

A Letter from Community Development

Dear Community and Friends,

This annual economic vitality progress report highlights projects, programs, and initiatives intended to spark growth and vibrancy in our local economy and further efforts to improve the overall quality of life in Los Alamos County. Los Alamos' business community continues to improve under the Council's leadership and with the support of community partners and our tenacious local business owners.

In keeping with Council's leadership priorities, the Los Alamos Community Development Department is proud to support and facilitate these Council-lead economic development initiatives.

Plan for smart growth: Since the County has scarce land to develop, the County's focus is to attract infill and redevelopment opportunities. To this end, the County facilitated, adopted, and began implementing its Downtown Los Alamos and White Rock Town Center master plan. These plans, along with the recently adopted comprehensive update to the County's Chapter 16 -Development Code and designation of the White Rock Metropolitan Redevelopment Area, will guide and support the desired revitalization of our two core business centers.

Expand and diversify housing: We continue to seek out, strategically invest in and facilitate housing development opportunities to assist homebuyers in purchasing their first home and support existing homeowners in making critical improvements to their homes.

Collaboration with local partners: We continue to strengthen existing partnerships and the local business environment, so we are all working in concert to enhance the quality of life in Los Alamos and throughout Northern New Mexico. Focus areas include workforce development, access to daycare, and multi-model transit.

And finally, we emphasize that it is vital to support our prosperity by patronizing local businesses and buying local whenever possible. We all benefit from a vibrant downtown area with flourishing shops, services, and restaurants.

Sincerely,



Paul Andrus
Community Development Director
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Artist Margarita Ryan's mural of J. Robert Oppenheimer, Bathtub Row Brewing Co-op.

TOURISM

Film director Christopher Nolan's blockbuster movie, *Oppenheimer*, premiered on July 21, 2023, and is shining a spotlight on Los Alamos' unique scientific, world-changing history. With six film locations in Los Alamos, the County, along with its partners in the community, at the Lab, and across the state, is harnessing the marketing potential of film tourism to bring visitors to the County's attractions and businesses. Look for "Oppie"-themed tours, events, merch, and business offerings on the "Project Oppenheimer" community webpage www.lacnm.com/projectopp.

White Rock Visitor Center is currently undergoing a temporary refresh with new exhibits, displays, furniture and reorganization. Bathrooms are receiving upgrades to improve water flow and pressure along with updated bathroom fixtures. A more permanent and extensive remodel will take place next year.

BROADBAND

The County worked with consultants CTC Technology & Energy to conduct a broadband study to determine the feasibility, cost, and community support for a Community Broadband Network, installing fiber connections to every Los Alamos home and business. Based on study results, the County Council has directed staff to pursue a project to procure an open-access County-owned network partner for installation and ongoing operations. The estimated cost is \$34 million. All options for funding the installation of the infrastructure will be considered. This fiber-to-the-home project within Los Alamos County will work hand-in-hand with the "middle mile" fiber optic project for a 2nd fiber optic line to be brought into the community connecting to hubs in both Santa Fe and Albuquerque. This new fiber line will enable internet service resiliency as well as provide enhanced competition.

STAY CONNECTED!

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Los Alamos County, New Mexico 2023 COMMUNITY VITALITY UPDATE

A Progress Report on Community Goals and Projects



Downtown Los Alamos

LOS ALAMOS
where discoveries are made

DEMOGRAPHICS

OVERVIEW

Median age: 41.5 years old
Average household income: \$123,677
Unemployment rate 2023: 1.5%
Business Licenses FY23 (new/renewals): 517

POPULATION

Los Alamos County: 19,187
Daytime Population: 25,000+

REAL ESTATE

Los Alamos County
Median Home Value: \$343,100
National Home Value: \$244,900
Los Alamos County Median Rent: \$1,143
National Median Rent: \$1,163

RENT VS. OWN

Los Alamos County Renters: 26 percent
Los Alamos Homeowners: 74 percent

EDUCATION:

- 98% High school graduate or higher
- 34% Bachelors
- 33% Masters
- 22% Doctorate

MAJOR EMPLOYERS

(budget ■ #employees)
Los Alamos National Laboratory:
\$4 billion ■ 17,244 Employees
N3B Environmental Management
\$2 billion over ten years ■ 647 Employees

SUPPORT OUR BUSINESSES

- Shop local first!
- Patronize local restaurants and food trucks
- Post a positive review online
- Attend community events
- Subscribe to local business news resources
County lacnm.com/subscribe
Chamber of Commerce facebook.com/LosAlamosChamber
MainStreet losalamosmainstreet.com
Volunteer! volunteerlosalamos.org

SCAN TO FIND

"100 Things to do This Summer"



VISION

"Los Alamos is a world-renowned community where discovery and innovation are inspired by its dramatic history. Extraordinary educational, recreational, and cultural opportunities abound in a vibrant and welcoming small-town atmosphere situated in a magnificent mountain setting."

—2023 Strategic Leadership Plan

ECONOMIC VITALITY

Economic vitality encompasses the ability of the community to diversify, develop, grow, and sustain the many elements necessary for a local economy to flourish. The 2023 Strategic Leadership Plan outlines these focus areas:

- Housing
- Local Business Recruitment, Retention, and Expansion
- Downtown Revitalization
- Tourism and Special Events
- Community Broadband

HOUSING

The County Council Goal to "increase the variety of housing options for all segments of the community, both affordable and market rate" is one of the economic priorities for attracting new businesses and recruiting and retaining new Lab hires.

The County is pursuing all options, including the conveyance of Department of Energy (DOE)-owned parcels no longer being used by the Lab. Four of the new housing projects listed below are located on DOE transfer lands and all offer a variety of configurations and designations (e.g., single-family, multi-family, mixed-use, workforce, senior, etc.) to meet the needs of residents.

- **The Bluffs** on DP Road in Los Alamos (64 multi-family units for seniors)—Status: Under construction; estimated completion: end of 2023.
- **Canyon Walk Apartments** on DP Road in Los Alamos (70 multi-family units)—Status: Completed and fully occupied.
- **The Hill Apartments** on 35th Street in Los Alamos (144 multi-family units)—Status: Under construction; estimated completion: end of 2023.
- **Arkansas Place** on Arkansas Avenue in North Community (44 multi-family condo units)—Status: Under construction; sales begin: fall 2023.
- **Mirador Single-Family** south of NM4 in White Rock (161 single-family units)—Status: 86 units completed.
- **Mirador Multi-Use** south of NM4 in White Rock (57 multi-family rental units)—Status: Under construction; estimated completion: end of 2023.
- **Cañada Bonita** on Canyon Road in Los Alamos (150 multi-family units)—Status: Awaiting site plan approval.
- **Arbolada** on North Mesa in Los Alamos (85 single-family detached units)—Status: Approved and awaiting permit application.
- **North Mesa Housing Project** north of San Ildefonso Street in Los Alamos—Status: Upcoming.

Housing Assistance programs available through the Los Alamos Housing Partnership include the Home Renewal Program (HRP), which allows income-qualified homeowners within the County to make needed repairs or improvements to their homes for increased efficiency, safety, and livability, without adding monthly expenses. The Homebuyer Assistance Program (HAP) assists income qualifying households with a non-amortizing down payment deferred loan with County funding for homebuyers within the County.

#1 ACCOLADES

2023 Los Alamos Named in 'Top 15 Best Small Towns to Visit'

Smithsonian Magazine

2023 Best Places to Live in New Mexico: #1 Los Alamos

Niche.com

2023 Best Place to Buy a House in New Mexico: #1 Los Alamos

Niche.com

2022 America's Healthiest Communities: #1 Los Alamos

US News & World Report

2022 Best School District in New Mexico: #1 Los Alamos

Niche.com

2022 Safest Cities in NM: #1 Los Alamos

Travel Safe



The Hill Apartments on 35th Street in Los Alamos.



20th Street Downtown Los Alamos.

In FY23, HRP finished 10 jobs with a total County loan amount of \$236,550. (5 in White Rock; 5 in Los Alamos townsite)

In FY23, HAP completed 3 loans in the total loan amount of \$60,900.

SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESSES

It is essential to collaborate with businesses on an individual basis to strengthen foundations and support growth, while also meeting the overall needs of the County's economic base. The following projects are priority focuses for 2023:

- **American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)**—\$1.2 million allocated; \$526,391 has been granted to small businesses, balance pending approval.
- **Local Economic Development Act (LEDA)**—One business application submitted.
- **County Code**—Chapter 16 Development Code and Chapter 18 Nuisance Code were updated and approved by County Council in 2022.
- **Customer Self-Service Portal**—Business owners can apply for, renew, and track their business licenses online.
- **Mainstreet Business Accelerator**—This new program created and administered by the Los Alamos Commerce and Development Corporation's MainStreet Program assists local entrepreneurs with bringing their new business ideas to market, including The Wolf and the Mermaid Enchanted Roasters, Los Alamos Golf and Games, Inspired Jewelers, and Wheeled.
- **DP Road**—Phase II Commercial & Residential Utilities Infrastructure (Phase I completed). Phase II out to bid in Fall 2023.
- **Small Business Lease Rate Survey**—Los Alamos MainStreet, in partnership with New Mexico MainStreet, gathered data for a market analysis of commercial lease rates in Los Alamos County. Townhall approach may be next step to gather more detailed feedback.

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

With the future visions of the White Rock and Los Alamos downtown areas captured in the master plans, the following projects are being undertaken as put forth in the plan goals:

- **Establishment of the Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA)** in White Rock: An area designated by New Mexico Main Street where tools for rehabilitation, redevelopment, and private investment may be used to stimulate economic development and community building. The same designation is being considered for a part of the Los Alamos downtown.
- **Re-envisioning 20th Street** in Los Alamos: This first step in the redevelopment of this area south of Trinity will be completed in 2023 by gathering community input first to guide subsequent development proposals.
- **Sale of A-8-a Transfer Parcel** just east of Smith's on DP Road in Los Alamos: This parcel will be competitively solicited for housing development proposals by the end of 2023.

LAC IS FOOD TRUCK FRIENDLY!

The County updated the code to make it easier and more flexible for food trucks to park and do business on county property. For an application contact: 505.662.8120.



Joe Daddy's Grill
Bathtub Row Brewing Co-op