoral researchers (355). The annual operating budget is over \$2 billion (\$2.2B in FY 2015).

Only 43% of the regular workforce (LANS) and students live in Los Alamos. The remainder commute from Santa Fe, Española, Taos and Albuquerque. However, the proportion of County residents who work at LANL was reported to be 34% in 2014. Within the same demographic, the average age is reported to be 45. Also in the same demographic, 64% are male and 36% are female; 42% are minority; and 65% have university degrees, with 22% having earned a PhD.

Some 31% of all employees are former LANL students or postdoctorate researchers; 53% of LANL scientists and engineers are former students or postdoctorates.

Demographic information in this section is based on data published by LANL in 2016.

LANL has more employees than the State government in Santa Fe.

LANL directly employed 10,199 people in 2014, or 66% of the total number of employees working in Los Alamos County.

### Employment by Type

#### LANL Employees by Employment Type: 2006-2015

Employment Type	2006	2010	2013	2015
Lab employees*	13,462	14,610	9,574	10,063
Protective force	606	414	397	357
Other contractors	801	594	362	407
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,869</b>	<b>15,618</b>	<b>10,333</b>	<b>10,827</b>

\*Lab employees in 2015 include regular employees, students, unionized craft workers, and post-doctoral researchers

Sources: 2006, 2010-2011, 2012-2013 and 2016 LANL Data Profiles.

## Potential Management Change and Employment Aging and Turnover

Two major potential developments related to LANL may drive change for Los Alamos County for the next five to ten years:

- Potential change to the LANL management contract.* Since 2006, a consortium of entities has operated LANL, including the University of California, Bechtel Corporation, and other for-profit companies. Federal officials recently announced that the operating contract will go out to bid within the next two years. If a nonprofit wins the contract, the County would experience a significant fiscal impact. County management estimated income from both gross receipts taxes generated by the Laboratory and local spending by Laboratory employees to be approximately \$40 million annually. While personal spending may not be affected, gross receipts taxes would plummet. Such a change could dramatically impact capital project spending, which, in turn, could affect quality-of-life issues, such as the ability of the County to build, improve or maintain cultural and recreational resources. The change would have a comparable effect on the rest of the state, especially adjacent counties. Gross receipts taxes generated by LANL are estimated to be over \$100 million annually statewide.
- The retirement of LANL employees and hiring of younger employees.* It has been generally stated that 30% to 40% of the LANL workforce will retire within the next five years. Based on the current number of employees, this percentage represents as many as 2,000 to 3,000 employees, and with spouses included, approximately double that number.

Using the reported 43% of the regular LANL workforce who live in the County, and who may or may not continue to reside in the County, some 860 to 1,300 Los Alamos County households could make life and housing changes in the relatively near future. Some may retire in place. Others may wish to remain in Los Alamos, but downsize. Others will move either to live in warmer climates or to be near family. Still others will need assisted care in Los Alamos County in their later years.

In April 2016, LANL announced that it expected to hire 2,400 new employees over the next several years. The comprehensive plan examines potential locations for a small increase in population, based on increasing employment, and balanced with anticipated retirement, relocation and downsizing of current LANL employees. The plan also articulates the goal to provide housing options and opportunities for those who work in the County and would like to live in the County as well.

As in previous comprehensive plans, LANL prospects play a significant, but changeable role in determining the goals and strategies of the plan.

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# 2.5

## PLANNING CONTEXT: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ECONOMIC VITALITY AND FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY ARE STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS IDENTIFIED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL TO BE OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE IN DETERMINING THE NATURE AND QUALITY OF THE FUTURE OF LOS ALAMOS.

# Economic Development

## County Council Goals

Economic vitality and financial sustainability are strategic focus areas identified by the County Council to be of extreme importance in determining the nature and quality of the future of Los Alamos.

The Council has established the following goals to promote economic vitality:

- Promote a strong and diverse economic base by encouraging new business growth.
- Support and retain Los Alamos National Laboratory as the area's #1 employer.
- Market and brand Los Alamos as a scenic destination featuring recreation, science and history.
- Maximize the utilization of County-owned land.
- Increase quality of life opportunities (housing, shopping, restaurants)
- Increase the availability of housing, both affordable and market rate.

*Source: 2010 Economic Vitality Strategic Plan*

The Council has established the following goals to promote financial sustainability:

- Encourage the retention of existing businesses and assist in their opportunities for growth.
- Support spin-off business opportunities from LANL.
- Significantly improve the quantity and quality of retail business.
- Attract new tourism-related business.
- Revitalize and eliminate blight in the downtown areas of Los Alamos and White Rock.
- Maximize our opportunity with respect to the development of the Manhattan Project National Historical Park.

*Source: Los Alamos County Strategic Leadership Plan*

# Economic Development

## Assets

Los Alamos County is unique in many ways. Almost as many people work in the County as live there. The County has one of the highest average worker earnings and per capita personal incomes in the nation, has one of the best school systems in the western United States, and has been ranked as having the “highest quality of life” of any County in the nation. Yet, Los Alamos County has a number of unique issues that are challenging for future economic expansion and related economic development programs.

- Nearly 70 years after its founding, the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) remains the largest employer in Los Alamos and in Northern New Mexico, and controls roughly 35 square miles, or one-third of all property in Los Alamos County. The economic vitality of the County still depends largely on activity at LANL. Since 1943, much of Los Alamos County business activity has focused on LANL. In the ten-year period from 2004 to 2013, LANL grew from 8,633 employees in 2004 to 10,199 employees in 2014, and reached more than 11,000 employees at one point in the decade.
  - Annual wages from LANL employment in 2014 were estimated at \$1.2 billion, or 80% of all wages earned in the County.
- A disproportionately low number of young working adults aged 20 to 29 make up just 7.4% of the County population, versus 14% nationwide. Conversely, a relatively large population of mature working age people aged 45-65 make up 37.9% of the County population versus 26.5% nationwide. The percentage of County residents who are older than 65 years grew from 1.1% in 1960 to 15% in 2010. The 2014 population of Los Alamos County was estimated at 18,191 people, with a median age of 44.8 years old compared with a U.S. median age of 36.8 years old, a difference of more than 8 years.
- Los Alamos is one of the most educated counties in the nation, with 80.3% of all citizens over 25 completing some college and 36.2% holding a graduate or professional degree or higher. This statistic compares with 58% of all U.S. citizens over 25 who have completed some college and 11.6% who have earned a graduate degree or greater.

- Since 2007, prior to the recession, employment in the County declined by 2,355 jobs (13%).
- Recent polls variously ranked Los Alamos County among the top counties in the U.S. for household affluence, personal wealth, and household income.
- In 2010, the overall cost of living in Los Alamos County ranked 115, or 15% greater than the U.S. average. (Source: Sperling’s Best Places) However, only one single component of Cost of Living Index exceeded the U.S. average – housing – which ranked 150% of the U.S. average cost in 2010, while all other components remained at or below the U.S. average.
- Los Alamos County has had an increase in visitors:
  - 33% growth between 2012-2015
  - 20% is due to new Los Alamos Nature Center, 13% for all others
  - Estimated visitor spending in 2015: \$15-\$20 million

## Median Income

As of July 1, 2015, Los Alamos County had the highest median household income in the state, \$111,076, in marked contrast to the rest of the state, which ranks 43rd nationally in the same category, and more than double the national average of \$53,657. Average household income in the County was \$130,885. The poverty rate, which is under 5%, is low compared to the national average of 14.8%.

## Unemployment Rate

The County unemployment rate was 4.0% in December 2015, the lowest of all counties in the state, while the state average was 6.6%. (Source: U.S. Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics)

## Economic Diversification

The Economic Vitality Strategic Plan adopted in 2010 called for identification and recommendation of land purchases and assembly, and disposition strategies to promote sustainable economic development in the County.

The County seeks to recruit diverse business and residential development that will help the Los Alamos economy to grow in a sustainable manner, reducing the risk of economic decline should the LANL budget be cut, or in the event of an unforeseen circumstance, such as a natural disaster or a national economic downturn similar to the recession of 2008.

## Economic Development Challenges

Marketing Los Alamos County has been challenging for a number of reasons, including flat population growth, high land values and Los Alamos' remote location.

- Through coordinated and aggressive marketing of the community using established national and regional networks for the past three years, the County and Los Alamos Commerce & Development Corporation (LACDC) have been able to bring dozens of business prospects to visit Los Alamos sites. These prospects range from large housing and senior living project developers, and high technology firms, to local entrepreneurs and national retailers, restaurant, and lodging companies. This effort is enhanced through the County's partnership with LACDC and the brokerage community. However, despite numerous site tours, few investors and developers have completed a purchase or investment in Los Alamos. The reasons most often given are the lack of well-located properties with sufficient infrastructure at a fair market value. Many of these businesses have chosen to locate in Santa Fe or Rio Arriba Counties instead.
- Los Alamos has limited drive-by exposure, aging infrastructure, relatively expensive housing, and residents who are accustomed to shopping outside of Los Alamos.
  - Los Alamos lacks attractive and competitive workforce housing in all price ranges.
  - While visitor numbers have increased since 2010, we have lost 140 hotel beds and hotel developers have yet to complete investments in this market.

## Efforts to Bring in Economic Development

### Public Infrastructure Investments

- In late 2015, as a result of these conditions, the County refined a list of long-standing projects involving the productive development of targeted County-owned properties. The list provided recommendations for County investment in public infrastructure to promote economic growth and development as part of the Economic Vitality Strategic Plan.
- Major streetscape and urban design investments, both through the Los Alamos MainStreet program as well as direct County construction and renovation projects, signal support for an important direction already established by the County with respect to infrastructure funding intended to spur private development.
- Infrastructure investments for 20th Street, DP Road and Deacon Street will support development efforts to build out these areas.

### Housing

- With new housing development and expanded opportunities for the local workforce to establish residence in Los Alamos, population will increase, retail will expand, and more spending will remain in the community. Over time, it is hoped that Los Alamos County can reach a "critical mass" of new development and price/quality equilibrium in the property market.

### Local and State Incentives

- In 2016, the State adopted legislation that allows use of Local Economic Development Act (LEDA) funds for hotel and restaurant development. The State and our local ordinance also support LEDA for arts and cultural district facilities, and this particular use of funds presents new opportunities for the future.



# 2.6

## PLANNING CONTEXT: TRANSPORTATION

# Transportation

## Overall Road Network

Los Alamos County contains approximately 109 square miles of land. Located on the eastern side of the Jemez Mountains, the County is somewhat isolated, with access only from NM 4 from the south, NM 502 from the east, and an airport. NM 4 connects Los Alamos with US 550 at San Ysidro. NM 4 provides access to the Jemez Springs/Jemez Pueblo area as well as the Valles Caldera National Preserve. NM 4 also connects White Rock and Bandelier National Park with the Los Alamos Townsite. NM 502 connects Los Alamos with US 84/285 at Pojoaque. US 84/285 is a major arterial which

connects a number of scattered independent communities and native Pueblo lands between Española and Santa Fe. NM 502 carries the majority of the traffic, consisting principally of approximately 10,000 commuters daily. This arterial road affords access to Taos and points in southern Colorado, as well as the central urban areas of New Mexico via I-25.

The following table shows traffic volumes on selected segments of state highways in Los Alamos County. The map below shows the functional classification of streets in Los Alamos Townsite (and White Rock).

### State Highway Segment Volumes

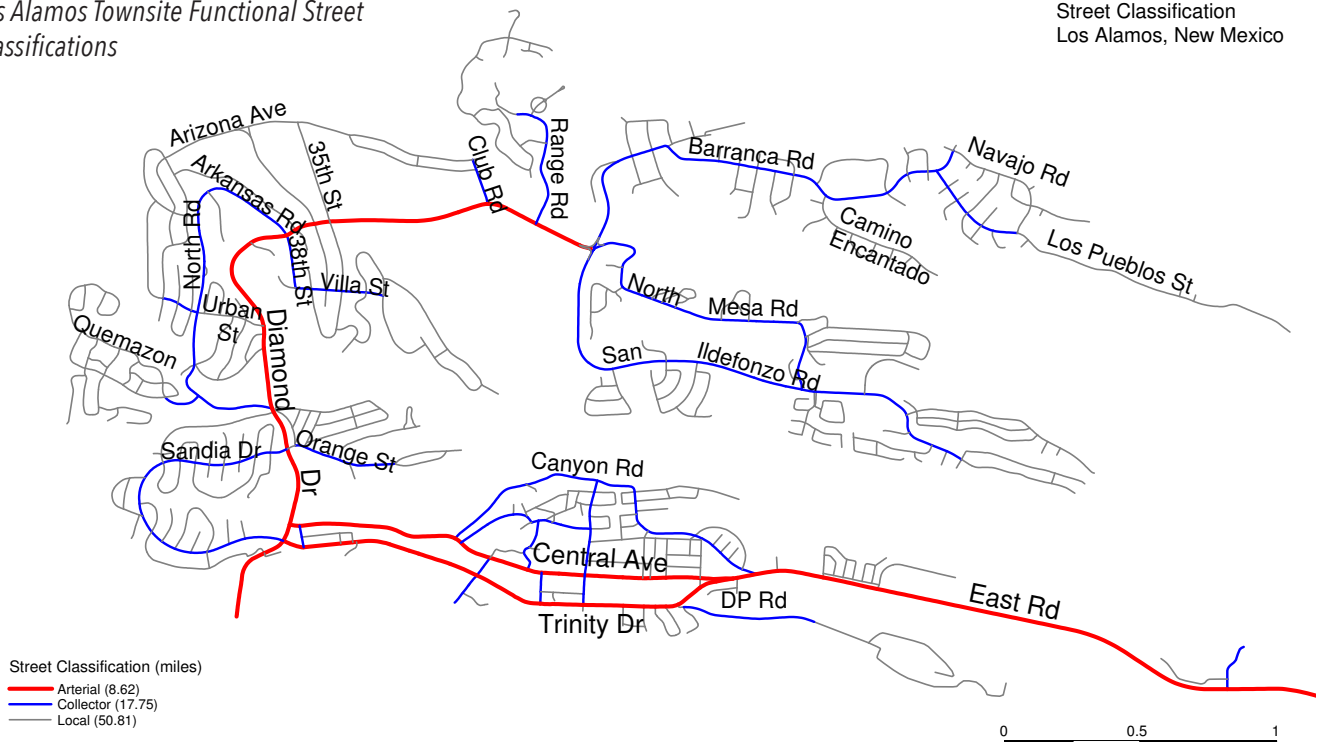
Traffic Volumes On Selected Road Segments in Los Alamos and White Rock

Location	Annual Average Daily Trips (AADT)		
	2014	2013	2012
NM 502 Entering Los Alamos Townsite	13,982	14,054	14,269
Trinity and Diamond	20,264	20,368	20,680
NM 502 at Junction with NM 4 - White Rock	12,993	12,599	12,791
NM 4 Junction with Pajarito Road - White Rock	8,897	8,830	8,870

Source: New Mexico Department of Transportation TIMS Road Segments by Posted Route, 5-27-15 Run Date.

### Los Alamos Townsite Functional Street Classifications

Street Classification  
Los Alamos, New Mexico



## Transit Service

Atomic City Transit operates an extensive public bus system throughout the Los Alamos Townsite and White Rock communities. Currently, seven different routes provide bus service to nearly all of the community. Service is relatively frequent (every 30 minutes at peak times), and is free to the public.

The State of New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) operates a regional public transportation system called the NMDOT Park & Ride. It provides both morning and evening service from Los Alamos Townsite to Española, Pojoaque, and Santa Fe, with connections for continuing service to Las Vegas, Bernalillo, Albuquerque, and regional communities located east of the Albuquerque metro area (Moriarty, Edgewood, Sedillo). This service also connects with the New Mexico Rail Runner train (Santa Fe to Belen), and with local transit service in Santa Fe. The North Central Rural Transit District (NCRTD) operates a mid-day bus serving both Española and Pojoaque.

## Airport

Los Alamos County Airport is located north of NM 502 on the eastern edge of Los Alamos Townsite. The airport has one 6,000 ft.-long runway. It is located on land leased from the Department of Energy and classified as a low-air-traffic facility.

Small private aircraft use the airport, and it has had intermittent commercial commuter service to Albuquerque. Most recently, Boutique Air offered flights beginning in 2015, but terminated its contract with the County in April 2016.

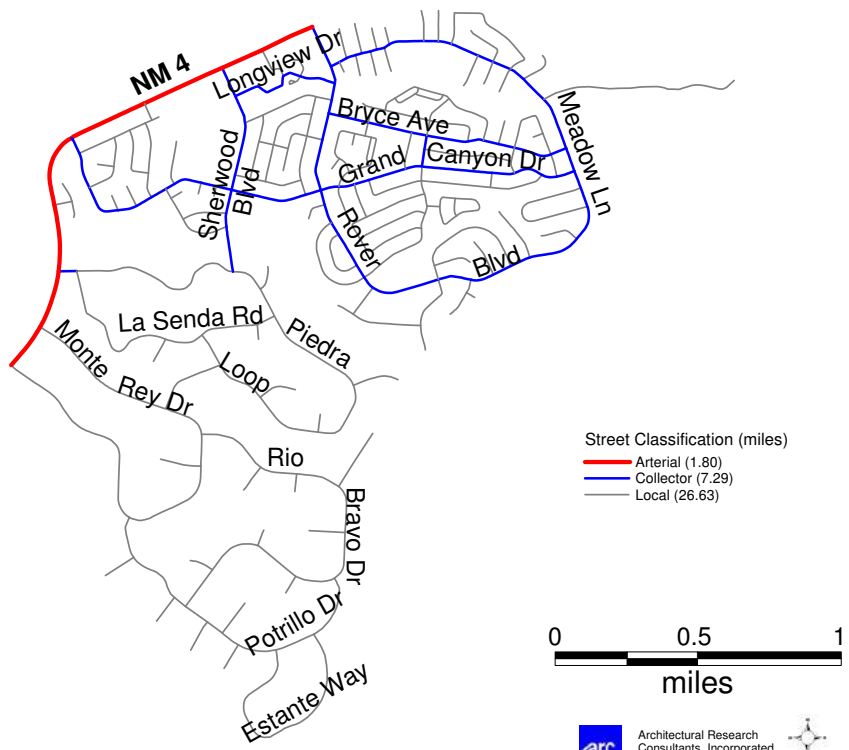
## Bicycle Routes

The design of the current Los Alamos County road network was primarily for vehicular traffic, although it has some accommodations for bicyclists and pedestrians. Los Alamos Townsite has three dedicated bicycle lanes. One is located on Canyon Road, which becomes Central Avenue, between Diamond Drive and Oppenheimer Drive. The second is located along a short segment of San Ildefonso Drive, from North Mesa Road to Sioux Street. A third dedicated bicycle lane is on Diamond Drive between the Los Alamos Medical Center and San Ildefonso Road. Although bicycle lanes painted along Central Avenue mark a bicycle right-of-way, no dedicated bicycle lanes are currently located along either Trinity Drive or Central Avenue.

In White Rock, dedicated bicycle lanes are located on both sides of NM 4, between Rover Boulevard and Pajarito Road/Grand Canyon Drive.

White Rock Functional Street Classifications

Street Classification  
White Rock, New Mexico



## Pedestrians and Trails

Design of the older neighborhoods of Los Alamos Townsite and White Rock facilitates pedestrian access. Interior systems of walkways and shortcuts, located away from roads, connect various activity areas within each neighborhood. More recent development patterns have tended to segregate residential development from all other types of development, creating a dependence on vehicle trips for daily transportation needs. Since 2000, community pedestrian advocates have championed sidewalk projects along Canyon Road/Central Avenue, and through the Historic District. Other traffic-calming measures have been constructed in the Townsite as well.

A 60-mile network of County trails links the foothills, canyons and mesas around Los Alamos. The County trail network links with over 100 miles of federal trails in the surrounding Santa Fe National Forest and the adjacent Valle Caldera National Preserve.

## Physical Constraints to Transportation System

Elevations in Los Alamos County range from 5,000 feet near the Rio Grande River to over 10,000 feet near the western border of the County. The developed areas of Los Alamos County include the Los Alamos Townsite and White Rock, and are located entirely on top of flat mesas separated by steep canyons. Part of the area's original attraction that became Los Alamos County was the relative lack of accessibility created by its location and topography which helped to protect the secret nature of scientific activities occurring at LANL.

Due to the rugged topography of the region surrounding Los Alamos County and land ownership patterns, additional outside access to Los Alamos County would be extremely challenging to develop and construct. Also, due to the configuration of development in Los Alamos County, construction of additional local roadways would also pose great challenges. As such, the focus of future transportation planning will likely focus on improving and expanding the transit system, expanding pedestrian and bicycle path facilities, and providing additional multi-modal opportunities.

## County Goals

The Strategic Leadership Plan adopted in 2016 listed mobility as an aspect of the Quality of Life focus area. The stated goal is to "Maintain and improve transportation and mobility."

- Related goals from the Strategic Leadership Plan include:
  - Maintain quality essential services and supporting infrastructure.
  - Enhance environmental quality and sustainability while balancing costs and benefits, including County services and utilities.
  - Maximize the use of County-owned land.

## Future Transportation

Currently, various parties are discussing the possibility of contracting services for development of a County Tourism Plan. Inspiration for this project is in part from the advent of the 2015 authorization of plans to develop a Manhattan Project National Historical Park site in Los Alamos and the focus that the planned park will bring to the historic district of the downtown. In addition to safety and mobility issues associated with a projected increase in all modes of traffic (especially pedestrian), the plan will need to address related issues of parking, way-finding and street and urban design. As tourism and visitation in general increase as anticipated, other transportation issues will arise. These issues could include: shuttle service to the ski hill, transportation-related signage considerations, and the use of new and improved technologies to gather and disseminate information.

## Summary

As Los Alamos County continues to develop, the transportation system will need to respond to changes in land use and population distribution by accommodating those changes and others.

The 2016 comprehensive plan update identifies goals and policies related to mobility and transportation planning, and suggests strategies for future study, analysis and implementation.



# 2.7

PLANNING  
CONTEXT:  
UTILITIES

# Utilities

## Introduction

Public utility services represent a substantial resource in terms of the community’s ability to promote and foster growth and development, and can serve as a tool to guide growth. Public policy can direct growth to appropriate areas of the community by the installation of appropriately sized utilities.

## Providers

The urban areas of Los Alamos County have access to all major utility services including water, wastewater, natural gas, electricity, and telecommunication. Los Alamos County owns and operates the water distribution, wastewater collection, natural gas distribution and electric distribution utilities within Los Alamos County. Los Alamos County also administers solid waste and recycling services. Qwest and Comcast® provide telecommunication services.

Rates paid for electric, gas, water, wastewater services and auxiliary fees fund the Los Alamos County Department of Public Utilities (LACDPU), which has provided the community with these services for more than 45 years. The utility is accountable to the citizens of Los Alamos County through the local Board of Public Utilities.

# Water

Los Alamos County owns and operates the water production facilities and distribution system in Los Alamos County through the LACDPU. LACDPU provides water service to the residents and businesses of Los Alamos and White Rock, and to Bandelier National Monument. Water is delivered in bulk to LANL under a service agreement with DOE, which operates its own distribution system.

It is intended that the low-cost water from this system will provide irrigation of parks and school grounds.

Based on the most current planning assessment, water production and supply capabilities in the County are robust. Nevertheless, aging pipelines and other water infrastructure components need replacement. Capital improvement planning with associated funding calculations is ongoing.

## Water Rights

Water rights for Los Alamos County total 5,541.3 acre feet per year and are comprised of a combined right of groundwater and surface water. Los Alamos County also has a contract with the Bureau of Reclamation for an additional 1,200 acre-feet of San Juan-Chama surface water.

Percentage of Water Rights Used: 2006-2015	
2006	75%
2007	76%
2008	80%
2009	73%
2010	73%
2011	79%
2012	82%
2013	72%
2014	66%
2015	61%

Source: Los Alamos County Department of Public Utilities

### County Water Rights Quantities

#### Summary of Los Alamos County Water Rights

Ownership	Quantity
Water Rights Owned by Los Alamos County	3,878.91 acre feet/year (Surface & Groundwater)
Water Rights Owned by LANL	1,662.39 acre feet/year (Surface & Groundwater)
San Juan Chama - Los Alamos County Service Contract	1,200.00 acre feet/year (not yet developed)
<b>Total Water Rights</b>	<b>6,741.30 acre feet/year</b>

Source: Los Alamos County Department of Public Utilities

The County has not yet developed this latter source of supply. From the late 1960s to the present, total water consumption ranges between 4,000 and 5,000 acre-feet per year. However, on two occasions during this time period, annual consumption exceeded 5,000 acre-feet and encroached upon the permitted water right amount.

## Sources of Water and Treatment Processes

Groundwater is extracted from the main aquifer located below Los Alamos via 12 wells located in three well fields: Guaje, Otowi and Pajarito ranging in depth from 1,519 feet to 3,092 feet. Booster pump stations lift the water through transmission lines to reservoir storage tanks for distribution. The entire water supply is disinfected with chlorine prior to distribution. The Long-Range Water Supply Plan is currently being revised. Adequate water is available for growth in the near term. Water conservation efforts are in place to mitigate increasing demands.

While the County's water rights of 5,541.3 acre feet include both surface water and ground water, LACDPU has supplied its customers solely with groundwater for potable use. Prior to the Cerro Grande fire in May 2000, surface water from the Los Alamos Reservoir was used for irrigation by Los Alamos Public Schools and by the County. As of spring 2016, the County has not been able to use surface water from the Los Alamos reservoir due to damage to the pipeline caused by multiple flooding events since 2000.

LACDPU completed a preliminary engineering report in 2012 to evaluate alternatives to develop the 1,200 acre-feet of San Juan-Chama Project water. The recommended alternative is to drill up to three wells on the canyon rim in White Rock to intercept groundwater prior to reaching the Rio Grande. Development is on hold pending completion of a revised Long Range Water Supply Plan for Los Alamos County to identify when water demand will warrant developing additional water rights based on population growth and operational expansion at Los Alamos National Laboratories.

The Los Alamos Reservoir was built in the 1930s and 1940s, and was the Los Alamos Ranch School's and later the Manhattan Project's first supply of potable water. After potable use was discontinued in the early 1960s, the reservoir later provided irrigation water for sports fields and community parks until 2000. The Cerro Grande Fire in May

2000 severely damaged the reservoir and its watershed. The reservoir was filled in with sediment from post-fire flooding and could no longer function as a water supply. Completion of the repair and reconstruction of the reservoir was in the spring of 2013. However, a catastrophic flood in September of 2013 again filled the newly repaired reservoir with silt. Repair of the transmission pipeline is scheduled for 2017, after which time it will again be used as a non-potable water resource. It is intended that the water from this system will provide for irrigation of parks and school grounds. Based on the most current planning assessment, the water utility has no existing deficiencies.

## Wastewater

Los Alamos County operates two wastewater treatment plants. The Los Alamos Wastewater Treatment Plant located in Pueblo Canyon serves the Los Alamos community. The plant began service in 2007 and its design accommodated increased flows from planned development. A planned system addition can provide additional capacity. A second treatment plant that is scheduled to be replaced in 2019 serves the White Rock community. The new plant will add capacity for additional planned development. The wastewater system is generally in fair condition with adequate capacity for existing needs, but will require evaluation on a case-by-case basis for all future developments.

## Treated Effluent Reuse

Treated effluent from the Los Alamos Wastewater Treatment Plant irrigates four different sites in Los Alamos: North Mesa Soccer Field, North Mesa Ball Fields, Los Alamos Middle School and Los Alamos County Golf Course. Effluent from the White Rock Wastewater Treatment Plant is used to irrigate Overlook Park in White Rock. Irrigation of a total estimated 112.37 acres is currently with treated effluent. LACDPU has effectively operated effluent distribution facilities, partnered with the Los Alamos County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Division, and administered the required permits for decades. Use of reclaimed water began in 1985 in White Rock at Overlook Park, and in Los Alamos, reclaimed water use began in 1945 when the original golf course was developed. Currently, LACDPU is pursuing expansion of reclaimed water use per the guidance of a comprehensive Non-Potable Water Master Plan, completed in 2013.

As part of LACDPU's effort to optimize the use of effluent and surface water for irrigation purposes, Forsgren Associates Inc. prepared a Non-Potable Water System Master Plan,

which was completed in September 2013. The objectives of the Master Plan study included reviewing existing infrastructure, evaluating existing and potential future irrigated sites, developing realistic demand for system build-out and recommending system improvements. The LACDPU developed a capital improvement plan as part of the master plan to expand the non-potable water system to spread the use of non-potable water throughout the Los Alamos and White Rock communities to displace use of potable water for irrigation. Loan/grant funding from the New Mexico Finance Authority Water Trust Board (WTB) funds expansion of the non-potable system. The County applies for grant/loan funding annually from the WTB.

## Natural Gas System

Los Alamos County owns and operates the gas distribution system in Los Alamos and White Rock. Four locations in the County receive gas delivery through regional transmission pipelines owned and operated by New Mexico Gas Company (NMGC).

In 2013, LACDPU provided service to approximately 7,090 residential customers that included multi-family connections and approximately 397 commercial/municipal customers. The natural gas system is comprised of both steel and plastic distribution mains and service lines ranging in size from 1/2" to 12" in diameter.

Two sources of supply are available for Los Alamos Townsite. The first is the City Gate Station located directly across from Camino Entrada along State Road 502. The second City Gate Station is located in the Quemazon subdivision. The Los Alamos Townsite gas distribution system contains approximately 84 miles of mainline pipe and 41 miles of service lines.

The source of supply for the community of White Rock comes from a 4" steel pipeline owned by the NMGC that begins at the New Mexico 502 and State Road 4 interchange. The White Rock system contains approximately 33 miles of mainline pipe and 18 miles of service lines.

Recent improvements by LACDPU have increased the capability of providing a sustainable supply of natural gas throughout the system, which is considered to have adequate capacity for the foreseeable future.

## Electric Supply

LACDPU owns and operates the electrical distribution system in the communities of Los Alamos and White Rock. Approximately two-thirds of the electrical distribution system is underground and one-third is overhead. The commercial districts in each area have 3-phase, 15KV, underground primary service with sufficient capacity for most commercial business expansions requiring up to 500 KVA each. The system can also accommodate larger size transformers on a case-by-case basis.

The Townsite substation serves the community of Los Alamos and has a 15MVA capacity, with plans underway for the construction of a second substation called LASS. The LASS substation will greatly increase system reliability and double the electrical system capacity in Los Alamos. Planned completion of the LASS substation project is by 2018. The White Rock substation serves the community of White Rock and consists of redundant 5MVA substation transformers. It also has 115KV transmission line capacity for bulk-power electrical capacity needs.

Also by 2018, LACDPU plans to install electric smart meters throughout its service area. The addition of smart meters will release additional electrical capacity. Smart meters can help the LACDPU shift load, shed load, and bank load via energy storage for the benefit of all. As the electrical systems evolve into the smart-grid, LACDPU is ready and capable to implement new smart-grid technologies for the benefit of its customers. Presently, LACDPU owns and operates 1MW of utility scale photovoltaic (PV) solar energy generation and 1.8MW of utility scale battery storage with plans to add a second 1MW of PV.

Under the electric coordination agreement with DOE, the County owns and will continue to own the means of energy generation and distribution. LANL is the recipient of 80% of all generated power and pays a proportional share of all capital and operational costs. Los Alamos County anticipates continuing a comparable arrangement with DOE past 2025.

Unlike other electric distribution utilities, LACDPU owns and operates 72 megawatts of power generation capacity, schedules the bulk power and brings it into Los Alamos. This means that LACDPU can purchase, schedule, and bring in additional wholesale power beyond its current obligations.

## Broadband Services

Los Alamos County is a member of the REDI Net Joint Powers Agreement in Northern New Mexico, and is actively working to improve the availability and cost of high-speed broadband service to home and business. REDI Net was a major fiber-optic backbone deployed over the past few years between Santa Fe and Taos, as well as in the Rio Grande corridor, including the Pojoaque and Española Valleys. Los Alamos County currently receives service from this backbone up to the town site through a radio system, which limits traffic. The County and neighboring Pueblos seek to improve their broadband service and have set aside funds to pursue faster service from the Pojoaque Valley to Los Alamos and White Rock. The County is currently completing a funding request to the State of New Mexico (LEDA fund) to assist in deploying "Middle Mile" fiber optic capacity to the Pajarito Mesa through one of three possible routes. While the preferred route is currently underfunded, it is anticipated that the County will develop strategies to realize a significant improvement in the cost and availability of Internet service in the Los Alamos/White Rock area.

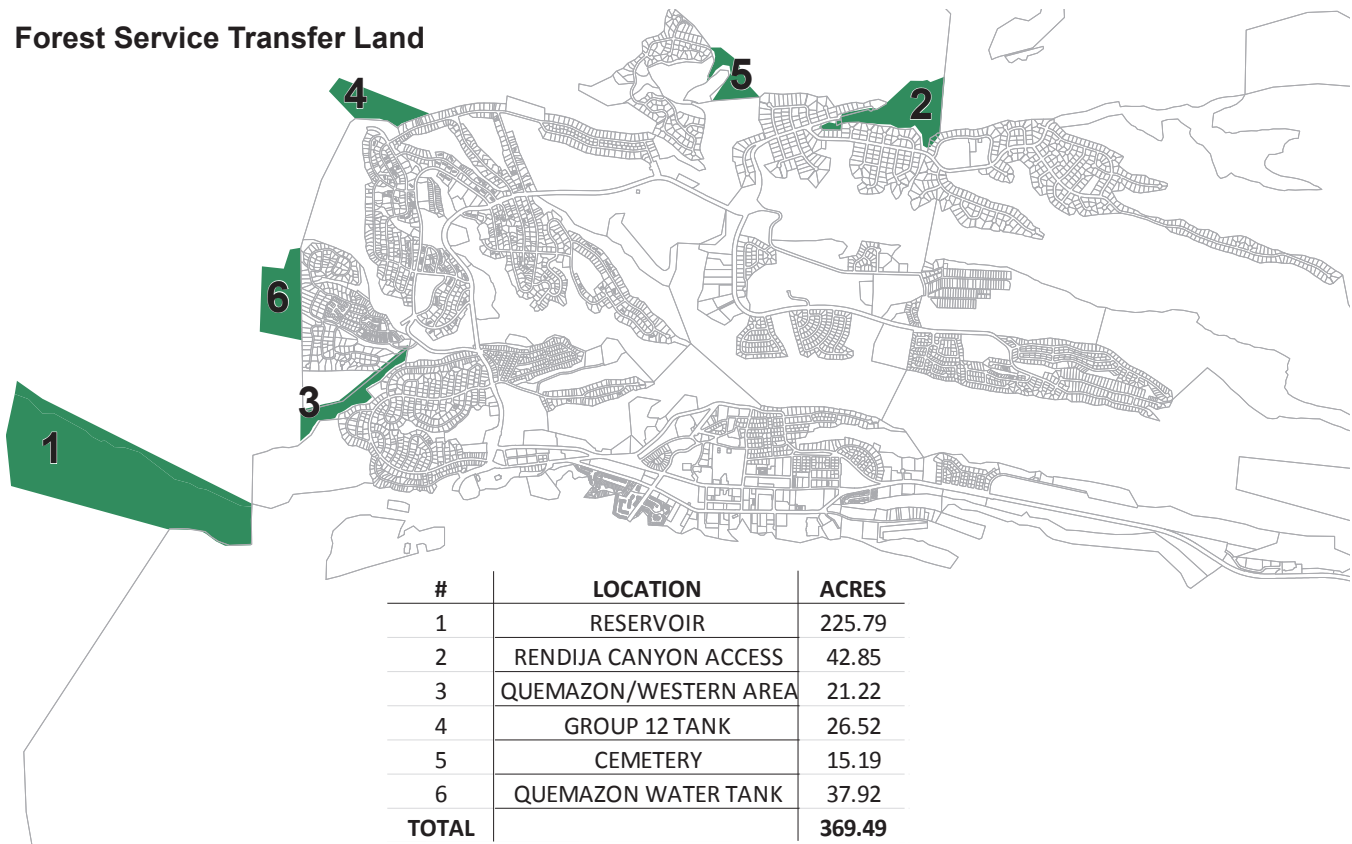
## Transfer Parcels

The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) has made available for sale to the County six parcels of vacant land currently in USFS ownership. Per USFS request, the County has prioritized the order in which these parcels may be acquired. (See map below.) The parcel in Los Alamos Canyon near the reservoir (1) and the Rendija Canyon access road (2) are the first priority for purchase. The canyon parcel between Quemazon and the Western Area (3), and the area around the Group 12 tank (4) are the next priority for transfer. LACDPU and the County Council have agreed that these parcels should be acquired, with the division of purchase costs between utilities and the general fund yet to be determined. The final two parcels, the area around the cemetery (5) and the land around the Quemazon water tank (6), are the lowest priority, and it is still to be determined whether the County will proceed with acquisition of these final two parcels, and if so, what source of funding would be appropriated for their purchase. All six parcels were originally identified and entered into legislation in approximately 2005. It is understood that completion of the transfers to the County will be a long-term endeavor.

See Appendix \_\_\_\_\_ for Utility Location Maps.

### U.S.F.S. Lands Transfer to the County

#### Forest Service Transfer Land



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# 2.8

## PLANNING CONTEXT: OPEN SPACE

LOS ALAMOS IS LOCATED  
ON THE PAJARITO  
PLATEAU, BETWEEN WHITE  
ROCK CANYON AND THE  
VALLES CALDERA, PART OF  
THE JEMEZ MOUNTAINS  
OF NORTHERN NEW  
MEXICO.

# Open Space

## Open Space and Environmental Stewardship

Los Alamos is located on the Pajarito Plateau, between White Rock Canyon and the Valles Caldera, part of the Jemez Mountains of Northern New Mexico. Volcanic action created the mountains over the last 13 million years. The town of Los Alamos sits on four mesas created by erosion of the volcanic tuff, which makes up the upper surface of the plateau. Water flowing east from the mountains down to the Rio Grande created the deep canyons that separate the mesas. At 7,355 feet elevation, the predominant tree species are ponderosa pine, aspen, spruce and fir. Native birds include the greater roadrunner, the State bird of New Mexico, and wild turkey. Other fauna include black bear (the State's official animal since 1953), cougars, jaguars, coyotes, porcupines, skunks, deer, elk, squirrels, chipmunks, pronghorns, western diamondbacks, kangaroo rats, jackrabbits, and a multitude of other birds, reptiles and rodents.

The Los Alamos County Council adopted the Open Space Management Plan as a guide for managing the County's 4,000+ acres of open space. The plan acknowledges the value of open space for multiple reasons: aesthetics, watershed protection, wildlife habitat, recreational use, preservation of cultural artifacts, and contribution to the quality of life in Los Alamos. The plan divides County-owned lands into six ecologically based management units, summarizes current conditions and past management practices, and recommends future management actions.

Council strategic goals related to open space and environmental stewardship, and adopted in 2016, include the following goals under the Quality of Life section:

- Implement a comprehensive range of recreational and cultural amenities that enhance the Los Alamos community
- Enhance environmental quality and sustainability, balancing costs and benefits including County services and utilities

## Natural Resources

The sweeping range of elevation in Los Alamos County creates a continuum of ecosystems and a surprising biodiversity. Spruce-fir, mixed conifer and ponderosa pine forests provide the backdrop for significant viewsheds, and attractive recreation opportunities for the Los Alamos County Trail Network, and they function as important components of watersheds. Groundwater infiltration is focused on riparian areas. Local botanists have identified more than 900 plant species within the County boundaries. About 130 bird species nest in the County, and the canyons and mesas are home to about 40 reptile and amphibian species and 70 kinds of mammals, including mule deer, elk, black bear, red, grey and kit fox, coyote, ringtail, and mountain lion. The County provides habitat for at least five threatened or endangered species.



## County Open Space System

### Neighborhood Open Space

One in seven houses in the County is on a perimeter lot that borders open space. Approximately 95% of County residents live within a seven-minute walk of County open space. Many residents of Los Alamos cite the ease of access to natural areas and trails as an important attraction of living in the County.

In the 2012 Community Survey cited in the Open Space Management Plan 2015, approximately 20% of residents reported that they use their neighborhood open space at least five times a week, whether for exercise, dog walking or recreation. Every neighborhood in Los Alamos and White Rock has nearby open space and the preservation and care of that open space is important to the adjacent or nearby residents.

### Trails/Open Space System

Los Alamos County has 60+ miles of maintained trails. The trail system represents the most active use of open space in the County. The vast majority of trail use has been and continues to be for recreational purposes. In the 2012 Community Survey, 87% of the respondents stated they had used the trail network in the previous year, and 57% said they used the trail network 12 or more times per year.

Open space offers financial benefits, as well. Homes that border open lands typically have a higher value than equivalent houses on the opposite side of the street that do not border open lands.

The Future Land Use map of the comprehensive plan formalizes a Countywide open space system that provides long-term protection of the community's natural and recreational landscapes. I



## Planning for and Zoning of Open Space

Prior to 1963, the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), the United States Forest Service, and the National Park Service owned all the land in Los Alamos County. During the mid- to late 1960s, the AEC sold what was originally government housing to private owners and transferred land and infrastructure to local government.

As part of the disposal process, the AEC deeded certain lands to Los Alamos County with deed restrictions limiting allowable uses on the properties. The deed restriction specifies that the land use will be for recreational purposes only and that any other use would result in a retraction of the deed and the land would revert to federal ownership. The recreation areas on North and Kwage Mesas, including the North Mesa Horse Stable Area, have such deed restrictions. In 1992, the ice rink was deeded to the County with the restriction that its use as a skating rink be continued.

In the 1970s, the County adopted three zoning categories for County-owned land: PL, PL (W-1), and PL (W-2). The County established W-1 and W-2 as either base or overlay districts, differentiating between the two by the level of activity and allowed development. W-1 limits activities to those that have minimal effect on the land, while W-2 allows more active uses and development, including camping, skiing, athletic fields, and the stables, among other uses. The PL category, "Public Land," can accommodate government and school district uses, including buildings, the airport, and various utilities. It is meant to serve a broad range of community needs.

In 1980, the County adopted Ordinance No. 252, identifying 25 parcels for open space preservation, with a provision for periodic (five-year) review to determine whether to remove any parcel or parcels from this protected list. Such removal must be by ordinance. In the same year, the County adopted Ordinance 254, identifying another 46 parcels for preservation as parks, recreation areas, and for other public facilities, also subject to the five-year review of status. In the late 1980s, the Department of Energy declared as surplus certain lands along the western perimeter of the Townsite. The County created a master plan for the area that included lands for development and recreation. It designated three tracts for recreation and access to the Santa Fe National Forest, which were conveyed to the County in 1995. The County sold the remaining tract for private development as Quemazon Communities.

“The Open Space System should protect and preserve certain parcels of undeveloped land that contain significant wildlife habitat or corridors, cultural resources, trails, or serve as areas for flood or wildfire protection. The system should align with the land uses defined on the Land Use Map that is part of the Comprehensive Plan Update.”

*(Source: Open Space Management Plan 2015)*

The subsequent Open Space Task Force spent two years developing a Draft Los Alamos County Open Space Plan. The County Council received the plan, but asked County staff to develop a land use map as a co-strategy for open space management.

In 2004, Los Alamos County convened a two-day "Town Hall" meeting to develop recommendations for specific parcels on the land use map. The Town Hall participants recommended that Pueblo Canyon, the Rendija Tract transfer parcel, the parcel south of the airport, and all existing PL (W-1) and PL (W-2) lands be designated open space. The meeting reached no consensus on the approximately 15 acres on the east and south sides of the golf course. County Council did not adopt a land use map or an open space plan at that time.

The Los Alamos Open Space Management Plan, adopted in 2015, is based in part on the 2000 document from the Open Space Advisory Committee. It incorporates directives from the 2004 Los Alamos County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan, the 2009 Community Wildfire Protection Plan, and data collected over the previous 10 years.

Following the extensive work and analyses that the County has already completed, and also based on the current outreach and public participation efforts, and the current adopted strategic goals of County Council, the 2016 comprehensive plan adopts all the parcel-specific recommendations for open space as corresponding land use designations in the Future Land Use Map. In addition, the Future Land Use Map confirms that all parcels called out in Ordinances 252 and 254 have open space or park status. The Core Themes section of this plan includes additional recommendations related to open space and trails.

As follow-up to the 1998 comprehensive plan, The County established an Open Space Advisory Committee in May of 2000. The City Council directed the committee to undertake a study that would result in:



...an open space plan for Los Alamos County [that] would identify land, including acreage to be transferred from the Department of Energy (DOE), that is most important to the community and its natural habitat and provide for its long-term protection. A well-designed open space land plan would also help respond to housing and economic development needs by identifying areas suitable for controlled development.



Map of County Trails



Los Alamos Townsite Trail Network



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3

# CORE THEMES



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# 3.1

## HOUSING, NEIGHBORHOODS & GROWTH

### GOALS, POLICIES & STRATEGIES

The first three topics are grouped primarily around the subject of housing – people’s homes and neighborhoods, and how they would change, or be protected from change, as a result of growth. The desire to protect residential character is balanced with recognition of the need for more and different kinds of housing.

# HOUSING

Housing is the key, not only to population growth, but to economic expansion. Increasing the availability of housing, both affordable and market rate, to meet the diverse needs of the community is one of four major goals of the Economic Vitality Strategic Plan. Creating more and varied housing opportunities will encourage population growth, which in turn will spur retail development and promote a more vibrant community. The comprehensive plan emphasizes the importance of developing new and varied housing, and promotes locating new housing, especially at increased densities, in downtown locations, separate and removed from existing neighborhoods. Opportunities to build housing

abound on County-owned land both in the Townsite and in White Rock.

Craig Martin's scholarly and comprehensive study of the history of housing in Los Alamos pinpoints the perennial housing issues, which are still facing Los Alamos today – not enough housing; not enough varieties of housing to choose from; and not always enough high quality construction.

## Population Growth and Infill

In two statistically valid comprehensive plan surveys conducted in 2016, the community expressed its support for planning for low to moderate growth of approximately 2,000 additional residents over the next 10 to 20 years. This number should be considered in light of the difficulty of such predictions and the perennial lack of certainty regarding the future expansion or potential contraction of LANL employment. Based on the assumption of some growth, but relatively low growth, the comprehensive plan examines where that growth can and should take place. The current population, based on 2015 census estimates, is 17,644 with a distribution of approximately two-thirds in Los Alamos Townsite and one-third in White Rock.

In April 2016, LANL announced that it expected to hire 2,400 new employees over the next five years. Currently, 43% of LANL employees live in Los Alamos County. Applying an assumption that the same percentage of new hires would live in the County would mean 860 employees would choose to reside in Los Alamos Townsite or White Rock. Based on the historic two-thirds and one-third split, and the average household size for each (2.25 in Los Alamos and 2.5 in White Rock) would mean approximately 1,203 new residents in Los Alamos Townsite and 688 new residents in White Rock; or 1,891 total.

An analysis based on known vacancies, both constructed housing and vacant land, and on census data cited above, indicated that the County could accommodate a potential population growth of approximately 2,000 people within the existing development boundaries.

“ By the end of January [1943], the town – not yet even a month old – resounded with the first statement of the recurring theme of the story of housing in Los Alamos: Shelter was in short supply. For the next 50 years, and continuing to the present day, the town rarely had enough suitable housing to meet the needs of all the residents. The lack of housing, the perceived inadequacies of the size and types of units available, and the quality of their construction became a primary cause of concern and conversation in the town. Gripping about housing became a local pastime, and remains so today. ”

-Craig Martin  
*Quads, Shoeboxes and Sunken Living Rooms  
 A History of Los Alamos Housing – 2000  
 Used with permission*

# FUTURE DWELLING UNITS – Planned, Proposed or Potential

## Potential New Housing

### Capacity for New Housing Development

Los Alamos		White Rock	
Vacant Homes	55	Vacant Homes	20
Vacant Platted Lots	183	Vacant Platted Lots	22
Ponderosa Estates-36.6 Acres unplatted PD-2, proposed	80	Grand Canyon 4.8 Acres unplatted at R-1-10	15
North Mesa-Arbolada -17 Acres unplatted PD-5, proposed	75	A-19 unplatted at R-1-5	160
DP Road-unplatted 9.6 Acres @ R-3-H-40	261		
Canyon View - planned	24		
Entrada - proposed	15		
LAVN – assisted living, proposed	40		
Quemazon - planned	8		
LASO 7.5 Acres @20 DU/Acre	150		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>891</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>217</b>
<b>COMBINED TOTAL – LOS ALAMOS AND WHITE ROCK: 1,108</b>			

#### Notes:

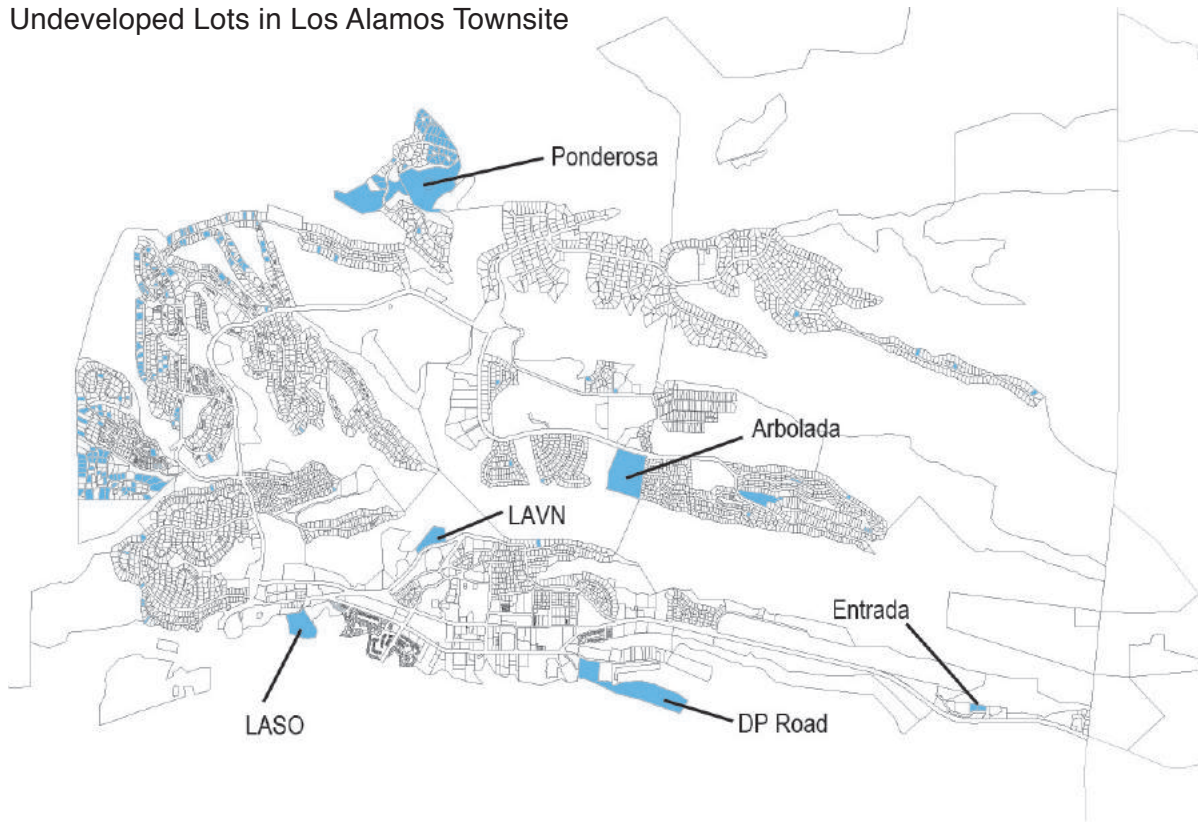
- 1) In some cases, Entrada and LASO, rezoning would be required to allow residential construction.
  - 2) Determination of the number of vacant houses was based on utility billing information where less than 2,000 gallons of water were used between July and December 2015. Vacancy was field-verified in April 2016.
- (SEE MAPS ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES- VACANT HOUSES NOT SHOWN)

This finding matches the community's desire, as heard throughout community outreach meetings, to avoid sprawl and development of designated open space areas. The community expressed its support for new development on vacant land, other than designated open space, and on County-owned, residentially zoned parcels, such as A-19.

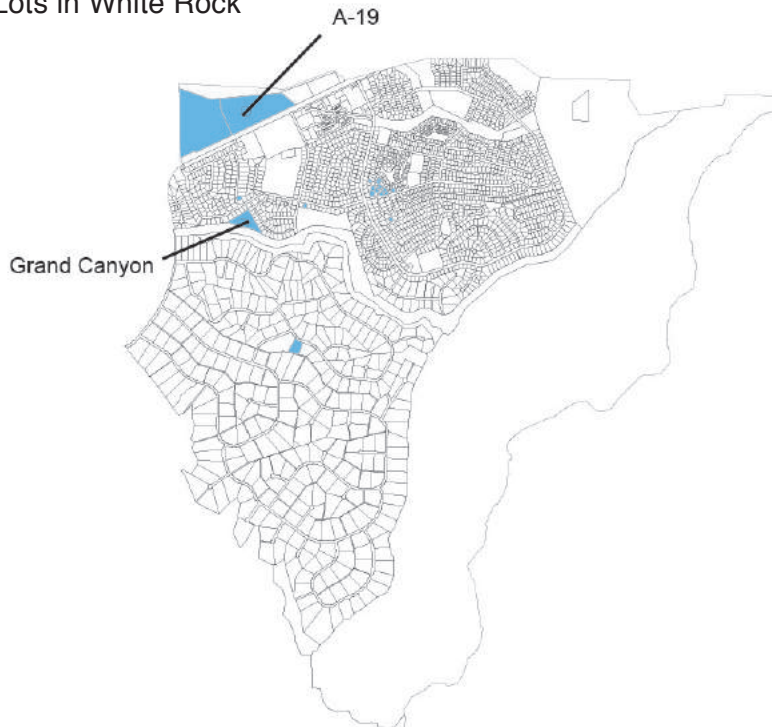
The projection does not differentiate, however, among different housing types. A full housing demand study and analysis is beyond the scope of the present work. An examination of demographic distribution, information on availability, and certain trending projections indicate that **there is a shortage of rental apartments, a projected shortage of smaller, down-sized units for retirees, including assisted living or continuum of care options, as well as of housing for smaller households, including for students and post-docs at LANL, and for low to moderate income households** that would consider living in the County if affordable housing were available. It will require further study to gain a better understanding of the extent of these needs.

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Undeveloped Lots in Los Alamos Townsite



Undeveloped Lots in White Rock



Undeveloped Lots in Los Alamos and White Rock

 Undeveloped Parcel/ Lot

# HOUSING

## GOALS

1. Protect the character of existing residential neighborhoods
2. Provide a variety of housing types, sizes and densities
3. Promote development of housing stock that would accommodate downsizing households
4. Promote maintenance and enhancement of housing stock quality
5. Provide programs, regulations, and enforcement to help ensure that all housing is healthy and safe, and meets basic housing maintenance requirements
6. Promote turning vacant housing back into safe and viable homes
7. Allow and encourage housing for older adults and people with disabilities, including designs that allow for independent living, various degrees of assisted living, and/or skilled nursing care



## ECONOMIC VITALITY

### POLICIES

1. Promote expanding the housing supply to meet the demand from employment growth and support economic diversification
2. Promote housing for seniors, students, and the workforce to support retention of spending and tax generation in the community
3. Promote the development of affordable and workforce housing

### STRATEGIES

1. Consider creating an affordable housing fund
2. Create a dedicated revenue source for mortgage assistance
3. Preserve existing rental housing stock through incentives
4. Investigate public/private funding options
5. Work with owners of vacant houses to assist in identifying opportunities for sale, rent and improving building condition



## LAND USE

### POLICIES

1. Encourage the creation and retention of a variety of housing options for all segments of the Los Alamos community, including but not limited to housing for residents who are low income, students/post-docs, workforce, high-end income and seniors
2. Provide workforce and market rate housing at a variety of price ranges, for both rental and ownership markets
3. Preserve historic housing stock
4. Promote design standards for high quality and good design of new housing
5. Develop and adopt new and mixed-use zoning districts
6. Support new housing developments in proximity to workplaces
7. Explore ways to reduce housing development costs

### STRATEGIES

1. Provide incentives and flexibility for new development through zoning
2. Examine increased density options
3. Consider density bonuses for affordable small units
4. Use public vacant or under-developed land for housing
5. Identify publicly owned sites suitable for housing, and prioritize use of sites, where appropriate, for housing for lower-income individuals
6. Create new strategies to encourage construction of smaller units for smaller households



## INFRASTRUCTURE

### POLICIES

1. Provide utility infrastructure to support new housing creation
2. Maintain or replace aging infrastructure as needed
3. Link transit service to housing

### STRATEGIES

1. Investigate cost/benefits of County-built structured parking downtown
2. Expand the existing housing program to include all user and ownership types, e.g., apartment rentals
3. Periodically update the Affordable Housing Plan including detailed goals and policies
4. Consider County support to build fire walls in quads and duplexes

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# NEIGHBORHOODS

A consistent theme heard throughout development of the plan was the importance to the community of its existing neighborhoods and the desire to preserve their residential character and scale.

## Established Neighborhoods

Los Alamos and White Rock have a variety of distinct neighborhoods. They are defined largely by housing type, density, and time of construction. Much of the single-family housing was originally government-built, which resulted in consistent housing types and patterns of development, as well as cohesive neighborhoods. The houses in a given neighborhood looked the same and were the same size, sometimes with some variation in the number of rooms. Some had the same setbacks, and were typically contained within a defined, exterior street layout.

Except where homes were destroyed by the Cerro Grande Fire in 2000, existing neighborhoods do not have many vacant lots. Where such lots do exist, primarily in the Townsite and to a lesser extent in White Rock, it is desirable to see new houses constructed in order to make the best and most efficient use of existing infrastructure, including utilities. Infill on vacant lots with new and high quality houses will also be beneficial to preserving both value and quality of life in existing neighborhoods.

## Neighborhood Preservation and Protections

The availability and potential availability of denser housing on currently undeveloped land reduces the pressure for development or redevelopment adjacent to or within existing neighborhoods. Nevertheless, in the interest of creating safeguards for existing neighborhoods, it is both prudent and desirable to address the possible nature of such safeguards.

Rezoning criteria in the development code creates the first line of protection. Additional safeguards to protect and preserve the character of existing neighborhoods and to support their stabilization could include: landscape buffers; location of parking; height restrictions; further restrictions to outdoor lighting; setback and step-back requirements; and possibly topographic considerations. For full effectiveness and control all these approaches will require enactment through the development code.

Additionally, neighborhood preservation will entail addressing vacant or poorly kept properties. The County is assessing and analyzing the locations and extent of the problem as well as the merits of alternative solutions. The community expressed a preference for a "carrot" versus a "stick" approach, but agreed that all possible solutions should be investigated and applied as appropriate in each case.

## New Neighborhoods

New neighborhoods will likely develop around new housing areas. Some of the new development patterns will be internally consistent, such as in the A-19, Ponderosa Pines and Arbolada subdivisions. However, the creation of more mixed-use developments, more likely in the two downtowns and other new mixed-use areas, the development patterns will be varied as housing units are interspersed with other land uses. New kinds of neighborhoods may emerge.

# NEIGHBORHOODS

## GOALS

1. Protect existing residential neighborhoods
2. Promote the creation of a variety of housing options for all segments of the Los Alamos community
3. Promote neighborhood stabilization



## ECONOMIC VITALITY

### POLICIES

1. Consider creation of a Short-Term Rental (STR) ordinance
2. Ensure that infill development is consistent with existing zoning
3. Provide transition buffers to nearby existing housing as needed

### STRATEGIES

1. Create a design manual with ideas for good design
2. Ensure collection of lodgers' tax for short-term rentals
3. Re-examine bed and breakfast regulations vis-a-vis STRs



## LAND USE

### POLICIES

1. Provide outreach and infrastructure support to housing developers during the permitting process
2. Encourage developers to notify and conduct meetings early in the development review process with the neighborhood and to respond to neighborhood concerns
3. Enforce property maintenance and code enforcement requirements on vacant or blighted properties.
4. Protect neighborhood open space and internal trail systems
5. Address outdoor lighting to better protect neighboring residential properties

### STRATEGIES

1. Support an enhanced and broadened community notification process
2. Develop buffer techniques and alternatives for new development or re-development adjacent to single-family housing
3. Consider code changes to ensure that they do not preclude upgrades
4. Consider refinements to current County property maintenance ordinance
5. Prioritize code enforcement efforts
6. Study possibility of limiting accessory dwelling units per development code
7. Consider easing parking requirements in areas with limited on-site feasibility
8. Encourage the formation of neighborhood associations
9. Consider creating a new residential zoning district allowing small lots and dwellings for affordable housing
10. Allow nonconforming uses to be maintained and enhanced, but generally not to be expanded or extended, and encourage them to becoming conforming over time



## INFRASTRUCTURE

### POLICIES

1. Maximize the use of County-owned land
2. Make strategic extensions of utilities to support development
3. Upgrade aging infrastructure

### STRATEGIES

1. Provide green building and new technology how-to information for rebuilding or upgrades
2. Provide incentives for energy efficiency upgrades
3. Educate builders and public to use storm water as a resource
4. Install underground utilities in existing neighborhoods
5. Examine existing easements and options for expansion to allow undergrounding
6. Enhance Internet service
7. Conduct periodic assessments of infrastructure to identify problems and inform solutions

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## GROWTH

The comprehensive plan desires and anticipates growth within the community, and adopts goals and policies to direct and promote that growth and ensure its success.

Based on the supposition of some low to moderate population growth, the comprehensive plan examines where that growth can and should take place.

The community has expressed support for growth of approximately 2,000 additional residents over the next 10 to 20 years. This number should be considered in light of the difficulty of making such predictions and the perennial lack of certainty regarding the future expansion or potential contraction of LANL employment.

In April 2016, LANL announced that they expected to hire 2,400 new employees over the next five years. It is also projected that between 30% and 40% of the current LANL workforce will retire over approximately the same time frame in which new employees will be brought on.

The County is encouraging new housing development and recognizes the need for more variety in size, type, and price

range of housing units, including Senior and assisted care facilities, as well as affordable housing. The comprehensive plan does not project population growth or decline. Rather, it plans for how to accommodate low to moderate growth, hoping to achieve a historic high of 20,000 population over the next decade. It is noted that the County Economic Vitality Strategic Plan has also discussed 20,000 as a population base in the context of economic development, in that it represents a minimal demographic benchmark for certain national retailers.

Growth is a function of expansion in sectors beyond housing. The Manhattan Project National Historic Park is expected to bring a significant growth in tourism, and, with it, a corresponding increase in economic development. As Los Alamos grows in its role as the gateway to three national parks and continues to be known for its desirability as a place to live, combined with the projected increase in LANL employment, the community can anticipate new housing development, more tourism and an improved economic climate.



# GROWTH

## GOALS

1. Plan for modest growth of an additional 2,000 residents in the next 5 to 20 years
2. Diversify the economic base
3. Maximize our opportunity with respect to the development of the Manhattan Project National Historical Park
4. Support and retain LANL as the best wealth-producing employer
5. Capitalize on Los Alamos County's role as gateway to three national parks
6. Expand focus of tourism to include Valles Caldera and Bandelier
7. Significantly improve the quantity and quality of retail business
8. Attract new tourism-related business
9. Revitalize and eliminate blight in the downtown areas of Los Alamos and White Rock
10. Promote growth in the downtown
11. Strive to make housing available to those who work in the County and want to live in the County
12. Enhance community pride



## ECONOMIC VITALITY

### POLICIES

1. Create a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly downtown that includes a central gathering place, nighttime entertainment, and more retail stores and restaurants
2. Promote eco-, education- and athletic-based tourism
3. Promote Los Alamos as venue for athletic events and competitions
4. Attract new tourism-related business
5. Market and brand Los Alamos as a scenic destination featuring recreation, science and history
6. Improve County communication with the business community
7. Support capital projects for population growth
8. Continue to implement streetscape improvements

### STRATEGIES

1. Develop and implement a tourism plan, including wayfinding
2. Provide sufficient land for growth areas, including for industrial and manufacturing uses
3. Use local Economic Development Act (LEDA) funds
4. Partner with LACDC to attract new business
5. Consider County-built business incubator



## LAND USE

### POLICIES

1. Maximize the utilization of County-owned land
2. Encourage the retention of existing businesses and assist in their opportunities for growth
3. Support infill development over expansion of current developed areas
4. Collaborate with Los Alamos National Laboratory as the area's #1 employer
5. Support spinoff business opportunities from LANL
6. Maximize the utilization of County-owned land
7. Showcase Lab-developed technologies

### STRATEGIES

1. Create new mixed-use zoning district
2. Partner with the National Park Service, Ski Los Alamos, and others to promote Los Alamos County as an outdoor recreation destination



## INFRASTRUCTURE

### POLICIES

1. Promote public/private partnerships of utility extensions
2. Ensure access to broadband communication for all properties in the County

### STRATEGIES

1. Continue to pursue grant funding for infrastructure improvements such as Los Alamos MainStreet
2. Minimize construction impacts to small businesses
3. Coordinate construction signage with State and private contractors

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# 3.2

## DEVELOPMENT, REDEVELOPMENT & DOWNTOWN

### GOALS, POLICIES & STRATEGIES

There is broad consensus that some growth and new development are desirable and would benefit the community. At the same time, there is also widespread agreement that vacant and blighted properties, both commercial and residential, need rehabilitation, and that the focus of both new construction and rehabilitation should be on the two downtowns.



# DEVELOPMENT

New physical and economic development is an overarching goal of the community and a necessary component to achieve economic vitality.

In the context of this comprehensive plan, physical development means new construction, generally on vacant or cleared sites. The community has expressed broad support for new development, especially in relation to a growing tourism economy. There is great anticipation for development of the Manhattan Project National Historical Park and related interest in and visitation of Bandelier National Monument and the Valles Caldera National Preserve. Los Alamos will promote itself as the gateway to three national parks and capitalize on other outdoor recreation opportunities that already exist. The County will partner with Pajarito Ski Mountain and publicize the numerous other outdoor recreation opportunities, including hiking and golf. Other tourism-related attractions include the Los Alamos Nature Center, the Bradbury Museum, and numerous special events such as Sciencefest.

The County should consider County projects or encourage the private sector to develop new opportunities as well to attract both residents and visitors alike. Residents suggested some opportunities, including a seasonal slide at the ski mountain, zip-lines, and a bike park, among others.

Increased interest in Los Alamos could spur development of additional hotel facilities, a convention center, and possibly even a destination resort.

In keeping with national trends, approximately 60% of current residents expect to retire in Los Alamos County. This number suggests the need for more assisted living and continuum of care facilities. The community will also need additional health care facilities, either associated with the hospital or not.

Central to all development, actual or anticipated is the need for additional housing of all types and sizes for a variety of income levels and needs.

There is also strong support in the community for keeping development within the current developed boundaries and not developing into any existing open space.

Development of County land not designated as open space is also a priority for the community. As the County moves forward in assessing the development potential, recruiting development interests, and divesting itself of publicly held land, it will be important that the process for doing so is transparent and open to all.

Not all efforts to spur development and economic growth will be on the part of the County. However, the County could be a partner, or catalyst, in some of these endeavors going forward. The comprehensive plan acknowledges the need for development and suggests a number of potential implementing strategies for consideration.

# DEVELOPMENT

## GOALS

1. Keep the focus of development primarily within current development boundaries
2. Significantly improve the quantity and quality of retail business
3. Enhance and maintain a vibrant downtown while keeping a small town character and feel
4. Maintain and protect all designated open space
5. Focus increased residential densities on new development in and near downtown
6. Promote economic diversification by building on the existing strengths of the community: technology, innovation, and information, as well as the natural resource amenities
7. Promote coordination of economic development and community development among County departments, as well as with all levels of government, the business community, and nonprofits, to strengthen industry clusters
8. Strengthen the business climate to be more competitive through use of transparent and predictable regulations, and efficient approval processes



## ECONOMIC VITALITY

### POLICIES

1. Balance economic development support for growth and sustainability
2. Promote Los Alamos County as a model for emerging technologies
3. Support existing businesses
4. Actively solicit new development opportunities
5. Support spinoff business opportunities from LANL
6. Attract new tourism-related business
7. Support County outreach to and communication with the business community

### STRATEGIES

1. Support construction of new tech facilities to attract new tech businesses
2. Consider a County-built business incubator
3. Support "makerspace" opportunities
4. Support selected rezoning and land use - regulations that support business
5. Reestablish commercial air service
6. Improve the appearance of the commercial areas
7. Investigate the potential for establishing an Economic Revitalization Strategy in strategic areas of the Los Alamos and White Rock downtown areas
8. Investigate the potential use of Industrial Revenue Bonds as a tool for development



## LAND USE

### POLICIES

1. Maximize the use of County-owned land
2. Generally keep development contained within current development boundaries (prevent sprawl)
3. Do not develop or allow development in open space
4. Increase residential density in the downtown area
5. Delay development of areas that require environmental remediation before they are safe and suitable
6. Ensure greater certainty in development review process
7. Structure permitting and development review processes especially if application conforms to Comprehensive Plan and the Future Land Use Map
8. Preserve existing industrial sites and identify strategies to maximize the level of use

### STRATEGIES

1. Adopt a new mixed-use zoning district
2. Streamline the development review process, especially for site plans
3. Develop a DP Road Sector Plan
4. Support land assemblage and strategic disposal of County property



## INFRASTRUCTURE

### POLICIES

1. Support strategic County utility extensions and other public improvements to support or attract new businesses
2. Maximize the utilization of County-owned land for infrastructure expansion
3. Provide streetscape improvements
4. Ensure energy-efficient County buildings

### STRATEGIES

1. Assure that every property has access to high-speed Internet
2. Support a wayfinding program for better and more efficient mobility
3. Identify potential locations for and support development of an RV park.

# REDEVELOPMENT

Los Alamos County has focused much of its redevelopment efforts in the two downtowns of White Rock and the Townsite, and significant progress has been made. In the context of this plan, redevelopment means reconstruction or rehabilitation of previously developed property.

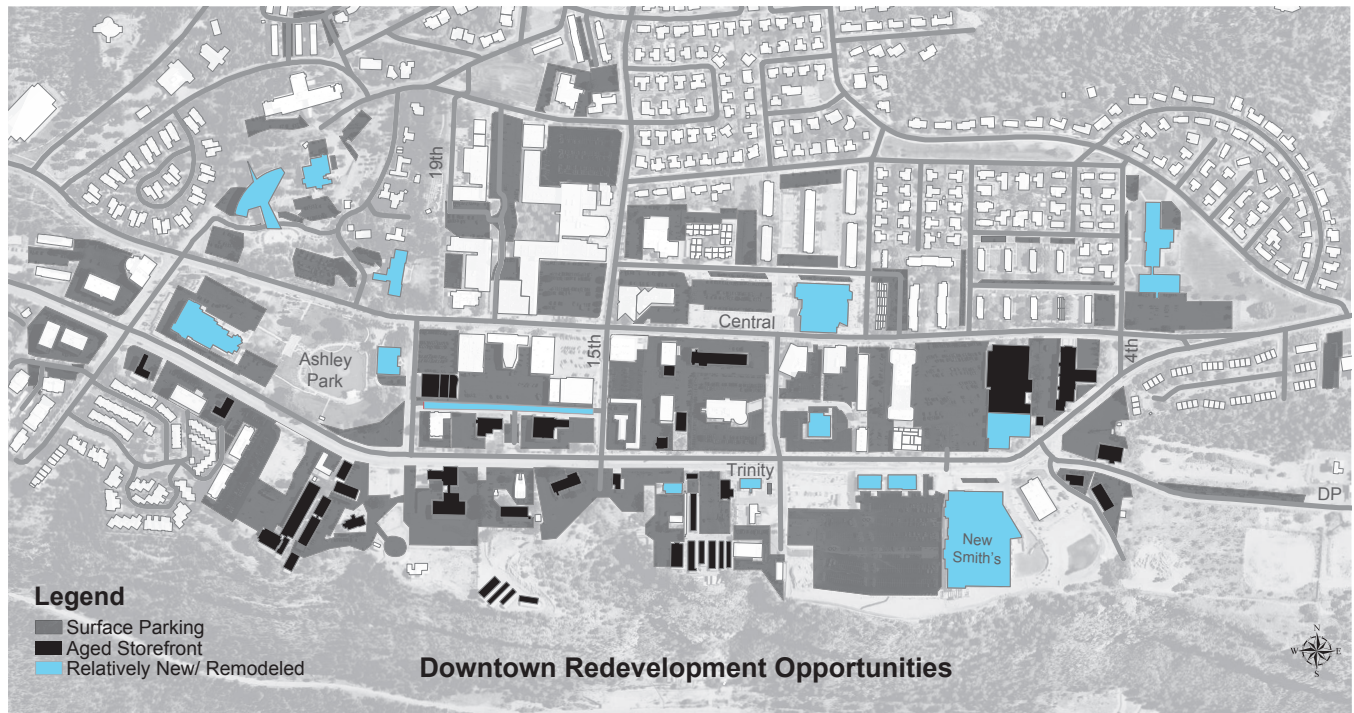
The County has actively pursued the actions recommended in the 2009 Downtown Plan, including Main Street redevelopment of Central Avenue. It completed streetscape work on Central Avenue from Oppenheimer Drive to 15th Street, with the next portion, from 15th Street to Knecht Street completed in the fall of 2016. It constructed a new Teen Center in the Community Building adjacent to Ashley Pond. The County completely redeveloped Ashley Pond with walking paths, a music pavilion, and gardens, including a Master Gardeners' demonstration garden at Central and Oppenheimer. It completed Fuller Lodge renovations in June 2016. Another major renovation was Kroger Corporation's construction of the new Smith's Marketplace on Trinity Drive, along with development of two other buildings on the site, and a third currently under construction in 2016.

Redevelopment of Trinity Drive was on the list of work to be done in 2009 and continues to be a community goal today. The County is currently creating lots for development south of Trinity as an extension of 20th Street. Transfer of land on DP Road to the County continues and will be the subject of further discussion, in terms of development opportunities and land uses.

The vacant former Smith's store has been the subject of much discussion as well, in terms of the community's desire to see all of the Meri Mac site, including the empty former Smith's store and the parking lot, upgraded and rehabilitated.

An analysis of redeveloped properties versus those that have not been remodeled, or are vacant or underused, showed an approximately equal amount of each, as measured in square footage of footprint. A "birds-eye" view of the downtown area shows the extent of redevelopment in the relatively recent past. The same graphic shows the areas still in need of development or reconstruction.

*Downtown Los Alamos Redevelopment Opportunities*



# REDEVELOPMENT

Revitalization and redevelopment needs in White Rock are twofold. First, the County has identified a significant number of vacant or abandoned houses and will need to further study various options for an assessment and approach.

Second, the former commercial area around Longview is largely vacant and has been in decline since the 1990s. The County has made a major investment along both sides of State Road 4 which has done much to improve civic pride and encourage private investment. Evidence of the latter is the new construction of the Del Norte Credit Union to be completed in the summer of 2016, as well as reinvestment in Metzger's and other potential projects under consideration also along State Road 4. The County is also currently redeveloping the old Town Hall into a Senior Center complex on Rover.

The County has accomplished much and the results of its investments are visible and growing. A major opportunity for new commercial activity in White Rock Center is tourism-oriented retail and services. The more than 250,000 visitors to Bandelier National Monument traveling through White Rock each year are an untapped market for visitor amenities and services, supported by retailers such as outdoor gear and specialty retail stores. In addition to tourism related to Bandelier, Valles Caldera National Preserve and the Manhattan Project National Historical Park are now two additional major tourist and visitor attractions in the area. They should create additional opportunities for recreation and economic development. Discussion of how the County will market and brand itself as a major tourist and recreation destination is ongoing.

The County has made significant public investments in White Rock, including the new visitors center, fire station, a new, award-winning library, teen center, and is currently reconstructing a 10,000-square-foot Senior Center. Private investment has followed public, with a new credit union constructed in a prominent and visible location at Route 4 and Rover Boulevard. It is anticipated that as many as 160 new dwelling units will also be built at the site on Route 4 known as A-19, along with other new development as envisioned in the A-19 conceptual master plan.

The opportunities that the County has worked hard to develop, and in which it has made major investments, will

also create the need for workforce and other housing, which in turn should drive the establishment of new businesses to serve both the local residents and tourists. White Rock will need a greater variety of higher density, moderately priced housing options to expand both ownership and rental opportunities.

Going forward, another focus of redevelopment will be the elimination of blighted and vacant properties, both commercial and residential. The County is investigating various strategies to address both the issues of blight and vacancy, which are neither mutually exclusive nor entirely coincident. These strategies could include incentives for development and redevelopment, as well as possible disincentives for continued blight.

The importance of housing redevelopment is twofold: first, for aesthetic reasons and to preserve neighborhood values, and second, to increase the supply of available housing, both rental and for sale.

There continues to be general agreement on where further improvement is needed: more and better local shopping opportunities; Trinity Drive, including a solution to the deteriorating service clubs; affordable housing; and opportunities for development on DP Road. The idea of extending the paved multiuse Canyon Rim Trail into the heart of Los Alamos has garnered broad support at the Los Alamos County Council, the Transportation Board, and with the public. The County should consider a similar multi-use trail in White Rock. The anticipated increase in tourism will increase the need for more hotel and conference space. Finally, the community continues to need and support improved and rehabilitated infrastructure, as well as strategic expansion of infrastructure to support new construction and as a driver for economic development.

# REDEVELOPMENT

## GOALS

1. Redevelop vacant blighted areas and underutilized properties
2. Encourage infill development on underused or blighted sites
3. Enrich the vibrancy of business districts through the integration of design, public art, public space, historic preservation, and cultural spaces and programming.



## ECONOMIC VITALITY

### POLICIES

1. Provide flexibility for uses in redeveloped areas
2. Assess and analyze the location and circumstances of vacant or blighted properties

### STRATEGIES

1. Employ incentive strategies and tools from the Economic Development Plan
2. Employ strategies and incentives that encourage property-owner compliance
3. Examine strategies and regulations to ensure compliance



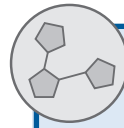
## LAND USE

### POLICIES

1. Address abandoned or blighted properties
2. Use incentives in making land use changes
3. Promote use of existing housing stock to meet housing demand

### STRATEGIES

1. Develop a manual for property owners for improving and/or updating exteriors and landscapes
2. Incentivize property owners to upgrade or redevelop
3. Add new zoning categories to allow mix of uses in more districts, and/or expand list of permitted uses
4. Increase flexibility in Downtown overlay uses to allow added residential use
5. Create a community service support network to help homeowners remedy violations
6. Prioritize health and safety violations for code enforcement



## INFRASTRUCTURE

### POLICIES

1. Foster and promote sustainability practices
2. Support undergrounding of utilities
3. In conjunction with new development or redevelopment, install conduit for future high-speed Internet
4. Establish an assessment and replacement schedule for aging infrastructure
5. Make strategic capital investments in infrastructure

### STRATEGIES

1. Provide incentives for energy efficiency upgrades
2. Incorporate a transportation system into economic development planning and for increased housing downtown

# DOWNTOWN

The downtown areas of the Townsite and in White Rock are key to development and redevelopment in the County.

In adopting the Downtown Los Alamos Element in 2009, the County reconfirmed the importance of the Townsite downtown “... as a lively, economically vital, pedestrian-friendly, and convenient mixed-use traditional town center.”

The vision for White Rock’s downtown, as expressed in the White Rock Center Element adopted in 2012, is very similar: *“The commercial center of White Rock is a thriving, active focal point for the community [serving] local residents, commuters, and tourists with a range of services and amenities. Residents have access to a large variety of daily needs – food, shopping, entertainment – and meet along a revitalized Arroyo and a new public plaza in a thriving mixed-use ‘town center.’ ”*

The County has already achieved significant improvements in these areas and will do more. A short list of significant construction and improvements includes: two public libraries, a new municipal building, fire station, visitor center, teen centers, Main Street reconstruction, and senior center. The community recognizes and appreciates the work done to date. The vast majority of responses in the first comprehensive plan survey, at a rate of approximately 4:1, believed that recent changes in Los Alamos in the built environment (buildings, street improvements, access to trails and open space) have been for the better.

Broad community consensus supports the need to address blighted properties as a means of improving the appearance of the community and promoting enhanced economic development.

One of the Council’s strategic goals is to maximize use of County land. This goal is especially applicable in the Townsite downtown where a number of opportunities exist for major development and redevelopment. Opportunities are A-13, the 7.5-acre LASO site; A-9, 4.2 acres on the north side of DP Road; A-8, 24 acres on the south side of DP Road; the County’s 3+-acre site on 20th Street, south of Trinity; and Deacon Alley.

In White Rock, the County is pursuing development of the 60-acre A-19 site, following recent development on former County property at State Road 4 and Rover.

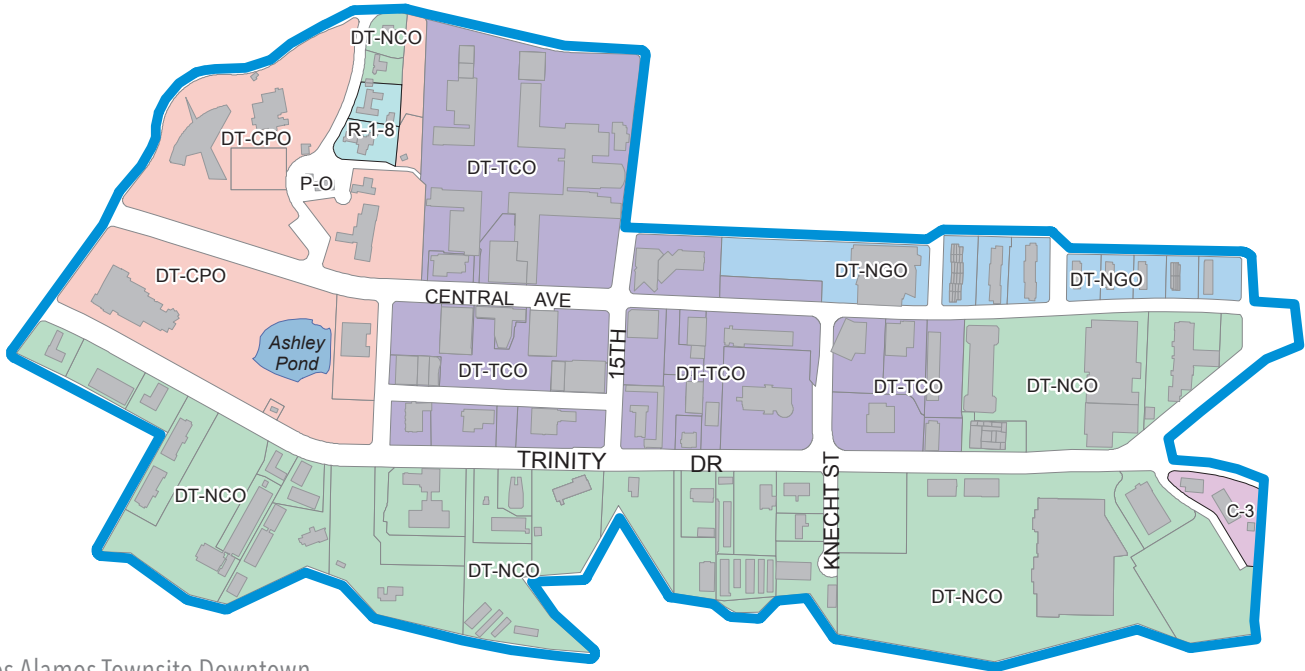
On the private side, the County is examining ways to address remaining vacant and blighted properties such as the Merrimac Center and the old “Black Hole” in the Townsite and the Longview area in White Rock.

The comprehensive plan introduces the “mixed-use” land use category to simplify and encourage private development by allowing either residential or commercial, or a combination of land uses on designated mixed-use tracts. The County also encourages housing development in the Townsite and White Rock, with the A-8 tract already zoned for high-density housing. Other support for increased activity in the Townsite downtown includes expansion of the Rim Trail, support for a historic district and for the Historic Society’s museum campus, Main Street expansion, and subdivision of the 20th Street property in preparation for sale and development. The County also recognizes the need to improve the use and appearance of Trinity Drive and to support new development through installation of utility infrastructure on DP Road, 20th Street, and into A-19 in White Rock.

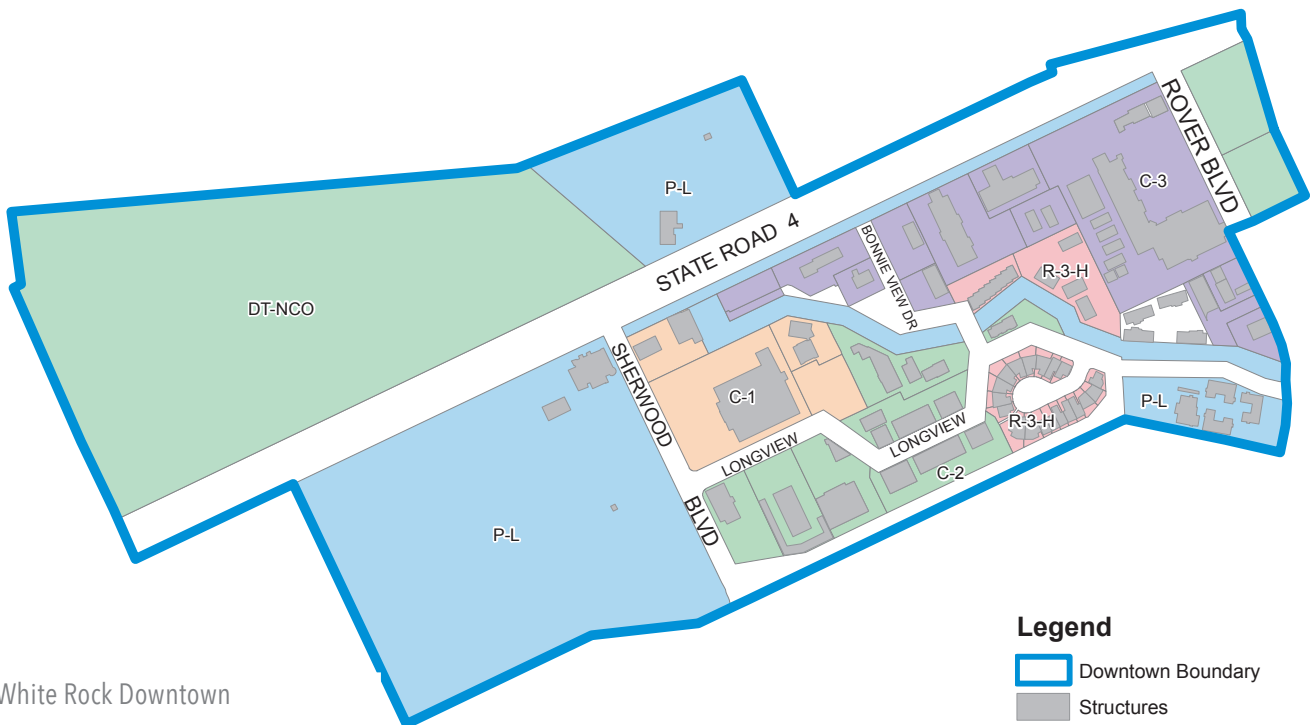
All the accomplished and anticipated improvements will enable revitalization of both downtown areas, including attracting new retail businesses and restaurants, especially in response to increased tourism.

“ I grew up here but have been gone the past 15 years. I couldn’t believe how great it looked when I came back! ”  
*Los Alamos Resident*

# DOWNTOWN





Los Alamos Townsite Downtown



White Rock Downtown

### Legend

-  Downtown Boundary
-  Structures

# DOWNTOWN

## GOALS

1. Create a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly downtown that includes a central gathering place, nighttime entertainment, and more retail stores and restaurants
2. Focus development priorities downtown
3. Focus increased residential densities in new development in and near the downtown
4. Enhance the vibrant, historic, small-town character of Los Alamos by focusing commercial density increases in the downtown area
5. Protect existing residential neighborhoods in or near downtown from impacts caused by new development or redevelopment



## ECONOMIC VITALITY

### POLICIES

1. Support a range of retail and service uses that complement one another
2. Support small businesses in the downtown
3. Provide flexibility for uses to change over time as market conditions change

### STRATEGIES

1. Consider public/private partnerships
2. Expand the Los Alamos MainStreet program improvements
3. Foster the historic importance of Los Alamos County in tourism promotion
4. Continue to preserve and maintain Fuller Lodge and other historic buildings, grounds and archeological resources
5. Promote construction of a new hotel and conference center
6. Develop transition zone strategies to buffer existing residential neighborhoods from new development or redevelopments



## LAND USE

### POLICIES

1. Support more, and different types of housing in new developments downtown
2. Focus residential density increases in new developments in or near downtown
3. Support the Historical Society Museum campus

### STRATEGIES

1. Establish a historic district in the downtown
2. Revisit parking requirements
3. Revisit code restrictions to height



## INFRASTRUCTURE

### POLICIES

1. Continue to support infrastructure construction downtown
2. Establish an assessment and replacement schedule for aging infrastructure

### STRATEGIES

1. Bring high-speed Internet to Los Alamos County

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# 3.3

## OPEN SPACE, TRAILS & MOBILITY

### GOALS, POLICIES & STRATEGIES

Nowhere is there greater agreement within the community than in the value of keeping all the County's open space protected and accessible. Mobility expands on the connections among open space, trails and streets as circulation, transportation and recreation corridors that serve all users.

# OPEN SPACE

Los Alamos County has over 4,000 acres of open space – 95% of County residents live within a seven minute walk of County open space. And as reported in the 2012 Community Survey, 20% of residents use their neighborhood open space or trails at least five times a week.

The Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) deeded much of the open space acreage to the County in the late 1960s as part of a general divestiture of AEC land, housing and infrastructure. Certain of the land parcels were deed restricted to recreational use only. These parcels included recreation areas on North and Kwage Mesas, and the North Mesa Horse Stables area.

Deed restrictions, while binding, are not impossible to change or remove. Deed restrictions have been renegotiated for a number of parcels in the County over the past several decades. Expanded uses have included a new sewer lift station, RV parking and the Sheriff's Posse land.

In the 1970s, the County added two zoning overlay districts, W-1 and W-2, to certain lands already zoned PL, Public Land. The overlay districts established the types of uses that would be permitted in the W overlay zones, differentiating between the two in intensity of permitted uses. W-1, the "Scenic open lands district, is intended to maintain, protect and preserve the scenic and environmental quality, open character and the natural recreational value of undeveloped land." While W-2, the "recreation wilderness district, is intended to maintain, protect and preserve the scenic and environmental quality, open character and natural recreational value of undeveloped land, and to accommodate public and private recreational uses of an open nature." (Source: County Code of Ordinances Article 13, Chapter 16) W-2 allows the more intensive recreational uses.

Not all Public Land has the "W" overlay. Land zoned only PL includes most of the open space in White Rock, as well as the golf course, certain utility locations, the airport, schools, including UNM-Los Alamos, and other publicly held parcels. The PL district is described in code as land "intended to

accommodate local government and school district uses and structures, designed to support community needs and the public health, safety and welfare." However, the development code does not include specific uses for PL land.

The Future Land Use Map of the comprehensive plan adopts land use categories for open space that establish three levels of open space, based on intensity of use. Parks are the most developed and support the most intense level of uses. The Parks category includes Ashley Pond and the adjacent Los Alamos Master Gardeners Club [check for correct designation] demonstration garden and all other developed parks and playgrounds. Other open space is designated as Active or Passive Use Open Space, with these categories corresponding to the zoning district categories described above. In addition, the comprehensive plan adopts as land use categories the recommendations of the Open Space Management Plan, adopted by Council in 2015, and which categories were supported by the Parks and Recreation Board in 2016.

*The random sample surveys conducted in May and September 2016 showed overwhelming support for keeping all or most currently undeveloped public land as open space, agreed to by 89% of all respondents. Participants in Round One visioning meetings held in March 2016 also expressed enthusiastic support for open space ("sacred places" mapped by participants) and neighborhood connections to County open space trails – some of which need improvement or signage. The majority of survey respondents (80%) did not favor development in the canyons or on canyon walls. 80% also indicated support for partnering with the National Parks and others to promote Los Alamos as an outdoor recreation destination. 89% of survey respondents favored the preservation of historic, environmental, and cultural landscapes.*

# OPEN SPACE

By designating open space lands as Active or Passive on the FLUM, the comprehensive plan adds another layer of protection to those lands. As a stated strategy in the plan, it is also expected that a rezoning action in the near future will change the zoning designations.

The Open Space Management Plan and the Parks and Recreation Board recommend adding the W-1 Overlay to the following lands, all currently zoned PL, except Lower Bayo Canyon, which is zoned PL/W-2:

- Lower Bayo Canyon, currently zoned PL/W-2
- White Rock Canyon, currently zoned PL
- Graduation Canyon, currently zoned PL
- Range Road Tract, currently zoned PL
- Upper Walnut Canyon, west fork, currently zoned PL
- Upper Walnut Canyon, east fork, currently zoned PL
- Several small drainage easements in North Community, currently zoned PL

The Open Space Management Plan also recommends that several parcels zoned PL/W-2, but having split uses on the same parcel, be rezoned to reflect those different uses as PL/W-1 and PL/W-2. The plan's map titled, "Current Zoning and Recommended Changes for Open Space" illustrates these uses.

Other proposed changes are to the following lands adjacent to the Golf Course:

- Two tracts adjacent to the golf course, currently zoned PD-5, change to PL/W-2
- The Woodland Trail, north of the golf course, currently zoned PL, change to PL/W-2
- The south section of the Golf Course containing the Walnut Canyon Rim Trail, currently zoned PD-5, change to PL/W-2

In addition, the Open Space Plan and the Board recommend these changes:

- Kwage Mesa parcel, with stables on the west half and open land including the Kwage Mesa Trail on the east half, currently zoned W-2, keep west half (stables, indoor arena, playground, tennis courts, and the North Mesa Pathway [circular walking trail]) PL/W-2, and change east half to PL/W-1
- Open space area in Overlook Park containing several trails, currently zoned P-L, change to PL/W-2

The Future Land Use Map reflects all the land use categories corresponding to the proposed zoning changes.

By mapping open space in the Future Land Use Map, the comprehensive plan illustrates an open space network for the County, and suggests strategies where possible for closing or minimizing any gaps.

## Conclusion

The County has attained many earlier goals and aspirations related to open space and recreation. These achievements include construction of a new Nature Center, skateboard park, and the current project extending the Canyon Rim Trail. The comprehensive plan adopts policies to guide future development, help establish priorities for new construction, and determine or confirm levels of use and protection in various open space tracts.

Many goals related to the use of open space and trails intersect with those related to recreation and transportation. Policies adopted as part of the comprehensive plan acknowledge this interface and interrelated goals.

# OPEN SPACE

## GOALS

1. Protect all existing County-designated open space
2. Enhance environmental quality and sustainability balancing costs and benefits, including County services and utilities



## ECONOMIC VITALITY

### POLICIES

1. Partner with National Park Service, Los Alamos Ski Club, and others to promote Los Alamos as an outdoor recreation destination
2. Implement a comprehensive range of recreational and cultural amenities that enhance the Los Alamos community
3. Promote Los Alamos County as an "Outdoor Community"

### STRATEGIES

1. Improve access to public open space and recreational facilities
2. Consider use of the lodgers' tax and Department of Tourism income to promote recreational activities
3. Eradicate invasive species
4. Continue to provide maintenance and support for demonstration gardens
5. Promote increased outdoor recreational tourism as a revenue source for open space maintenance



## LAND USE

### POLICIES

1. Be stewards of the natural environment, including the existing ecosystems
2. Do not build houses in the canyons or on canyon walls
3. Preserve historic, environmental, and cultural landscapes
4. Maintain and improve outdoor recreation for a diverse population
5. Support Open Space Management Plan recommendations for open-space zoning
6. Preserve and protect neighborhood open space
7. Adopt open-space zoning districts as recommended by the Open Space Management Plan and by the Comprehensive Plan

### STRATEGIES

1. Adopt three types of open space on the Future Land Use Map in alignment with recommended changes to zoning
2. Rezone areas currently zoned PL to clarify their appropriate categories
3. Identify gaps in open space connections. Propose strategies for connections



## INFRASTRUCTURE

### POLICIES

1. Support green infrastructure
2. Minimize infrastructure impacts to open space to the greatest extent practical
3. Maximize coordination efforts between Community Services (Parks & Recreation) and DPU for needed or proposed utility work in open space.

### STRATEGIES

1. Require reclamation or remediation as needed on all projects
2. Develop storm-water management standards
3. Develop and adopt standards for minimal disturbance and for reclamation in open space

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# TRAILS

Along with the open space system, the County also has approximately 60 miles of maintained trails. By mapping these trails, it is possible to see the overlap with open space and to identify the gaps in that network. The comprehensive plan supports the maintenance, improvement and enhancement of the trail system.

In addition, the plan identifies four main trail connection gaps illustrated in the Needed Trail Connections Map. They are: East Road crossing from Entrada to the Canyon Rim Trail trailhead; connection of the two parts of the existing Canyon Rim Trail (this connection project is funded and is currently in construction); extension of the western end of the Canyon Rim Trail across Trinity; and connection of the trail networks west of Quemazon and west of the Western area.

Currently there are two paved multi-use trails in Los Alamos, the Canyon Rim Trail and the Los Alamos Mesa Trail. There is discussion of and support for expanding the Rim Trail to loop through downtown, with an extension to the Aquatic Center, Nature Center, and eventually establishing a complete loop within the larger context of bicycle and pedestrian systems to the eastern edge of the County and perhaps even farther.

In White Rock, the multi-use Cañada de Buey Trail is paved from State Road 4 to Rover; from Rover to the entrance to Overlook Park the trail has a crusher fine surface.

In addition to their importance for recreation purposes and connectivity, trails also support Safe Routes to School. The plan supports expansion of additional trail extensions, especially in places where such extensions would make connections to and create loops with other trails.



# TRAILS

## GOALS

1. Improve and expand the trails system
2. Comply with the Bicycle Transportation System Plan Update



## ECONOMIC VITALITY

### POLICIES

1. Develop and expand trails connecting downtown to surrounding open space
2. Create or improve trails that serve residents of all ages
3. Collaborate with other public land owners to connect County trails to non-County-owned trails adjacent to or near County land
4. Assure that the Bicycle Transportation System Plan addresses the maintenance responsibilities and regularly identifies access impediments

### STRATEGIES

1. Pursue federal and state transportation grant funding for multi-modal circulation
2. Pursue bicycle trail certification by the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) and designation by the League of American Bicyclists as a "Bicycle-Friendly Community"
3. Promote trail etiquette for all trail users



## LAND USE

### POLICIES

1. Promote safety for pedestrians and cyclists, on paved trails and streets
2. Ensure that policies require private development to provide trail connections and prevent creation of impediments to any trail connections

### STRATEGIES

1. Map trails and identify gaps in trail connections. Propose strategies for connections
2. Develop a strategy for prioritization of gap connections
3. Consider alternate means of circulation, especially for ADA
4. Consider signage or speed controls to promote safety on multi-use trails and pathways
5. Develop and adopt code requirements for private implementation of trail connections



## INFRASTRUCTURE

### POLICIES

1. Create designated, safe, convenient, and well-maintained bike and pedestrian pathways and sidewalks
2. Incorporate multi-use trails whenever possible
3. Recognize and acknowledge the difference between bicycling for recreation and bicycling for transportation
4. Ensure safe trail crossings, especially at arterials; weigh cost/benefits of underpasses and/or overpasses

### STRATEGIES

1. Complete development of the paved and accessible Canyon Rim Trail from DP Road through the historic core, and Ashley Pond to the Aquatic Center and the Nature Center, and possible loops
2. Link Canyon Rim Trail to the Los Alamos Mesa Trail
3. Consider wider easement requirements for trails

# MOBILITY

The comprehensive plan supports the development and maintenance of a multi-modal transportation system.

The plan recognizes the dual aspects and purposes of mobility and circulation – transportation and recreation. Where unpaved open space and trails networks pertain primarily to recreation, streets and other paved pathways are central to both recreational and transportation purposes. The key to a successful system for all users is convenience and connectivity.

Safety will continue to be a priority for all modes of transport, both for everyday mobility and in the event of emergency evacuation needs. In 2016, the County adopted the Hazard Mitigation Plan, which addresses emergency evacuation planning. The comprehensive plan endorses and supports that plan.

## Pedestrians

Walking is perhaps the most basic form of recreation, exercise, relaxation and of transportation. While the geographic layout of the Townsite does not lend itself to easy walking access to shopping and for other errands, Los Alamos' relatively small size and the distribution of elementary schools throughout neighborhoods facilitates a Safe Routes to School program for both pedestrians and bicyclists. A comprehensive transit system and an established system of paths through and around neighborhoods that was created at the time the neighborhoods were originally laid out further aid safe access to schools. Informal trails are also well established through the extensive open space and trail network. White Rock has an extensive interconnected path and trail system enhanced by the lack of dividing canyons, typical in the Townsite.

"Walkability" is an unscientific measure of public pedestrian access to various destinations, including schools, parks, libraries and businesses. Overall, Los Alamos Townsite has a poor "walk score" of 13 out of a possible 100 points, which means most errands require the use of a car. White Rock fares better, with a "walk score" of 47, which still means that most errands require a car.

The comprehensive plan anticipates improved walkability by supporting more housing in both the Townsite and White Rock downtowns, as well supporting improved pedestrian and bicycling facilities on new and redeveloped streets.

## Buses

In 2016, the County completed a comprehensive transit study and service plan, which evaluated the existing Atomic City Transit bus service and made recommendations based on projected demand for the next five years. The free and extensive bus service currently operates throughout the Townsite and White Rock, however, it offers no service on weekends or late into the evening. Analyses, discussions and responses to changing needs are ongoing. However, the community generally supports transit service free to the public. Expanded use to serve tourism needs could include a downtown "circulator" and service to Bandelier from the Townsite.

## Bicycles

Bicycling has expanded significantly as a mode of transportation both nationally and internationally. Support for bicycle travel includes dedicated infrastructure with designated bicycle lanes on streets, protected intersections, requirements for bicycle parking, and the growing trend of bike-share programs in cities, including Albuquerque. The latter may become of greater interest in Los Alamos, especially with the projected growth in tourism. The relative proximity of LANL to the location of most housing, both in Los Alamos and in White Rock, also suggests that bicycling to work could become increasingly popular. While not

# MOBILITY

within the scope of the comprehensive plan, the first round of community meetings expressed an interest in further investigation and planning for bicycle travel. In 2005, the Transportation Board recommended to Council the adoption of a list of roads as a Bicycle Transportation System, and implementation of certain improvements, appropriate to each road, in conjunction with major maintenance, reconstruction, or construction at that facility. The County is currently in the process of updating the Bicycle Transportation System Plan.

Los Alamos also has an extensive network of mountain bike trails, which are more an element of recreation and tourism than transportation. For tourism, the Los Alamos region presents numerous opportunities for inclusion in bicycle touring. After identifying projects in 2013, the County is currently working with the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) to achieve its Bronze-level status. The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Division has considered locations for mountain bike parks, including on DP Mesa and at the end of Olive Street in the Denver Steels area. The Department of Energy is currently developing a bicycling map for their properties.

Many goals related to the use of open space and trails intersect with those related to recreation and transportation. The policies adopted as part of the comprehensive plan acknowledge the interface and interrelated goals of all.

## Streets

For a long time, the focus of streets has been to serve motorized vehicles. However, both nationally and in communities across New Mexico, that focus has been expanding to accommodate all potential users, and has developed into the concept known as “complete streets.” At its most basic, “complete streets” means streets designed and built for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users of all ages and abilities, as well as for motorized vehicles.

The fundamental goals of a “complete streets” approach have been separately expressed throughout various County documents. These goals include Mobility and Environmental Stewardship, and incorporate Economic Vitality and Financial Sustainability.

No single approach or design solution can achieve the accommodation envisioned by the complete streets concept. Rather, each community and each project in the community must be individually tailored to find the right balance of safety, service, convenience and aesthetics.

The comprehensive plan supports adoption of a complete streets policy for all future transportation projects.

Again due to geographic constraints, it is unlikely that the State or County will develop any major new roads in Los Alamos or White Rock. The community outreach planning portion of the comprehensive plan update process certainly expressed interest in re-examining access on East Jemez Road, improving the condition of State Road 4 between the Townsite and White Rock, and reconfiguring the intersection in front of the Los Alamos Medical Center. A Transportation Master Plan could address these and other road issues.

## Conclusion

The comprehensive plan recognizes the need to tie transportation planning to land use and the direct bearing this has on the quality of life as well as economic development.

*“A nationwide movement launched by the National Complete Streets Coalition in 2004, Complete Streets integrates people and place in the planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of our transportation networks. The Coalition promotes the development and implementation of policies and professional practices that ensure streets are safe for people of all ages and abilities, balance the needs of different modes, and support local land uses, economies, cultures, and natural environments. To date, over 730 agencies at the local, regional, and state levels have adopted Complete Streets policies, totaling over 900 policies nationwide.” Source: [www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets](http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets)*

# MOBILITY

## MOBILITY GOALS

1. Support streets designed for the safety and comfort of all users
2. Maintain and improve transportation and mobility
3. Make improvements to the transportation system that support economic vitality and housing goals
4. Improve bicycle and pedestrian safety and convenience
5. Support long-range regional transportation planning, including regional transit for commuting to work
6. Support the Hazard Mitigation Plan



## ECONOMIC VITALITY

### POLICIES

1. Give the same level of prioritization to non-motorized circulation (bicycle and pedestrian) as to motorized circulation
2. Support and promote viable airport service
3. Promote recreational trail use for both locals and tourists

### STRATEGIES

1. Add a transit route from the Townsite to Bandelier and Valles Caldera



## LAND USE

### POLICIES

1. Develop and support transportation corridors that connect housing and employment centers
2. Create designated, safe, convenient, and well-maintained bike and pedestrian pathways and sidewalks
3. Design for accessibility
4. Make Los Alamos County a bicycle-friendly community

### STRATEGIES

1. Integrate parking with transit
2. Revisit parking requirements
3. Consider separation of bikes and pedestrians on paved trails
4. Consider expanded opportunities for off-site parking
5. Upgrade infrastructure, including streetscapes, green spaces, and entrances to Los Alamos, to reflect civic pride in the community



## INFRASTRUCTURE

### POLICIES

1. Create a user-friendly, efficient, multi-modal system that connects the Laboratory, downtown, and White Rock
2. Support a "complete streets" policy for all new and rebuilt roadways
3. Develop and adopt a transportation master plan that incorporates the trails and bike plan and is tied to land use
4. Support enhanced recreation opportunities
5. Ensure convenient transit access for all new residential developments

### STRATEGIES

1. Collect data on transportation modes and patterns.
2. Consider bike-share program associated with Rim Trail.
3. Consider alternate transportation and circulation options
4. Coordinate transportation on and off the Hill with other systems in the region
5. Support a downtown circulator seven days/week and for extended hours, especially on weekends
6. Examine the best approaches for safe pedestrian crossings on arterials such as Trinity, Diamond and State Road 4, including hawks and pedestrian / bike-activated flashing lights
7. Build a bike park

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4

FUTURE LAND  
USE







# 4.1

## PURPOSE OF THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP

THE FUTURE LAND  
USE MAP IS A GRAPHIC  
REPRESENTATION  
OF THE GOALS AND  
POLICIES EXPRESSED IN  
AND ADOPTED BY THE  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

# Future Land Use

The goals and policies of the comprehensive plan translate into anticipated land uses. Land use categories are broad and in some cases represent potential overlap of uses. For example, the Mixed Use category allows both or either residential and commercial uses. This category provides flexibility and encourages a creative approach to development. By contrast, the residential categories, which represent densities, or the number of dwelling units per acre, primarily protect existing neighborhoods by generally representing the current built status and by establishing limits to any new construction on both vacant or redeveloped land. Just as the whole of the comprehensive plan is a guiding policy document, the Future Land Use Map also represents policies to guide future development.

The County first adopted a code of ordinances, including a development code establishing zoning to guide the use and intensity of land and structures, in 1985. The development code also directs the Planning and Zoning Commission to create a comprehensive or master plan for the physical development of the County. The County created zoning districts and has expanded and amended them since the development code was originally adopted, and adopted a comprehensive plan in 1987. However, the County never adopted a land use map, although the it was envisioned and anticipated.

## 4.1.1 Purpose of the Future Land Use Map

The Future Land Use Map is a graphic representation of the Goals and Policies described in and adopted by the comprehensive plan. The map depicts the broad categories and general distribution of land uses. It shows the proximity and relation of uses to one another and reflects both the historic development of the County and its expected and anticipated growth.

The map is a guide to land development and preservation decisions. It informs the review and decision making process. It directs new development to appropriate areas, while providing flexibility in the type and intensity of potential uses through creating new Mixed-Use areas that are open and adaptable to various uses and subject to a streamlined review process.

The comprehensive plan intends that rezoning applications for uses that conform to the Future Land Use Map would follow an expedited and less onerous application and review process than those proposals for uses that do not conform to use shown on the Future Land Use Map.

While the Future Land Use Map is an expression of the goals and policies of the comprehensive plan, the plan anticipates changes to the map. Such changes may result from changes to goals or policies, or from specific development proposals, which are in line with and promote the plan's goals.

## 4.1.2 Relation of the Future Land Use Map to Zoning

Land use categories are typically broader categories of use than those defined by zoning. For example, description of residential districts is by ranges of density, most often as the number of dwelling units per acre.

The categorization of land uses and traditional zoning have separated uses to protect residential uses from incompatible uses that could be harmful or bothersome to people in their homes. Such separation is also intended to provide areas for business and manufacturing uses where they can operate as needed without the worry of negatively impacting residential use.

The past 10 to 15 years have seen a growing recognition that not all such separation is necessary or desirable. With the recognition of the value of typically smaller neighborhood commercial uses as an asset for residential areas, many municipalities have loosened their land use regulations to allow for a greater mix of uses, if not immediately adjacent, then closer than was previously thought desirable.

Los Alamos' downtown zoning exhibits this thinking by allowing a broad range of uses, where residences are close and often adjacent to the commercial center of the community, both in the Townsite and in White Rock.

Nevertheless, as the community continues to grow, it will be important to provide certain protections for existing neighborhoods as new development or redevelopment meets existing, especially in the case of long-standing, low-density residential areas. The Comprehensive Plan suggests the

creation of three of the four downtown districts also allowing both residential and non-residential uses in the same districts.

In considering open spaces, the County adopted certain zoning districts in the 1970s to establish different levels of intensity of use in open space, as well as to reflect certain restrictions established when the federal government passed the land on to the County. The future land use map will reflect the different kinds of open space in the County and identify gaps in desirable connectivity, and contribute to the development of a comprehensive system of open space and trails for future use and enjoyment.

The future land use map is a guide for future use and development. It is meant to identify areas to be designated for certain uses. The comprehensive plan and the future land use map adopted as part of the plan are planning tools based on current conditions and community values. As evidenced by past planning efforts, physical conditions and values evolve over time, sometimes in unexpected ways. The development code establishes mechanisms that allow for change through a periodic review of the plan, the adoption of area or neighborhood plans, and consideration of individual development proposals.

The comprehensive plan generally, and including the Future Land Use Map, is a guiding document. Because adoption of the comprehensive plan is by Resolution and adoption of the Development Code by Ordinance, in the event of a conflict between them, the code will prevail.

Changes to zoning should conform to the Future Land Use Map. However, there may not be a direct correspondence between current or existing zoning and future land uses. Additionally, more than one zoning district may be consistent with a FLUM category.

### 4.1.3 Future Land Use Map (FLUM) Categories

The comprehensive plan establishes the following land use categories for the Future Land Use Map:

- Residential
  - Low Density (0-3 Dwelling Units per Acre)
  - Medium Density (3-7 Dwelling Units per Acre)
  - Medium/High Density (7-15 Dwelling Units per Acre)
  - High Density (15+ Dwelling Units per Acre)
- Institutional
- Commercial
- Office
- Mixed-Use
- Industrial
- Open Space
  - Park
  - Open Space Active (corresponding to W-2)
  - Open Space Passive (corresponding to W-1)
- Urban Reserve
- Federal

## 4.1.4 Future Land Use Categories Classifications

Land use classifications are broad categories defined by the preferred or anticipated land use. With one exception, Federal Land, they do not reflect of ownership or necessarily depict existing uses. Additionally, land use classifications do not directly correspond to zoning. They are intended to adopt and graphically convey a pattern of desirable as well as established land use. It is important to understand that the Future Land Use Map can be changed, and that this plan, along with the Development Code, further define the criteria required to approve such changes. However, by adopting the Future Land Use Map as part of the comprehensive plan, the County provides guidance and direction for future growth and change.

- Residential.** Residential land uses depict density, or the number of dwelling units per gross acre. Because Los Alamos is relatively small and much of the residential use in the community already exists, the number of categories is limited to four and is based on the general character of existing constructed neighborhoods. Where a subdivision or Planned Development (PD) has been developed, it is placed in the residential category that represents the overall density for the entire subdivision or PD. Where open space has been set aside within a subdivision or PD, certain lots may be smaller than they would be if there were no open space. The land use category reflects the overall density of the development, which includes the open space. Elsewhere, the County has approved an overall density, such as in Quemazon, but there is a variety of densities internal to the development. There too, the land use map category reflects the overall density.

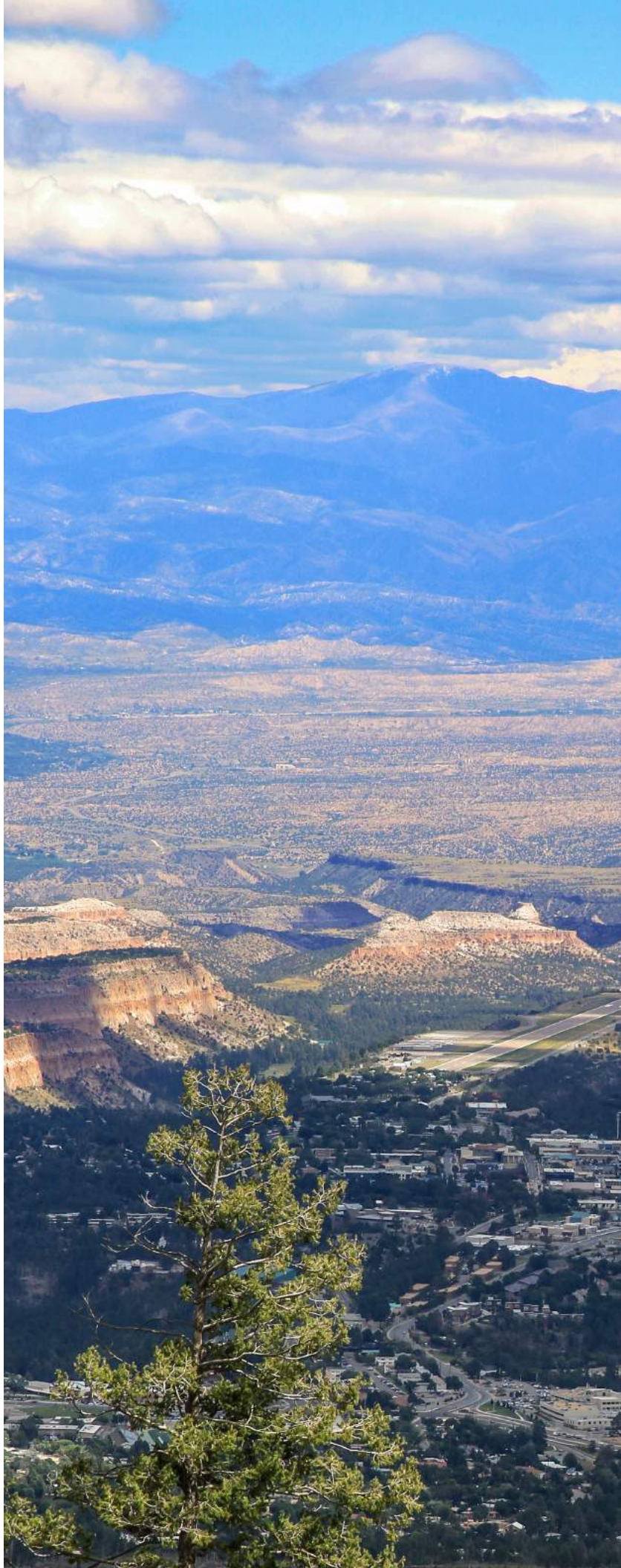
*The following table shows the relationship of residential zoning districts to the residential land use categories in the Future Land Use Map:*

Residential Land Use Categories Related to Zoning Districts

<b>Residential Land Use Categories:</b>	Low Density (0-3 Dwelling Units per Acre)	Medium Density (3-7 Dwelling Units per Acre)	Medium/High Density (7-15 Dwelling Units per Acre)	High Density (15+ Dwelling Units per Acre)
<b>Zoning Districts:</b>	RA, RE, PD-2	R-1-12, R-1-10, R-1-8, PD-5, PD-3.5, R-4	R-1-5, R-M, R-M/NC, R-3-L, PD-7, PD-12, R-5, R-6	R-3-H, R-3-H-40, PD-20

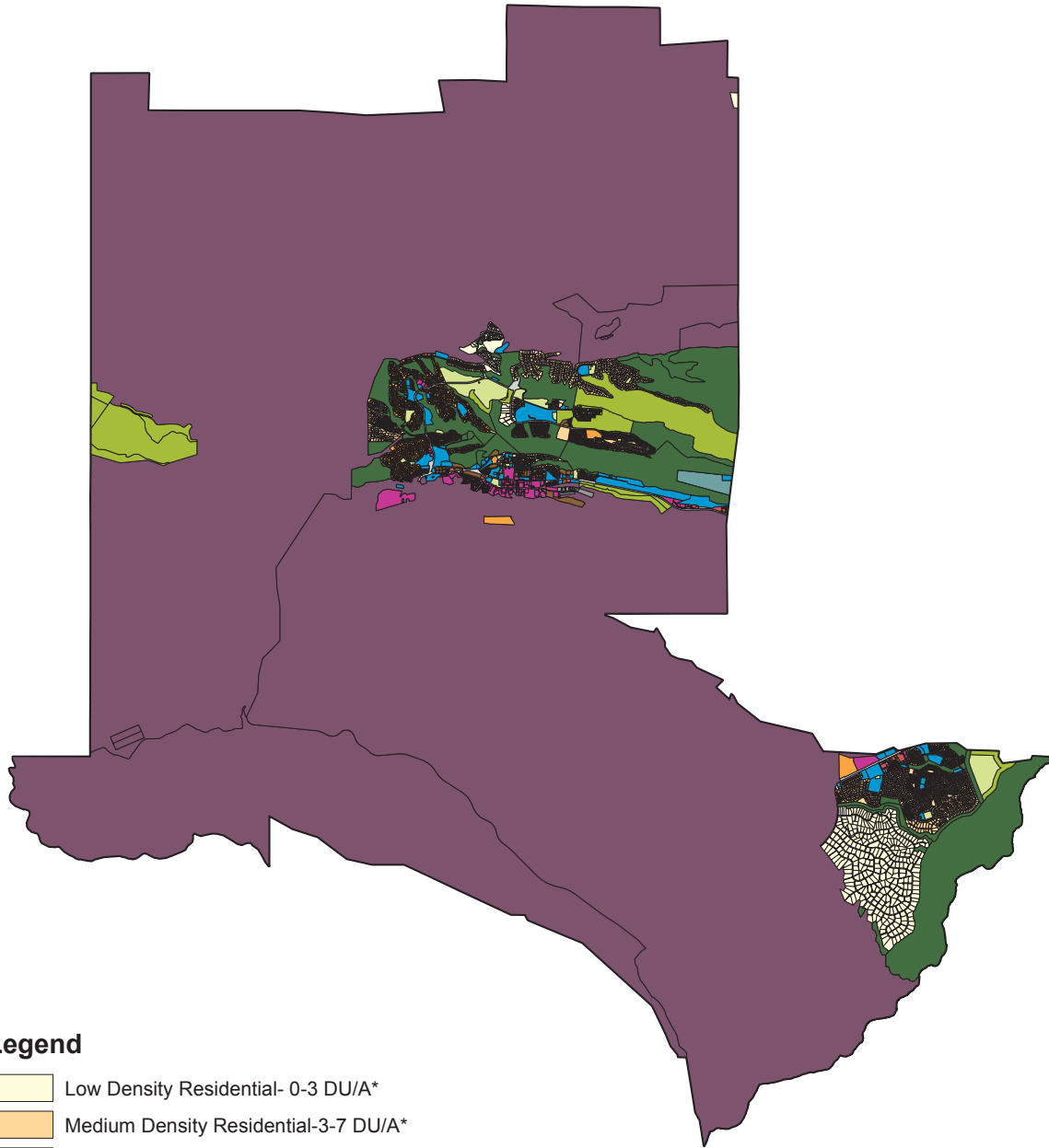
- **Institutional.** Institutional uses include schools, museums, hospitals, libraries, fire and police stations, religious assemblies, government offices such as the Los Alamos County Municipal Building, and other government facilities such as senior and teen centers, and the Aquatic Center. This category includes Los Alamos Public Schools' property that is temporarily rented as office space to private entities.
  - **Commercial.** This designation applies primarily to retail shopping areas, but also to commercial service providers including restaurants. It can also include offices and certain light industrial uses.
  - **Office.** The Office land use designation is applied to those areas where there is not generally retail activity, except as an accessory use. Offices may be administrative, medical, business and professional.
  - **Mixed-Use.** The Mixed-Use designation applies to all of the Downtown zones. It may include those areas where housing and non-residential uses occupy the same lot, but it does not have to include housing. It is anticipated, and the comprehensive plan supports, that one or more new zoning categories will be created that will allow mixed uses in other parts of the County. For the purposes of the comprehensive plan, the Mixed-Use designation means that either or both residential and non-residential uses may be permitted on a property designated Mixed-Use. Further, this designation will not require a comprehensive plan amendment to another land use category for approval of a Site Plan or other development.
  - **Industrial.** Industrial uses correspond to both the light and heavy industrial zoning districts. This land use category is intended to provide areas with sufficient separation from residential areas so as not to negatively impact residences, but also to allow for sufficient land within the County for manufacturing, processing and distribution functions for economic development. The comprehensive plan recognizes that these uses, which may have environmental impacts incompatible with other uses, including truck traffic, need areas where they can operate without mitigating impacts to immediate neighbors. The industrial category allows commercial uses.
  - **Open Space.** Open space categories identify different intensities of development and use. The *Park* category encompasses developed parks, both public and private, of various sizes. The *Open Space – Active* category corresponds to the W-2 zoning designation and includes public and private recreational uses of a generally open nature, with certain structures related to the recreational uses allowed. The *Open Space – Passive* category corresponds with the W-1 zoning designation and includes lands that remain primarily in their natural state, but can accommodate various kinds of low-impact recreation such as hiking, biking and equestrian trails.
  - **Urban Reserve.** This category establishes County-owned land to be used future economic development. Los Alamos anticipated making land available for business especially for manufacturing purposes, but not exclusively for start-up or expansion needs of companies that may be spin-offs or have other ties to LANL. As with the Mixed-Use category, it is intended that this land use designation will not require a comprehensive plan amendment for Site Plan or other development approval.
  - **Federal.** This is the only category that is based on ownership and not use. It is useful in showing the relationship of federally owned land to land under County jurisdiction. Because the County has no control over federal land and does not zone land that it does not control, there is no corresponding zoning district. This district includes Department of Energy (DOE), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service lands.
- Note:** *In adopting the land use categories, the comprehensive plan acknowledges the intent of public land to support community needs, including infrastructure, and that public health, safety and welfare are essential considerations in all land use determinations.*





# 4.2

## FUTURE LAND USE MAP



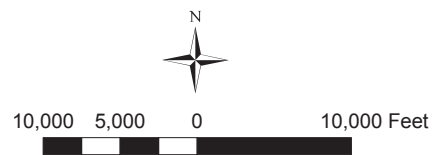
**Legend**

- Low Density Residential- 0-3 DU/A\*
- Medium Density Residential-3-7 DU/A\*
- Med-High Density Residential- 7-15 DU/A\*
- High Density Residential-15+ DU/A\*
- Institutional
- Parks
- Open Space- Active
- Open Space- Passive
- Mixed-Use
- Commercial/Office
- Industrial
- Federal
- ROW
- Urban Reserve

\*Dwelling Units per Acre

## Future Land Use Los Alamos County

Draft 10-18-16





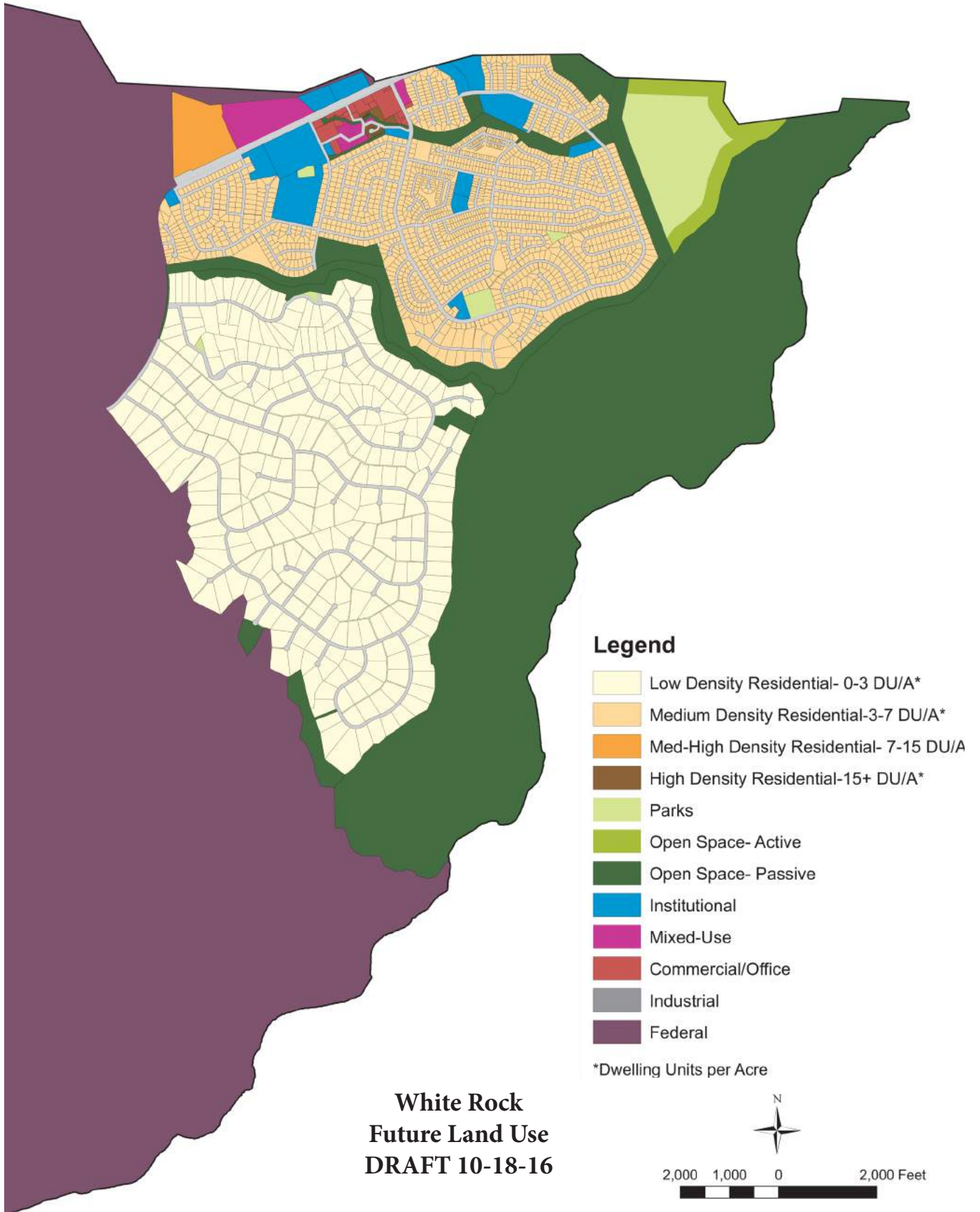
## Future Land Use Los Alamos

Draft 10-18-16

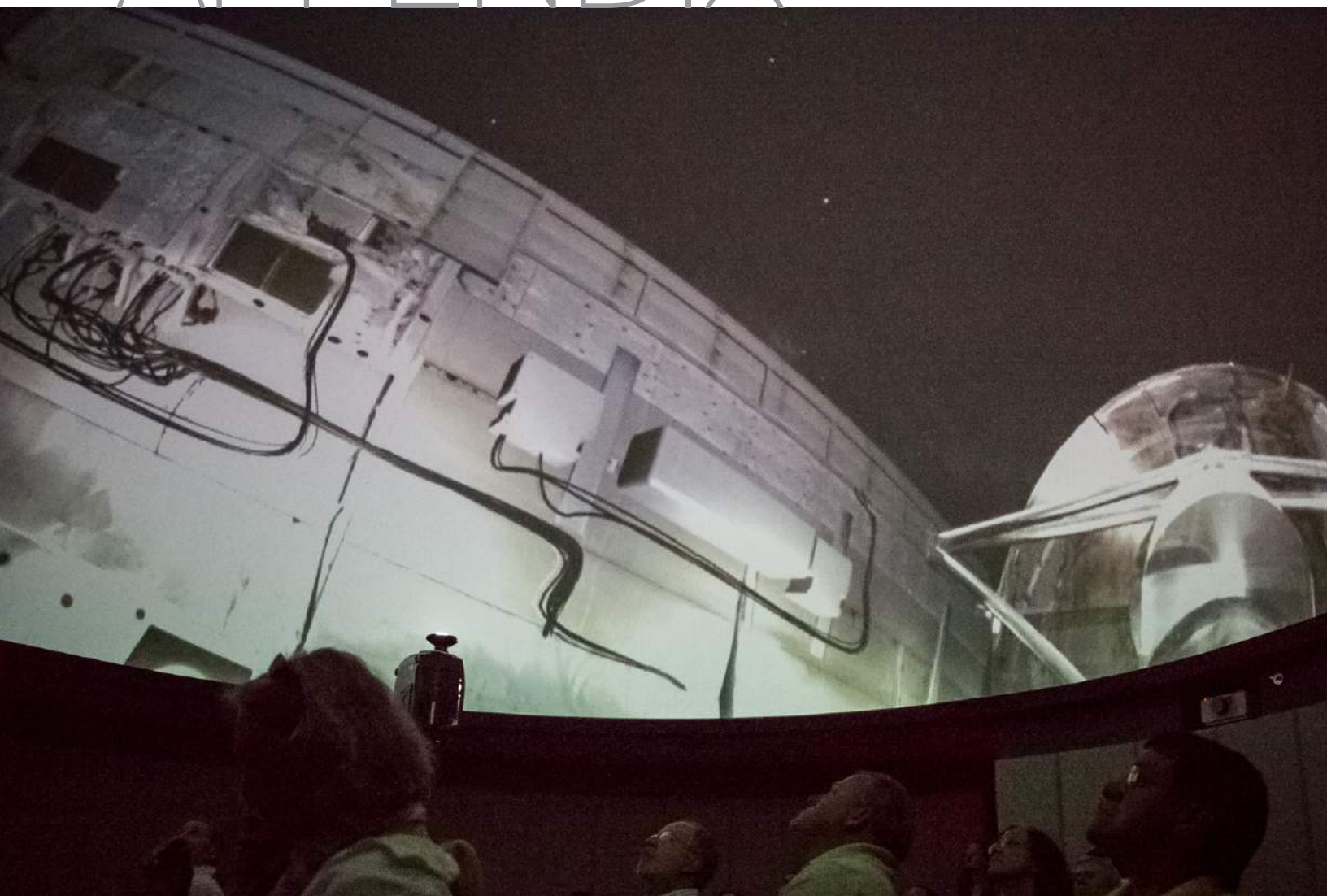
- Legend**
- Low Density Residential- 0-3 DU/A\*
  - Medium Density Residential-3-7 DU/A\*
  - Med-High Density Residential- 7-15 DU/A\*
  - High Density Residential-15+ DU/A\*
  - \*Dwellings 1 mile near Area
  - Institutional
  - Parks
  - Open Space- Active
  - Open Space- Passive
  - Mixed-Use
  - Commercial/Office
  - Industrial
  - Federal
  - ROW
  - Urban Reserve

Pajarito Ski Area





# APPENDIX



# A.1 GLOSSARY

## **Active Open Space**

Open space that may be improved and set aside, dedicated, designated, or reserved for recreational facilities such as swimming pools, play equipment for children, ball fields, court games, picnic tables, etc.

## **Affordable Housing**

In the case of dwelling units for sale, housing that is affordable means housing in which mortgage, amortization, taxes, insurance, and condominium or association fees, if any, constitute no more than 30% of such gross annual household income for a household of the size which may occupy the unit in question.

## **Clean and Lien**

When rubbish, trash, weeds, etc. must be disposed of at an approved waste collection facility from a property, all costs, fees, and penalties incurred shall be assessed as a lien against the owner of the property.

## **Complete Streets**

They are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work.

## **CLI - Cost of Living Index**

an index of the variation in prices paid by typical consumers for retail goods and other items relative to the cost of living over time or regions.

## **Density Bonuses**

A zoning tool that that permits developers to build more housing units, taller buildings, or more floor space than normally allowed, in exchange for provision of a defined public benefit, such as a specified number or percentage of affordable units included in the development.

## **DOE**

Department of Energy

## **Downtown**

In Los Alamos: as defined in the Downtown Masterplan, with minor exceptions, as shown in the overlay downtown zone.  
In White Rock: as defined, with minor exceptions, in the White Rock Masterplan as the Preferred Scenario. *See maps on page 83.*

## **Eco-tourism**

Tourism to places having unspoiled natural resources, with minimal impact on the environment being a primary concern.

## **Green Infrastructure**

Green infrastructure refers to natural vegetation, landscape design, and engineered techniques that retain, absorb, and often cleanse stormwater runoff. By including such features throughout a community, stormwater and other runoff from wet weather or spring thaws is retained, absorbed, and often naturally filtered.

## **Housing Density**

The maximum number of dwelling units permitted outright by a particular land-use classification.

## **Infill Development**

The development of vacant or partially developed parcels which are surrounded by or in close proximity to areas that are substantially or fully developed.

## **Infrastructure**

The basic facilities such as roads, schools, power plants, transmission lines, transportation, and communication systems on which the continuance and growth of a community depends.

## **Inclusionary zoning**

A development containing [at least 20%] low- and moderate-income dwelling units. This term includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the creation of new low- and moderate income dwelling units through new construction, the conversion of a nonresidential structure to a residential structure, and/or the gut rehabilitation of a vacant residential structure.

## **LAPS**

Los Alamos Public Schools

## **LANL**

Los Alamos National Laboratory

**LEDA**

Local Economic Development Assistance  
Public support of economic development to foster, promote, and enhance local economic development efforts while continuing to protect against the unauthorized use of public money and other public resources. This empowers communities to embark on economic development projects tailored to their LOCAL needs. In essence, LEDA is used to enter into a “public private partnership” for an economic benefit.

**Lift station**

Sewage lift/pump stations are used for pumping wastewater or sewage from a lower to higher elevation, particularly where the elevation of the source is not sufficient for gravity flow

**Lithic Scatters**

Lithic scatter is a surface scatter of cultural artifacts and debris that consists entirely of lithic (i.e., stone) tools and chipped stone debris.

**Makers Space**

A collaborative work space open to any age, located anywhere for making, learning, exploring and sharing that uses high tech to no tech tools.

**Metropolitan Redevelopment Area**

Is an area, district or neighborhood that has existing economic or physical conditions such as:

- Low business activity
- Vacant and underutilized buildings
- Deteriorating/unsafe buildings
- Inappropriate zoning issues
- Demographic changes
- Poor housing conditions

**The Metropolitan Redevelopment Code**

Empowers municipalities to rehabilitate and redevelop downtown areas that are deteriorated, blighted or underutilized in order to stimulate economic development and community well-being by establishing Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas (MRAs)

**Open Space**

Land and water areas retained for use as active or passive recreation areas or for resource protection in an essentially undeveloped state.

**Passive Open Space**

Open space that is essentially unimproved and set aside, dedicated, designated, or reserved for public or private use or for the use and enjoyment of owners or occupants.

**Public Private Partnership**

Is a government service or private business venture that is funded and operated through a partnership of government and one or more private sector companies.

**Remediation**

The action or measures taken, or to be taken, to lessen, clean-up, remove, or mitigate the existence of hazardous materials existing on the property to such standards, specifications, or requirements as may be established or required by federal, state, or county statute, rule, or regulation.

**Reclamation**

The attempt to make land suitable for building or farming.

**Set Back**

The minimum distance by which any building or structure must be separated from a street right-of-way or lot line.

**Step Back**

A setback of the upper floors of a building which is greater than the setback of the lower floors.

**Workforce Housing**

Homes aimed at households earning from 60% to 120% of the *area's median income* (AMI). In contrast, the term affordable housing is generally used for households whose income is less than 60% of AMI.

**Utilities Glossary****Smart Grid**

An electricity supply network that uses digital communications technology to detect and react to local changes in usage.

**PV - Photo Voltaic**

Relating to the production of electric current at the junction of two substances exposed to light.

- Short-circuit megavolt-amperes (MVA)
- Short-circuit amperes (A)
- Kilovolt (kV)
- Megawatt (MW)

## A.2 LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACS	American Communities Survey
AEC	Atomic Energy Commission
AMI	Area median income
ARC	Architectural Research Consultants, Incorporated
BIA	U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs
CDD	Community Development Department
CDP	Census designated place
CIP	Capital investment project
DOE	U.S. Department of Energy
FLUM	Future land use map
FY	Fiscal year
HUD	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
LACDC	Los Alamos Commerce & Development Corporation
LACDPU	Los Alamos County Department of Public
LANL	Los Alamos National Laboratory
LANS	Los Alamos National Security, LLC
LEDA	Local Economic Development Act
MRA	Metropolitan redevelopment area
NCRTD	North Central Rural Transit District
NMDOT	State of New Mexico Department of Transportation
NMGC	New Mexico Gas Company
NMSA	New Mexico Statutes Annotated
NPS	National Park Service
P&Z	Planning and Zoning
PD	Planned development
UNM	University of New Mexico
USFS	U.S. Forest Service

## A.3 STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP GOALS



### Los Alamos County Strategic Leadership Plan 2016 Update

What will the Los Alamos community look like in 20 years? Will our unique combination of science and setting continue? Will we have preserved our small town atmosphere and natural surroundings? Will there be plenty of affordable neighborhoods and an excellent educational system?

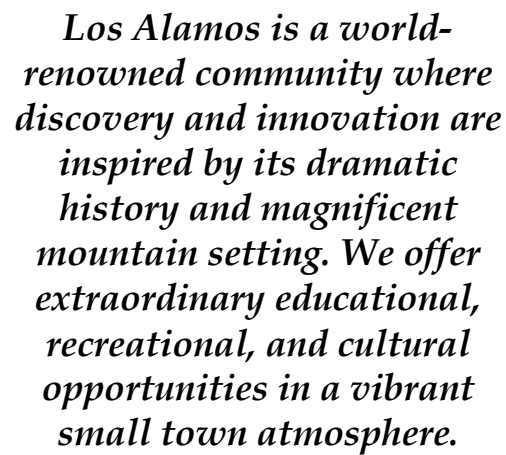
In order to accomplish these priorities and more, Los Alamos will need a strong leadership vision that serves as a basis for policy formulation and goal-setting. A flexible road-map is required, which will provide direction not only to the County enterprise but the community as well. The strategic focus areas or issues that will shape the County's future must be addressed with dynamic leadership commitment.

For these reasons the Los Alamos County Council developed a 20-year Strategic Leadership Plan to help guide the community into the future. The Plan includes a shared vision for what the community can become. In support of the vision, strategic focus areas were identified along with actionable goals to help measure success.

The Los Alamos community has volunteered countless hours of service to assisting the Council with its visioning and goal setting. The Strategic Leadership Plan incorporates the past work of community volunteers where at all possible. The plan builds upon the foundational work developed by the Los Alamos community and adopted by the County Council.

*A Vision for the future...*

## Imagine Los Alamos County in 20 years...



*Los Alamos is a world-renowned community where discovery and innovation are inspired by its dramatic history and magnificent mountain setting. We offer extraordinary educational, recreational, and cultural opportunities in a vibrant small town atmosphere.*

## Strategic Focus Areas

### Economic Vitality

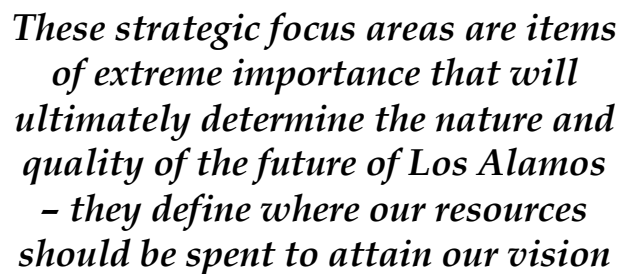
- Economic Vitality
- Financial sustainability

### Quality of Life

- Education
- Quality cultural and recreational amenities
- Environmental stewardship
- Mobility
- Housing

### Quality Governance

- Operational excellence
- Communication
- Intergovernmental Relations



*These strategic focus areas are items of extreme importance that will ultimately determine the nature and quality of the future of Los Alamos - they define where our resources should be spent to attain our vision*

## How do we get there from here?

In the next five years the County will address these twenty-six major goals (focus areas with corresponding goals):

### Economic Vitality

#### Priority Area - Economic Vitality

- Maximize our opportunity with respect to the development of the Manhattan Project National Historical Park.

#### Economic Vitality

- Promote a strong and diverse economic base by encouraging new business growth.
- Collaborate with Los Alamos National Laboratory as the area's #1 employer.
- Market and brand Los Alamos as a scenic destination featuring recreation, science and history.
- Maximize the utilization of County-owned land.

#### Financial Sustainability

- Encourage the retention of existing businesses and assist in their opportunities for growth.
- Support spinoff business opportunities from LANL.
- Significantly improve the quantity and quality of retail business.
- Attract new tourism related business.
- Revitalize and eliminate blight in the downtown areas of Los Alamos and White Rock.

## Quality of Life

### Priority Areas – Housing

- Promote the maintenance and enhancement of housing stock quality while utilizing available infill opportunities as appropriate.

### Education

- Support Los Alamos Public Schools’ goal of ranking among the top public schools in the nation.
- Partner with Los Alamos Public Schools and support, as appropriate, the delivery of their educational services to community standards.
- Support the development of quality career and life-long educational institutions.

### Quality Cultural and Recreational Amenities

- Implement a comprehensive range of recreational and cultural amenities that enhance the Los Alamos community.

### Environmental Stewardship

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

### Mobility

- Maintain and improve transportation and mobility.

### Housing

- Promote the creation of a variety of housing options for all segments of the Los Alamos community.
- Support development of affordable workforce housing.

## Quality Governance

### Priority Areas - Operational Excellence and Communication

- Simplify permit requirements and improve the overall process.
- Establish and implement a mechanism for effective Utility policy setting and review.

#### Operational Excellence

- Maintain quality essential services and supporting infrastructure.
- Invest in staff development to create a high performing organization.
- Manage commercial growth well following an updated, concise, and consistent comprehensive plan.

#### Communication

- Improve transparency in policy setting and implementation.
- Create a communication process that provides measureable improvement in citizen trust in government.

#### Intergovernmental Relations

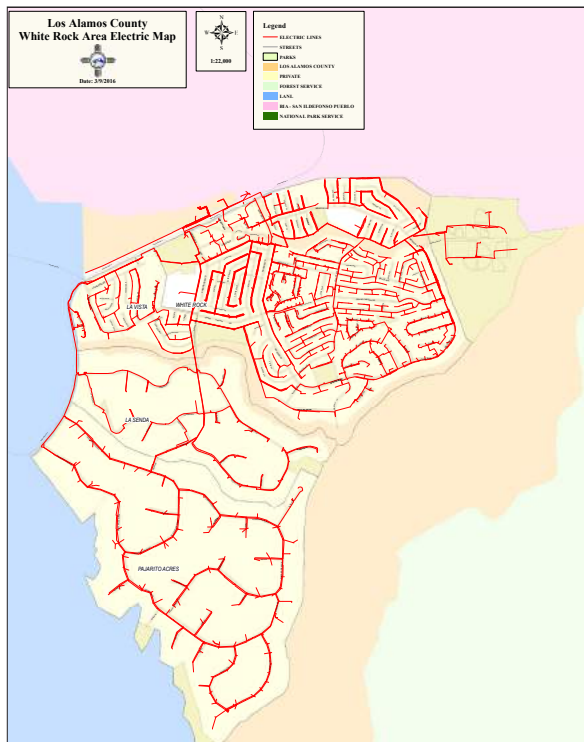
- Strengthen coordination and cooperation between County government, LANL, and regional and national partners.
- Actively pursue land transfer opportunities.

Goal statements reflect leadership priorities and direction that will define the basis for policy formulation and revenue and resource generation and allocation.

# A.4 COUNTY UTILITY MAPS



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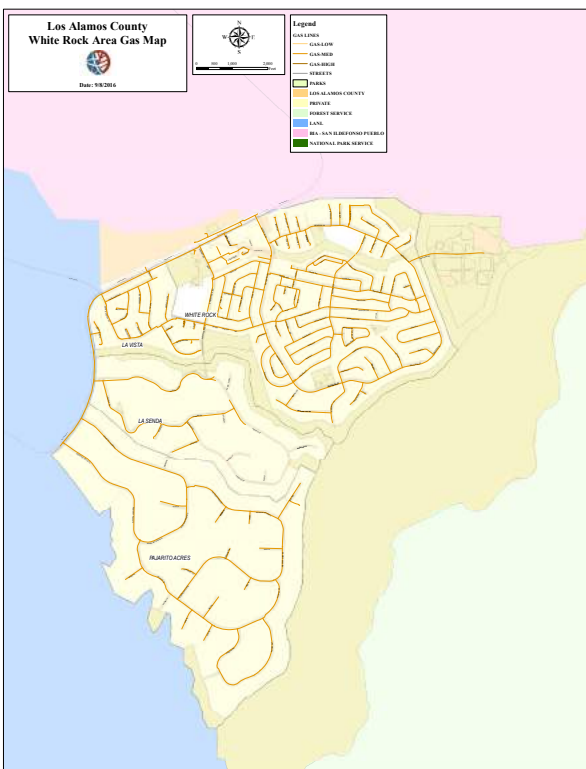


*Electric Lines in Los Alamos Townsite*

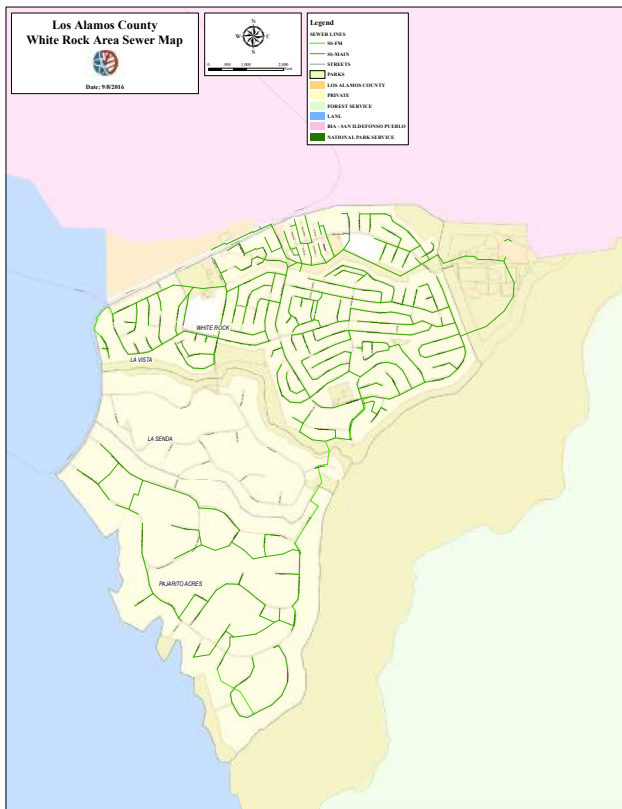
*Electric Lines in White Rock*



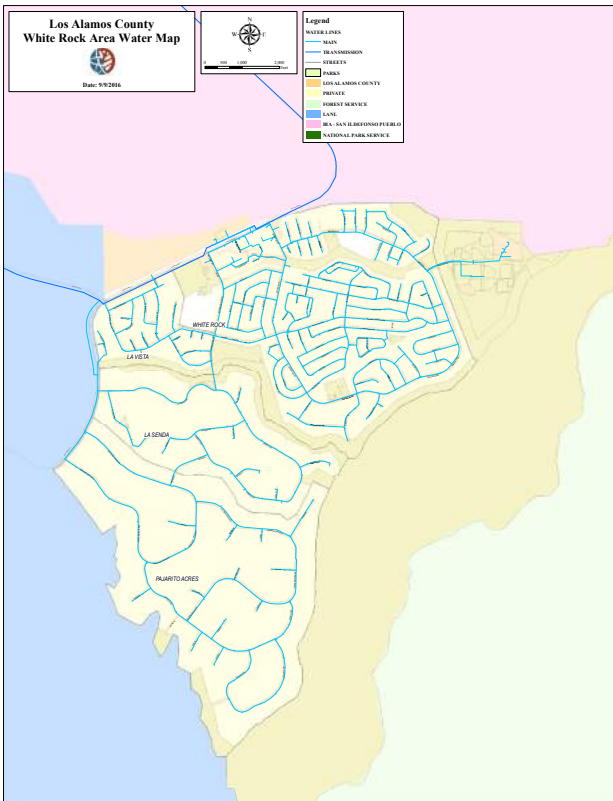
*Natural Gas Lines in Los Alamos Townsite*



*Natural Gas Lines in White Rock*

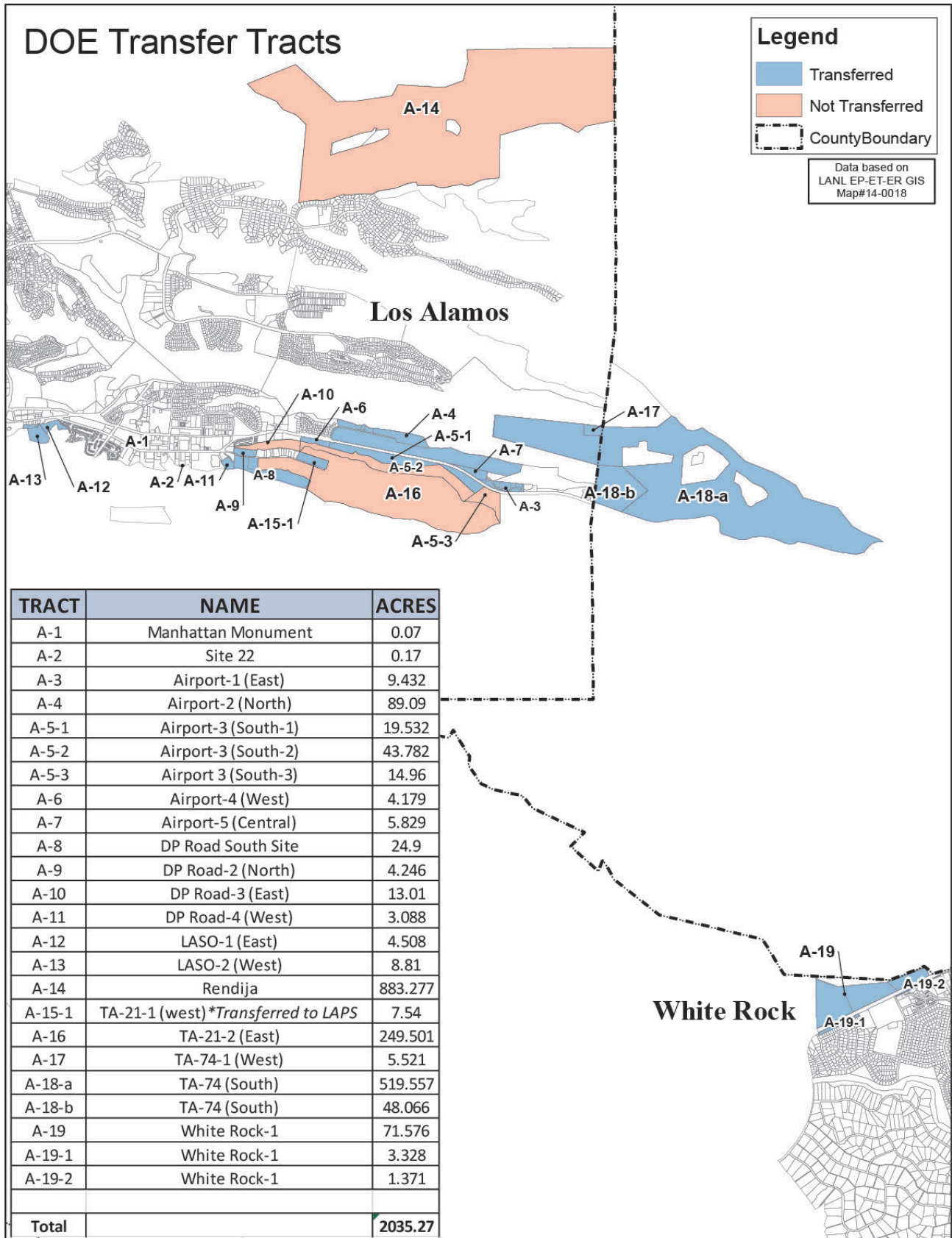


Wastewater Lines in Los Alamos Townsite (top) and White Rock (left)



Potable Water Lines in Los Alamos Townsite (top) and White Rock (left)

The following map shows tracts of land that the U.S. Department of Energy has transferred to the County (blue), removing the land from federal land status. Additional tracts (tan) have been slated for transfer, but have not yet been transferred.



# A.5 OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



## OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



**Architectural Research Consultants Incorporated**  
Albuquerque, New Mexico • 505-842-1254 • Fax 505-766-9269 • Internet: [www.ARCplanning.com](http://www.ARCplanning.com)

**Karpoff and Associates**  
Albuquerque, New Mexico • (505) 877-6041

## PUBLIC MEETINGS

- Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z) (4 in December-June)
- Project Kick-off (Dec.), Progress Report (Feb.) Round 1 Results (April), Random Sample Survey Results (June)
- Interviews (10 in January)
- Round 1 Visioning (White Rock Fire Station on 3-14, UNM- L.A. on 3-16 and Los Alamos Golf Course on 3-19)
- Round 2 Topics (UNM-L.A. on 6-15, Fuller Lodge on 6-22, 6-29 and White Rock Fire Station on 6-29)
- P&Z Workshops (7-20, 8-10 & 8-17 )
- P&Z Review of Draft Plan (9-14 and 9-28)



- Staff and P&Z Chair presentations to other committees and boards

## OPINION SURVEYS

- On-line (Jan.-Feb.)
- Random Sample Survey #1 (June)
- Chamberfest Informal (June)
- Random Sample Survey #2 (September)

## MATERIALS - 2016 PLAN

- **White papers:** compiled by Los Alamos County staff & Consultant team
  - Topics covered: demographics, LANL demographics, land use, open space, housing, economic development, transportation and utilities
- **Framing papers:** compiled by Los Alamos County staff & Consultant team
  - "Neighborhoods, Density and Growth"
  - "Downtown, Redevelopment and Economic Vitality"
  - "Open Space, Trails and Circulation"
- **Survey results** were compiled and results were made available for review
  - Random Sample Survey summary and full report posted on plan website and presented to P&Z
- **Public meetings results** that the planning team analyzed, compiled, presented and made available on the plan website
  - Round 1 major points, written comments, and community mapping
  - Round 2 policy discussion highlights and summarized written comments

## PUBLIC INFORMATION

- Web site launched in January and regularly updated
- Postcards mailed in January to all addresses
- Newspaper display ads posted
- Press releases
- Op Eds
- Newspaper articles
- Radio announcements and interviews



## 10 KEY RESULTS FROM RANDOM SAMPLE SURVEY #1

- 59% will retire here. In addition, LANL announced new and replacement jobs. Consequently Los Alamos should plan for modest growth meeting needs of retirees and workforce
- New housing should be located in downtown, through developing vacant land, and on DP Road (following ranking of responses). Strong preference for redevelopment and re-occupying houses over expanding the urban footprint
- 71% of respondents agree that the County should require buffer and transitional areas between single-family housing and more intense development
- Need for economic diversification includes science & technology (93%) and tourism (85% of respondents)
- Increased tourism, expanded LANL mission and Manhattan Project Historic National Park will be positive drivers of change in Los Alamos in the future (in order of responses)



## 10 KEY RESULTS FROM RANDOM SAMPLE SURVEY #1 (CONTINUED)

- 75% of respondents believe parking downtown is sufficient; 77% do not believe Los Alamos needs a municipal parking structure and 64% do to support downtown infill that would require taking away parking. Yet, respondents anticipate Manhattan Project National Historic Park will result in more tourist-oriented businesses and improved economy (highest rankings). Plus, Round 2 participants strongly supported more retail and mixed use downtown - likely reducing available surface parking
- 86% of respondents cite municipal buildings and architecture have improved Los Alamos
- 79% of respondents support keeping all or most of currently undeveloped public land as open space
- 76% of respondents support extension of paved Rim Trail to commercial core, 73% support County focus on bike lanes and trails, while 54% do to support narrowing vehicle lanes on Trinity Drive to add bicycle lanes
- 95% of respondents cite more access to trails, open space and recreation have improved Los Alamos



# ROUND ONE MEETINGS

COMMUNITY MAPPING

kick off meetings

Los Alamos County is updating the Comprehensive Plan & your county plan needs you! With your lead we will work together to build a user-friendly plan that describes the vision and goals of Los Alamos County residents, honors and incorporates relevant past planning work, and provides meaningful tools to guide future development.

visit the plan website for details, history, and a survey and like us on facebook: Los Alamos County Plan 2016  
[www.losalamoscountycomplan2016.com](http://www.losalamoscountycomplan2016.com)

KICK OFF SCHEDULE

**round 1:** open house, visioning & community mapping

please come to any community visioning meeting!

**Monday March 14**  
White Rock Fire Station  
6:30 PM

**Wednesday March 16**  
UNM-LA 6 PM

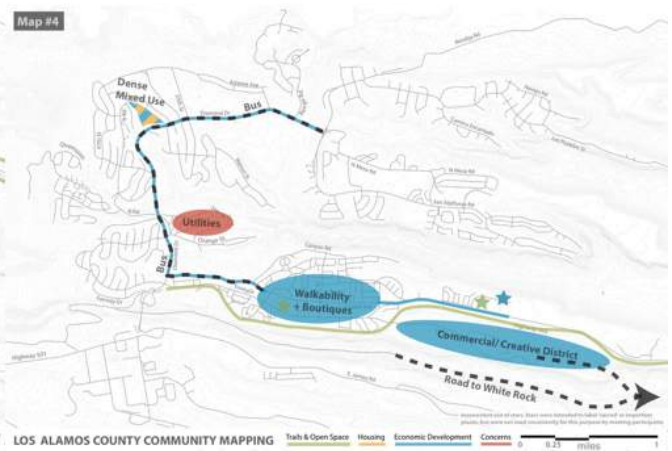
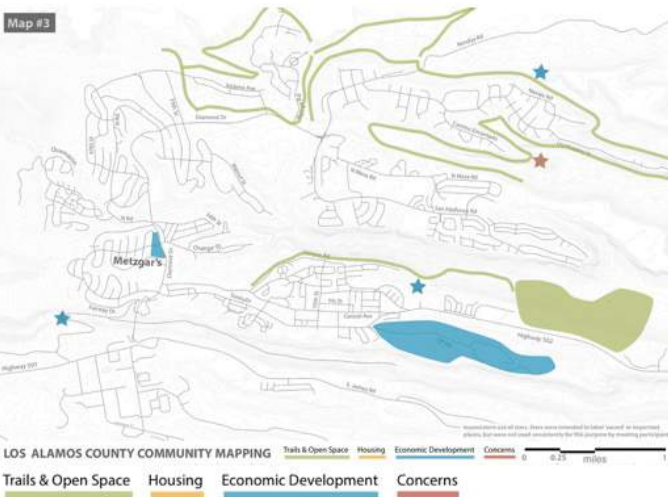
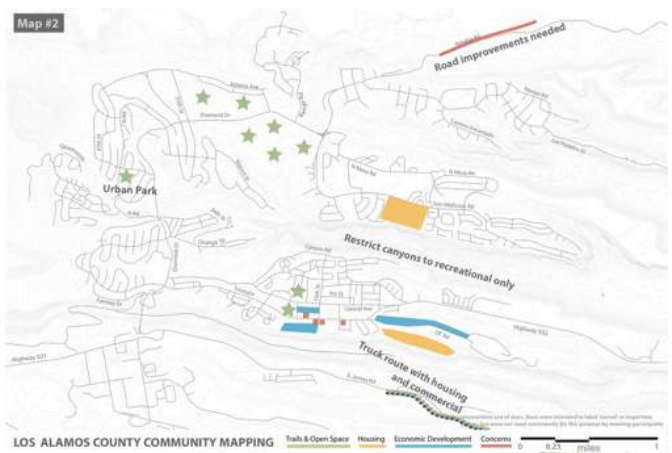
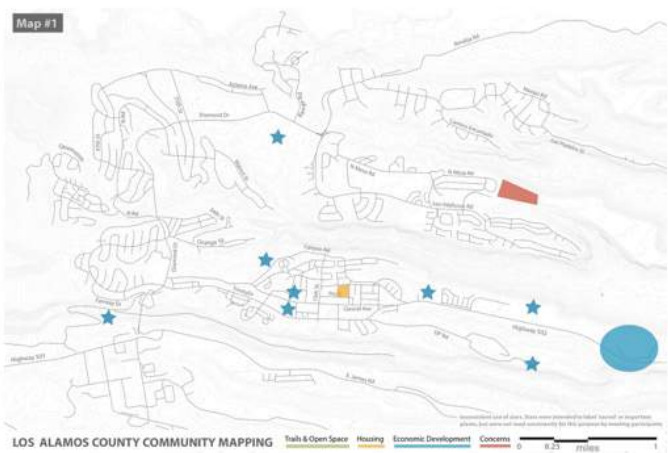
**Saturday March 19**  
Los Alamos Golf Course  
Community Building 9 AM

## COMMUNITY MAPPING: CENTRAL THEMES

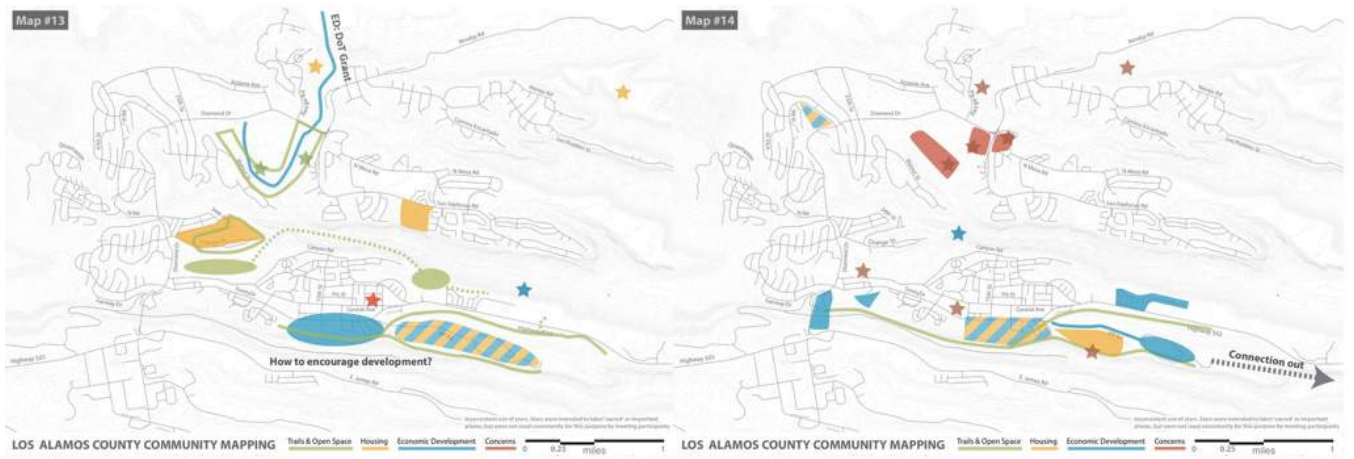
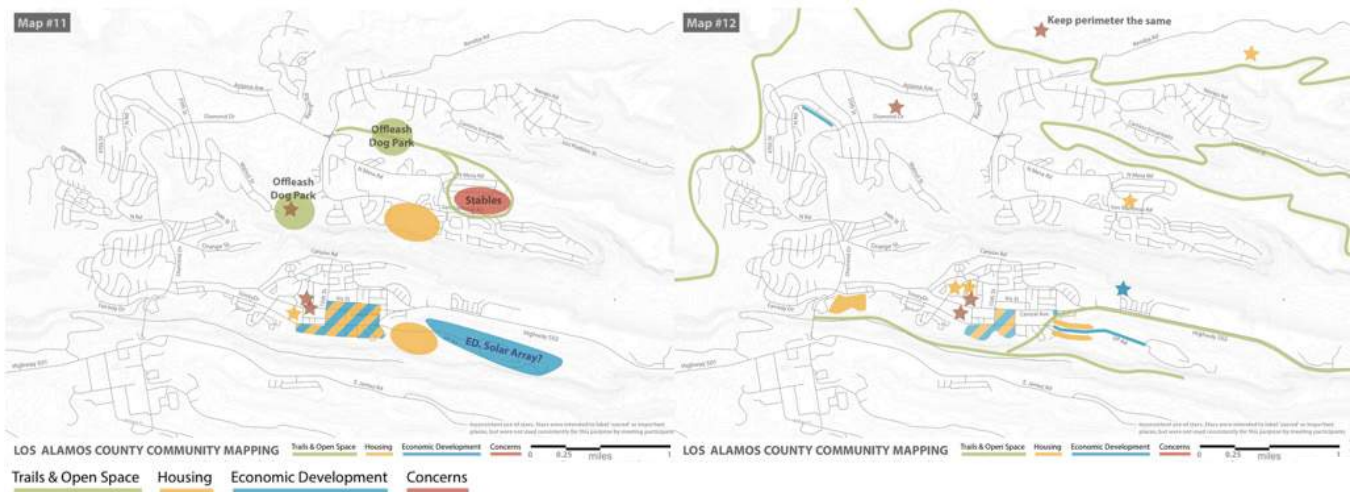
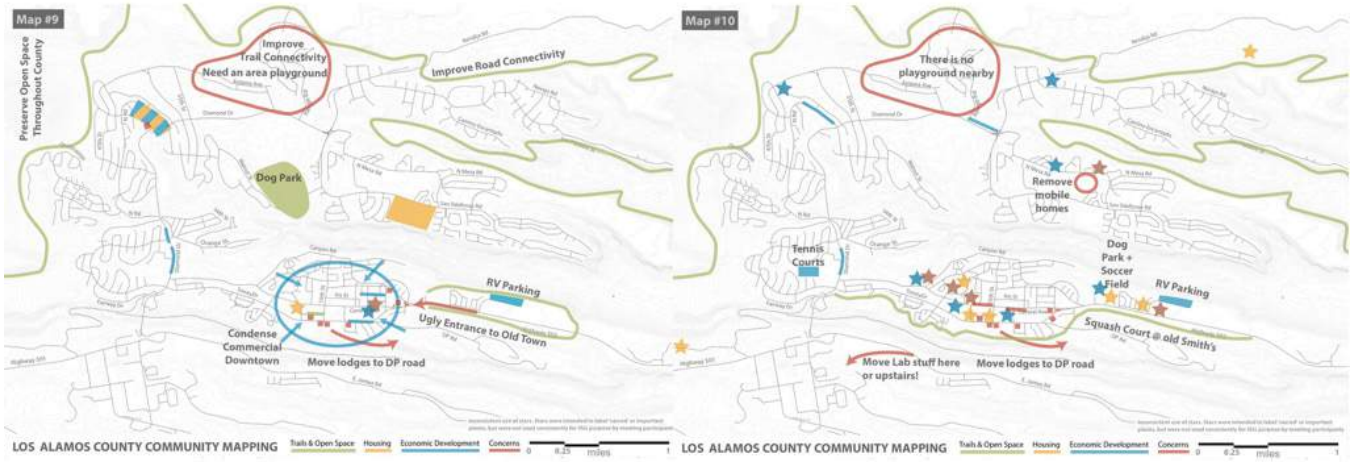
- During our community mapping exercises community members created maps highlighting issues and opportunities in Los Alamos Townsite and White Rock
- ARC took each map created by the community and digitized it
- We could then layer the maps to illustrate the central themes mapped by the community



# COMMUNITY MAPS OF LOS ALAMOS TOWNSITE

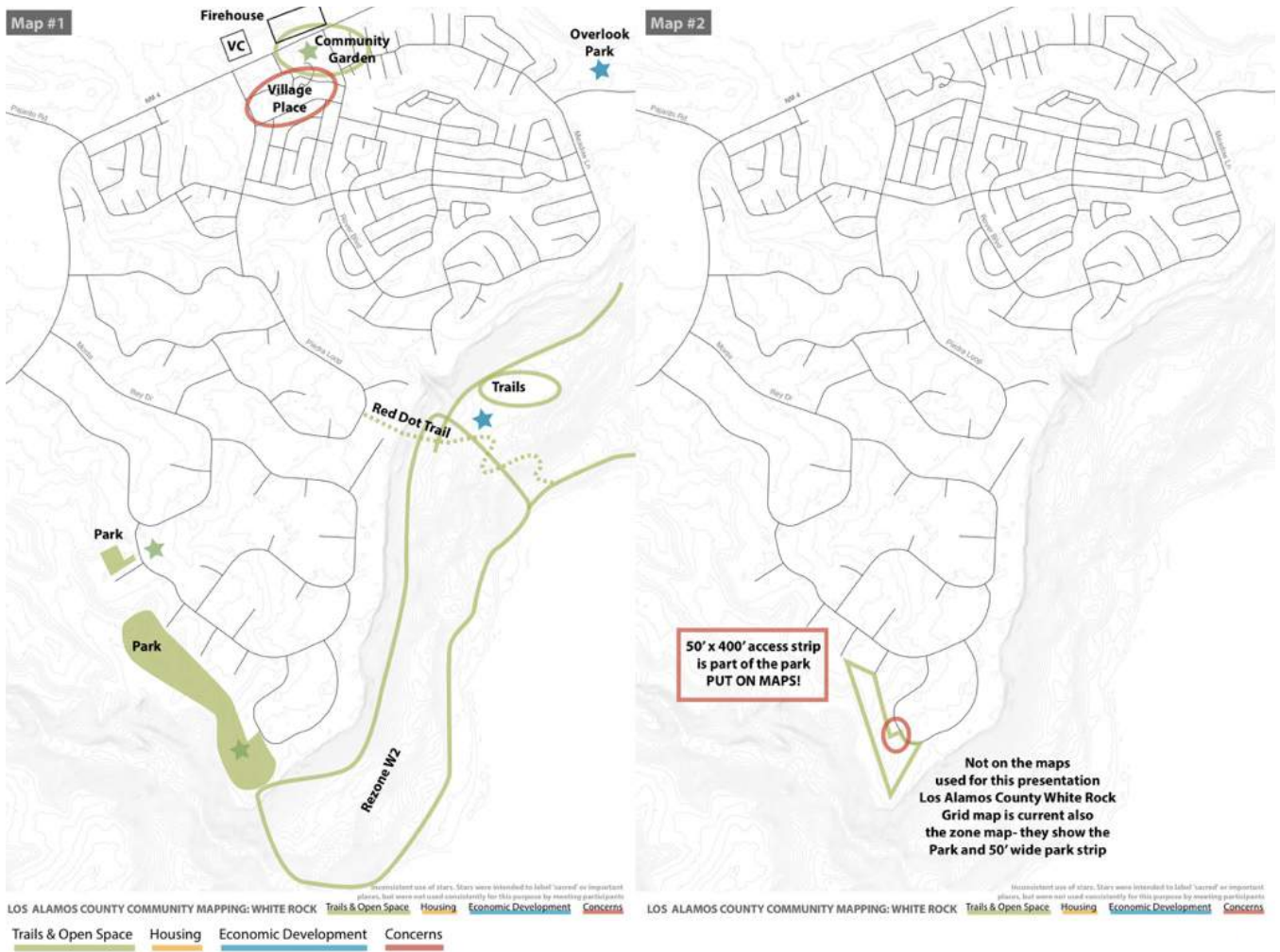








# COMMUNITY MAPS OF WHITE ROCK



Map #3

A-19 is sprawl  
all residential should be  
on same side of NM4



Map #4



Map #5



Map #6



Inconsistent use of stars. Stars were intended to label 'secret' or important places, but were not used consistently for this purpose by meeting participants.

Inconsistent use of stars. Stars were intended to label 'secret' or important places, but were not used consistently for this purpose by meeting participants.

LOS ALAMOS COUNTY COMMUNITY MAPPING: WHITE ROCK Trails & Open Space Housing Economic Development Concerns

LOS ALAMOS COUNTY COMMUNITY MAPPING: WHITE ROCK Trails & Open Space Housing Economic Development Concerns

Trails & Open Space Housing Economic Development Concerns

APPENDIX

Map #7



Map #8



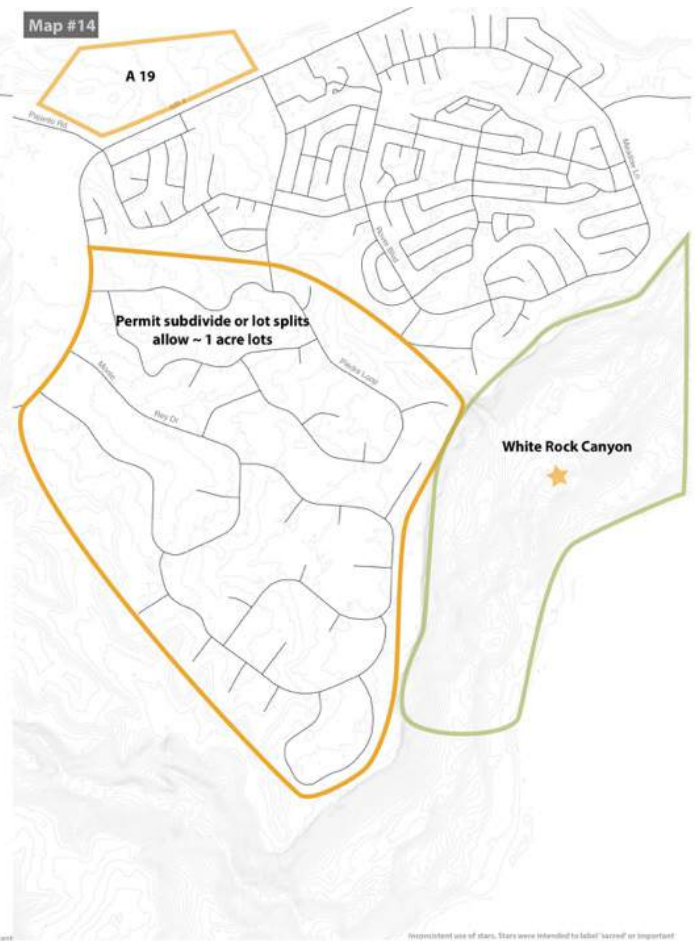
Map #11



Map #12



Inconsistent use of stars. Stars were intended to label 'hazard' or important places, but were not used consistently for this purpose by meeting participants.



LOS ALAMOS COUNTY COMMUNITY MAPPING: WHITE ROCK [Trails & Open Space](#) [Housing](#) [Economic Development](#) [Concerns](#)

LOS ALAMOS COUNTY COMMUNITY MAPPING: WHITE ROCK [Trails & Open Space](#) [Housing](#) [Economic Development](#) [Concerns](#)

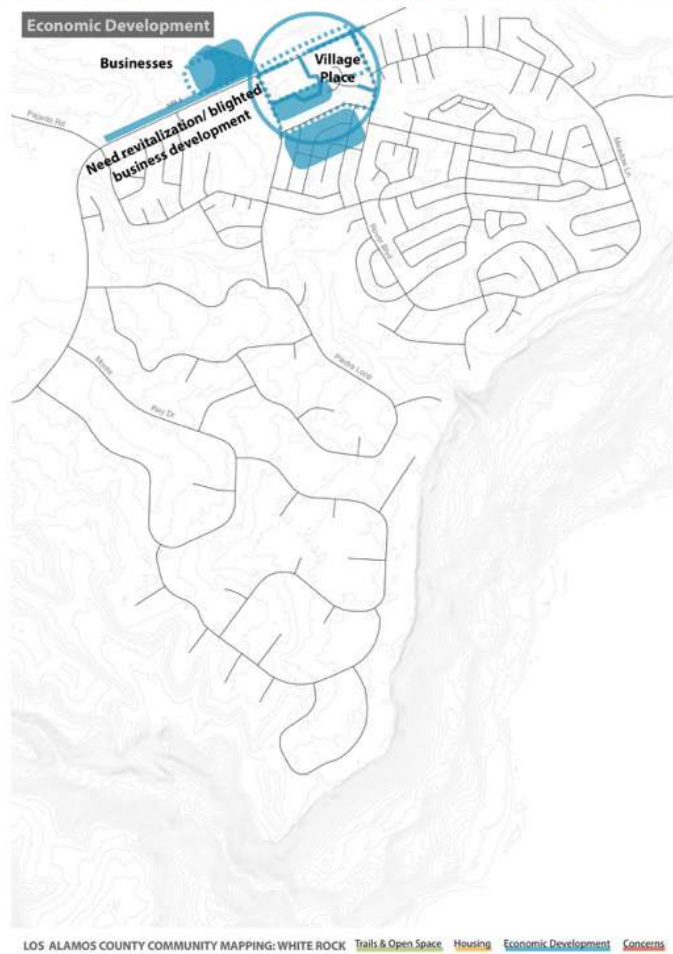
[Trails & Open Space](#) [Housing](#) [Economic Development](#) [Concerns](#)



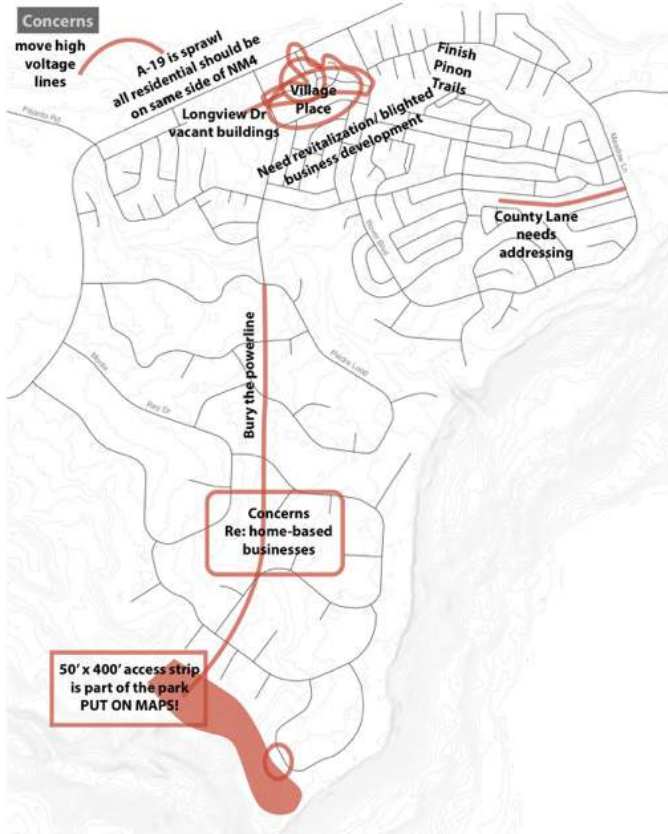
# COMMUNITY MAPS OF LOS ALAMOS TOWNSITE

Based directly on the maps created by the community, these maps consolidate community mapping by theme.

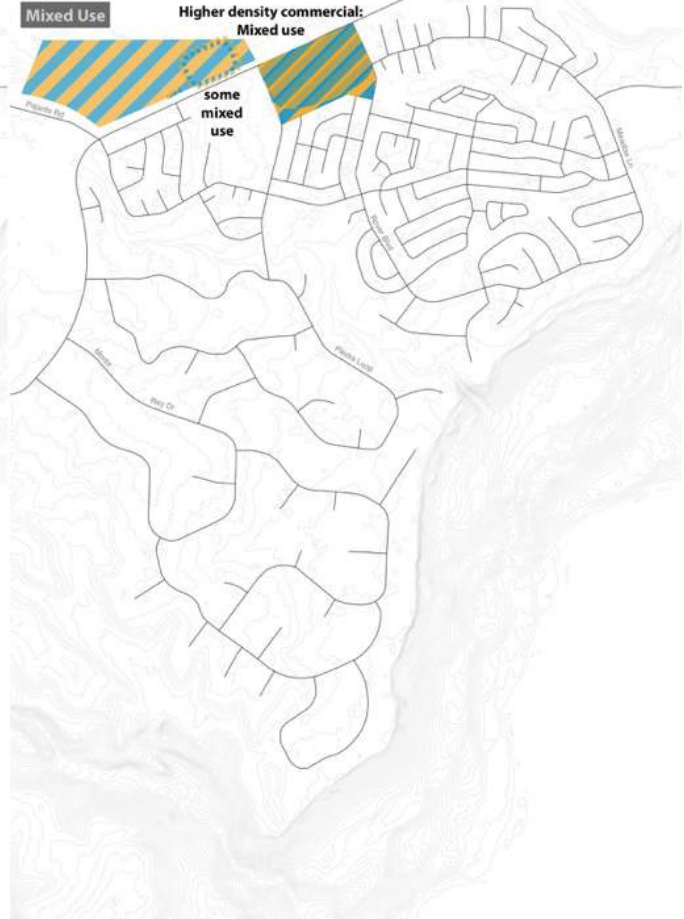
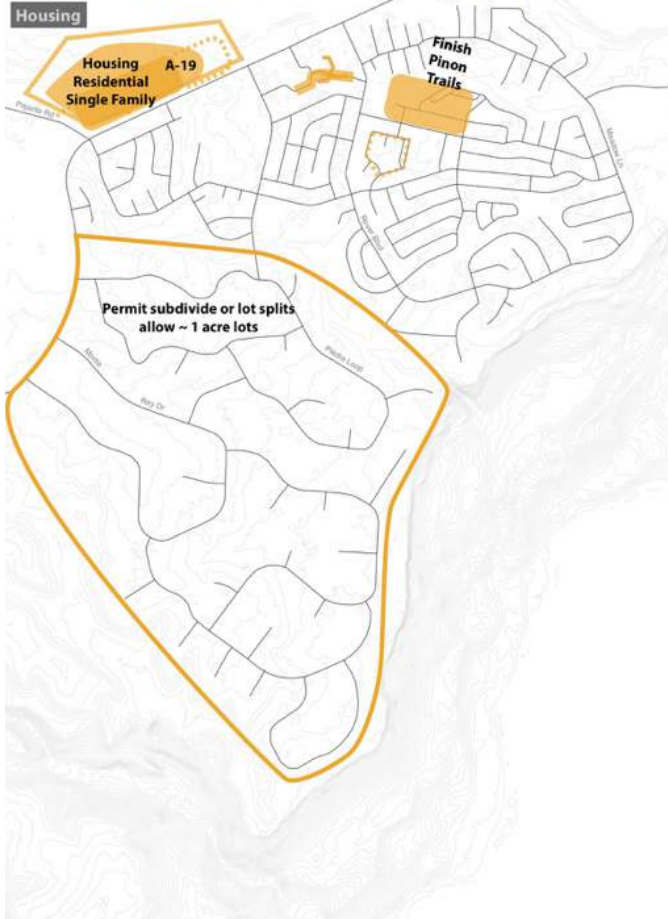
## WHITE ROCK: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



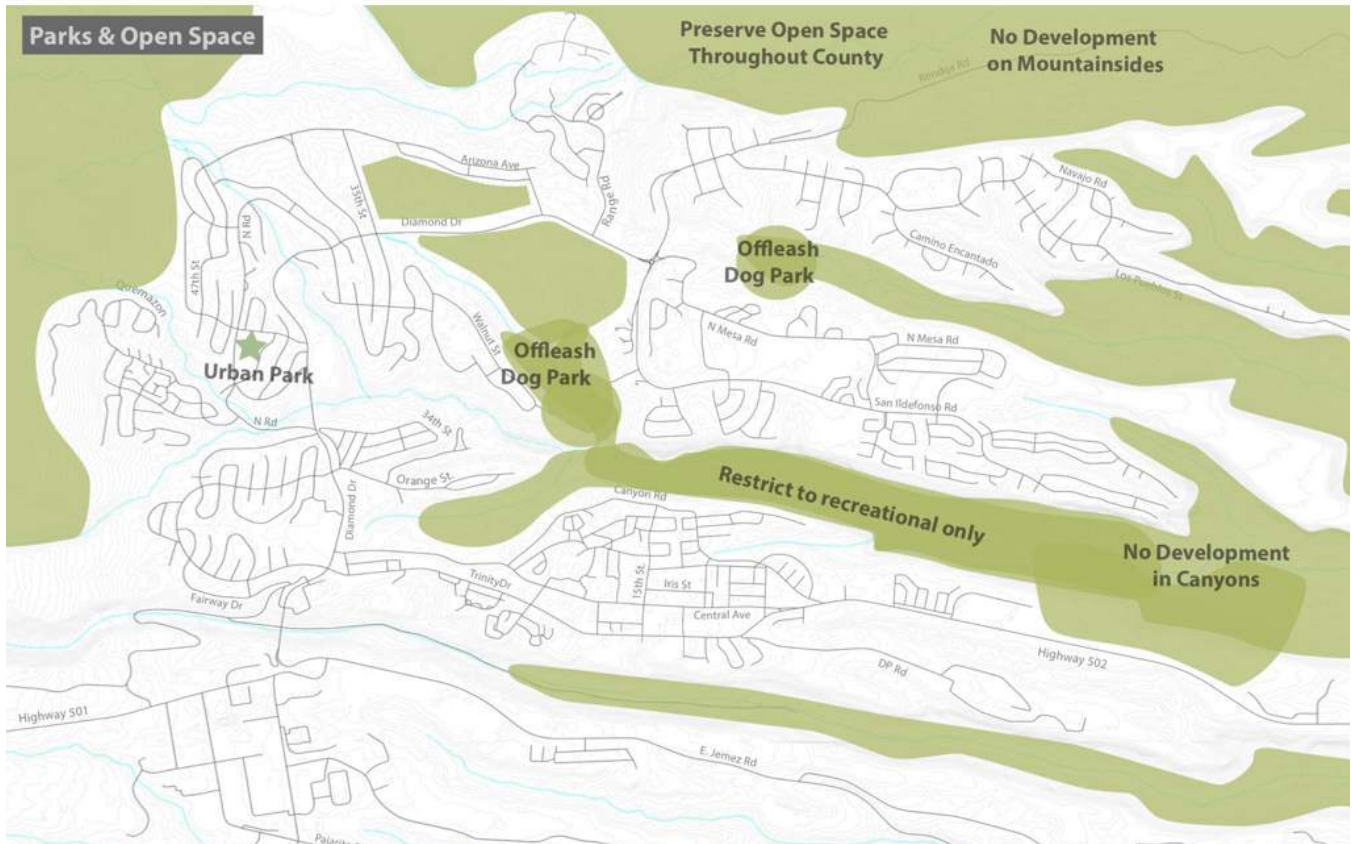
# WHITE ROCK: CONCERNS AND TRAILS + OS



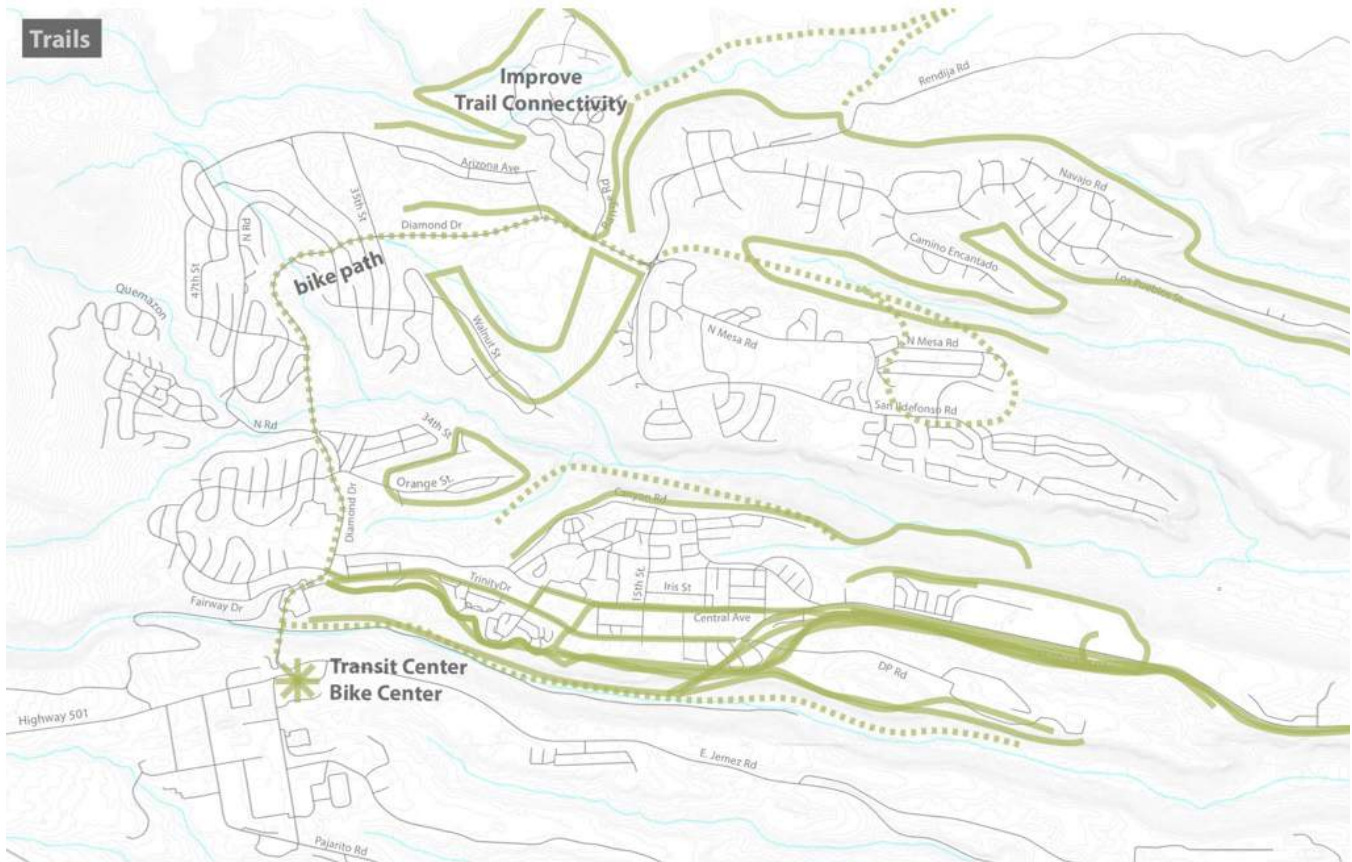
# WHITE ROCK: HOUSING AND MIXED USE



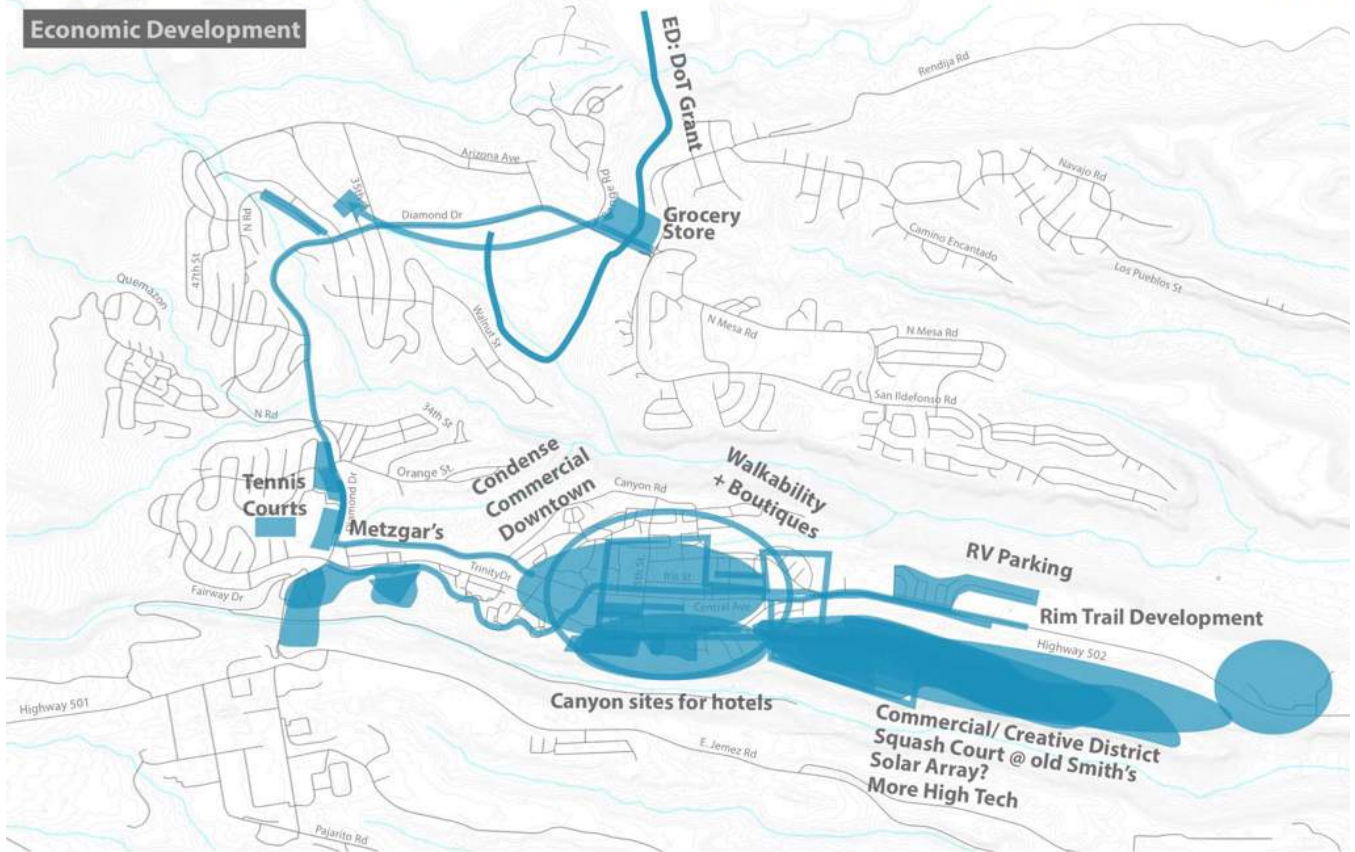
# LOS ALAMOS TOWNSITE: PARKS + OPEN SPACE



# LOS ALAMOS TOWNSITE: TRAILS



# LOS ALAMOS TOWNSITE: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



# LOS ALAMOS TOWNSITE: HOUSING

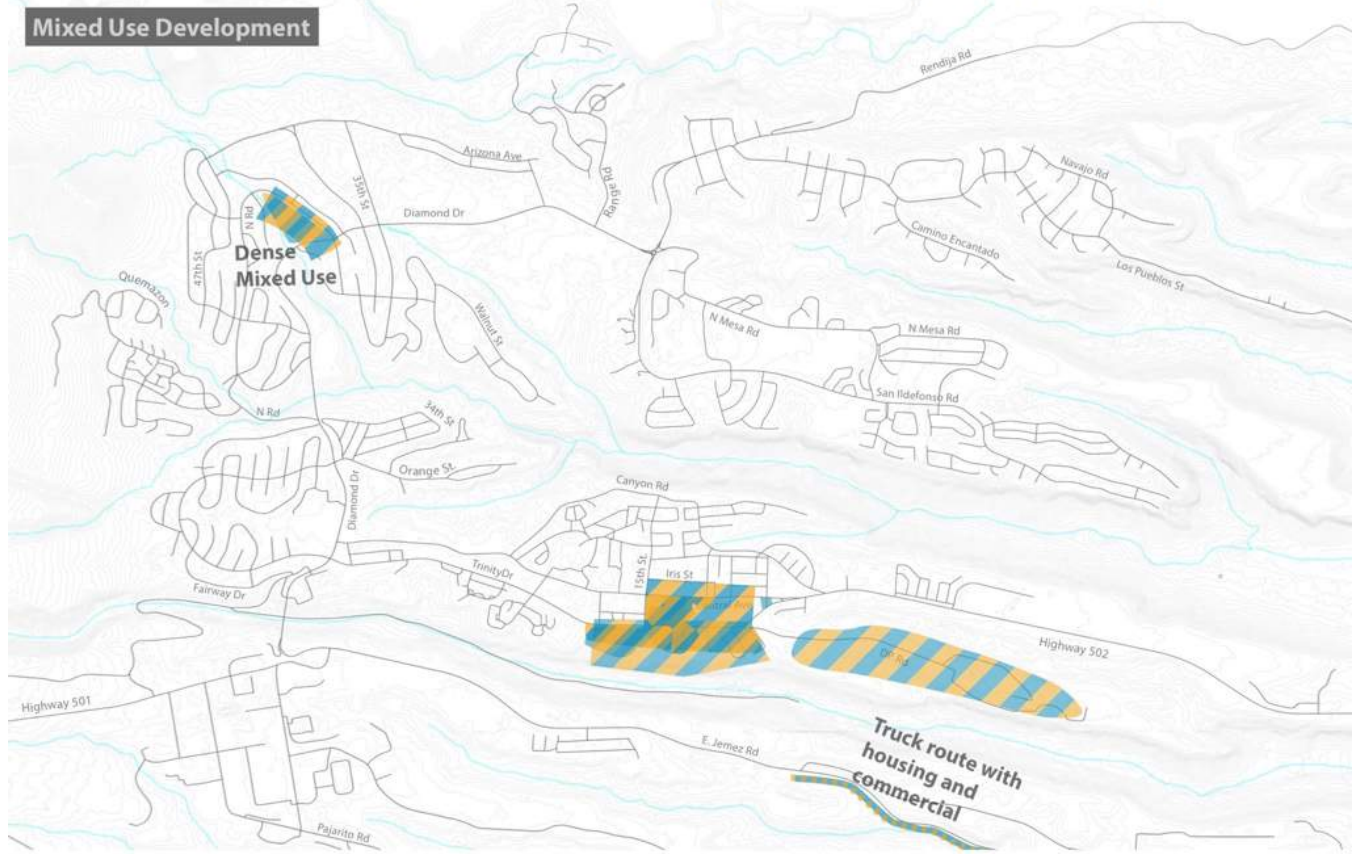


LOS ALAMOS COUNTY COMMUNITY MAPPING

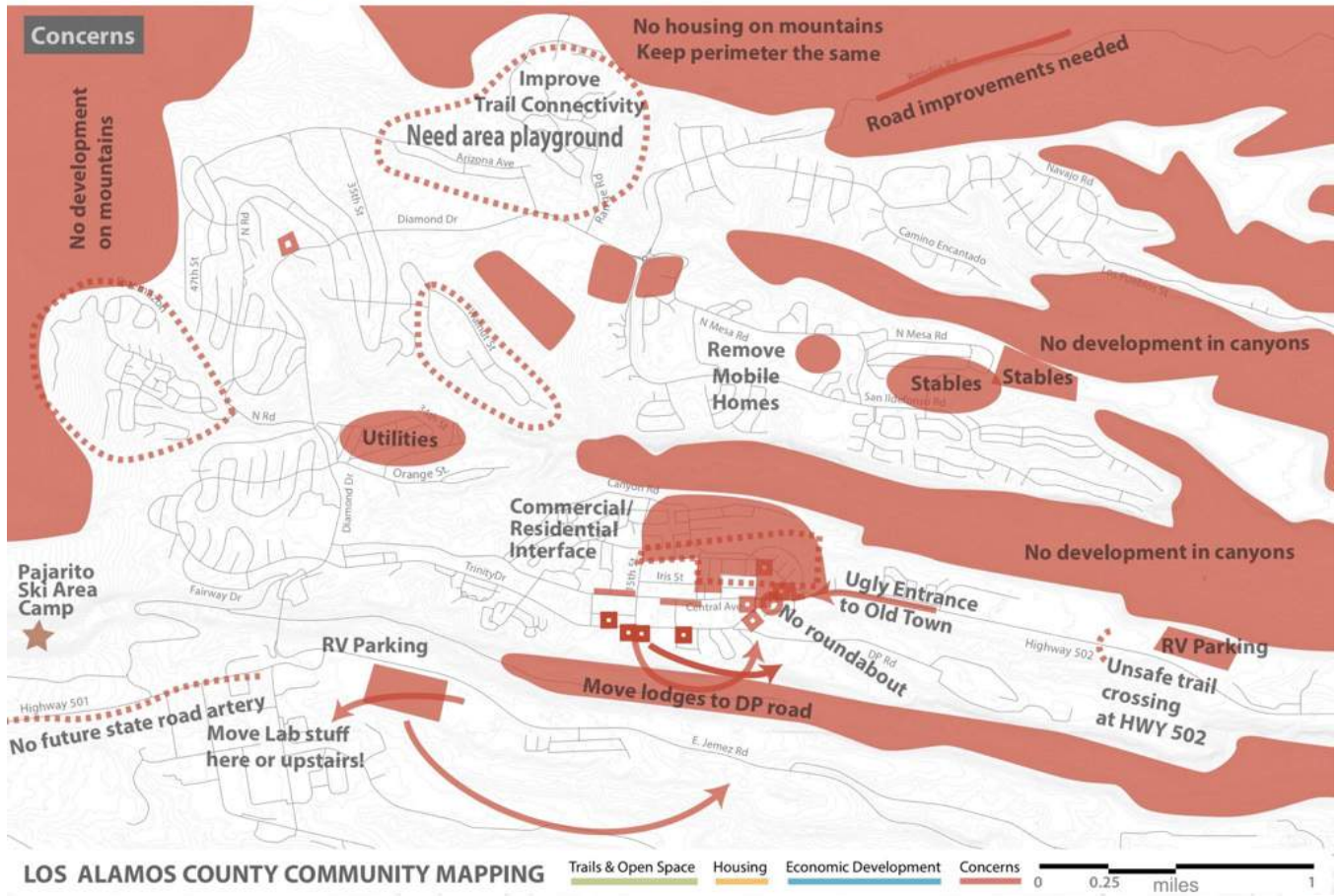
Trails & Open Space	Housing	Economic Development	Concerns
---------------------	---------	----------------------	----------

0 0.25 miles 1

# LOS ALAMOS TOWNSITE: MIXED USE

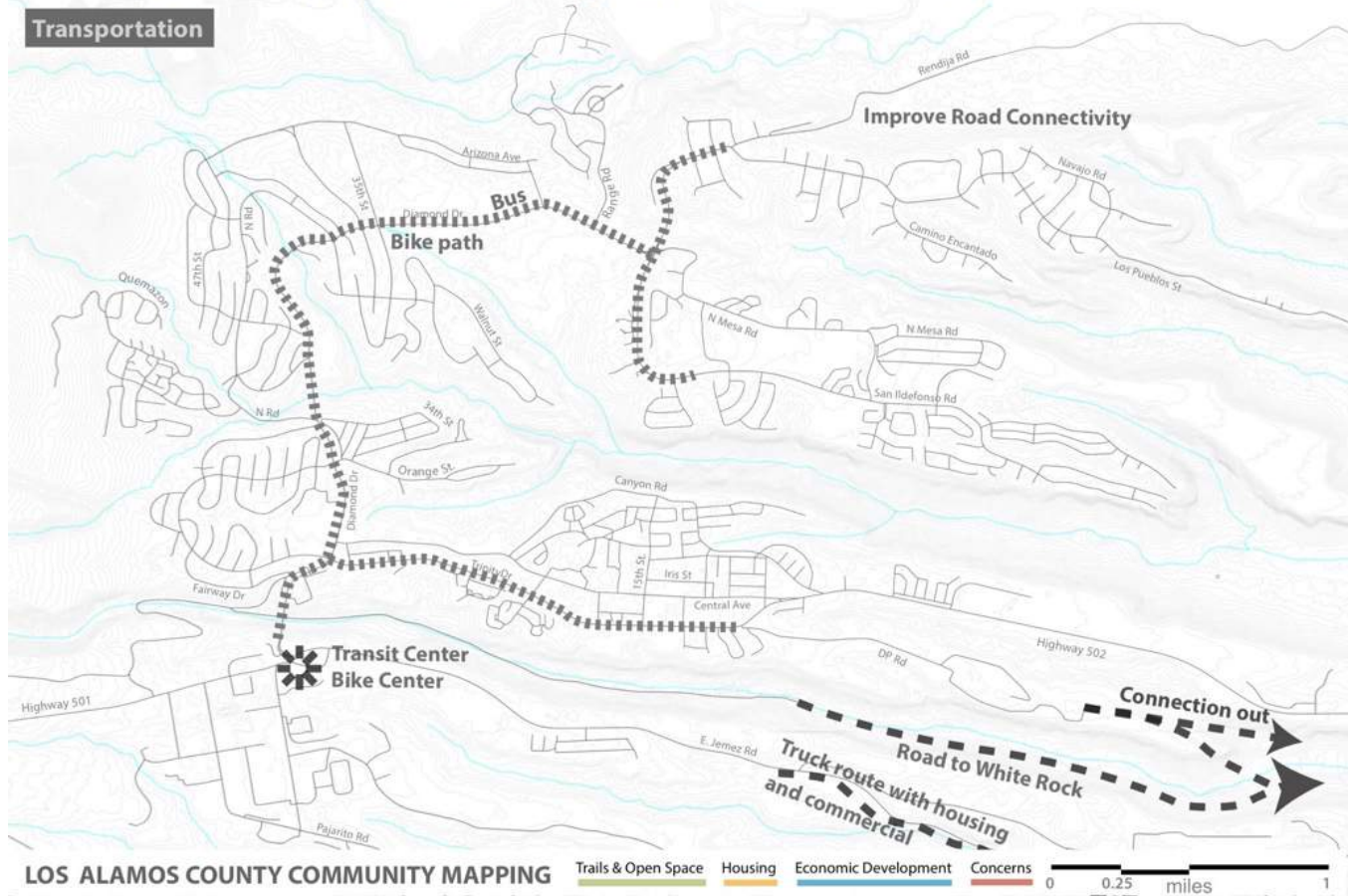


# LOS ALAMOS TOWNSITE: CONCERNS



# LOS ALAMOS TOWNSITE: CONNECTIVITY

## Transportation

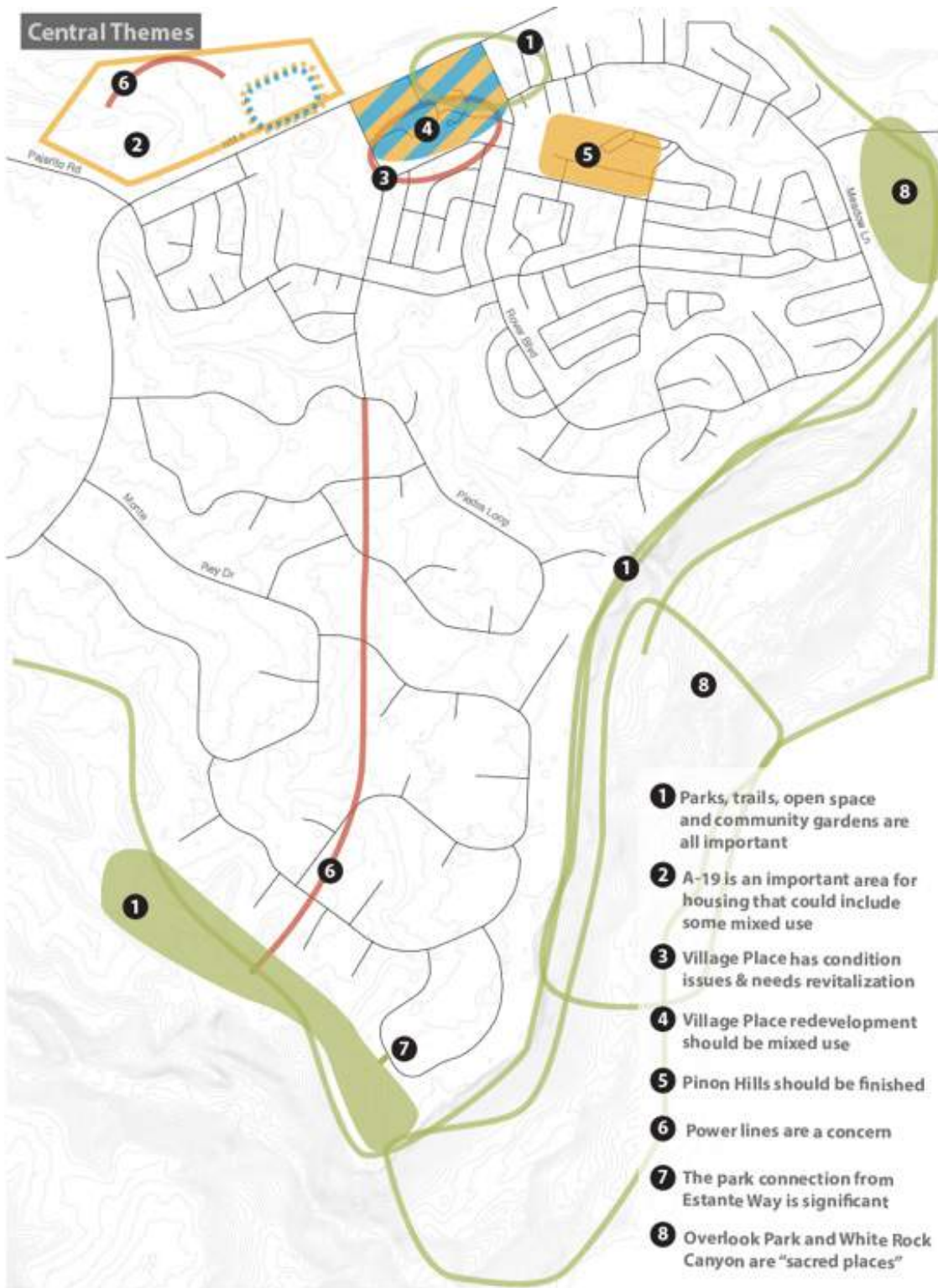




# CENTRAL THEMES

## LOS ALAMOS TOWNSITE: CENTRAL THEMES





LOS ALAMOS COUNTY COMMUNITY MAPPING: WHITE ROCK Trails & Open Space Housing Economic Development Concerns



# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

LOS ALAMOS COUNTY 2016

## SUMMARY OF RANDOM SAMPLE #1 SURVEY RESULTS



## SURVEY RESPONSE OVERVIEW

- Staff and ARC team designed the first random sample survey to elicit further information on key questions identified in Round 1 meetings so as to inform Round 2 discussions
- 3,000 surveys were mailed out to randomly selected addresses of the 9,711 delivery addresses in Los Alamos County
- 599 surveys were returned as of June 14 and tabulated for this meeting (417 paper mailed back and 182 filled out on-line)
- A sample size of 599 at a 95% confidence level provides a maximum margin of error of approximately 4.1% in either direction
  - In theory, in 95 out of 100 cases, the results will differ by no more than 4.1% from what would have been obtained by interviewing all County households

# ACTUAL SURVEY



NO POSTAGE  
NECESSARY  
IF MAILED  
IN THE  
UNITED STATES



## Los Alamos County Comprehensive Plan Update Public Opinion Survey — May 2016

Survey Code #

Please read the cover letter for instructions.  
Survey also available online at <http://lacounty.com>

**BUSINESS REPLY MAIL**  
FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 5558-000 ALBUQUERQUE, NM  
POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

**LOS ALAMOS COUNTY COMP PLAN UPDATE**  
PO BOX 1158  
ALBUQUERQUE NM 87103-9905

35. What do you anticipate will be the potential future impacts of the Manhattan Project National Historical Park on Los Alamos County?

- Traffic congestion/parking problems
- Improved economy
- Greater use of recreational facilities
- More tourist-oriented businesses
- Increased need for hotel/motel facilities
- All of the above
- None of the above
- Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

36. Do you think Los Alamos County has changed significantly in the past 5-10 years?  No  Yes

37. If yes, how has it changed?

- Municipal buildings and architecture:  Improved  Somewhat Improved  No Significant Change  Somewhat Worse  Worse
- Central Avenue "Main Street" improvements:  Improved  Somewhat Improved  No Significant Change  Somewhat Worse  Worse
- Better shopping opportunities:  Improved  Somewhat Improved  No Significant Change  Somewhat Worse  Worse
- More access to trails, open space, recreation:  Improved  Somewhat Improved  No Significant Change  Somewhat Worse  Worse
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_  Improved  Somewhat Improved  No Significant Change  Somewhat Worse  Worse

38. Do you anticipate that Los Alamos County will change significantly in the next 5-10 years?  No  Yes

39. If yes, how?

Same responses from question 37 will continue to apply.

40. What do you see as potentially positive drivers of change in Los Alamos? Check all boxes that apply.

- Increased tourism
- Population growth
- Manhattan Project National Historical Park
- Expanded mission for LANL
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

41. Are there other topics that you would like to tell us about?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PLAN Thank you!

1. Where do you live?

- White Rock/Pajarito/La Senda
- Barranca Mesa
- North Community
- North Mesa
- Western Area
- Eastern Area (downtown)
- Other area in Los Alamos County
- Outside Los Alamos County

2. Are you or a family member now or have you or a family member been at any time in the past an employee or contract worker at LANL?  No  Yes

3. Should the County plan to grow by at least 2,000 new residents (this number equates to approximately 870 new or reoccupied vacant housing units) by 2040?  No  Maybe/No  No Opinion  Maybe/Yes  Yes

4. Where should new housing be located in the Los Alamos Townsite?

Rank by priority: 1 as highest and 6 as lowest; write numbers in boxes.

- Downtown (new construction on Central and/or south of Trinity; second story residences of existing commercial buildings)
- DP Road
- Distributed throughout existing neighborhoods as casitas/guest houses and only as appropriate in terms of density, lot coverage, setbacks, parking, and other zoning requirements
- Vacant land on the North Mesa (Note: 17 acres are already zoned PD-5 for 75 units)
- Undeveloped County-owned open space east of the horse stables and zoned P-L (W-1) and P-L (W-2)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Where should new housing be located in White Rock?

Rank by priority: 1 as highest and 4 as lowest; write numbers in boxes.

- A-19 (vacant land north of State Rd. 4)
- Rehabilitated Longview area
- Distributed throughout existing neighborhoods as casitas/guesthouses and only as appropriate in terms of density, lot coverage, setbacks, parking, and other zoning requirements
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Do you believe there is a need for affordable housing in Los Alamos County?  No  Yes

7. If yes, how do you believe it should be provided by one or more of the following methods?

Check all boxes that apply.

- Allow for more accessory apartments/granny/mother-in-law flats where appropriate in terms of density, lot coverage, setbacks, parking, and other zoning requirements
- Require a certain percentage of any new residential construction to be affordable (inclusionary zoning ordinance)
- Establish a dedicated revenue source for low/moderate income mortgage assistance
- Develop subsidized low- and moderate-income housing

8. Is there sufficient parking downtown?

- No  Maybe/No  No Opinion  Maybe/Yes  Yes

9. Do you support "infill" development in the downtown core, especially along Central and Trinity that would eliminate parking?

- No  Maybe/No  No Opinion  Maybe/Yes  Yes

10. Do you think Los Alamos needs a municipal parking structure?

- No  Maybe/No  No Opinion  Maybe/Yes  Yes

11. Do you support reducing parking requirements for commercial development in the downtown?

- No  Maybe/No  No Opinion  Maybe/Yes  Yes

12. Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

13. How long have you lived in your current place of residence? \_\_\_\_\_ Years

14. Do you anticipate relocating in the next:  0-5 years?  5-10 years?  No, I don't anticipate relocating

15. Do you expect to retire in Los Alamos?  No  Yes  I am already retired

16. If no, would the availability of different housing options be likely to change your mind to retire in Los Alamos?  No  Yes

17. If yes, what kind?

- Smaller and More affordable
- Closer to downtown/shopping
- Assisted living option
- Other/describe: \_\_\_\_\_

18. Should the County require buffer or transition areas between single-family housing and more intense development?  No  Yes

19. Do you have sufficient parking at your residence?  No  Yes

20. Do you think carports and/or garages in residential front yards should be subject to design standards (such as matching the style and materials of the house)?  No  Yes

21. Do you think carports and/or garages should be subject to less stringent design standards in order to broaden residents' possible use/placement options?  No  Yes

22. Do you have an RV?  No  Yes

23. Have you experienced any problems related to RV parking in your neighborhood?  No  Yes

24. If yes, was the problem:

- Finding on-street RV parking?  No  Yes
- Finding space at a commercial RV storage lot?  No  Yes
- Streets blocked/hard to navigate due to RVs parked on the street?  No  Yes

25. If you have an RV, how much would you be willing to pay per month to park it in a secure off-site location?

- Not willing to pay  Less than \$50  \$50 to \$100  \$100 to \$200  \$200 to \$400

26. Do you support increased tourism as a driver of economic development?  No  Yes

27. Which aspects of the County do you think should be promoted for tourism? Rank by priority.

- Manhattan Project National Historical Park:  Low  Mid/Low  No Opinion  Mid/High  High
- Bandelier National Monument:  Low  Mid/Low  No Opinion  Mid/High  High
- Valles Caldera National Preserve:  Low  Mid/Low  No Opinion  Mid/High  High
- Fuller Lodge area & Los Alamos History:  Low  Mid/Low  No Opinion  Mid/High  High
- Science, including the Bradbury Science Museum and Sciencefest:  Low  Mid/Low  No Opinion  Mid/High  High
- Hiking & the County's natural beauty:  Low  Mid/Low  No Opinion  Mid/High  High
- Sports activities, including Pajarito Ski Area:  Low  Mid/Low  No Opinion  Mid/High  High
- Cultural activities:  Low  Mid/Low  No Opinion  Mid/High  High
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

28. How do you think the County could better support the business community, including Lab spinoff businesses?

- Zone changes:  Low  Mid/Low  No Opinion  Mid/High  High
- County-built business incubator:  Low  Mid/Low  No Opinion  Mid/High  High
- Incentive programs (such as increased heights):  Low  Mid/Low  No Opinion  Mid/High  High
- Infrastructure investment (utilities, transportation, etc.):  Low  Mid/Low  No Opinion  Mid/High  High
- Incentives for storefront renovations:  Low  Mid/Low  No Opinion  Mid/High  High
- Permit more food trucks:  Low  Mid/Low  No Opinion  Mid/High  High
- Wayfinding signage and directional cues for visitors:  Low  Mid/Low  No Opinion  Mid/High  High
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

29. What other activities would you support or participate in if they were available? Check all that apply.

- Paintball
- Indoor ice skating
- Tough Mudder (obstacle race)
- Mini-Mudder (obstacle race for children)
- Ski hill seasonal slide
- Mountain biking
- SplashPad
- Bowling
- Manhattan Project National Historic Park tours
- Zipline
- Recreational pool
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

30. Do you support keeping all or most currently undeveloped public land as open space?  No  Yes

31. Would you support some development of public land for:

- Housing?  No  Maybe/No  No Opinion  Maybe/Yes  Yes
- Active recreation (playfields, archery, paintball, etc)?  No  Maybe/No  No Opinion  Maybe/Yes  Yes
- Playgrounds or tot lots?  No  Maybe/No  No Opinion  Maybe/Yes  Yes
- More dog parks in neighborhoods?  No  Maybe/No  No Opinion  Maybe/Yes  Yes
- Industrial or manufacturing uses?  No  Maybe/No  No Opinion  Maybe/Yes  Yes
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_  No  Maybe/No  No Opinion  Maybe/Yes  Yes

32. Do you support expansion of the paved Rim Trail to access other parts of the community?

- Ashley Pond/historic district/commercial core?  No  Maybe/No  No Opinion  Maybe/Yes  Yes
- PEEC and the Aquatic Center?  No  Maybe/No  No Opinion  Maybe/Yes  Yes

33. In the next 5 years, should the County focus on developing bike lanes and bike trails?

- No  Maybe/No  No Opinion  Maybe/Yes  Yes

34. Do you support narrowing vehicle lanes on Trinity Drive to add bicycle lanes?

- No  Maybe/No  No Opinion  Maybe/Yes  Yes

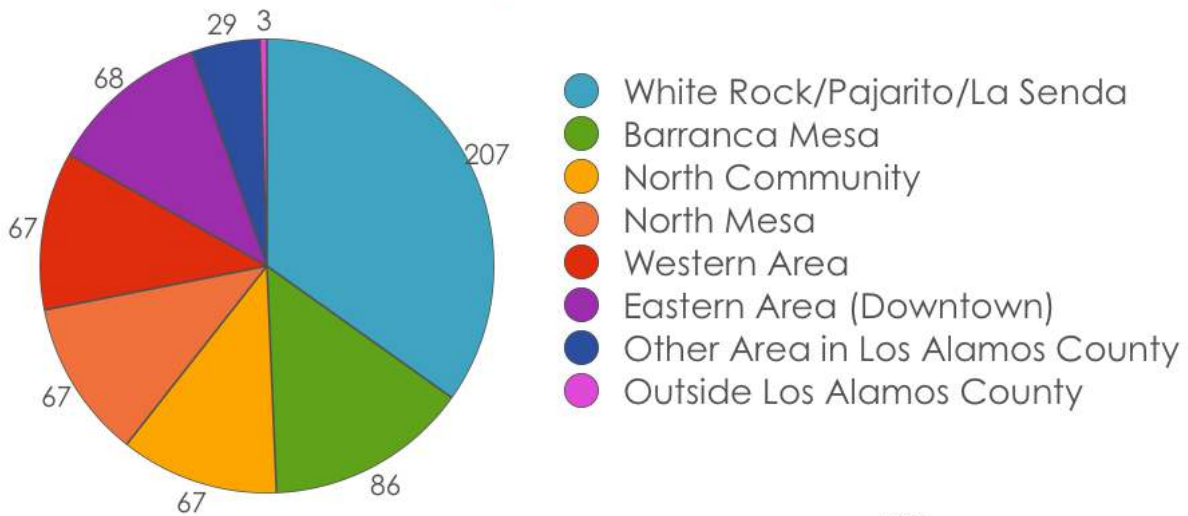




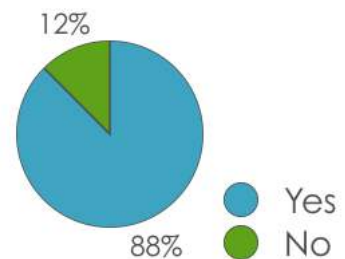
# DETAILED SURVEY RESULTS

## WHERE DO YOU LIVE?

65% live in Los Alamos Township

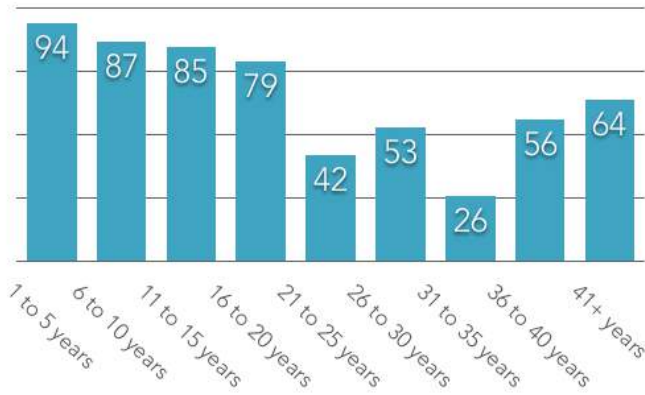


ARE YOU OR A FAMILY MEMBER NOW OR HAVE YOU OR A FAMILY MEMBER BEEN AT ANY TIME IN THE PAST AN EMPLOYEE OR CONTRACT WORKER AT LANL?



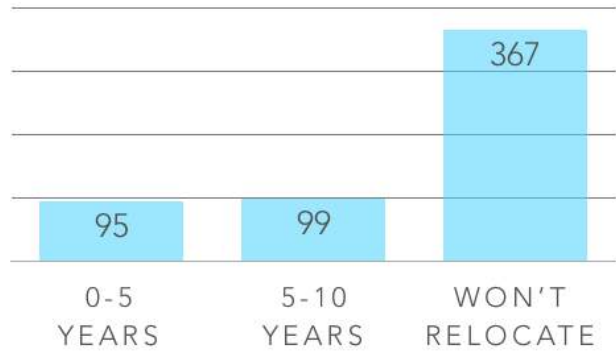
# WHERE WILL YOU LIVE?

HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED IN YOUR CURRENT PLACE OF RESIDENCE?



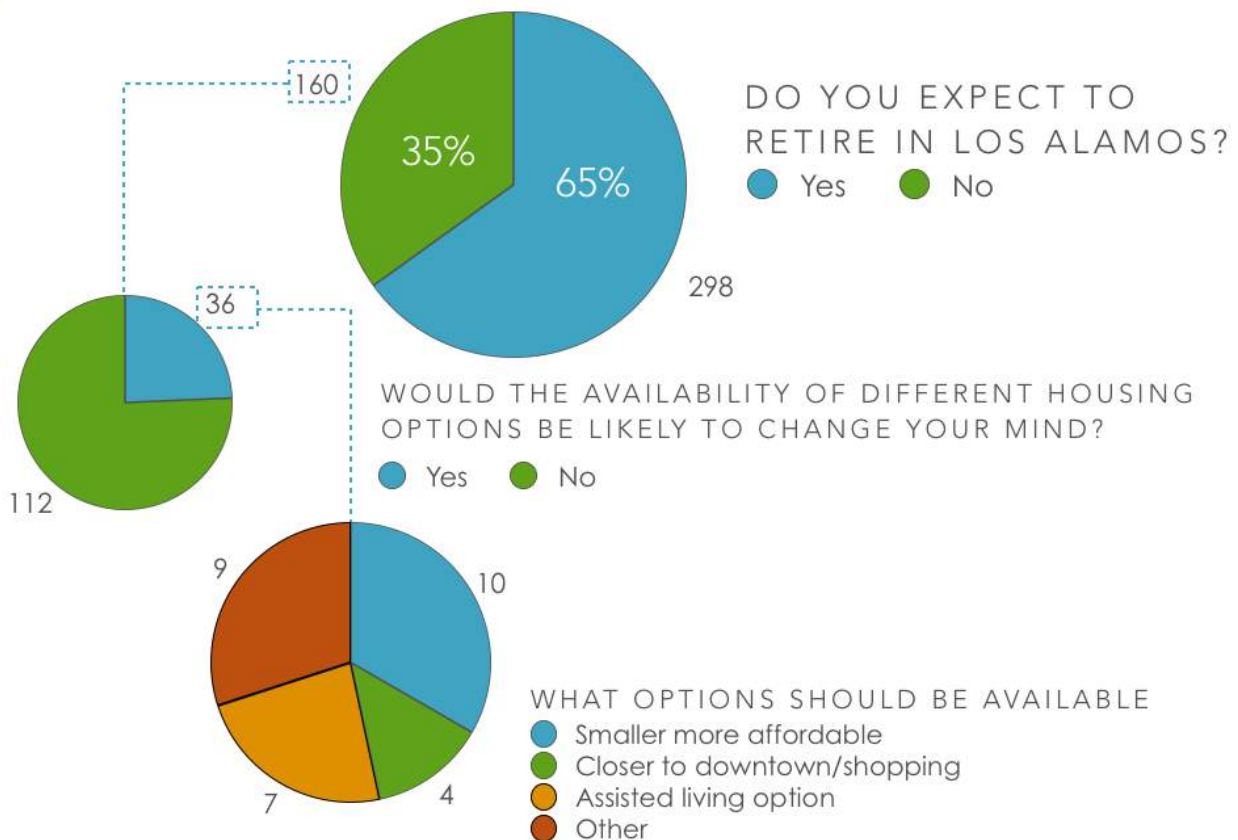
Half have lived more than 15 years in current residence

DO YOU EXPECT TO RELOCATE IN THE NEXT...



66% will not relocate

# WHERE WILL YOU RETIRE?



# HOUSING OPTIONS

## COMMENTS

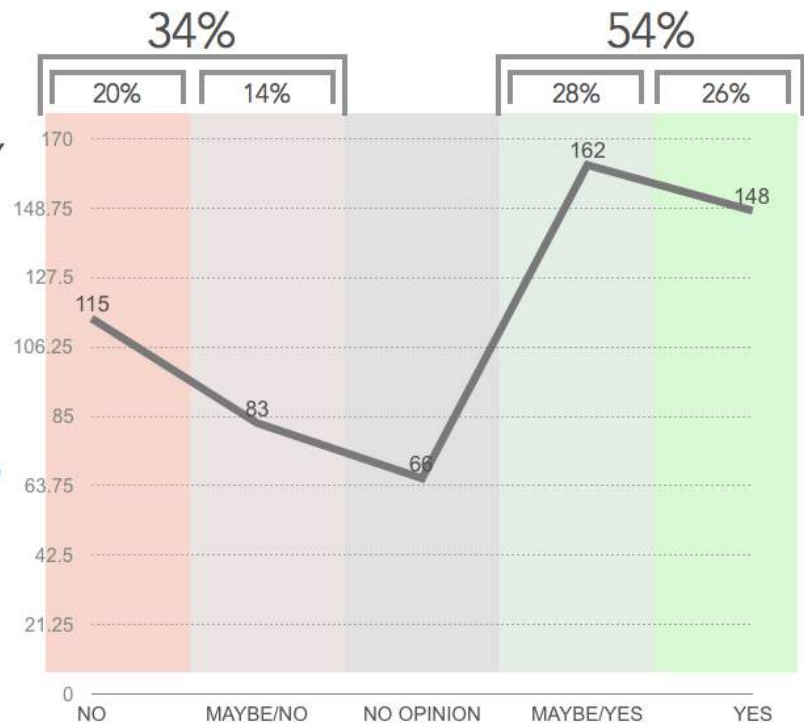
Many statements in support of retiring in current home

Some support for:

- patio homes, condos, 1-story townhouses
- assisted living, including for young people
- more upscale housing

# GROW BY 2,000 BY 2040?

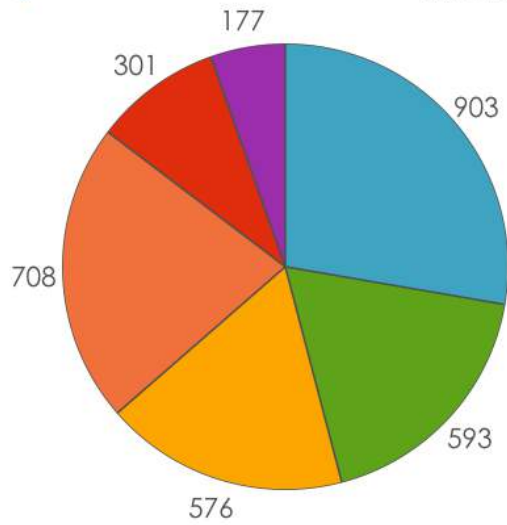
SHOULD THE COUNTY PLAN TO GROW BY AT LEAST 2,000 NEW RESIDENTS BY 2040? (THIS EQUATES TO APPROXIMATELY 870 NEW OR REOCCUPIED VACANT HOUSING UNITS)



# HOUSING

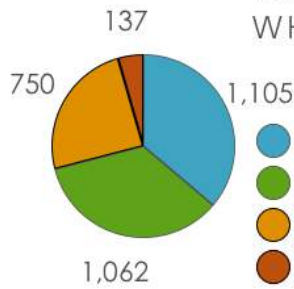
## RANKED AND WEIGHTED RESULTS

*Ranked by respondents & weighted by ranking order: items ranked first received 3 points, second received 2, third 1, fourth+ 0*



### WHERE SHOULD NEW HOUSING IN LOS ALAMOS TOWNSITE BE LOCATED?

- **Downtown** new construction on Central and/or south of Trinity; second story residences of existing commercial buildings
- **DP Road**
- **Distributed** throughout existing neighborhoods as casitas/guest houses and only as appropriate in terms of density, lot coverage, setbacks, parking, and other zoning requirements
- **Vacant** land on the North Mesa (Note: 17 acres are already zoned PD-5 for 75 units)
- **Undeveloped** County-owned open space east of the horse stables and zoned P-L (W-1) and P-L (W-2)
- **Other**



### WHERE SHOULD NEW HOUSING IN WHITE ROCK BE LOCATED?

- **A-19**
- **Rehabilitated Longview Area**
- **Distributed** throughout existing neighborhoods as casitas/guest houses and only as appropriate in terms of density, lot coverage, setbacks, parking, and other zoning requirements
- **Other**



## HOUSING IN LOS ALAMOS TOWNSITE COMMENTS

Strong support for building on vacant lots and rehabilitation over construction in new areas

Strong objections to building in open space/ canyons

Some suggestions for federal land transfers  
- Rendija Canyon and other unspecified canyons

A few suggestions for other locations - Golf Course, Quemazon, Mitchel Plateau (above 48th St.), Stables (for and against), Downtown (for and against)

# HOUSING IN WHITE ROCK

## COMMENTS

Support for improving existing houses (8 comments)

Opposition to new housing (15 comments)

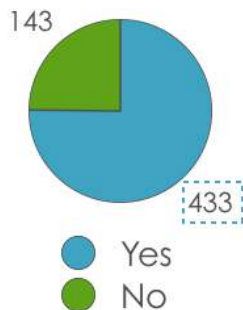
Support for higher density and mixed-use housing, and an assisted living facility

Objections to building in open space / canyons

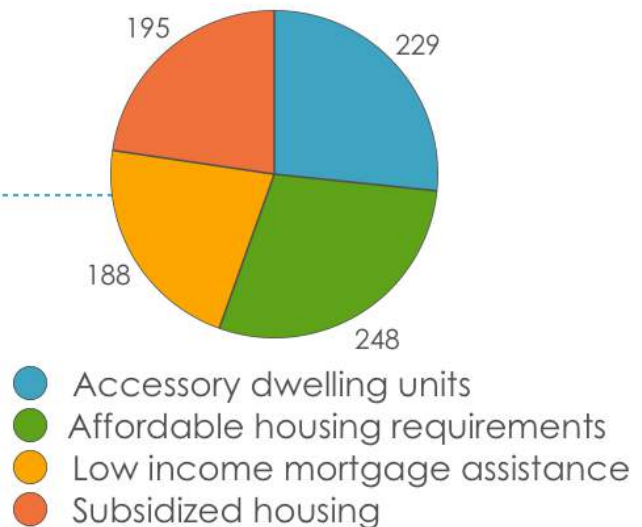
A few suggestions for federal land transfers

# AFFORDABLE HOUSING

DO YOU BELIEVE THERE IS A NEED FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN LOS ALAMOS COUNTY?

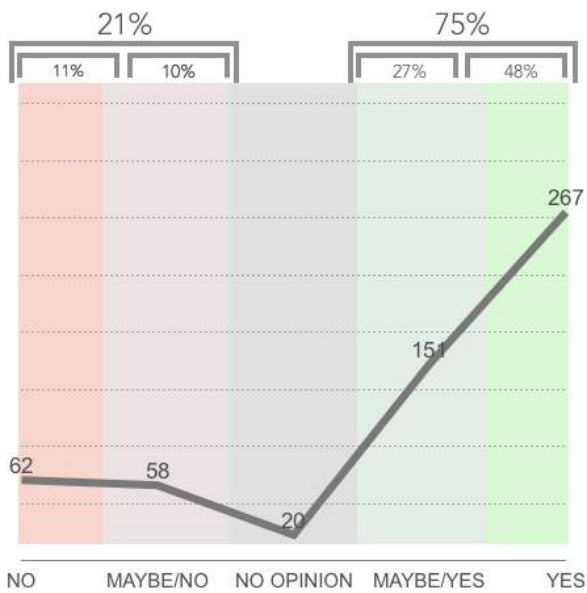


IF YES, HOW DO YOU BELIEVE IT SHOULD BE PROVIDED BY ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING METHODS?

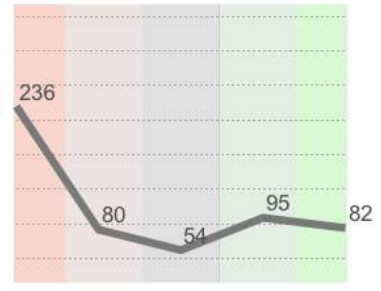


The responses provided here are only from surveys where the affordable housing question was marked 'Yes'.

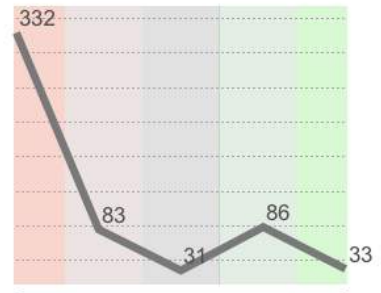
# PARKING



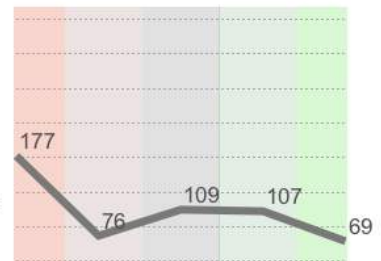
DO YOU SUPPORT "INFILL" DEVELOPMENT IN THE DOWNTOWN CORE, ESPECIALLY ALONG CENTRAL AND TRINITY THAT WOULD TAKE AWAY PARKING?



DO YOU THINK LOS ALAMOS NEEDS A MUNICIPAL PARKING STRUCTURE?



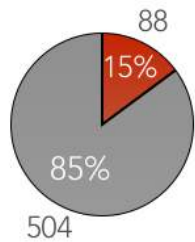
DO YOU SUPPORT REDUCING PARKING REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE DOWNTOWN?



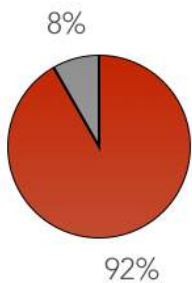
IS THERE SUFFICIENT PARKING DOWNTOWN?

# RESIDENTIAL PARKING & RV'S

DO YOU HAVE SUFFICIENT PARKING AT YOUR RESIDENCE?

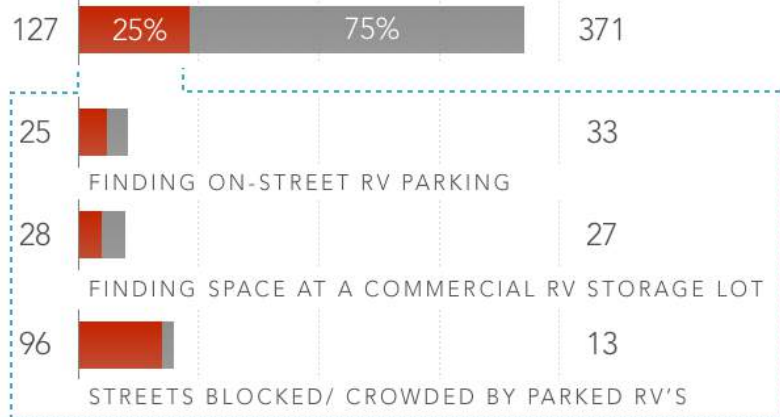


DO YOU HAVE AN RV?  
● Yes ● No



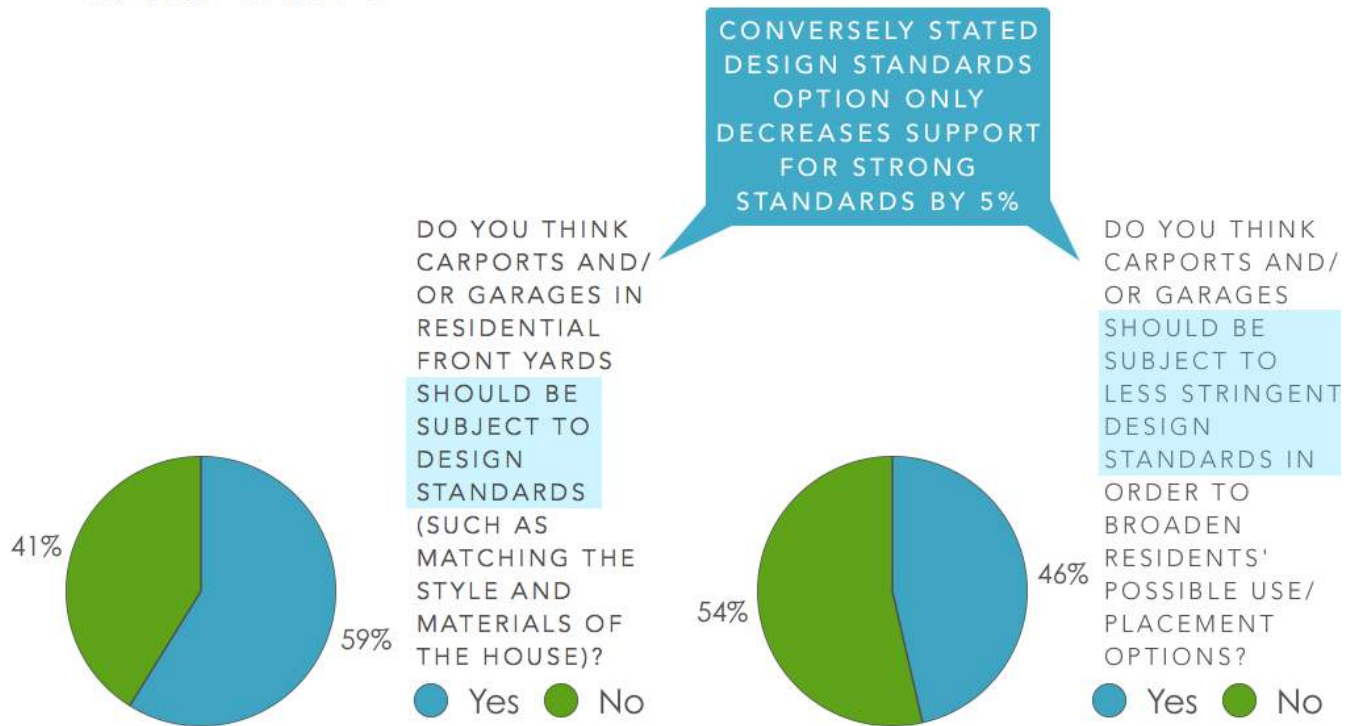
● Yes  
● No

HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY PROBLEMS RELATED TO RV PARKING IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?



WILLING TO PAY PER MONTH FOR RV PARKING:  
NO: 11  
<\$50: 24  
\$50-\$100: 11  
>\$100: 0

## DESIGN STANDARDS FOR GARAGES & CARPORTS

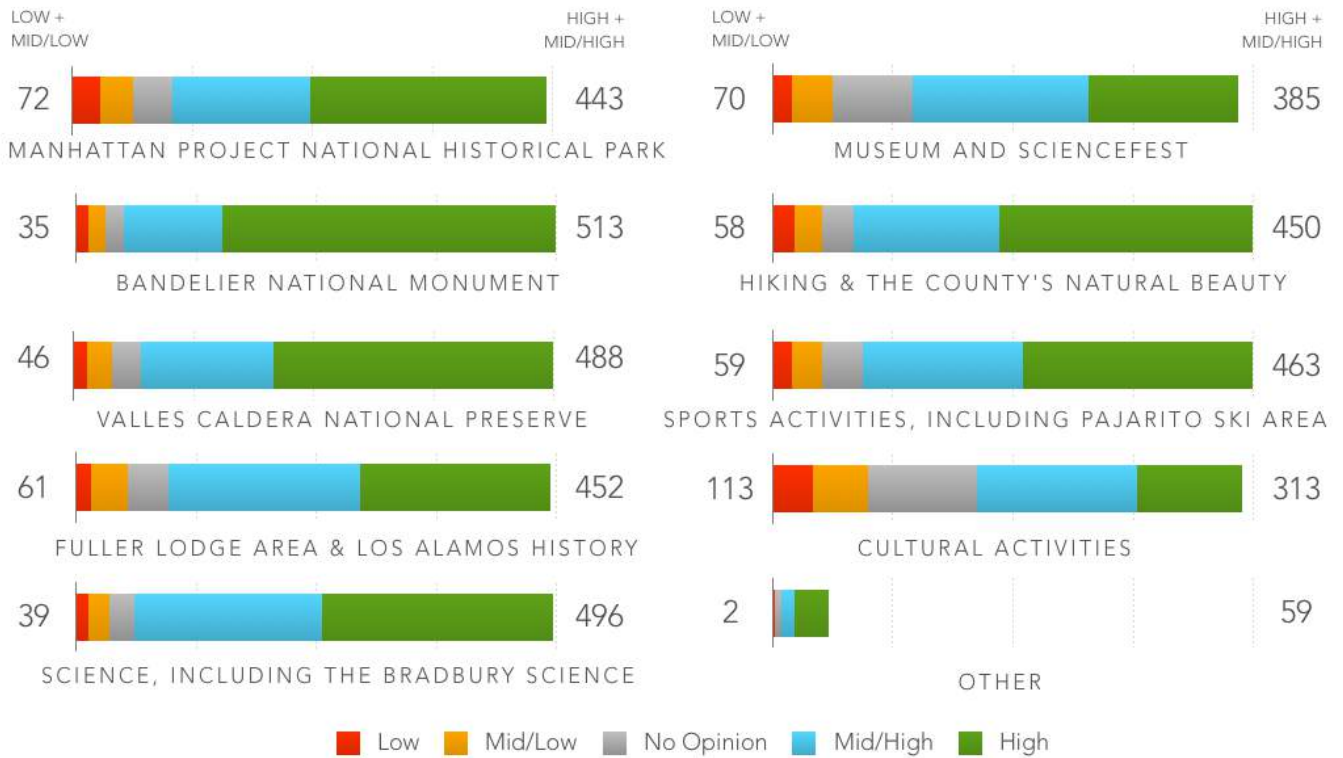


## TRANSITIONAL AREAS



# TOURISM 85% OR RESPONDENTS SUPPORT INCREASED TOURISM AS A DRIVER OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

WHICH ASPECTS OF THE COUNTY DO YOU THINK SHOULD BE PROMOTED FOR TOURISM?



## TOURISM THAT SHOULD BE PROMOTED COMMENTS

Recreation including: road biking, mountain biking, Olympic training, triathlons, ice rink, swimming pool (most comments)

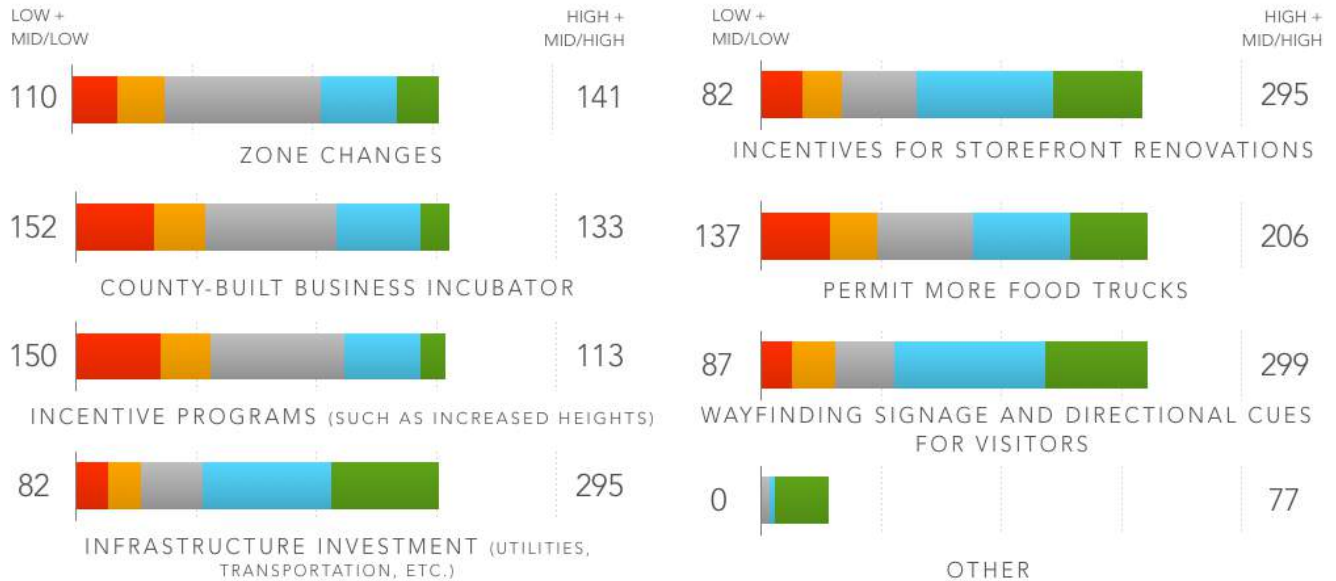
Events such as: 100 years of scouting, Founders Day, arts and crafts fairs

Better shopping

Some respondents do not want tourism or believe it is already promoted as much as appropriate

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

HOW DO YOU THINK THE COUNTY COULD BETTER SUPPORT THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY, INCLUDING LAB SPINOFF BUSINESSES?



## COUNTY ACTIONS TO SUPPORT BUSINESS COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Rent control - lower rents (largest number of comments)

Streamline the development permit process, loosen code standards (second largest number of comments)

More visible signage

Improve appearance of retail space

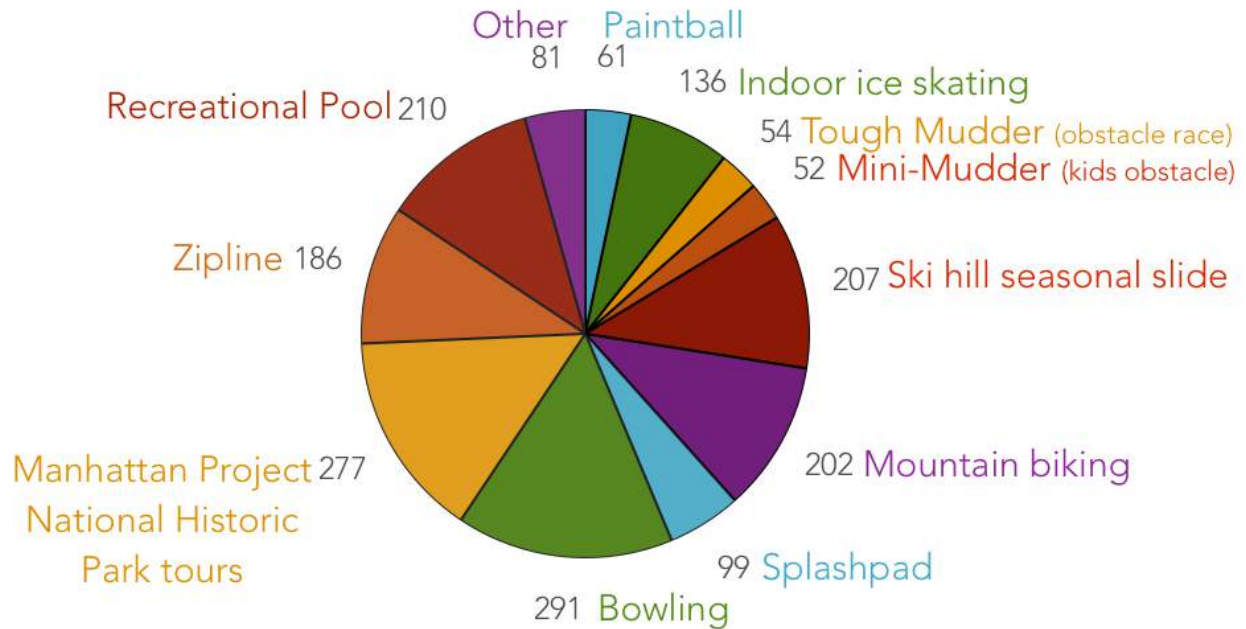
Offer more training and improve connections for start-up and investment community

Restrict Central to retail; keep lab out of downtown cultural district

High speed internet

## RECREATION

WHAT OTHER ACTIVITIES WOULD YOU SUPPORT OR PARTICIPATE IN IF THEY WERE AVAILABLE?



## RECREATION ACTIVITIES YOU SUPPORT OR WOULD PARTICIPATE IN COMMENTS

Many unique ideas (few repeats) for other activities, including:

Pool, recreation center in White Rock

Outdoor pool

Leisure pool

Disc golf

Indoor walking

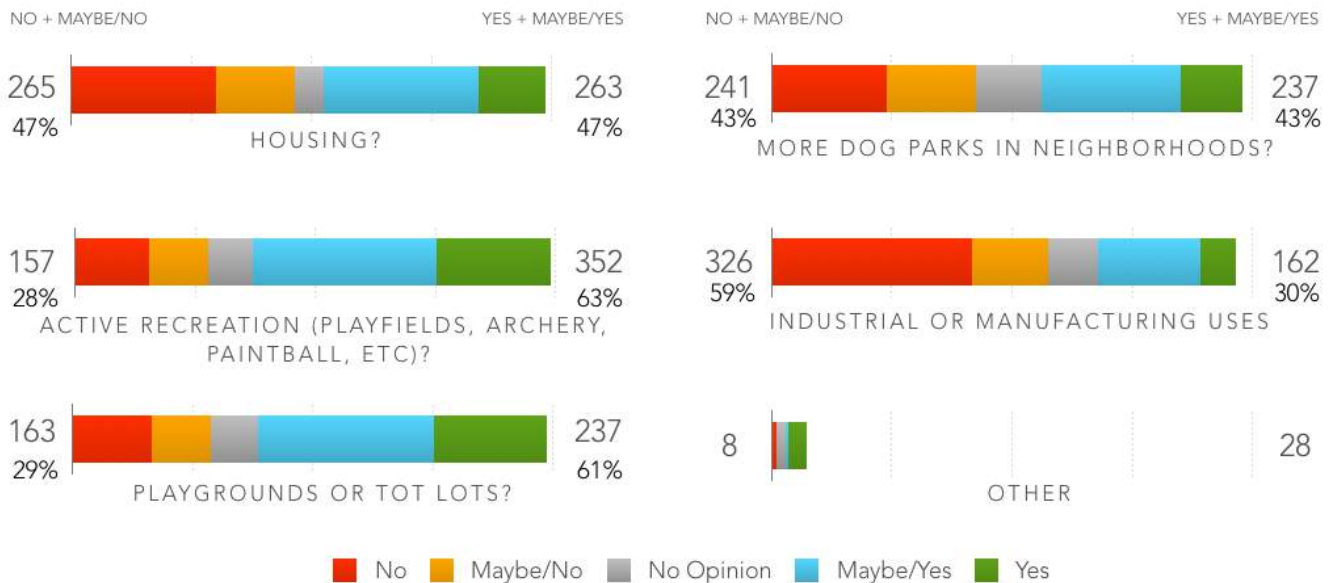
Rio Grande Zipline

# OPEN SPACE



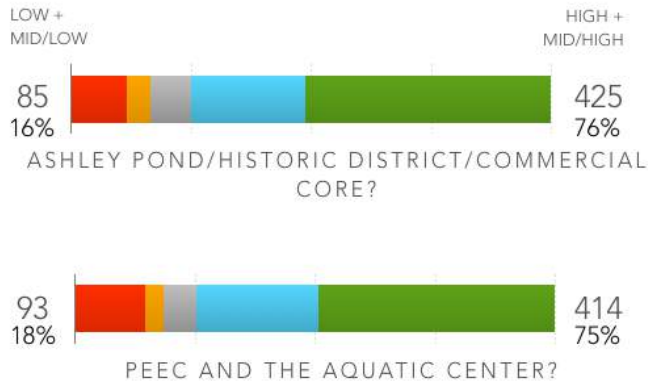
# PUBLIC LAND

WOULD YOU SUPPORT SOME DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC LAND FOR:



# TRAILS AND BIKE LANES

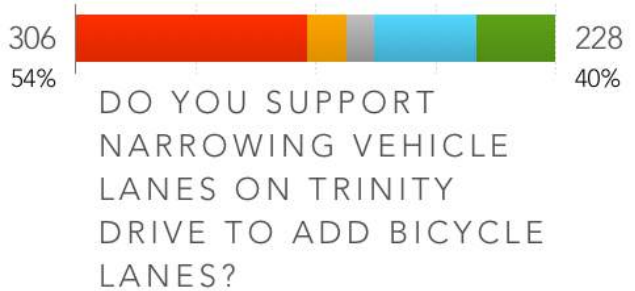
DO YOU SUPPORT EXPANSION OF THE PAVED RIM TRAIL TO ACCESS OTHER PARTS OF THE COMMUNITY?



IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS, SHOULD THE COUNTY FOCUS ON DEVELOPING BIKE LANES OR BIKE TRAILS?



DO YOU SUPPORT NARROWING VEHICLE LANES ON TRINITY DRIVE TO ADD BICYCLE LANES?



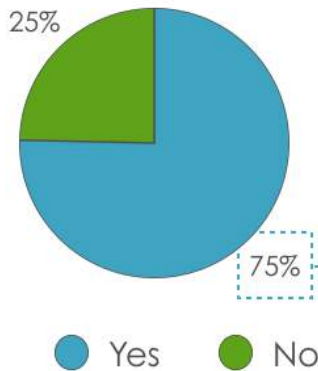
# MANHATTAN PROJECT EFFECTS

WHAT DO YOU ANTICIPATE WILL BE THE POTENTIAL FUTURE IMPACTS OF THE MANHATTAN PROJECT NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK ON LOS ALAMOS COUNTY?

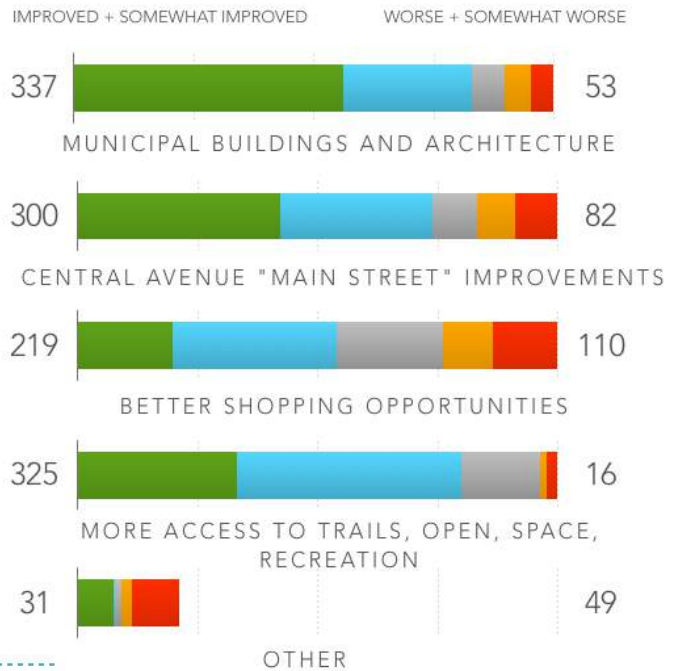


Ranked by respondents & weighted by ranking order: items ranked first received 3 points, second received 2, third 1, fourth+ 0

DO YOU THINK THAT LOS ALAMOS HAS CHANGED SIGNIFICANTLY IN THE LAST 5 TO 10 YEARS?



HOW HAS LOS ALAMOS CHANGED?



## HOW HAS LOS ALAMOS CHANGED?

### COMMENTS

#### Positives

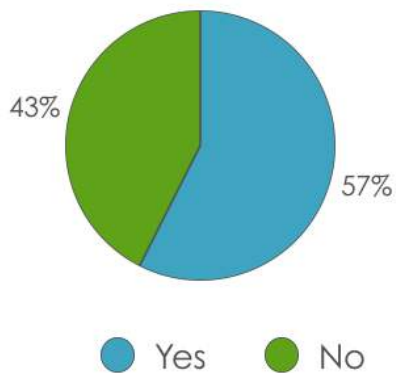
- WR library and teen center, WR landscaping/art, Ashley Pond, contemporary architecture, looks less dated, quality of public works and utilities, traffic calming, transit, more young adult options

#### Negatives

- More vacant buildings, view from Trinity of new jail, shopping choices, fewer small shops, less friendly, Rents too high

## CHANGES IN LOS ALAMOS

DO YOU ANTICIPATE THAT LOS ALAMOS COUNTY WILL CHANGE SIGNIFICANTLY IN THE NEXT 5-10 YEARS?



## HOW DO YOU THINK LOS ALAMOS WILL CHANGE?

COMMENTS

For Better (64 comments)

- Economy, including more business growth, restaurants
- Tourism, including more visitors, jobs, dynamic feeling, more bike trails
- Demographics, including influx of young families, older residents,
- Outdoor Amenities, including more recreation, public spaces
- Improved Infrastructure, including streets, traffic control, wireless networks
- General Improvements, including downtowns; good zoning practices, beautification, look and feel of small town preserved while offering more amenities like splash pad, indoor recreation, outdoor recreation



## HOW DO YOU THINK LOS ALAMOS WILL CHANGE? COMMENTS

### For Worse (50 comments)

- Excess construction - big buildings, stables taken,
- Traffic congestion - less safety, quiet, and parking
- Declining businesses - fewer businesses like laundromat,
- Increased crime
- Bad tourism
- County interference
- Property values and taxes - higher housing prices, higher property taxes, ugly fraternal clubs,
- Do not want change



## HOW DO YOU THINK LOS ALAMOS WILL CHANGE? COMMENTS

### LANL Effects on the Community (31 comments)

- Growth depends largely on LANL
- Decreasing budget will result in aging population and stagnation; reduction in employment; loss of revenue as contractors go non-profit; absentee management
- Younger lab families among announced 2,000 new employees; good if LANL remains strong but need independent economic drivers

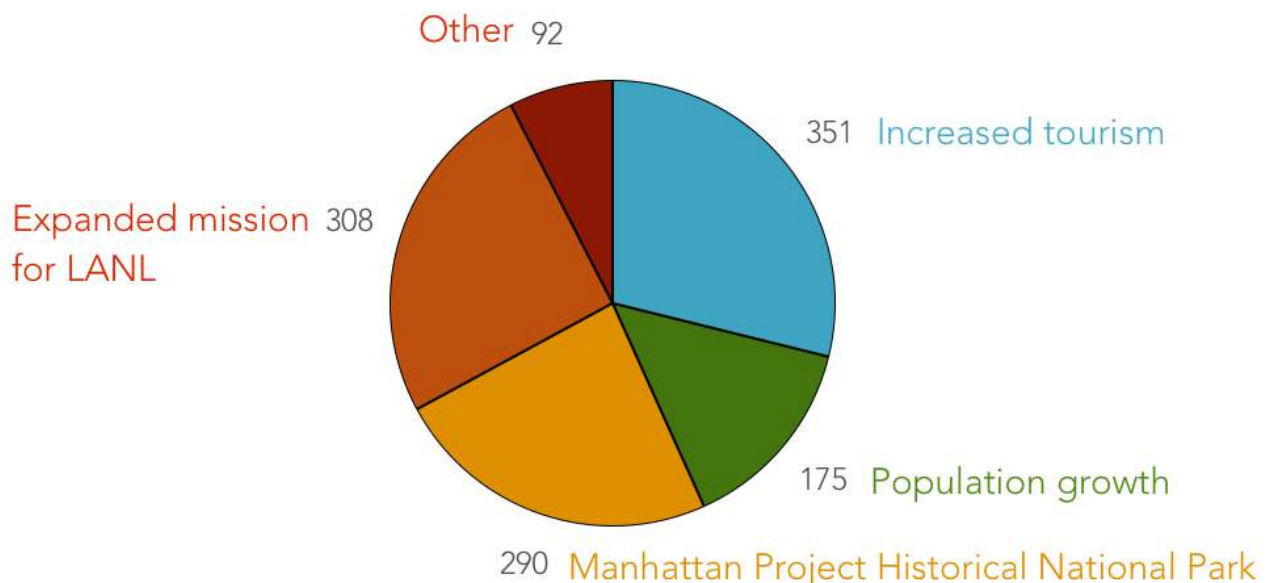
## HOW DO YOU THINK LOS ALAMOS WILL CHANGE? COMMENTS

### Impacts of Growth (84 comments)

- Need more housing, more affordable housing for lower-paid employees, more restaurant options,
- Commuting options including bike from White Rock to Los Alamos; need reliable air service to Albuquerque; under grounding of utilities

## POSITIVE DRIVERS

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS POTENTIALLY POSITIVE DRIVERS OF CHANGE IN LOS ALAMOS?





## WHAT DO YOU SEE AS POSITIVE DRIVERS OF CHANGE? COMMENTS


Promote tourism and outdoor recreation / concerns about negative impacts of tourism

Occupy vacant and clean-up/maintain neglected properties

Preserve trees and natural beauty

Keep streets wide / develop bike lanes

UNM-LA should be 4-year and have quality student housing



COMPREHENSIVE  
**PLAN**  
LOS ALAMOS COUNTY 2016

RANDOM SAMPLE  
SURVEY #2  
RESULTS

PRESENTATION TO  
PLANNING AND ZONING  
COMMISSION  
SEPTEMBER 14, 2016



**Architectural Research Consultants Incorporated**

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## SURVEY RESPONSE OVERVIEW

- Staff and ARC team designed the second random sample survey to ask respondents about their level of support for the draft goals and policies of the plan
- 3,000 surveys were mailed out to randomly selected addresses of the 9,711 delivery addresses in Los Alamos County
- 463 surveys were returned and entered into ARC's database as of noon of September 13 (312 paper mailed back and 151 filled out on-line)
- A sample size of 463 at a 95% confidence level provides a maximum margin of error of approximately 4.4% in either direction
  - In theory, in 95 out of 100 cases, the results will differ by no more than 4.4% from what would have been obtained by interviewing all County households

## SURVEY RESPONSE OVERVIEW

- Respondents were asked “What level of support do you have for the following goals and policies?”
  - Response options were:
    - “no support”
    - “little support”
    - “some support”
    - “full support”
- The survey closed on 9/9/2016 but surveys are still arriving by mail
- The summary survey results will be posted on [losalamoscountycompplan2016.com](http://losalamoscountycompplan2016.com)

## SURVEY RESPONSE OVERVIEW

- We asked 75 questions, and most responses were positive
  - The **average** level of support across all policies and goals was **76% in support**
  - Support varied
    - high of 89% positive support on Q. 62, “*Preserve historic, environmental, and cultural landscapes*”
    - low of 45% support on Q.21, “*Support small lot development integrated into neighborhoods for affordable housing*”

- **Overall, 97.4% of goals and policies received a majority positive support**

# COMMENTS

- Respondents wrote ~351 comments in the two boxes provided (after Q.50 and Q.75)
- 33 comments (9% of all comments) stated concerns that the survey questions are vague, duplicative, or nuanced to indicate unspecified activities. Some objected that the questions are not framed in a neutral way.
  - This survey was designed to ask respondents' level of support for draft goals and policies (general statements by nature that are not neutral, some of which were further simplified in the survey for brevity). Our explanation of goals and policies should have been stronger in the survey cover letter, and should be described in the on-line survey summary report
  - Since most comments were on point with policy direction (pro or con), we do not believe that the misunderstanding of the generality of statement invalidates the survey results
- Many comments expressed negativity towards over-regulating, taxes, spending, and inappropriate or highly risk County pro-activism (such as in the local housing market, economic development including tourism and planning for population growth)
- Many comments stated support for the county mission and county actions that would implement goals and policies
- Some comments focused on other controversies, such as roundabouts

# ACTUAL SURVEY - PAGES 1 AND 2

What level of support do you have for the following goals and policies?

*Mark bubble to indicate support on a scale of 0 to 3, where 0 = no support, 1 = little support, 2 = some support, and 3 = full support.*

HOUSING, NEIGHBORHOODS & GROWTH	
<b>GOALS</b>	
1 Provide a variety of housing types, sizes and densities, especially downtown	0000
2 Support development of affordable workforce housing	0000
3 Promote development of smaller housing units appropriate for downsizing households	0000
4 Protect existing residential neighborhoods while utilizing available infill opportunities as appropriate	0000
5 Promote maintenance and enhancement of housing stock quality	0000
6 Plan for modest growth of an extra 2,000 residents in the next 10-20 years	0000
7 Significantly improve the variety and quality of retail businesses	0000
8 Eliminate blight and revitalize in the downtown areas of Los Alamos and White Rock	0000
9 Capitalize on Los Alamos County's role as gateway to three national parks	0000
10 Promote growth in the downtown	0000
<b>ECONOMIC VITALITY POLICIES</b>	
11 Promote expanding the housing supply to meet the demand from employment growth	0000
12 Promote housing for seniors, students, and workforce to support retention of spending and tax generation in the community	0000
13 Consider creation of a Short-Term Rental (STR) ordinance for economic benefit to homeowners and Los Alamos County	0000
14 Promote eco- and education based tourism to support growth and development	0000
15 Promote Los Alamos as a venue for athletic events and competitions	0000
16 Market and brand Los Alamos as a scenic destination featuring recreation, science and history	0000
17 Provide workforce and other market rate housing at a variety of price ranges, for both rental and ownership markets	0000
<b>INFRASTRUCTURE POLICIES</b>	
18 Provide infrastructure to support new housing creation	0000
19 Make strategic extensions of utilities	0000
<b>LAND USE POLICIES</b>	
20 Improve County communication with the business community to support growth and development	0000
21 Provide workforce and other market rate housing at a variety of price ranges, for both rental and ownership markets	0000
22 Promote stabilization of rental areas	0000
23 Support small lot development integrated into neighborhoods for affordable housing	0000
24 Provide outreach and infrastructure support during the permitting process to housing developers	0000
25 Encourage developers to notify and conduct meetings early in the development review process with the neighborhood and to be responsive to neighborhood concerns	0000
26 Strenuously apply property maintenance and code enforcement requirements to vacant or blighted properties	0000
27 Encourage the retention of existing businesses and assist in their opportunities for growth	0000
28 Support infill development over expansion of current developed areas	0000

What level of support do you have for the following goals and policies?

*Mark bubble to indicate support on a scale of 0 to 3, where 0 = no support, 1 = little support, 2 = some support, and 3 = full support.*

DEVELOPMENT, REDEVELOPMENT & DOWNTOWN	
<b>GOALS</b>	
29 Improve the variety and quality of retail business	0000
30 Retain the small town character and feel of the community	0000
31 Redevelop vacant and blighted residential areas	0000
32 Create vibrant, pedestrian-friendly downtowns in Los Alamos and White Rock that includes a central gathering place, nighttime entertainment, and more retail stores and restaurants	0000
33 Focus development priorities downtown, including residential uses	0000
<b>ECONOMIC VITALITY POLICIES</b>	
34 Support existing businesses	0000
35 Actively solicit new development opportunities	0000
36 Support spin-off business opportunities from LAML	0000
37 Attract new tourism related business	0000
38 Support County communication with the business community	0000
39 Provide flexibility for uses in redeveloped areas	0000
40 Examine measures for using County resources and authority to put vacant properties back into use	0000
41 Solicit interest in new hotel development	0000
<b>LAND USE POLICIES</b>	
42 Maximize the utilization of County-owned land	0000
43 Consider incentives to reduce the number of vacant residential and non-residential properties	0000
44 Approach vacancies and redevelopment problems with solutions before penalties (cannot not stick)	0000
45 Give highest priority in code enforcement to health and safety violations	0000
46 Support Historical Society Museum campus	0000
<b>INFRASTRUCTURE POLICIES</b>	
47 Provide streetscape improvements	0000
48 Ensure energy-efficient County buildings	0000
49 Develop standards for street sections by street type	0000
50 Foster and promote sustainability practices	0000
<b>COMMENTS:</b>	

# ACTUAL SURVEY - COVER LETTER AND PAGE 3



**BUSINESS REPLY MAIL**  
FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 5555-000 ALBUQUERQUE, NM  
POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

**LOS ALAMOS COUNTY COMP PLAN UPDATE**  
PO BOX 1158  
ALBUQUERQUE NM 87103-9905



Survey Code #

August 24, 2016

Dear Resident or Businessperson of Los Alamos County:

Your household or business has been randomly selected to participate in this important 2nd and final survey for the Los Alamos County Comprehensive Plan. Architectural Research Consultants (ARC) is conducting this survey on behalf of the County. The survey will only take about 10 minutes to complete and your response will be anonymous. The purpose of this survey is to gauge the level of support for draft goals and policies that will guide future development of the County. The information gathered through the survey will be used as part of the input in developing the comprehensive plan.

The comprehensive plan gives direction for how Los Alamos County should grow and what it will look like in the future. The plan sets policy that will guide land use decisions, which can affect your neighborhood, your own property and what is in store for the property next door. The plan does not change zoning; any zoning changes must go through a separate public review process with notification to nearby property owners.

**Please fill out and return the survey no later than Friday, September 9, 2016.**

You are strongly encouraged to complete the survey on-line. Go to [www.lacosurvey.com](http://www.lacosurvey.com) and enter the survey code listed at the top of this letter (code is case sensitive). The survey will be available on-line until September 9, 2016. The on-line version is easy to use, automated, and gives you more space for comments.

OR

You can complete the survey and return it postage-paid. Please fold and scotch tape or staple it.

The complete set of draft goals, policies and strategies is available, as well as the results of both the public workshops held this summer and the first random sample survey conducted in May 2016.

Your participation is invaluable to the success of this planning effort. Thank you!

Visit the plan website for news, updates and background information related to the comprehensive plan at:

[www.losalamoscountycompplan2016.com](http://www.losalamoscountycompplan2016.com)

For more information on the public engagement process, contact Steve Burstein, AICP Planner, ARC, at (505) 842-1254 or sburstein@arcplanning.com

If you have technical problems with the survey, contact Bruce Walters at ARC, at (505) 842-1254 or bwalter@arcplanning.com

For more information about the comprehensive plan, contact Los Alamos County Principal Planner Tamara Barr at: (505) 662-8120 or tamara.barr@laccnm.us.

What level of support do you have for the following goals and policies?

Mark suitable to indicate support on a scale of 0 to 3, where 0 = no support, 1 = little support, 2 = some support and 3 = full support.

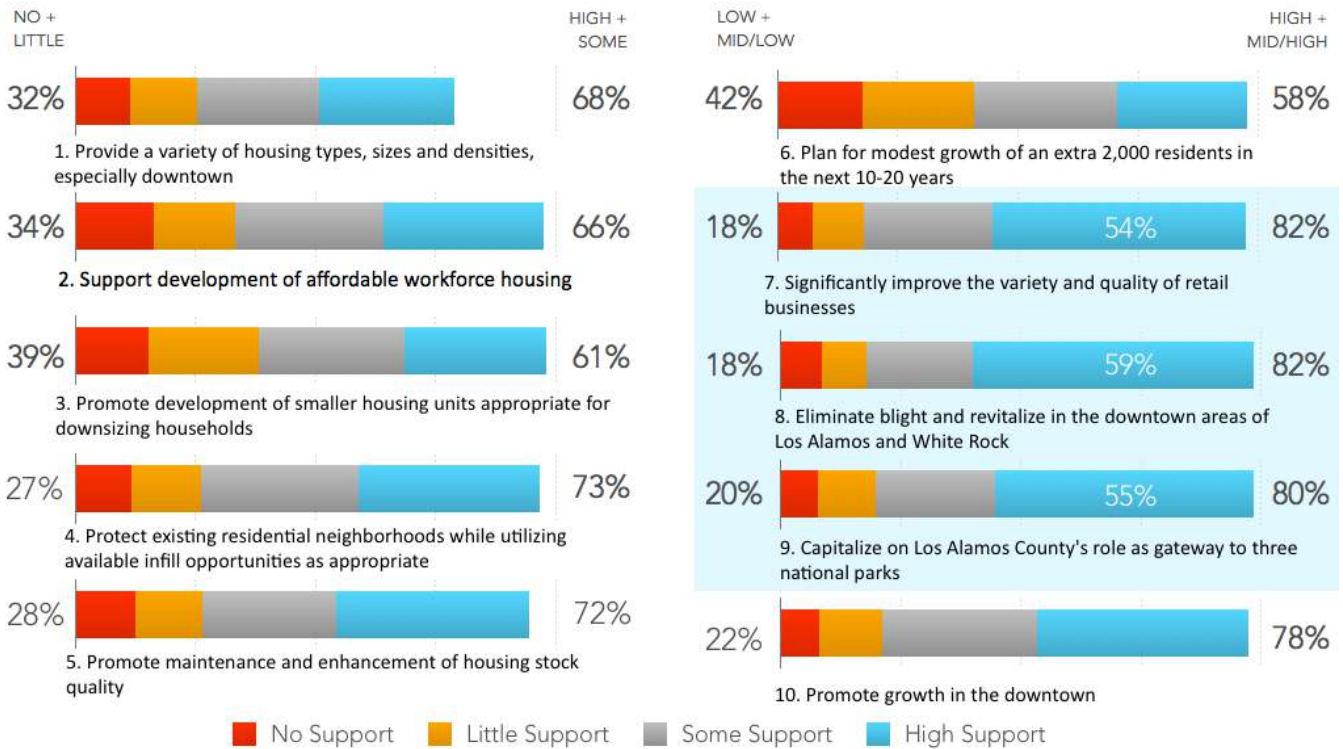
OPEN SPACE, TRAILS & MOBILITY	
<b>GOALS</b>	<b>LAND USE POLICIES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be stewards of the natural environment, including the existing ecosystems</li> <li>Protect all existing County-designated open space</li> <li>Improve and expand the trails system</li> <li>Support streets designed for the safety and comfort of all users</li> <li>Maintain and improve transportation and mobility</li> <li>Make improvements to the transportation system that support economic vitality and housing goals</li> <li>Make Los Alamos County a bicycle-friendly community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preserve historic, environmental, and cultural landscapes</li> <li>Maintain and improve outdoor recreation for a diverse population</li> <li>Support Open Space Management Plan recommendations for open space zoning</li> <li>Promote safety for pedestrians and cyclists, on paved trails and streets</li> <li>Ensure that private development is required to provide trail connections and may not create impediments to any trail connections</li> <li>Minimize infrastructure impacts to open space</li> </ul>
<b>ECONOMIC VITALITY POLICIES</b>	<b>INFRASTRUCTURE POLICIES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with National Parks, Ski Los Alamos, Sierra Club, and others to promote Los Alamos as an outdoor recreation destination</li> <li>Implement a comprehensive range of recreational and cultural amenities that enhance the Los Alamos community</li> <li>Develop and expand trails connecting downtown to surrounding open space</li> <li>Do not develop in the canyons or on canyon walls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require remediation of infrastructure projects in open space</li> <li>Provide facilities that accommodate both recreational and transportation bicycling</li> <li>Ensure safe trail crossings, especially at arterials; weigh costs/benefits of underpasses and/or overpasses</li> <li>Create a user-friendly, efficient, multi-modal system that connects the Laboratory, downtown, and White Rock</li> <li>Support design of all new and rebuilt roadways to accommodate motorized and non-motorized circulation</li> <li>Develop and adopt a transportation master plan that incorporates the trails and bike plan and is tied to land use</li> <li>Periodically update transit plan</li> <li>Coordinate transportation on and off the Hill with other systems in the region</li> </ul>
<b>COMMENTS:</b>	
<input type="text"/>	

## SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

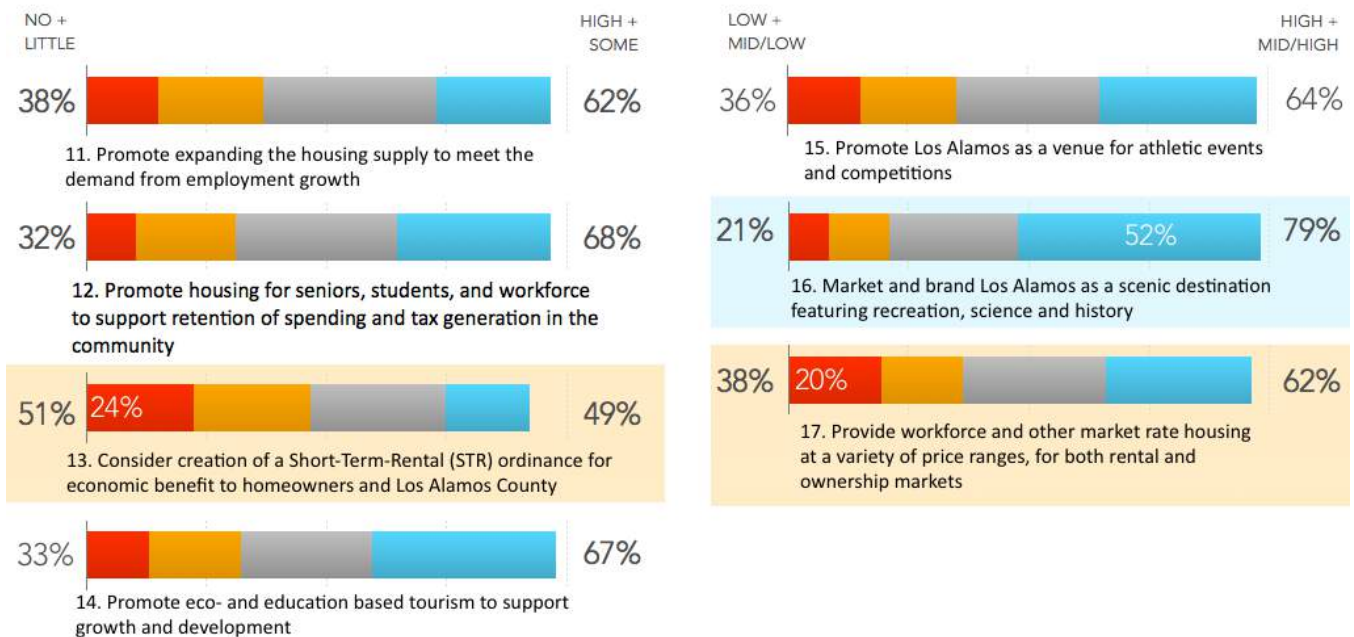
- Questions that received a majority, 50%+, "Full Support"

- Questions that received over 20% "No Support"

# HOUSING, NEIGHBORHOODS AND GROWTH GOALS

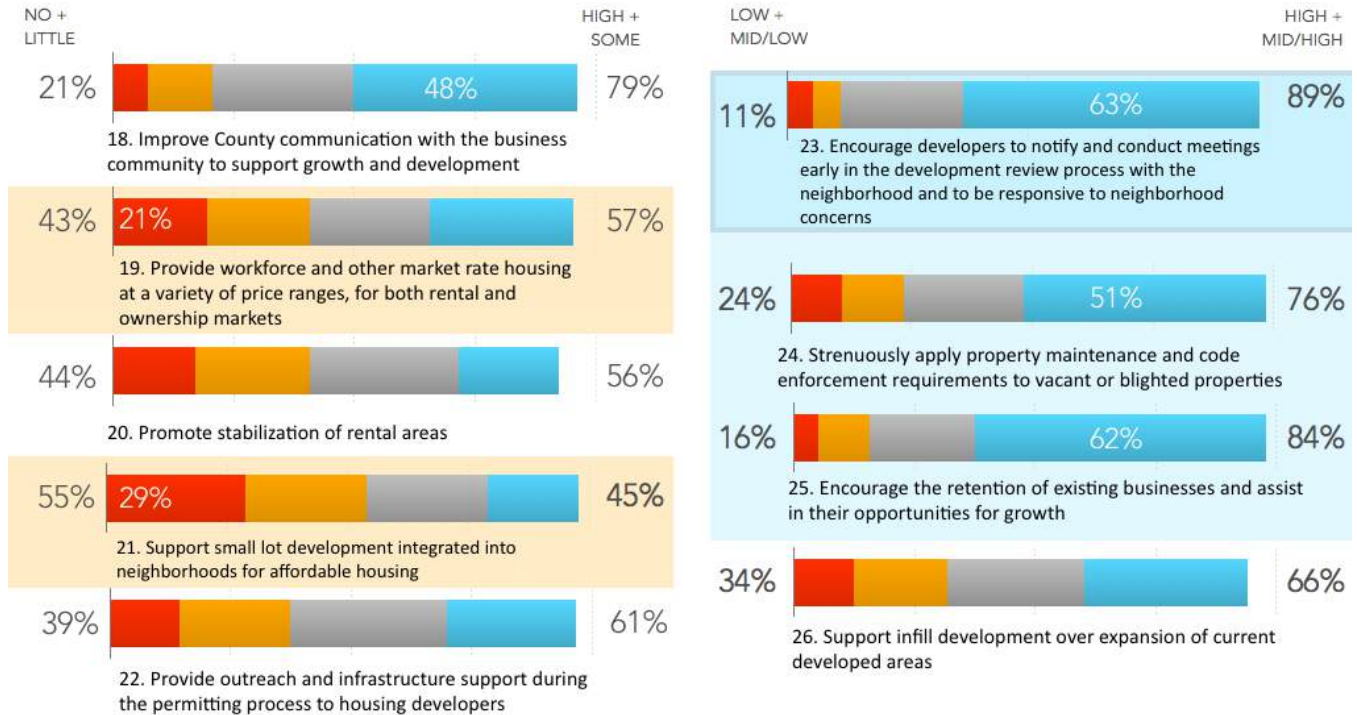


# HOUSING, NEIGHBORHOODS AND GROWTH - ECONOMIC VITALITY POLICIES

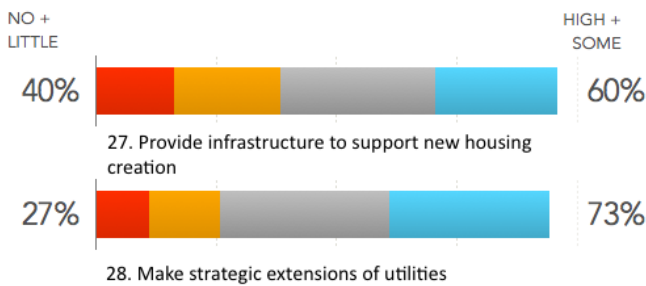




# HOUSING, NEIGHBORHOODS AND GROWTH - LAND USE POLICIES

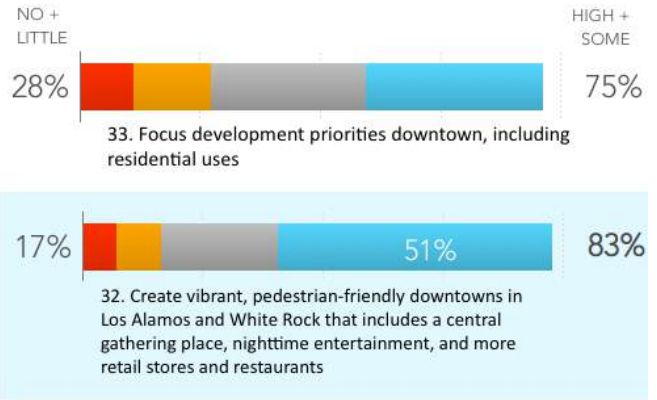


# HOUSING, NEIGHBORHOODS AND GROWTH - INFRASTRUCTURE POLICIES

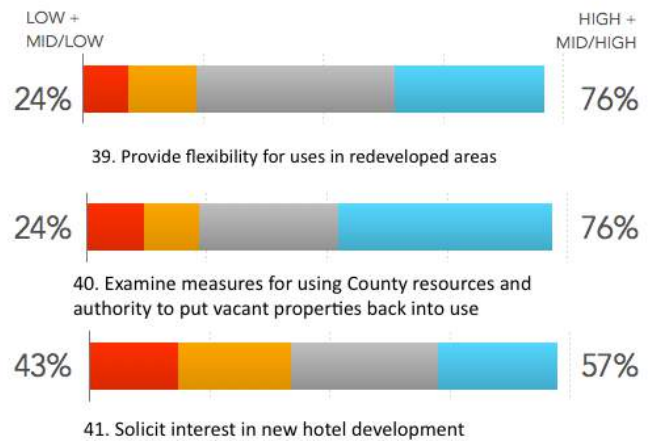
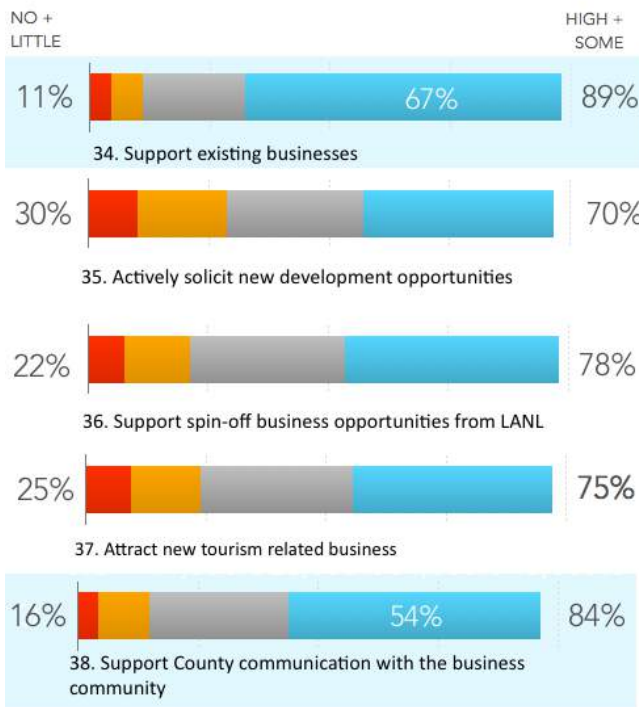




# DEVELOPMENT, REDEVELOPMENT & DOWNTOWN - GOALS

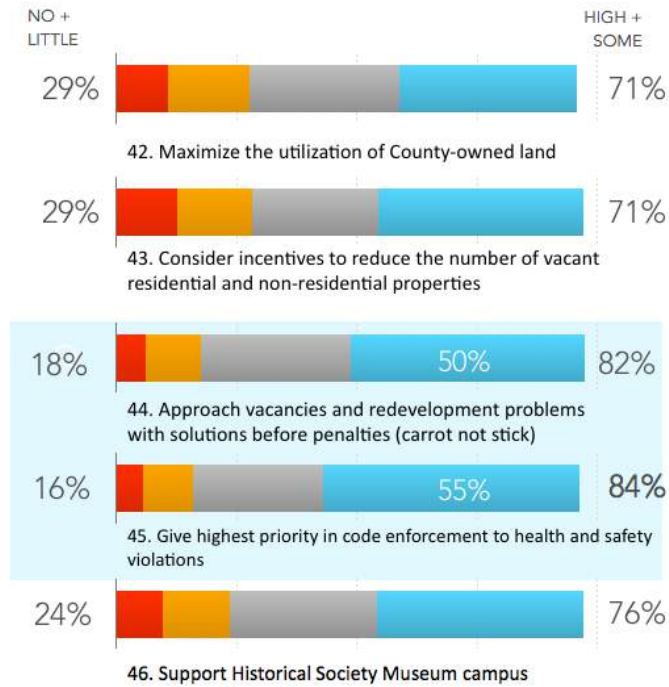


# DEVELOPMENT, REDEVELOPMENT & DOWNTOWN - ECONOMIC VITALITY POLICIES

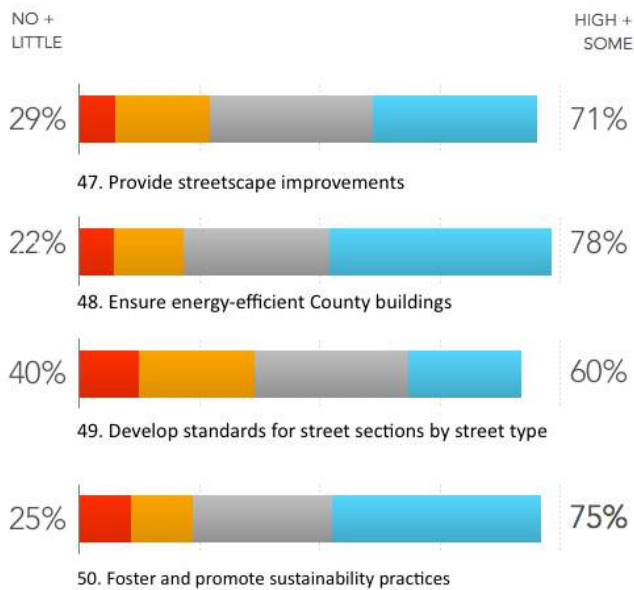




## DEVELOPMENT, REDEVELOPMENT & DOWNTOWN - LAND USE POLICIES

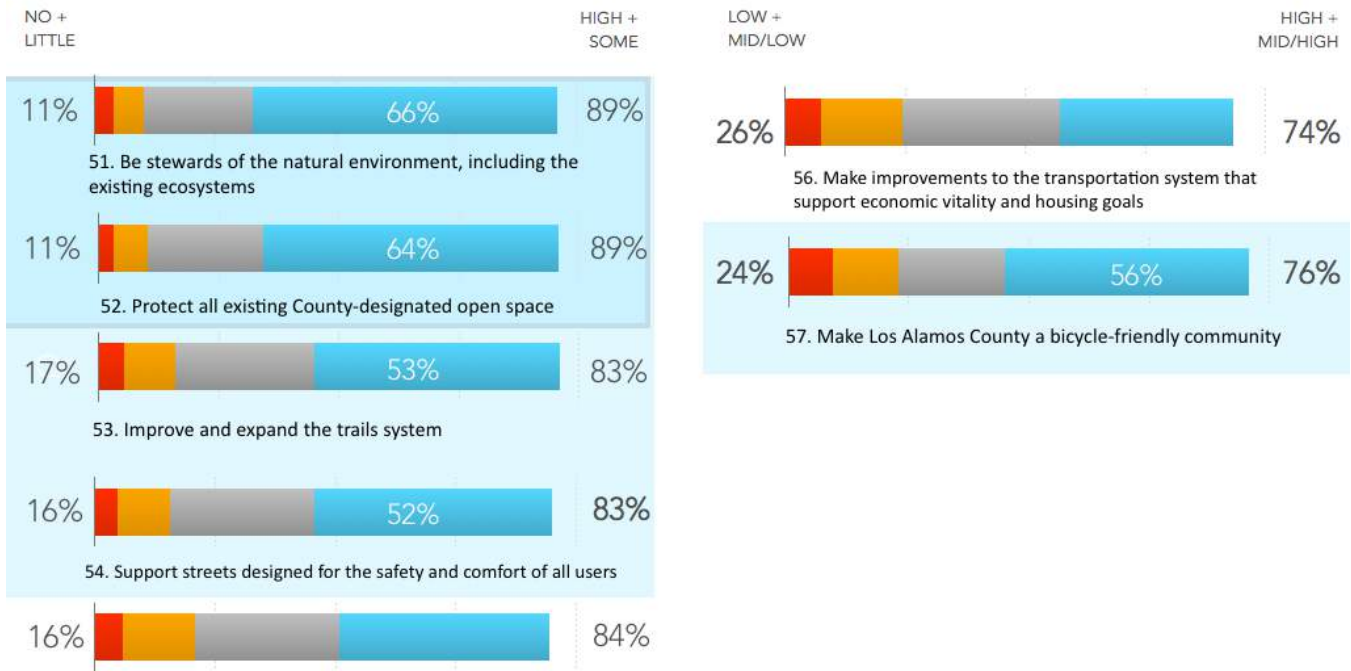


## DEVELOPMENT, REDEVELOPMENT & DOWNTOWN - INFRASTRUCTURE POLICIES

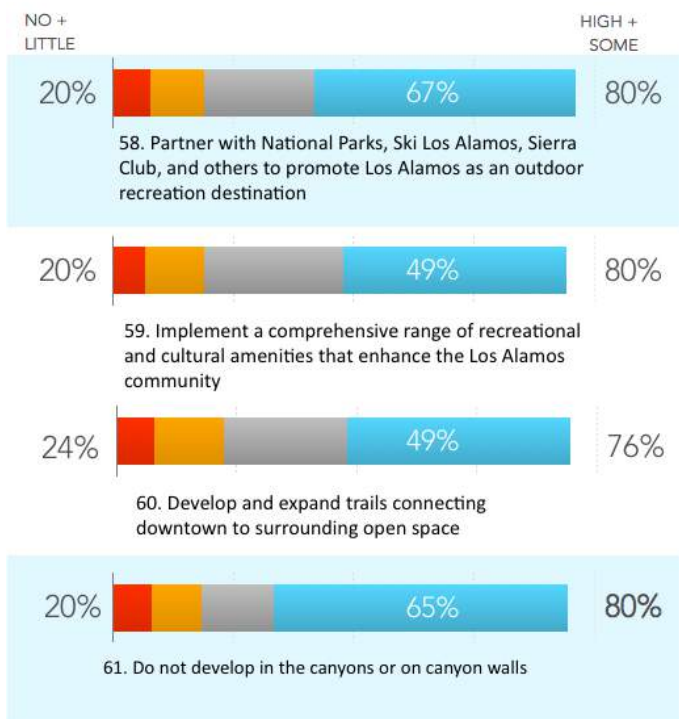




# OPEN SPACE, TRAILS AND MOBILITY - GOALS

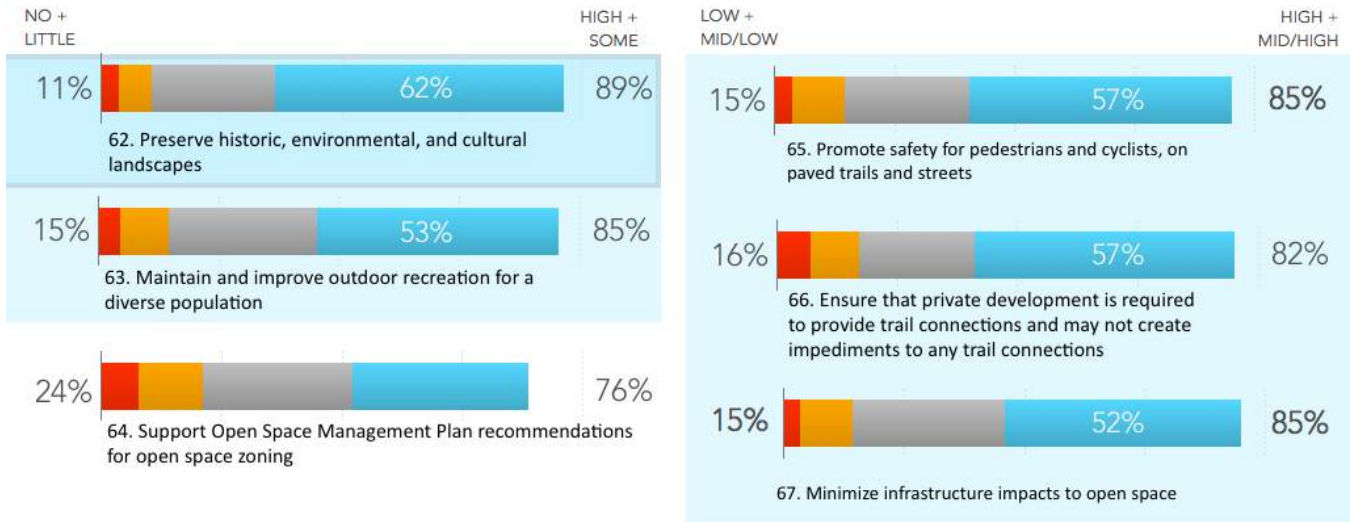


# OPEN SPACE, TRAILS AND MOBILITY - ECONOMIC VITALITY POLICIES





## OPEN SPACE, TRAILS AND MOBILITY - LAND USE POLICIES



## OPEN SPACE, TRAILS AND MOBILITY - INFRASTRUCTURE POLICIES

