



Chamber Business Breakfast

Los Alamos County In Review 2022

Steven Lynne
County Manager

January 12, 2023

Your Presenter

Steven Lynne County Manager



Steven Lynne, County Manager



Agenda

County Leadership

Challenges and Highlights

Council Priorities and Overarching Goals

Communication

Housing

Open Space, Recreational & Cultural Amenities

Local Business

Social Services

Broadband

Infrastructure

Questions

Los Alamos County Leadership



● **Anne Laurent**
Deputy County Manager
Acting Administrative Svcs. Dir.



● **Linda Matteson**
Deputy County Manager



● **Helen Perraglio,**
Chief Financial Officer



● **Paul Andrus**
Community Development Dir.



● **Cory Styron**
Community Services Dir.

● **Juan Rael**
Public Works Director



● **Philo Shelton**
Utilities Manager



● **Troy Hughes**
Fire Chief



● **Dino Sgambellone**
Police Chief



● **Alvin Leaphart**
County Attorney



New CMO Positions



● Danielle Duran,
Intergovernmental Affairs Manager

The Intergovernmental Affairs Manager position was created to foster relationships and look for partnering opportunities with the county's regional neighbors, state and federal stakeholders and legislators.



● Jerry Smith,
Broadband Manager

The Broadband Manager position was created to assess and oversee the Council's priority area to bring high-speed, reliable and affordable broadband to the community.



● Angelica Gurule,
Sustainability Manager

The Sustainability Manager position came directly from the LARES citizen task force recommendations. This position oversees the county's efforts to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions and promote sustainable initiatives.

2022 Challenges

Jan 2022 COVID-19 Omicron Surge - County Response:

- Distributed its supply of at-home COVID-19 rapid tests to the business community
- Implemented a COVID-19 Community e-Newsletter featuring county-specific assessments from epidemiologist Will Athas
- Brought in additional PCR testing facilities (later included rapid PCR testing)
- Hosted six COVID-19 vaccine/booster clinics and held two community briefings
- Began participating the National Wastewater Surveillance Program

Apr/May 2022 Cerro Pelado Fire:

- The fire burned 45,000 acres of forest and threatened Los Alamos County's border
- County coordinated with federal, state, regional & local partners to communicate with stakeholders, issued daily press releases, and conducted numerous community briefings
- Assisted early evacuations of Sombrillo and Aspen Ridge population
- Assisted in relocating large animals (horses) to animal shelter in other counties



2022 Challenges continued

Inflation and Supply Chain Disruptions

- Project bid responses were limited, conditional, or came in much higher than budgeted (e.g., Replacement of the White Rock Wastewater Treatment Plant, Canyon Road Project)
- Various projects were also delayed due to a shortage of materials or equipment (e.g., Leisure Lagoon)
- Employee recruitment and retention challenges
 - County worked with Council to modify union and non-union compensation packages to be more competitive





2022 Highlights



- The County was designated an American World War II Heritage City by the National Parks
- Ranked Number 1, Healthiest US Community for the third consecutive year by U.S. News and World Report
- Selected as the filming location by Director Christopher Nolan for his movie “Oppenheimer” coming to theaters July 21, 2023
- The County hosted the second annual Winter Classic Hockey event bringing hockey fans from all over the state, Texas and Colorado. The event culminated with a game between the Ice Wolves and the El Paso Rhinos (members of the North American Hockey League).



Council Goals & Strategic Priority Areas

Council adopted in February 2022, its goals and strategic priority areas for the year. Enhancing quality of life, economic vitality, environmental sustainability, and racial equity and inclusivity are overarching goals that are incorporated into each priority area, as well as coordinating and cooperating with Los Alamos National Laboratory, regional, state, and national entities.





Strategic Priority Areas

Communication

Enhancing communication to better inform and engage the public on County matters and to better interface with regional, state, and national entities.

Housing

Increasing the variety of housing options for all segments of the community, from affordable to missing middle to market rate, and pursuing new energy-efficient options and opportunities for utilizing vacant spaces throughout the county.

Open Space, Recreation & Cultural Amenities

County open spaces and cultural attractions are greatly valued by the community and provide opportunities for recreational and economic growth; appropriately allocating resources to ensure resiliency and sustainability is important to our citizens.

Local Business

Appropriately supporting existing businesses, growing new small businesses, supporting technology start-ups and spin-offs, and identifying redevelopment opportunities as a part of these efforts.





Strategic Priority Areas continued

Social Services

Behavioral, mental, and physical health and social services are important for resiliency and quality of life; County support can help address needs for appropriate types and levels of services.

Broadband

Reliable high-speed broadband service throughout the community is essential; determining appropriate investments will advance County efforts in ensuring this service.

Infrastructure

Balancing maintenance of existing infrastructure with new investments in utilities, roads, trails, expanded transit options, facilities, and amenities; and promoting sustainable and resilient practices throughout the community, such as carbon-neutral electric generation.





Los Alamos County Communications Team
May 2022 – Cerro Pelado Community
Briefing

Priority Areas



Communications

- Communication Plan Updated

The updated plan focuses on more **communication**: increase social media presence, look for other platforms to expand communication, including more video, e-newsletters, etc.

- My Civic 311 App

Work continued on the My Civic 311 app: designed to provide citizens with an easier method to report and track issues. Should allow the County to identify trends early and provide better customer service.

- New Social Media Coordinator

Council approved a new Social Media **Coordinator position** to expand and coordinate communication campaigns for a variety of online platforms.

- New Website

A contract was finalized and awarded in summer 2022 for the redesign and hosting of a new, more customer-centric website. The new site should launch summer of 2023.



Priority Areas



Housing

Projects on formerly County-owned land

- **Mirador Subdivision in White Rock:** Phase 1 includes 161 units of market rate detached single family homes. Additional permits were issued in 2022. The site plan for Phase 2, a mixed-use development (57 apartments and 11,000 square feet of commercial use space) was approved.
- **Canyon Walk Apartments:** 70 multi-family units were constructed under the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program. The project was completed and 100% of the units were leased in 2022.
- **The Bluffs Apartments (*photo next page*):** Construction is nearing completion for a senior housing rental development of 64 units under the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program with occupancy planned for 2023.
- **The Hill Apartments (*top right*):** Construction has started on 35th Street (at the old LASO site) east of the hospital for 149 market-rate apartments with completion expected in 2023



Priority Areas



Housing continued

Projects on privately owned lands

- **Arbolada on North Mesa:** Preliminary subdivision plan approved for 85 homes.
- **Ponderosa Estates Phase 3:** Preliminary subdivision plan approved for 48 homes.
- **Homes at North Community (Arkansas Place):** 44 market rate townhomes are under construction.
- **Mountain View (Trinity Drive):** 15 market rate units (10 townhomes for purchase and 5 apartments) – plans have been approved.
- **Cañada Bonita:** Rezoning of the former Visiting Nurses property on Canyon Road for mixed-use (~150 apartments, plus commercial space) was approved.
- **2201 Trinity (Century Bank mixed-use)** – Includes new bank, additional office space, and 123 housing units – site plan submitted.



Priority Areas



Open Space, Recreation & Cultural Amenities

- **Trail maintenance contract** awarded.
- **Integrated Master Plan survey** conducted to assist in prioritizing projects and maintenance needs. Plan to be completed in 2023.
- **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) audit** performed to address accessibility and inclusivity options for facility users.
- **Leisure Lagoon Construction Completed:** includes a zero-entry pool, lazy river, spray features, and a three-story, indoor/outdoor slide.
- **Golf Course Site Development Improvements and Amenities:** Various public meetings held throughout the year. Council voted in December to direct funds for maintenance and improvements on the existing golf course footprint, as well as address safety issues on the driving range with administrative controls. Higher netting to be considered separately.
- **Two Multi-use Gymnasium Projects:** Council and Los Alamos Public School Board considered options at the Middle School site, and at a school site in White Rock. Public meetings were held as well to engage the public. Both projects have received State funding.



Priority Areas



Open Space, Recreation & Cultural Amenities continued

- **Enhanced tennis court facilities:** Continued to evaluate locations to construct an eight-court facility with the ability to host tournaments.
- **Integrated trail and transportation strategy:** Developed an updated plan. Coordinated with LANL.
- **Purchased the historic Baker House (Bathtub Row):** future use is being considered and developed.
- **Food Waste Composting program:** Council approved project to divert 1,500 tons of food waste and 3,000 tons of organic yard trimmings.
- **Operation Save the Bears:** Implemented the bear-resistant dumpster and roll-cart program
- **LA RES Final Report:** Council adopted many of the recommendations to reduce the community's greenhouse gas emissions; included selecting a vendor to conduct a Greenhouse Gas baseline analysis and develop a Climate Action Plan.



Priority Areas



Local Business

- **Commercial Building Permits:** 41
- **Residential Building Permits:** 691
- **New Business Licenses:** 164
- **Chapter 16 Development Code:** Replaced in its entirety the code that governs commercial, residential, and mixed-use development and redevelopment.
- **White Rock Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA) Plan:** Council approved the plan which permits the County to use various tools to boost incentives for redevelopment projects that are consistent with the White Rock Town Center Master Plan.
- **20th Street Hotel and Conference Center:** The Local Economic Development Act (LEDA) project was terminated. Lots on 20th Street will be considered for new economic development opportunities.



Priority Areas



Local Business

- **Sales of County-owned land for economic development purposes:**
 - 3661 and 3689 Trinity Drive – Successful bidder considering options
 - 20th Street – Lots available in 2023 will be advertised for development
 - Entrada Business Park – To be advertised in 2023 for development
 - DP Road – To be advertised in 2023 for development
 - Sombrillo Court – To be advertised in 2023 for development
 - Diamond Drive and 37th Street Parcel – This single lot will be advertised in 2023 for development
- **Implemented the Small Business Assistance program (ARPA funding) to provide COVID-19 relief funding:**
 - 55 applications received from local businesses
 - \$225,000 has been distributed, as of the end of December 2022
- **Add new Business Program Manager position for greater support of local business**



Priority Areas



Social Services

- **Tween Center (grades 6-8):** Funds were approved to investigate the potential for a Tween Center to complement the Teen Center and Youth Activity Centers. A Request for Proposals (RFP) is being developed to include evaluation of site locations close to the downtown amenities, and assess building costs and program development costs. Additional outreach is needed to move the project forward in 2023.
- **Comprehensive Health Plan:** The County Health Council proposed a process for developing a plan to monitor the overall health of the community, advise on policies that affect health care, facilitate communication, and identify resources to improve health, as required by NM Senate Memorial 44 and HB137. Council voted to move forward with the proposed approach.
- **Individual Assistance ARPA Program:** Launched in December 2022 by the Social Services and Finance Divisions. The program will provide aid to families experiencing food insecurity and difficulty paying rent, utilities and household expenses resulting from the pandemic. Eligible Los Alamos residents can receive up to \$2,000.

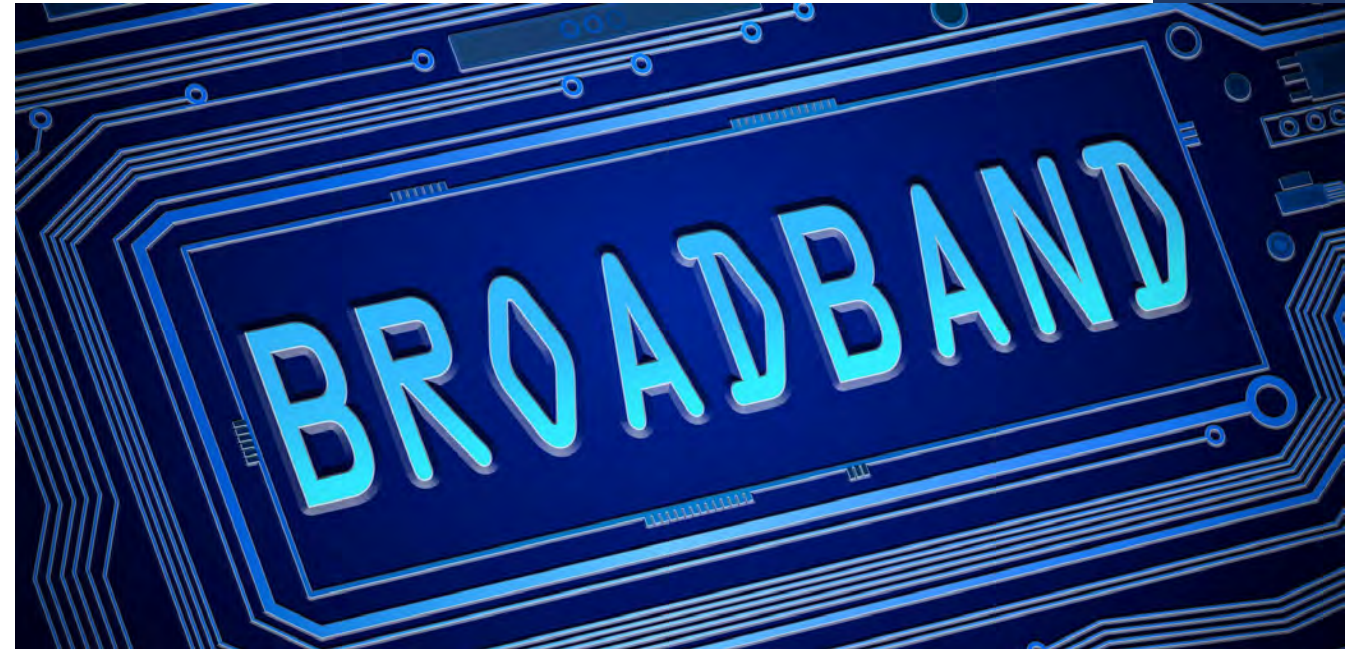


Priority Areas



Broadband

- County hired a consultant to update and validate broadband technical approach used in the 2012 design and report prepared by Crestino.
- In support of this evaluation, the consultant launched a comprehensive survey and speed test to assess broadband availability, affordability, and accessibility throughout the county. Subsequent stakeholder and public meetings were held.
- Using the updated design and report, findings will be presented to Council with options for possible implementation steps and identifying possible funding sources.
- County continues to meet with others in the region having a common interest in acquiring a second fiber-optic-based internet feed. A plan will be developed for concept, cost, and funding options of "middle mile."
- County staff continues to research other funding sources – particularly unallocated APRA and BIL funds for broadband projects



Priority Areas



Infrastructure

A substantial portion of the County budget is dedicated to infrastructure improvements. In FY2023 Capital Improvement Projects across all funds totaled roughly \$66M, making up 24% of the County's overall budget.

- **Carbon Free Power Project:** The Council and Board of Public Utilities (BPU) have been pursuing a project to build a nuclear generation facility in Idaho. The cost is presently estimated at \$89/MWhr. Council and BPU will consider in February 2023 if the County should continue in or exit the project.
- **Water Resource Recovery Facility:** Construction to replace the White Rock Wastewater Treatment Plant began in 2022 - excavation, steel, and concrete work were completed. Equipment is ordered but is delayed due to supply chain disruptions. Anticipated completion is in 2024. The new facility will produce a higher quality effluent which is better for the environment and will allow DPU to expand irrigation to the LAPS schools.
- **San Juan Generating Station (coal-fired plant):** The ownership-agreement (of which the County was a party) expired and the plant was shut down in September 2022. The County has partially replaced this power with wind and solar generation through a power purchase agreement (firmed with market power). The County continues to explore other options to replace this power.



Priority Areas



Infrastructure continued

Road improvement projects continued as planned in 2022 with the following projects completed, in design, or in construction:

- Reconstruction of **Canyon Road** with utility improvements: Completed in November 2022
- Construction of **Sherwood Blvd** drainage and road improvements (Grand Canyon Drive to Aztec Avenue)
- Reconstruction of **Cumbres del Norte** (North Mesa) Road and Utility Improvements project
- **Trinity Drive ADA and Pedestrian Improvements Project** (Diamond and Oppenheimer) was completed in 2022. Sidewalks and curbs along Trinity Drive were repaired with funding from a \$250,000 state grant
- Staff is continuing to evaluate the **Trinity Corridor** from Oppenheimer to Knecht Street (includes pedestrian and bicycle consideration)
- **DP Road Phase 2 improvements** – Roadway and utility plans were finalized in 2022. These plans will go out for bid in early 2023. This project will enhance economic opportunities on DP Road., while adding sidewalk and parking infrastructure



Priority Areas



Infrastructure continued

- **NMDOT State Road 4 Project:** County staff has advocated to widen and improve the Truck Route and NM State Road 4 intersection. When completed the project will add capacity and help reduce traffic congestion. The County is working with their state partners to keep the project moving.
- **Improve Safety of State Road 4:** An engineering study was conducted by NMDOT to add shoulders to both sides of State Road 4 between the Truck Route intersection and White Rock. The project is planned to start after NMDOT completes the intersection project.

Improve pedestrian and bicycle connections and safety:

- Both phases of the **Urban Trail Corridor** of this multiuse path are federally funded. NMDOT and environmental and cultural approvals, and engineering design are underway with construction activities anticipated in 2023.
- **Canyon Rim Trail Phase III** is underway: Legal staff is assisting with drafting the required documents to purchase the required land through an easement. Final design efforts will commence once the easement is acquired. Construction activities are anticipated in 2023.





Questions