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# LOS ALAMOS CAP: COMMUNITY WORKSHOP SUMMARY

April 2, 2024 | County Council Chambers & Zoom (Hybrid Meeting) | 6:00–7:30 pm

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## WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

Los Alamos County hosted a hybrid public workshop in Council Chambers and on Zoom on April 2, 2024, from 6:00–7:30 pm. Approximately 17 community members attended in Council Chambers and 8 attended on Zoom.

This document summarizes participation, discussion, questions, and feedback from the Climate Action Plan (CAP) public workshop. This input will be used to inform the draft CAP development and implementation planning.

### Workshop Goals

- Provide updates on the CAP process, including results from the GHG inventory and action analyses.
- Vet the CAP strategy and action list with the community to understand which actions are most and least supported.
- Begin soliciting input on action implementation (e.g., potential partners, equity considerations).

## Workshop Agenda

Time	Agenda Item
6:00–6:10 pm (10 min)	Welcome & introductions
6:10–6:45 pm (35 min)	Presentation & interactive polling
6:45–7:00 pm (15 min)	Q&A
7:00–7:25 pm (25 min)	Interactive activity
7:25–7:30 pm (5 min)	Thank you & adjourn

## OVERARCHING FEEDBACK & TAKEAWAYS

During the interactive polling activity, workshop attendees indicated that:

- Buildings & energy and transportation & land use are high priority focus areas for the CAP.
- Within those focus areas, there is strong support for:
  1. Incentivizing and encouraging energy efficiency and electrification retrofits.
  2. Adopting green building standards and replacing electric equipment at burnout.
  3. Developing an EV infrastructure plan.
  4. Advocating and partnering regionally to improve transit network.
  5. Developing a CTR program.
- Within those focus areas, there is less support for:
  1. Establishing energy benchmarking programs for commercial and municipal buildings.
  2. Developing a contractor training program.
  3. Implementing codes requiring EV infrastructure and promoting EV adoption.
  4. Encouraging multimodal transportation.
- Transitioning the County fleet to EVs has strong support from some and less support from others (it scored high for actions that are most and least supported).
- The CAP action list should include robust community engagement and education, promote economic development, provide resources for community members, and focus on a variety of environmental issues, including waste, carbon sequestration, food, and water resources.
- Meeting the county's climate goals may face challenges related to costs and funding, education and communication, the political and legal landscape, and differing perspectives on climate science.
- Ideas for overcoming challenges include education, framing (e.g., promote other benefits of climate action, compare with peer jurisdictions taking action), collaboration and cooperation, and legal and political action and advocacy.

During the interactive feedback activity, workshop attendees shared their opinions, suggestions, and priorities related to the draft actions, including that adaptation to a changing climate is necessary, the County fleet transition to EVs should be a lower priority, and sustainable business certification incentives would be helpful.

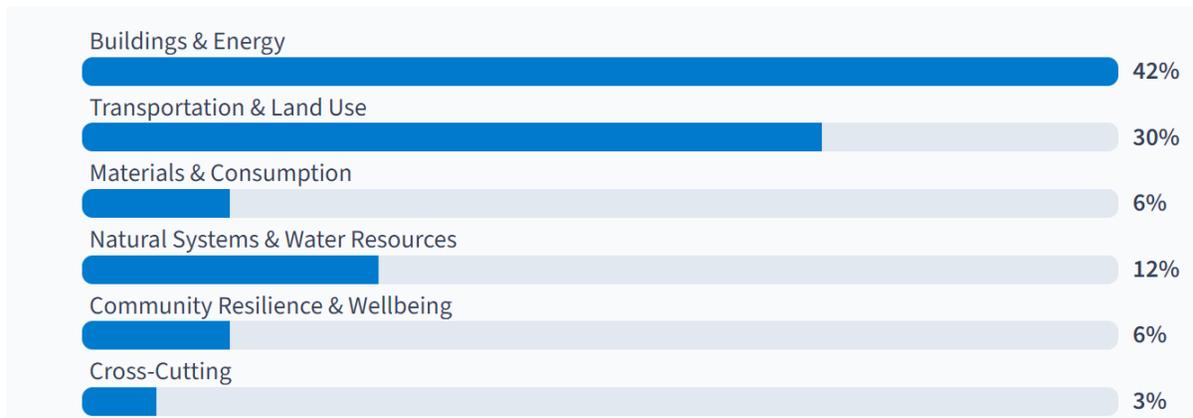
See below for more detailed feedback received during the workshop.

## INTERACTIVE POLLING QUESTIONS

At the end of the presentation, attendees participated in an interactive polling activity. Polling questions and results are summarized below.

### 1. Which focus areas should be the highest priority for the CAP? (Select up to 2.)

Attendees indicated that buildings & energy and transportation & land use should be the highest priority focus areas for the CAP, selected by 42% and 30% of attendees, respectively. This question received 33 responses (each selection registered as 1 response).

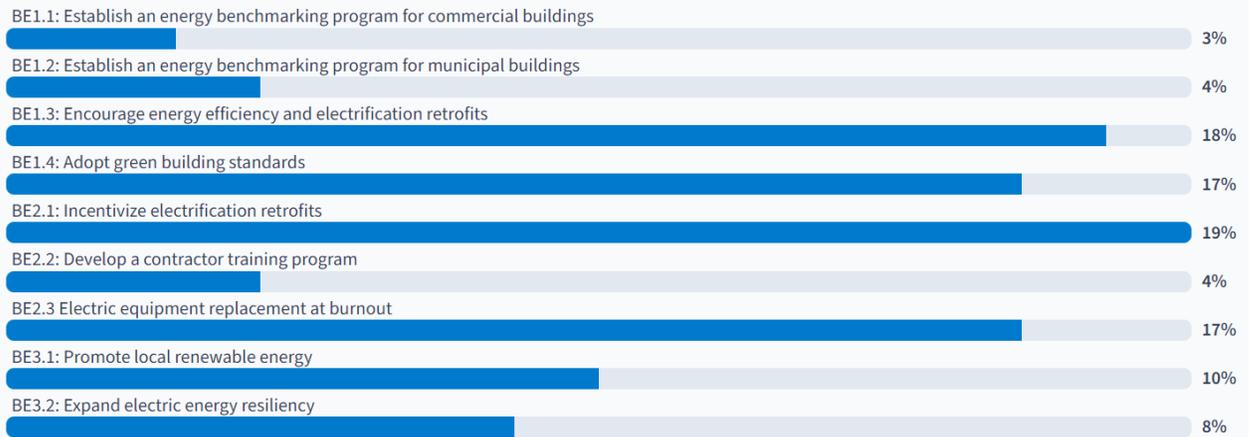


### 2. For the Buildings & Energy focus area:

#### a) Which actions do you most support? (Select up to 3.)

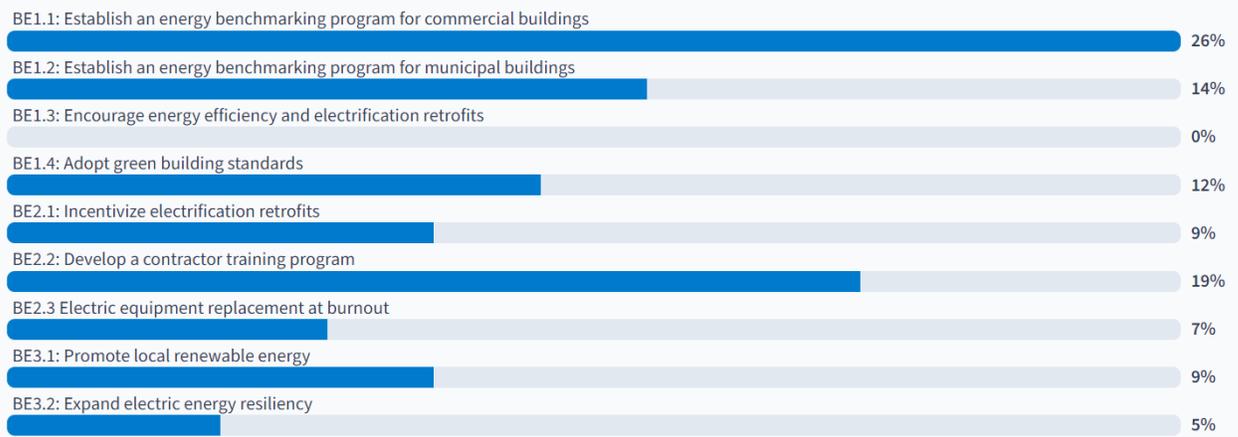
Attendees most supported actions BE2.1: Incentivize electrification retrofits (19%), BE1.3: Encourage energy efficiency and electrification retrofits (18%), BE1.4: Adopt green building standards (17%), and BE2.3: Electric equipment replacement at burnout (17%). This question received 72 responses (each selection registered as 1 response).

## Los Alamos CAP: Community Workshop Agenda



### b) Which actions do you least support, if any? (Select up to 3.)

Attendees least supported actions BE1.1: Establish an energy benchmarking program for commercial buildings (26%), BE2.2: Develop a contractor training program (19%), and BE1.2: Establish an energy benchmarking program for municipal buildings (14%). This question received 43 responses (each selection registered as 1 response).

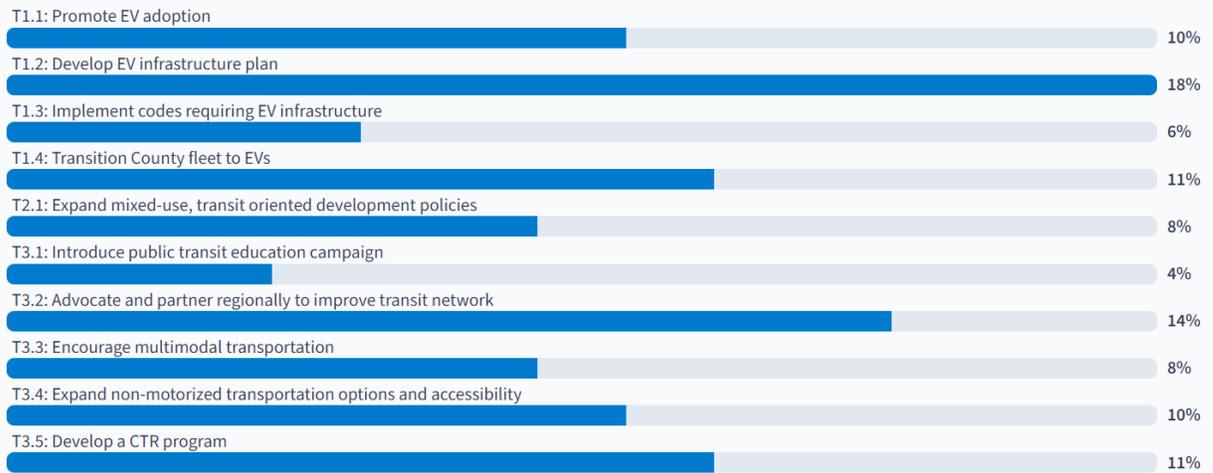


## 3. For the Transportation & Land Use focus area:

### a. Which actions do you most support? (Select up to 3.)

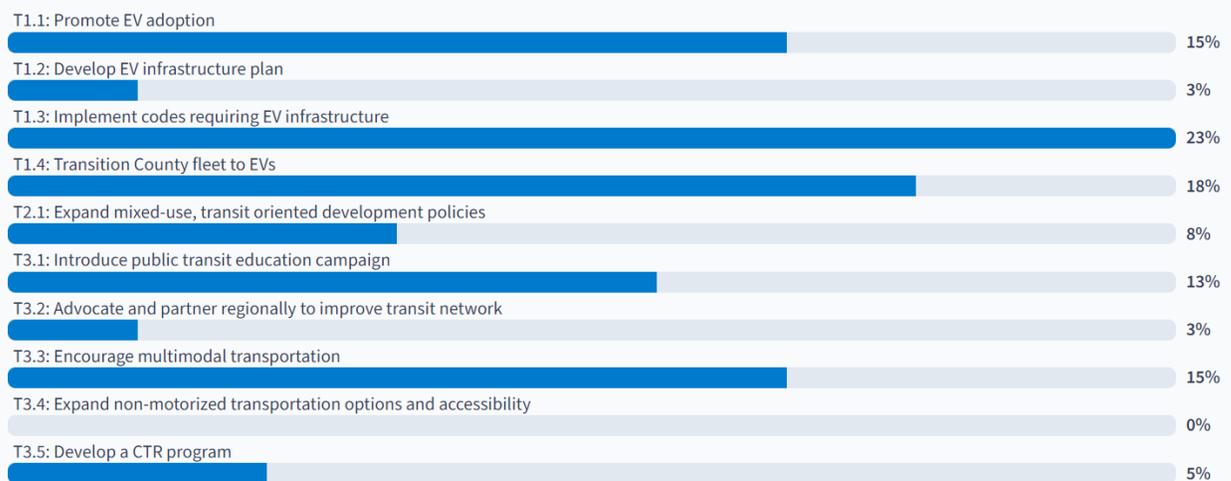
Attendees most supported actions T1.2: Develop EV infrastructure plan (18%), T3.2: Advocate and partner regionally to improve transit network (14%), T1.4: Transition County fleet to EVs (11%), and T3.5: Develop a CTR program (11%). This question received 72 responses (each selection registered as 1 response).

## Los Alamos CAP: Community Workshop Agenda



b. Which actions do you least support, if any? (Select up to 3.)

Attendees least supported actions T1.3: Implement codes requiring EV infrastructure (23%), T1.4: Transition County fleet to EVs (18%), T1.1: Promote EV adoption (15%), and T3.3: Encourage multimodal transportation (15%). This question received 40 responses (each selection registered as 1 response).



## 4. What actions are we missing?

Attendees submitted the following responses to this open-ended question:

- Provide vouchers for low income households for retrofits
- Robust community engagement
- Energy efficiency in remodeling existing buildings
- Safe streets for bicycling to work
- Work with schools to achieve these goals
- Carpool incentives (including school, sports) ...

- Diversifying local food retailers
- Support DPU with transmission challenges
- Water use plans and water catchment plans.
- Rather than encourage and education of multimodal, plan and implement safer streets for bike/ped
- Encourage economic development
- More focus on items related to water access, availability and quality.
- Community solar with regional neighbors
- Educate on plant based foods sources locally
- Reducing plastic and styrofoam usage. Emission standards for trucks
- How to sequester carbon at home
- Apartment dwellers find it very hard to charge
- Eliminating plastics in waste stream
- Economic development that bring needed services to community
- Energy justice
- Housing

## 5. What suggestions do you have to make these actions more impactful and equitable?

Attendees submitted the following responses to this open-ended question:

- Think about lab commuters
- Low/no-interest loans for residential efficiency/electrification retrofits
- Also - thank you!
- Realtime dashboard to see how actions are helping
- Don't force solutions that are not business and budget friendly.
- Robust community engagement
- Be realistic about local government imposing regulation that causes large pushback
- I have to read more - but maybe quantifying if I do x (& encourage y neighbors) what my impact would be
- Provide info about how to electrify incrementally, step by step
- Build a solar garden for customers with limited income
- Have regular updates/presentations on progress
- Including estimated costs or amounts for incentives would be helpful. It's difficult to understand how much it will cost. Perhaps \$/mtco2e
- Legalize housing to reduce emissions
- More ways to get info out into community to increase participation
- Ensure diversity in feedback and community input

## 6. What challenges may we face in meeting our target?

Attendees submitted the following responses to this open-ended question:

- Events at schools

- Promoting neighbor to neighbor communication ... providing tips/worksheets that help us
- Getting renewable energy to LAC
- Gas reduction legal landscape ... lessons learned from municipalities that are further down this path
- Education on appliance replacement/\$
- Reducing emissions in (just) LA will not affect the climate in LA
- Up front costs
- \$\$
- People in LA don't love to spend money unless they know it will have good ROI
- Partnering w other local stakeholders
- Ambitions not supported by available funding. Unsustainable expectations.
- So many commuters may not feel invested.
- How to move climate deniers to reduce carbon
- People not understanding the benefit of these actions
- Cost to households to comply with policies
- Political opposition: NIMBYism, resistance to change
- State anti-donation law
- Changing the politics of climate change
- Land use requirements for large solar, nuclear, utility expansion
- Climate change deniers

## 7. How should we overcome those challenges?

Attendees submitted the following responses to this open-ended question:

- Make the right choice = an easy choice
- Present things as a way to save money, increase air quality, etc rather than climate focused. Mutual benefits.
- Remind people this is not radical stuff
- Need to start incremental improvements and investments now
- Be adaptable. Watch what happens in other areas and do not repeat failed strategies.
- More bus routes in evening and weekend
- Cooperation with tribal communities
- Constantly give examples of how other cities and towns and states have already done this
- Remove the many legal barriers to dense housing
- Work with state legislature to modify anti donation clause
- County insert in newspaper on appliance replacement
- Build sense of community
- Events like these are good to educate people and give them the opportunity to ask questions
- Educate and incentivize
- Continued community education
- adequate public transit to other cities and more services provided locally

- Good journalism that explains
- Workplace and neighborhood communication

## Q&A

After the presentation and interactive polling activity, attendees were invited to ask questions during a live Q&A session. See below for paraphrased questions and responses.

- **Question:** A lot of these recommendations need to be implemented in order to reach our goal, but we just voted on preferences; how will you assess preferences versus what really needs to happen to reach the desired goal?
  - **Answer:** *Our analysis did show that we need all the actions modeled to reach the GHG reduction target; that said, there are options in terms of when actions might be implemented over time. High-priority actions with strong community support might be prioritized for early implementation, while less impactful actions with less support might be considered for exclusion from the plan.*
- **Question:** Is there a strategy to encourage heater replacement before emergencies, considering most replacements occur under duress?
  - **Answer:** *Education and access to resources are key strategies to encourage proactive heater replacements. Providing information and resources before emergencies can help individuals make informed decisions and consider the benefits of retrofits, which can reduce energy use and make for a more comfortable home.*
- **Question:** How will funding for the CAP be addressed? Is there funding allocated for education and outreach staff?
  - **Answer:** *Council is considering a few items this budget cycle; some have stemmed from LARES; one of those includes education and outreach. There's a lot of available federal funding right now, so we're thinking about how we can leverage existing funding sources.*
- **Question:** The state has a strong anti-donation clause; has there been any headway in the state legislature about this?
  - **Answer:** *A New Mexico Climate Investment Center has been funded by the governor's budget. It is set up as a 501(c)(3) to address this issue. Federal funds will be directed through the 501(c)(3). There are also available tax credits at the state and federal level.*
- **Question:** The actions seem to focus on CO<sub>2</sub> reduction. Emissions from Los Alamos don't impact our climate. Climate change is happening now; I'm concerned that the emphasis on emissions misses things that affect our health and safety.
  - **Answer:** *The analysis focused on CO<sub>2</sub> reductions. We acknowledge that climate change is already happening and having real impacts on the community. One of the top actions that came out from the multicriteria analysis was conducting a climate vulnerability analysis, which would help us get a more comprehensive understanding of the climate risks the community faces, which can help us identify policies and solutions to*

*address those risks. There are some other actions on the list that focus on resilience. We would love to hear specific ideas if you have any.*

- **Question:** What are the plans for revising and updating the CAP based on technology advancements and changing circumstances?
  - **Answer:** *Adaptability is an important consideration here. The CAP will include an implementation plan, which will include information about how the plan will be maintained and monitored over time. This includes regular reviews, assessments of progress, and adjustments to strategies to ensure effectiveness and relevance over time.*
- **Question:** Are there specific methodologies and references used in emissions reduction calculations?
  - **Answer:** *We create our analyses to have transparent assumptions and data sources. Our analysis assumptions will be included in a detailed technical appendix in the CAP and can be provided upon request.*
- **Question:** Will these actions also focus on reducing energy (e.g., eliminate commutes and reduce building energy use)?
  - **Answer:** *Demand management is an important piece of this puzzle. We do have actions that promote energy efficiency in both the buildings and transportation sectors. We are open to additional ideas.*
- **Question:** Has the County changed operational policy toward vehicles to end idling and move toward an EV fleet?
  - **Answer:** *The County is currently revising the idling policy that will apply to County operations and will include education for the community. The County has also allocated funding to procure EV's at a minimum of 2 vehicles annually.*
- **Question:** Will the CAP address residential PV microgrid (excess electricity passed back to the grid) by eliminating the limit on residential PV generation and better supporting residential PV?
  - **Answer:** *The CAP does have a proposed action to address residential solar. "Support local and statewide standards for community solar programs, micro-grid establishment, and grid modernization. Continue to work with DPU to plan for enhanced distributive energy goals and assist with rooftop distributed solar installation by installing net meters to reduce energy costs. This action aligns with the County's Integrated Resource Plan, which recommends greatly increasing local solar generation and storage capacity."*

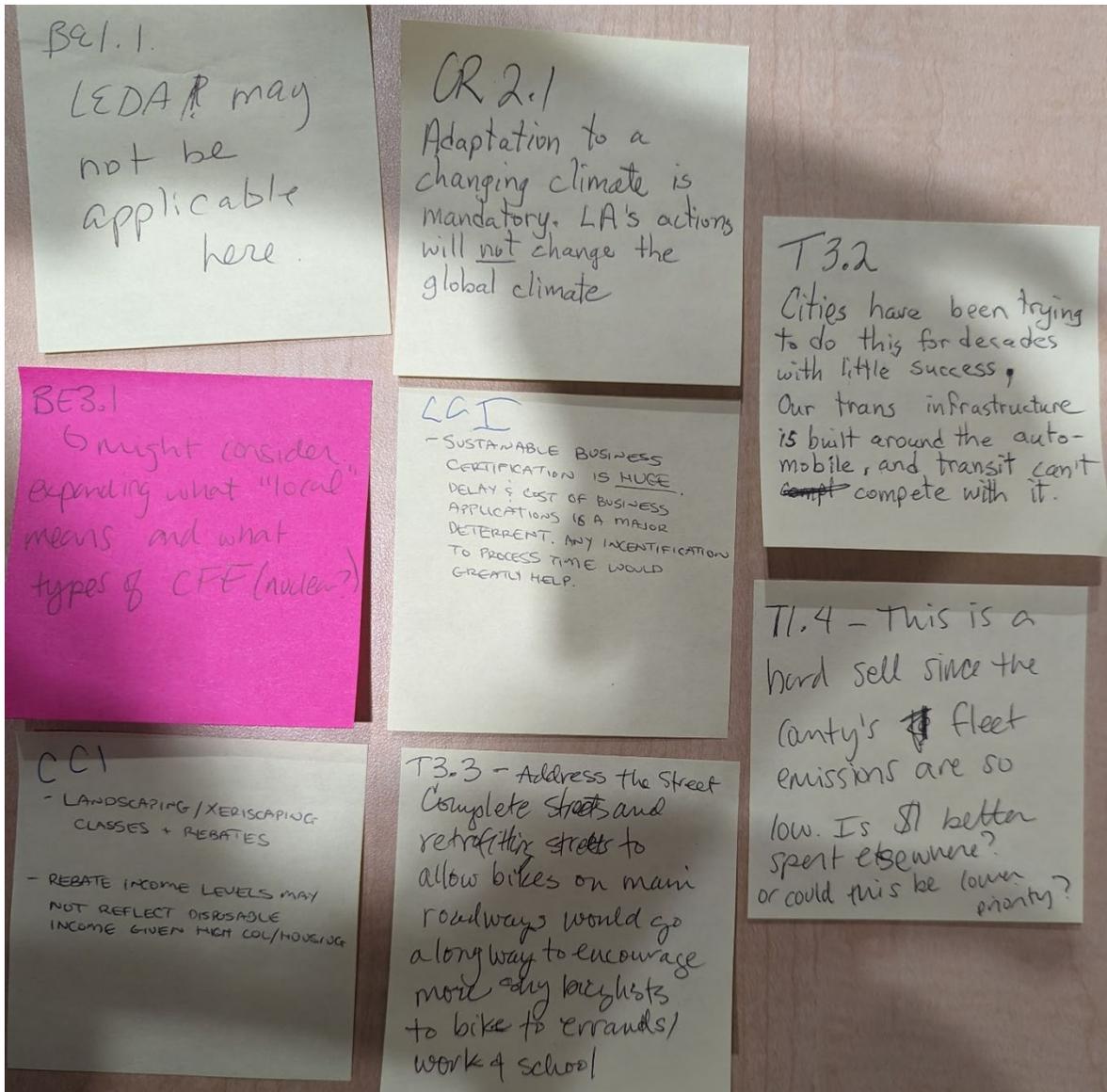
## INTERACTIVE FEEDBACK ACTIVITY

At the end of the presentation, polling, and Q&A, attendees were invited to provide additional feedback on the draft actions.

*What feedback do you have about these proposed actions? (E.g., support, concerns, partnerships, implementation considerations, equity considerations)*

Attendees submitted the following responses to this open-ended question:

- BE1.1: LEDA may not be applicable here
- BE3.1: Might consider expanding what "local" means and what types of CFE (nuclear?)
- T1.4: This is a hard sell since the County's fleet emissions are so low. Is \$ better spent elsewhere? Or could this be lower priority?
- T3.2: Cities have been trying to do this for decades with little success. Our trans infrastructure is built around the automobile, and transit can't compete with it
- T3.3: Address the street; complete streets and retrofitting streets to allow bikes on main roadways would go a long way to encourage more shy bicyclists to bike to errands/work and school
- CR2.1: Adaptation to a changing climate is mandatory. LA's actions will not change the global climate
- CC1: Sustainable business certification is huge. Delay and cost of business applications is a major deterrent. Any incentivization to process time would greatly help
- CC1:
  - Landscaping/xeriscaping classes and rebates
  - Rebate income levels may not reflect disposable income given high COL/housing



## OPTIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

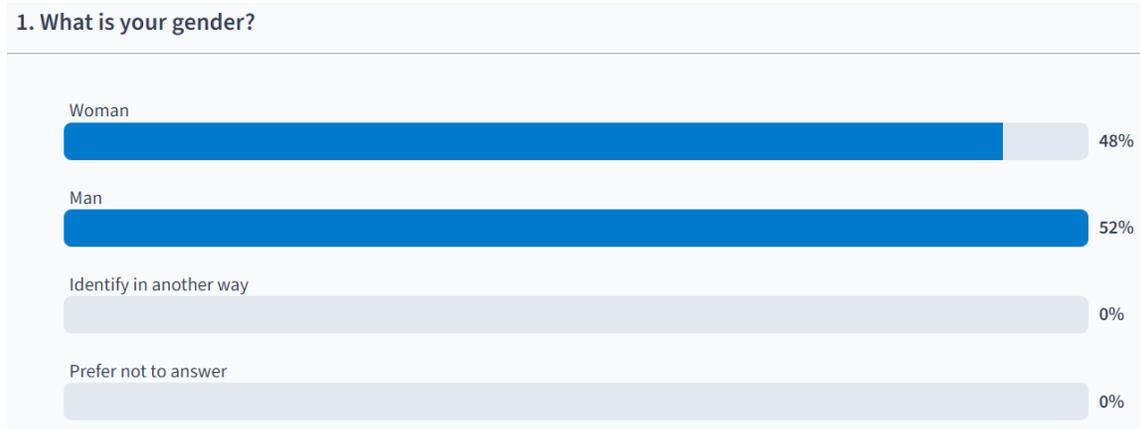
At the end of the interactive polling questions and before the interactive feedback activity, workshop attendees were invited to complete an anonymous, optional demographic survey. The demographic survey was completed by 22 workshop attendees; results are summarized below. When census data is available, demographics from the workshop are compared with the demographics of Los Alamos County.<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [QuickFacts: Los Alamos County | census.gov](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/los-alamos-county-nm)

<sup>2</sup> [Los Alamos County, NM | censusreporter.org](https://www.censusreporter.org)

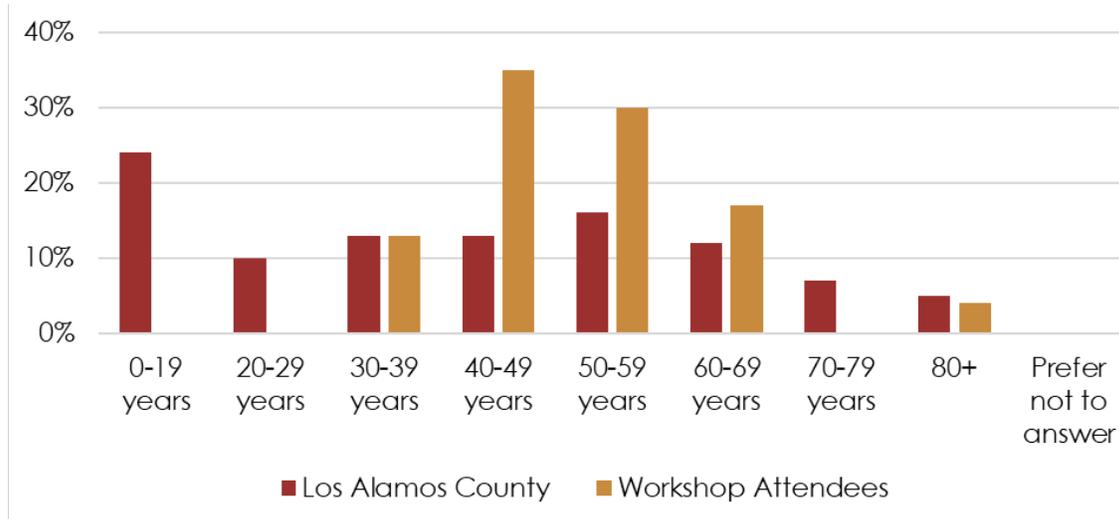
## 1. What is your gender?

About half of workshop attendees identified as women (48%) and about half of attendees identified as men (52%).



## 2. In which category is your age?

Workshop attendees were older on average than the Los Alamos County population, with a greater representation of people in the age category of 40–69 (82% of workshop attendees, compared to 41% of Los Alamos County residents).



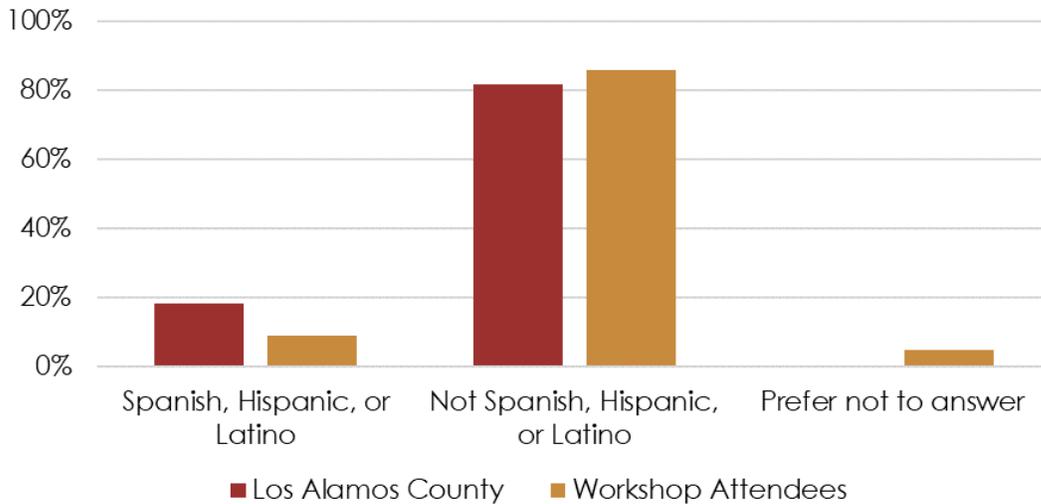
## 3. What is your race? (Mark one or more races to indicate what race you consider yourself to be.)

The majority (91%) of workshop attendees identified as white, which is similar to the Los Alamos County population (86.8%). No workshop attendees identified as Asian, Asian Indian, or Pacific Islander, compared to 7.5% of the Los Alamos population. Note that the Census reports race slightly differently than the workshop questions; see the Census linked above<sup>1</sup> and the N/As in the table below for some of these differences.

	Los Alamos County	Workshop Attendees
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1.5%	0%
Asian, Asian Indian, or Pacific Islander	7.5%	0%
Black or African American	1.4%	0%
White	86.8%	91%
Two or more races	2.7%	N/A
Other	N/A	5%
Prefer not to answer	N/A	5%

#### 4. Are you Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino?

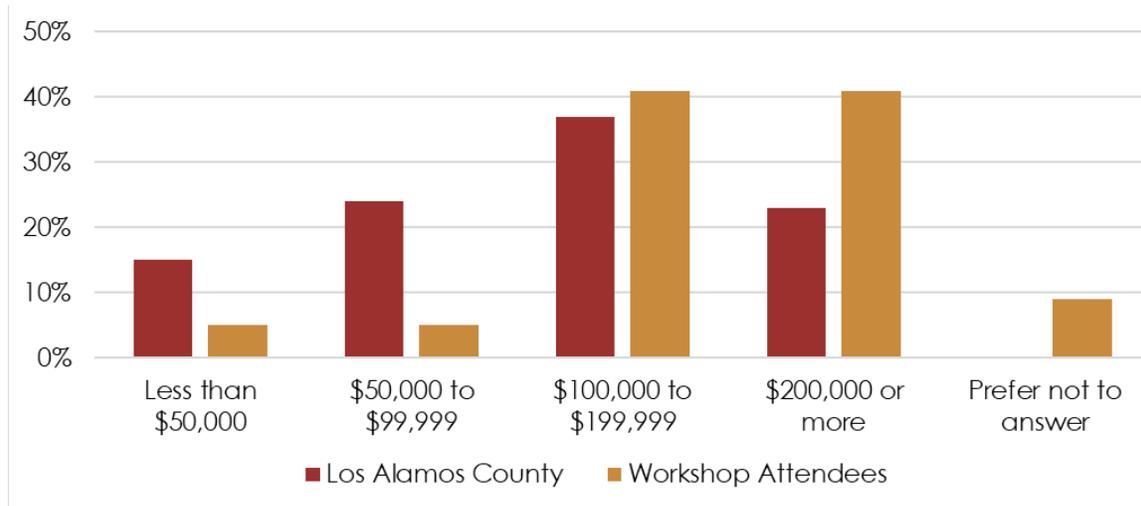
The majority (86%) of workshop attendees did not identify as Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino, compared to 82% of the Los Alamos County population.



#### 5. How much do you anticipate your household's total income before taxes will be for the current year? (Please include in your total income money from all sources for all persons living in your household.)

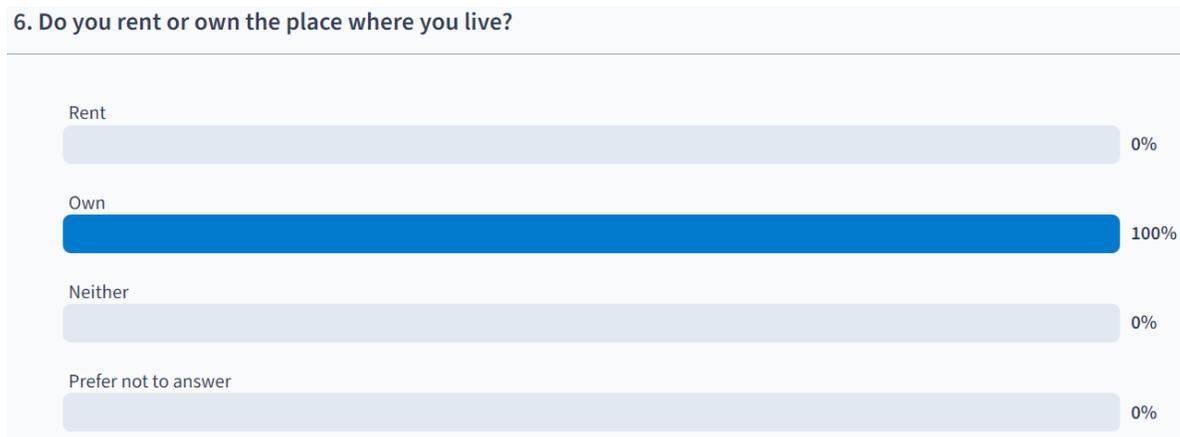
Workshop attendees had higher household incomes on average than the Los Alamos County population, with a greater representation of people in the \$200,000

or more category (41% of workshop attendees, compared to 23% of Los Alamos County residents).



### 6. Do you rent or own the place where you live?

All workshop attendees owned their home.



### 7. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Workshop attendees had higher educational attainment on average than the Los Alamos County population, with a greater representation of people holding bachelor's and graduate or professional degrees (100% of workshop attendees, compared to 69% of Los Alamos County residents).

## Los Alamos CAP: Community Workshop Agenda

