

LWW LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS[®] OF LOS ALAMOS

UPDATE

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of Los Alamos
P.O. Box 158, Los Alamos, NM 87544
<https://my.lww.org/new-mexico/los-alamos>
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Calendar

October 3	Voter Guide distributed with the <i>LA Daily Post</i>
October 7	Candidate Forum, UNM-LA, 7 p.m. (6:30 p.m. for refreshments)
October 8	Early Voting Begins at the Municipal Building, 8 a.m.
October 17	Lunch with a Leader, Unitarian Church, Stephanie Nakhleh, noon
October 19	Early Voting begins at the White Rock Town Hall, 8 a.m.
October 24	Board Meeting, Unitarian Church, noon
November 1	Climate Action Plan, Angelica Gurule, on Zoom, noon
November 5	Election Day, Polls are open 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

September Lunch with a Leader: Stephanie Nakhleh

Our next Lunch with a Leader will be on Thursday, October 17, from noon to 1 p.m. at the Unitarian Church on N. Sage Loop. Our speaker will be Stephanie Nakhleh, the co-founder of *Boomtown*, a newsletter focused on revitalizing local journalism in Los Alamos. Raised in Los Alamos by a physicist father and a small-business owner mother, Nakhleh has witnessed both progress and challenges in the community over the years.

Nakhleh began as a cub reporter for the *Los Alamos Monitor* and later wrote feature stories for the *Santa Fe New Mexican*. Her passion for investigative journalism led to co-founding *Boomtown* with photographer Minesh Bacrania. *Boomtown* covers critical local issues like homelessness, downtown redevelopment, and road safety.

Nakhleh will reflect on the evolving role of journalism in Los Alamos over the past three decades. Attendees will hear about the challenges that have emerged with the decline of traditional newsrooms, and how new models like *Boomtown*, published on the Substack platform, are working to fill the gap. She'll discuss critical community issues such as housing, substance use, and road safety, while emphasizing the importance of transparency and community engagement in addressing these challenges.



Karyl Ann Armbruster Stephanie Nakhleh, photo courtesy of Boomtown.

Candidate Forum

The League will hold a Candidate Forum for the November general election on Monday evening, October 7, at 7:00 PM in the UNM/LA Student Center, Building 2. At 6:30 there will be refreshments and opportunity to chat with the candidates.

Outgoing County Clerk Naomi Maestas will explain the voting procedures. Kristin Henderson, Chair of the UNM-LA Advisory Board, will explain the UNM-LA GO Bonds question.

Representative Christine Chandler, running for NM House District 43, and Michael Redondo, running for Los Alamos County Clerk, are both unopposed, but they will speak and answer questions.

There are five candidates running for the three positions for County Council. They are: Republican David Reagor; Libertarian James Wernicke; Democrats Beverly Neal-Clinton, Ryn Herrmann, and Denise Derkacs. They will also speak and answer questions. Members of the Los Alamos High School Hilltalkers will be the timekeepers.

Election Schedule

- **Early Voting in Person**
Tuesday, October 8 thru Friday, October 18: Monday thru Friday:
from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Los Alamos County Municipal Building, Council Chambers
- **Early Voting in Person (continued)**
Saturday, Oct. 19 thru Saturday, Nov. 2: Monday thru Saturday
from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Los Alamos County Municipal Building, Council Chambers
and at the White Rock Town Hall, Training Rooms
- **Election Day, Tuesday, November 5**
Vote Centers open 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Registered voters of Los Alamos County may vote at **any** of the following Vote Centers on Election Day:
 - Los Alamos County Municipal Building - Council Chambers
 - White Rock Town Hall – Conference Training Rooms
 - Golf Course Community Building – Multi-Purpose Room
 - Betty Ehart Senior Center – Downstairs Classroom
 - University of New Mexico-Los Alamos – Building 2, Room 230

Latest on the Climate Action Plan

Los Alamos County Sustainability Manager Angelica Gurule will speak to the League about progress on the Climate Action Plan (CAP) at a special virtual meeting from noon to 1 p.m. on Friday, November 1. The link will be sent to League members on October 25. The final plan is scheduled to be heard by Council later in November.

The draft Climate Action Plan (link is below) was presented to the County Council in July and subsequently County residents were invited to submit comments, which have been reviewed by the Environmental Sustainability Board (ESB).

Sue Barns, member of the ESB, wrote, “Adoption of the CAP would be the culmination of nearly 4 years of work (!) by concerned Los Alamos citizens and staff. It would be a huge step forward in so many aspects of environmental sustainability and resilience to climate change.”

<https://www.losalamosnm.us/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/departments/county-manager/documents/b-draft-climate-action-plan.pdf>

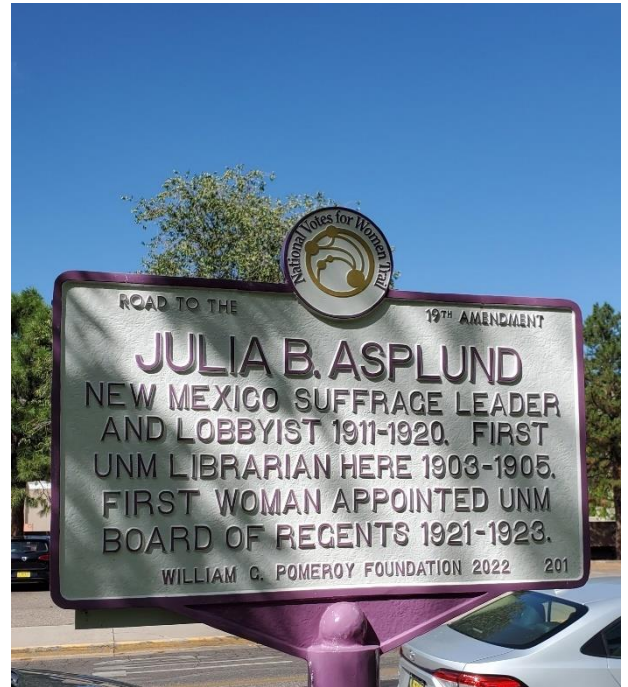
Barbara Calef

President's Message: Women's Equality Day

August 26, my mom and I traveled to Albuquerque for a Women's Equality Day celebration at the historic Hodgin Hall on the UNM campus. She was born just 18 years after the 19th Amendment guaranteeing women's suffrage was ratified and has lived through many significant changes in what it means for a woman to be active in the political landscape.

The celebration honored Julia Brown Asplund, a New Mexico women's suffrage leader. Ms. Asplund was born in Missouri and moved to New Mexico in 1903 at the age of 28 to serve as UNM's first professionally trained librarian. From 1914 - 1916 she served as president of the New Mexico Federation of Women's Clubs. She helped organize an automobile parade of more than 150 women to challenge U.S. Senator Thomas Catron, a New Mexico Republican who opposed women's suffrage. She helped form the New Mexico chapter of the Congressional Union for Women's Suffrage and played a key role in lobbying the New Mexico Legislature to ratify the 19th Amendment in 1920. In addition to her work in the suffrage movement, she served as the first woman UNM regent from 1921-23 and was appointed as the first chair of State Library Commission from 1941-54, where she focused on providing books in both English and Spanish to children.

The celebration included the placement of a trail marker and talks by Professor Cathleen Cahill, historian from Penn State, and Lisa K. Curtis, lawyer and Chair of the New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women. The trail marker is part of the National Votes for Women Trail to commemorate historic sites around the U.S. where women worked for suffrage. The Trail is marked with plaques and digitally on their website: [View the Trail – National Collaborative for Women's History Sites \(ncwhs.org\)](http://ncwhs.org).



Julia Brown Asplund trail marker at UNM. Photo by Felicia Orth

Felicia Orth

Farewell to Rebecca Chaiken

Rebecca has always been one of the most efficient people we've known. But this time it makes us sad.

In August she quietly announced that she was planning to move back to Minnesota as soon as she found a house there and then suddenly she's packed up and expecting the movers in three days! She and husband Cam Counters are moving to St. Paul, Minnesota. We didn't even have time to give her a farewell party or tell her how much we'll miss her accuracy, speed, thoroughness--and above all her cheerful disposition. In her five years as our secretary, she volunteered for several organizations and was the model citizen.

We wish her and Cam the very best in their new home.

Welcome, New Member!

Jyl DeHaven writes:

I moved to Los Alamos at the end of February from Santa Fe. I am a commercial real estate broker with Colliers International and my primary 'territory' is Los Alamos. I was excited to find a place to live - and relocate. I moved to New Mexico about 11 years ago from Fort Worth, Texas, where I was a CRE broker and Associate Professor at University of Texas at Arlington in the school of urban planning. My focus was sustainable/green cities.

I am a native New Mexican - born in Roswell and lived in Albuquerque and Farmington before moving to Texas as a pre-teen. I have a BFA in Art and an MS in clinical nutrition.

I am on the Health Council Board/LA, the Environmental and Sustainability Board/LA, The Santa Fe Regional Airport Board, and CSBG (Community Services Block Grant) tripartite board for the State.

I am a single mom of an amazing 32 year-old son who is an AI Software Engineer in Silicon Valley. I like to bake, am learning yoga/Pilates, and love to read. I also like to 'connect dots' to solve big complex problems. I have never been a member of the League of Women Voters, and am excited to learn more and be whatever resource that I can.

Voter Registration

Five League members registered voters on National Voter Registration Day. Jody Benson accompanied personnel from the Office of the County Clerk to register students at the high school. Lynn Jones, Rosemary Alme, and Hedy Dunn, and later Ed Santiago distributed information at the L.A. Co-op. Charlie Sartor and I set up our table on Thursdays at the Farmers' Market in September. All together we registered 14 voters, and handed out many more sample ballots and poll schedules.

Barbara Calef



At Tuesday's County Council meeting in Council Chambers David Hampton and Jody Benson, representing election workers and the League of Women Voters, accept a Proclamation from Councilor Suzie Havemann, center, designating September as Voter Registration Month and Sept. 17 as Voter Registration Day in Los Alamos. Courtesy/LAC



and

Rosemary Alme, Hedy Dunn, and Lynn Jones offer to register voters at the Los Alamos Co-op. Photo by Barbara Calef

Observer Corps Report – County Council – September 10, 2024

Affordable Housing Ordinance; Trinity Drive Project; Artificial Turf Study

The regular session was attended by Chair Denise Derkacs, Vice Chair Theresa Cull, and Councilors Melanee Hand, Suzie Havemann, Keith Lepsch, David Reagor, and Randall Ryti. Our observer report is based on discussion during the meeting and documentation provided in the full agenda package.

Affordable Housing Ordinance

Council unanimously approved an updated Los Alamos County Affordable Housing Ordinance, which amends Chapter 14, Affordable Housing, of the County Code to include households with incomes up to 120% of the median.

Key changes in the ordinance

The County’s Housing and Special Project Manager, Dan Osborn, described how the updated affordable housing ordinance complements the County’s newly adopted Affordable Housing Plan. “The Plan is really the toolbox,” said Osborn. “The ordinance is the enabling legislation.”

Osborn explained that the higher upper limit for income eligibility brings the ordinance into alignment with federal funding limits for affordable housing initiatives, thereby unlocking state and federal funds for affordable housing programs. The inclusion of moderate-income households is seen as a necessary adjustment to address rising housing prices.

The updated ordinance also removes prescriptive language related to the Los Alamos Housing Partnership to allow for broader collaboration with service providers, opening more opportunities for the County to work with third party developers, nonprofits, and others providing affordable houses and housing services to the County.

Previous coverage

Tonight’s public hearing continued discussions of the Plan from its presentation on June 25 and its adoption on August 27. [See County Council reports in the August and September 2024 LWVLA Updates.]

Trinity Drive Project

Council supported a resolution for a hybrid road diet project on a half-mile segment of Trinity Drive, aiming to improve safety and multimodal transportation features and to bring them into compliance with state and federal guidelines. The motion passed 5–2. Councilors Ryti and Reagor voted against the motion, voicing concerns about business impacts and right-of-way acquisitions.

Project background

Public Works Director Juan Rael recapped the project background. The New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) completed a Road Safety Audit in 2016 for Trinity Drive, a state-owned highway also known as NM 502, from Oppenheimer Drive to 15th Street. The audit reviewed pedestrian safety, traffic mobility, multi-modal transportation features, and recommended improvements. To implement the improvements, NMDOT awarded the County \$4.25 million for design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction.

In August, Council selected Alternative Three, which reduces the existing five-lane road to a four-lane road consisting of a center turn lane, two vehicular eastbound lanes, one vehicular westbound lane, and two bicycle lanes.

Before allowing the project to proceed to final design and subsequent bidding and construction, NMDOT required a resolution of support from Council to demonstrate the community’s support, the subject of this meeting.

Project schedule and ongoing public involvement

Conrad Ley from Wilson & Company Inc., the County's consultant with this project, presented the project's proposed timeline. Project phases include environmental studies, preliminary design, final design, and construction. Construction is anticipated to start in the spring of 2026.

Coordination with NMDOT and other stakeholders is needed throughout the design phase to ensure safety, minimize impacts on local businesses, and comply with state and local requirements, Ley said. "One of the other things that we're coordinating with NMDOT is to move the Park and Ride to the north side near the Justice Center, so that it's a little more centrally located for folks." The current stop is in front of Mesa Public Library. A few Atomic City Transit stops along the south side of Trinity Drive will also be moved, he said.

Rael added that tonight's resolution isn't the end of the process. "This is just sort of selecting one alternative that we can move forward to final design so we can wrap up the evaluation stage," he said. "There will still be opportunities for the public to weigh in." Businesses also will need to weigh in.

Council discussion

Two closely related issues predominated Council's discussion of the selected alternative: the project's potential impacts on businesses and the design of bicycle paths along Trinity Drive.

Councilor Reagor read an email he received from a local business, suggesting that the proposed changes would put small businesses in peril. "...You're erecting a barrier between the lab people and all the restaurants in town that rely on that business, and you make it harder and harder to come here at lunch."

As an alternative design, he asked why the County couldn't improve Central Avenue to be more bike-friendly and leave Trinity Drive with its current configuration. "You don't have to

make both streets friendly for bicycles," said Reagor.

Rael responded that the project design was based on the "safe streets for all" concept that was a Council initiative adopted many years ago. "Right now, we don't have bicycle lanes on this segment of Trinity," he said. "When we look at roadway projects, we are looking at a roadway for all."

Previous coverage

Details of the Trinity Drive Road Diet Project were presented to Council on August 6, 2024, when they selected proposed Alternative 3, Hybrid Road Diet 2 [see the County Council Report in *LWVLA Update*, September 2024].

Artificial Turf Study

The Council unanimously approved a \$305,570 contract for an artificial turf conceptual study focusing on five baseball, softball, and soccer fields in the County.

Study overview

Cory Styron, Community Services Department (CSD) Director, provided details on the project to convert specific fields to artificial turf as recommended in the CSD Integrated Master Plan. The study aims to determine the feasibility of converting selected natural grass fields to artificial turf, considering both potential benefits and drawbacks.

The County staff report noted multiple benefits that artificial turf offers over natural grass, primarily the improved durability of the playing surface. Ensuring that the fields are playable year-round allows more flexibility in scheduling their use, which is essential for the Los Alamos High School baseball and softball teams and other local organizations.

Additionally, artificial turf reduces maintenance needs, saving both time and money by minimizing the need for mowing, watering, and chemical treatments, while being resistant to pests, including gophers. It also provides a consistent playing surface that enhances safety and performance.

Five specific fields will be studied: Bomber Field (baseball), Senior Field (baseball), Hope

Field (softball), X Lovato Field (softball), and Dara Jones Soccer & Lacrosse Field at Overlook Park. The project will review current conditions, accessibility, lighting, fencing, dugouts, and the possibility of a single venue for baseball and softball fields.

Community input

The contract requires the vendor to maintain a web page to make project information readily available and to provide an additional platform where the community can engage with the Project Team.

Study results and financial implications

Once the study is completed, the vendor will deliver recommendations on the optimal fields and layout, with estimated costs for design and construction of the renovated playing surfaces and amenities that also align with ADA compliance, lighting requirements, environmental and playability goals. It will include maintenance recommendations, such as the estimated annual cost of maintaining synthetic fields, necessary equipment for upkeep, and management strategies involving staff, volunteers, and contractors.

Styron warned that the switch to artificial turf, plus ADA compliance, and lighting upgrades, would be costly. He added “we also need to walk through the pros and cons of maintenance and replacement so that we fully understand what we're committing ourselves to.”

Next steps

The study is expected to take 10 months and be completed in July 2025. Once the study results are available, Council plans a follow-up discussion to determine the next steps and funding options.

Local News Coverage

Los Alamos Daily Post, September 14, 2024. Video: Councilor Ryti Briefing <https://ladailypost.com/video-councilor-ryti-gives-briefing-on-tuesday-meeting/>

Kirsten Laskey, *Los Alamos Daily Post*, September 12, 2024. Council OKs Resolution <https://ladailypost.com/council-oks-resolution-supporting-hybrid-road-diet-on-trinity>

June Fabryka-Martin and Craig Martin

Observer Corps Report – County Council – September 24, 2024

NNSA Update; Opioid Settlement Funds; Regional and Intergovernmental Issues

The regular session was attended by Chair Denise Derkacs, Vice Chair Theresa Cull, and Councilors Melanee Hand, Suzie Havemann, Keith Lepsch, David Reagor, and Randall Ryti. Our observer report is based on discussion during the meeting and documentation provided in the full agenda package.

National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) Los Alamos Field Office Update

Overview

NNSA Los Alamos Field Office Manager Ted Wyka updated Council on a wide range of topics. Our observer report is brief because it focuses on significant changes for issues of interest to LWVLA members.

Excellent coverage of Wyka’s full presentation at tonight’s meeting is provided by local news outlets: *Los Alamos Daily Post*, *Los Alamos Reporter*, and *Boomtown*. Links to these are provided at the end of our report.

Mission and budget

Wyka noted that the President submitted his budget request for FY 25 in March. “As we all know, Congress will determine the outcome,” said Wyka, “but I am optimistic that it will be solid for LANL in FY 25. NNSA’s goal, according to Wyka, is for LANL to produce 30 pits per year by 2028.

Workforce

LANL’s primary focus is switching away from growth and towards mission execution in its workforce hiring decisions for 2025. LANL is projecting to hire about 1,400 people, reported Wyka, to replace the annual attrition of roughly 900 people per year with an additional 500 to cover various activities to support mission needs.

Traffic and housing

To meet the traffic and housing challenges brought about by LANL growth, Wyka said that the LANL team has adopted several strategies to keep people who don’t need to be here off the Hill. These measures include remote work, off-site facilities, alternate work schedules, and other measures.

Electrical Power Capacity Upgrade (EPCU) project

Wyka reminded Council that LANL requires a reliable, resilient and redundant electrical power supply to support mission programs and other activities. By late 2027, he said, the existing lines that serve LANL and the Los Alamos County will reach capacity, causing operational constraints on mission work. The EPCU project will include a new power line and upgrades to internal distribution system. “The EPCU project reached a critical National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) milestone this month,” said Wyka. “The Forest Service started their pre-decisional objection process on September 11 on the final environmental assessment, as well as the Forest Plan Amendment.” Wyka reported that NNSA expects to announce its decision on whether to issue a finding of no significant environmental impact or to issue a notice of intent to prepare

an environmental impact statement in early 2025. For more information and updates, Wyka referred interested parties to the EPCU Project web pages managed by the U.S. Forest Service (<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/santafe/?project=63199>) and LANL (<https://environment.lanl.gov/resources/epcu/>).

Los Alamos Reservoir Road

Wyka reported that, regarding the Reservoir Road, “bollards are now in place to minimize traffic, thereby protecting the presence of endangered species.” He added that any consideration of this land for future recreational use will require discussions not only with NNSA, but also with the pueblo tribes and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Opioid Settlement Funds Use Plan

Council approved the Opioid Settlement Funds Use Plan, which allocates \$761,000 — the county’s share of New Mexico’s opioid settlement funds — to opioid-related expenditures for prevention, harm reduction, treatment, recovery support, and professional development. The funds will be spread over five years, with a portion reserved for unforeseen needs. Social Services Division Manager Jessica Strong stated, “The County’s plan gives priority to evidence-based strategies, not necessarily trying new or innovative things, but to make sure there’s data behind anything that we would want to spend the funds on.”

Plan overview

Key strategies in the county’s plan include broadening access to Narcan, expanding prevention services in Los Alamos Public Schools, and offering online behavioral therapy in detention centers, said Strong. The plan also aims to address opioid addiction across age groups and life stages.

Strong said that the plan also looks to conduct more training on evidence-based strategies, “not only to community members who may be interested in this information, but also first responders, medical and behavioral

health personnel who may not know all of the latest evidence-based practices for responding to an opioid overdose, responding to treatment needs, responding to recovery support.” She also highlighted the need to collect data to determine success.

Following Council’s vote to approve the plan, Chair Derkacs commented that, “I think this seems to be a reasonable division of funds, for the best uses within the constraints of the budget and the timeline.”

Regional and Intergovernmental Issues

Danielle Duran, Intergovernmental Affairs Manager, briefed Council on current regional and intergovernmental affairs, highlighting regional and state issues.

Key points

- Housing. A Regional Housing Summit is planned for May 2025. Participants include Los Alamos County, Santa Fe County, Rio Arriba County, Sandoval County, and the City of Española.
- Middle and last-mile broadband. Progress on middle-mile and last-mile broadband was noted, with San Ildefonso Pueblo receiving a grant for which Council had agreed to provide matching funds. San Ildefonso Services and DPU are working on a contract for conduit placement under SR-4 as waterline work is being completed.
- A report on State Route 4 raised the issue of what funding might be allocated for it to be improved.

Local News Coverage

Stephanie Nakhleh, *Boomtown*, September 24, 2024. *BoomGov : A preview of the Los Alamos County Council meeting, September 24,2024.* <https://www.boomtownlosalamos.org/p/boomgov>

Stephanie Nakhleh, *Boomtown*, September 26, 2024. *NNSA’s Ted Wyka gives semi-annual report.* <https://www.boomtownlosalamos.org/p/nnsas-ted-wyka-gives-semi-annual>

Maire O’Neill, *Los Alamos Reporter*, September 26, 2024. *NNSA Los Alamos Field Office Manager Updates County Council* <https://losalamosreporter.com/2024/09/26/nnsa-los-alamos-field-office-manager-updates-county-council-on-budget-hiring-traffic-safety-and-more/>

Kirsten Laskey, *Los Alamos Daily Post*, October 1, 2024. *Video: Council Chair Derkacs on Sept. 24 Meeting.* <https://ladailypost.com/video-council-chair-denise-derkacs-on-sept-24-meeting/>

NNSA news release, *Los Alamos Daily Post*, September 13, 2024. *NNSA Publishes Electrical Power Capacity Upgrade Factsheet* <https://ladailypost.com/nnsa-publishes-electrical-power-capacity-upgrade-factsheet-with-answers-to-frequently-asked-questions/>

June Fabryka-Martin and Craig Martin

Observer Corps Reports – Planning & Zoning Commission – September 25

Commissioners present: Chair Rachel Adler, Vice Chair Stephanie Nakhleh, David Hampton, Katherine Bruell, Ronald Nelson, Rebecca White

Commissioners absent: Karen Easton, Benjamin Hill

Chapter 16 Development Code Cleanup

By unanimous vote (6–0), the Planning and Zoning (P&Z) Commission agreed to recommend to County Council that it approve the application from the Community Development Department (CDD) to amend the text of Chapter 16, Development Code, regarding the process for Minor Zone Map Amendments.

Purpose of text amendments

The Development Code governs development within the County. It applies to all development and redevelopment, both public

and private. Desirae Lujan, CDD Senior Planner, explained that proposed text changes to the Code aim to:

- clarify language,
- address inconsistencies,
- correct typos, grammatical errors, and omissions, and
- amend specific standards or procedures that can further align with County goals and policies.

Lujan said that the primary change in tonight's application from CDD is to clarify approval authority and responsibility for development applications, particularly Zone Map Amendments. The proposed text designates P&Z as the final decision-maker for minor zone map amendments, and Council for major zone map amendments.

Minor and Major Zone Map Amendments

The CDD staff report explains that the distinction between Minor and Major Zone Map Amendments hinges on ownership of the land parcel or lot.

- "A Minor Zone Map Amendment applies to applications to change a single tract, parcel or lot under common ownership, or the land affected by the map amendment is predominantly owned by a single person or entity under common ownership.
- A Major Zone Map Amendment does not concern a single tract, parcel or lot under common ownership, or the land affected by the map amendment is not predominantly owned by a single person or entity under common ownership."

Future Amendments to the Development Code

Providing an overview of what's to come, Lujan said that CDD staff have broken up the Development Code cleanup into different phases, starting with tonight's proposed amendment to clarify authority for minor zone map amendments.

Lujan showed CDD's schedule for the phases. Part 1 of the Code cleanup will correct minor text errors, redundant language, and omissions in the Code. These changes will be presented to P&Z on October 9, 2024.

Part 2 of the Code cleanup will address components that CDD staff have determined require additional discussion, such as temporary signs, open space zoning map corrections and other clarifications. These are scheduled to be presented to P&Z early in 2025.

Part 3 of the Code cleanup is to complete the update of the Comprehensive Plan, which will include a consultant for community engagement and drafting of the document. A Request for Proposal (RFP) will be drafted by the end of November 2024.

The final phase of Code cleanup addresses issues for analysis and potential changes, such as parking maximums, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), Downtown Los Alamos (DTLA) boundaries, and Open Space rezoning.

Open Space Rezoning Discussion

Commissioner Hampton expressed interest in expediting certain straightforward open-space rezoning requests and public hearings to show progress and address community concerns.

CDD Director Paul Andrus acknowledged the need for progress and the importance of addressing community priorities but countered by noting the need to manage CDD staff bandwidth and other ongoing projects. "There's one particular item pertaining to open space parcels that will require some discussion in the public, some discussion with other boards, to determine whether or not the zoning on these specific parcels really ought to be changed," said Andrus.

Andrus noted that, because open-space rezoning will require a robust process for community input, it makes sense to run those discussions in tandem with the Comprehensive Plan update. The services of a consultant will be not only to have the public process, but also to work with CDD staff to shape the draft Plan.

The process to update the Plan starts next year. “We’ll know then what we think a good time frame for those two items is going to be,” said Andrus. “Is it going to be a year? Is it going to be less than a year? Those are the things that we’re going to find out.”

Andrus concluded that “we just didn’t feel like that [open-space rezoning] was of particular urgency. Meaning we didn’t feel like there was any risk or urgency in trying to put that in front of other things. I’m not minimizing the importance in a lot of people’s minds. I’m just saying we don’t feel like anything’s happening with that. ... So, at this stage, this is what we think we can accomplish with the staff that we have and the other priorities that we’re dealing with.”

Home Energy Innovation and Insights

Andrus announced that CDD staff are coordinating an event to reach out to the public and local contractors on Home Energy Innovation and Insights. “We’re having this meeting here [in Council chambers] on November 18, at 5:30 to 8 pm and we’ll have an architect and an engineer available to provide direct insight to folks who have technical questions and are interested in materials and those sorts of things.”

June Fabryka-Martin and Craig Martin


September Lunch with a Leader: Andrea Determan

Taraka Dale was scheduled to tell us about her research in plastics this month, but she had to cancel. (She will speak to the League in January.) Fortunately, Andrea Determan, the Director of Inclusive Schools at Los Alamos Public Schools (LAPS), volunteered to speak. She is responsible for overseeing and supporting the district’s initiatives for diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging, as well as ensuring compliance with state, federal, and New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) mandates. She came out of retirement to work in this position a year ago after 22 years as a schoolteacher.

Determan explained that LAPS hired a consultant, Mindsteps, several years ago to give advice about what they are doing well, where they can improve, and to provide a new direction.




Andrea Determan. Photo by Becky Shankland



100% of LAPS students will meet or exceed grade level expectations in three key areas:
Academic Excellence,
Social-Emotional Wellbeing
and Civic Responsibility.

Los Alamos Public Schools exist to provide a safe, engaging learning environment that honors diversity and ensures every student thrives.

- Be accountable for every child.
- Address the root cause.
- Stay meaningfully engaged.
- Ensure students have a voice in the process.
- Filter all decisions through the lens of the whole person.



After gathering data, the LAPS School Board adopted new strategic goals at the end of the last school year, which are represented by the Venn diagram at left.

The principal goals shown here are that: 100% of LAPS students will meet or exceed expectations in three key areas – academic success, social-emotional wellbeing, and civic responsibility. Further, LAPS will provide a safe, engaging learning environment that honors diversity and ensures that every student thrives.

Determan explained that those goals are incorporated in the recently adopted curricula.

She then described the five components of social and emotional learning:

- self-awareness (know who you are, what you are good at and not);
- self-management (manage your emotions);
- social awareness (make sure all students respect everybody);
- responsible decision-making;
- relationship skills (build strong, positive relationships).

She said that meaningful engagement is important for the students. It is essential to make sure all students are connected to somebody at school as well as at home and to include student voices at meetings.

Civic responsibility involves actions and attitudes, such as:

- compliance with laws, rules, regulations;
- participation – select a cause, volunteer;
- be knowledgeable about how to verify information;
- be respectful of people’s rights.

Students must feel safe, respected, and included, although they don’t have to like everybody.

Determan noted that the community is becoming more diverse. There are now 90 Black families in the community and 120 Indigenous students in the schools.

She concluded, “We have a path, the tools, we know it’s the right way to go.” However, it will take some time to implement the program; staff and students must be trained. She said the staff is working very hard to achieve the new strategic goals and she visited 55 classes last year to speak with the students about them.

Barbara Calef

Tickler Reports – Council Agenda Items and BCC Vacancies

Tickler Report

Tentative Council Agenda Items as of September 24, 2024

This is a partial list of tentative Council agenda items in the County tickler that was distributed with the Council's agenda package for its September 24, 2024 session. All of the items are subject to change.

- White Rock Pedestrian Crossings
 - 10/08/24 meeting. Action requested on citizen petition regarding road and pedestrian safety in White Rock
- National League of Cities
 - 10/08/24 meeting. Action requested for approval of Los Alamos County policy proposal to National League of Cities
- Council strategic goal for environmental stewardship
 - 10/22/24 meeting. Overview of Council strategic goal for environmental stewardship
- Community Broadband Network Services
 - Action requested on approval of GSA contract at 9/10/24 meeting
- Environmental Sustainability Board
 - 10/22/24 meeting. Briefing by Chair of Environmental Sustainability Board

eComment Tool for Council meetings:

Individuals can use the County's newly launched eComment tool to submit online public comments, once the agenda is published, until noon on the day of the Council meeting. Copies will be provided to each councilor before the start of the meeting.

Submit comments at the Granicus website at <https://losalamos.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>. Use the search filters to find the meeting with the published agenda and select "eComment" in the far-right column. Agenda items open for public comment will be marked with a "Comment" tag.

See the public release in the Los Alamos Daily Post, "County Launches eComment Tool for Council Meetings", <https://ladailypost.com/county-launches-ecomment-tool-for-council-meetings/>

County BCC Vacancies as of July 31, 2024

Los Alamos County has 11 standing Boards and Commissions (BCCs). Generally, the purpose of a board is to serve in an advisory capacity to the County Council, but some have statutory responsibilities as well.

All BCCs and current vacancies are below as of September 30, 2024.

Upcoming vacancies are in yellow text. Changes from last report have a magenta highlight.

- Art in Public Places Board 0
 - No terms ending soon
- Board of Public Utilities 0
 - No terms ending soon
- County Health Council 4
 - 5 terms ending Jan 6, 2025
- Environmental Sustainability Board 0
 - No terms ending soon
- Historic Preservation Advisory Board 0
 - No terms ending soon
- Library Board 0
 - No terms ending soon
- Lodgers' Tax Advisory Board 3
 - 1 term ending Dec 1, 2024
- Parks and Recreation Board 0
 - 3 terms ending Nov 30, 2024
- Personnel Board 0
 - 1 term ending March 31, 2025
- Planning and Zoning Commission 1
 - 1 term ending March 31, 2025
- Transportation Board 1
 - 3 terms ending Feb 28, 2025

Totals: 9 vacancies, 14 terms ending soon

Interested Los Alamos County residents may submit an online application by visiting the County's Boards and Commissions webpage and selecting "apply" at <https://www.losalamosnm.us/Government/Leadership/Boards-Commissions>



Mail to: LWV Los Alamos / P.O. Box 158 / Los Alamos, NM 87544

Name(s): _____

Address: _____ Date: _____

_____ ZIP: _____

Phone 1: _____ E-mail 1: _____

Phone 2: _____ E-mail 2: _____

Membership Categories: All checks for memberships and contributions should be payable to LWV-Los Alamos and all are tax-deductible. Let us know if you'd like a tax-deduction statement. A substantial portion of Single and Household membership dues supports state and national League of Women Voters work.

_____ Single membership: \$45.

_____ Household membership (two or more people at the same address): \$70.

_____ Single Sustaining membership: \$75.

_____ Household Sustaining membership (two or more people at the same address): \$95.

_____ Student membership: Free (must be 16 or over).

_____ Additional donation to support the Los Alamos LWV work: \$ _____

_____ **Newsletter Update** – Check here to receive it as an electronic file, saving postage and paper,

_____ **OR** Check here if you prefer to have a hard copy of the newsletter mailed to you.

_____ Check here to receive occasional friendly reminders of upcoming events by e-mail.

Ways to help the League if you wish to be an active member (check as many as apply)

Name1 Name2

_____ _____ Voter Registration at events such as the Farmers Market. Training by the County Clerk's office.

_____ _____ Organize/provide refreshments at forums when we meet in person.

_____ _____ Observer Corps: Watch Council, DPU, P&Z meetings etc. and write a short summary to publish in our newsletter. (All meetings are recorded, so you can watch them later.)

_____ _____ Write newsletter articles on a local issue or League activity.

_____ _____ Assist in developing the Voter Guide: edit, develop questions, enter data onto League database, work with news publications to get the information printed, etc.

_____ _____ Assist with Lunch with a Leader: assist in inviting leaders to give presentations; order/deliver lunches when we meet in person, help set up tables, etc.

_____ _____ Website/social media: technical assistance and content development.

_____ _____ Advocate for League positions: communicate with local, state, and federal leaders.

_____ _____ Serve on the LWV-Los Alamos Board.

_____ _____ Other: _____

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

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League of Women Voters of Los Alamos
P.O. Box 158
Los Alamos, NM 87544