

Will Santa Fe aspire to be a “City of Peace,” or will it be a City of War?

Without formal City opposition, a factory for weapons of mass destruction will continue to harm Santa Fe’s identity. “Without vision, the people perish.”

For further background, see our previous *Santa Fe Reporter* ads at <https://lasg.org/LASG-ads.html>. Though available to all, these ads are written for those who read them and have the freedom to act. Don’t worry about those who won’t read these ads. Only a few people are needed to lead.

A big new nuclear weapons factory in Greater Santa Fe?

Less than a mile south of the town of Los Alamos, a factory for the plutonium cores of nuclear weapons (“pits”) is slowly being assembled, involving many new and remodeled buildings and associated infrastructure. Roughly four thousand staff and hundreds of contracted workers are working on this project around the clock.

The first pits are now being slowly produced for a new warhead, even as additional equipment is being installed.

This new mission for Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) began in the first Trump administration. It now comprises over a third of LANL’s total effort. In February of this year, the Trump Administration doubled the required capacity of this factory. A bill now before Congress would require even greater capacity.

A \$30 B stopgap plan to build additional nukes ASAP

From start to “finish” (in 2034, supposedly), this will be a \$30 billion project, by far the largest capital project in the history of our state.

Despite all this effort, the expected lifetime of this factory is unknown, centered as it is in a 50-year-old building – which is also too small and does not meet modern safety requirements. For these reasons a new, larger factory is being built in South Carolina, which is slated to open in the late 2030s. In the meantime, Los Alamos is the rushed stopgap factory.

As the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), the part of the Department of Energy (DOE) which makes U.S. warheads, tacitly admits, none of the pits to be produced in Los Alamos are actually “needed” to maintain the current stockpile of roughly 3,700 active warheads and bombs.

In simple terms, NNSA wants new pits for new weapons ASAP to augment and “improve” U.S. nuclear forces, the better to “dominate” (NNSA’s word) Russia and China over the coming decade.

Los Alamos is a terrible place for a nuclear bomb factory

Which is part of why this mission will eventually fail, as has happened four times already. The sooner this happens, the better. The LANL site was chosen partly because of its isolation. Road access, housing, skilled labor, and buildable locations are limited or inadequate. The site is seismically active with multiple faults and is heavily fractured. Some buildings are near what may be unstable cliff edges. Most of the site is highly vulnerable to wildfires. Environmental cleanup ambitions interfere with new construction. As one government auditor put it, “Los Alamos is the worst place in the country for a pit factory.”

What is the idea of Santa Fe? Is there one?

America’s actual “king” is its pervasive national security state, to which Congress, the White House and federal courts now bow. This is the “military-industrial complex” Eisenhower warned us about in 1961, fealty to which has now spread to most institutions in our society, including Congress as mentioned, academia and – especially – the news media, including in New Mexico. Both major political parties support war and international aggression.

State and local governments are left to struggle with the human and environmental fallout from our misshapen federal priorities. New Mexico has fared particularly badly, as we chronicle at <https://tinyurl.com/yc35bx6c>.

Now, a gigantic artificial intelligence complex, closely allied with big government, threatens to take over our very thoughts, not to mention our water.

Should City leaders mentally bow to the tyranny of militarism and war, passively

embracing the “military-nuclear state” and the nuclear welfare it offers in return? Or should Santa Fe consciously attempt to articulate a “different” goal and identity for itself?

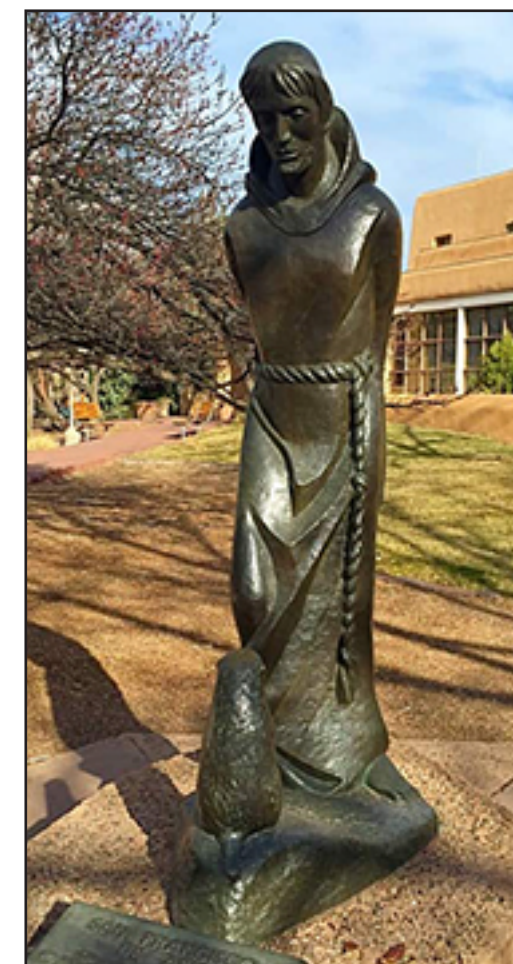
Because right now, Greater Santa Fe has literally become the World Capital of Weapons of Mass Destruction, in financial terms.

Faithful to its original name, the City did make a choice when it long ago joined Mayors for Peace, a nuclear abolition organization of some 8,584 cities, in 166 countries. It did so when, 20 years ago, it passed multiple resolutions opposing pit production at LANL, calling instead for treaty compliance and diplomacy. Why not also now, when such a resolution would be most timely and powerful?

In the spirit of St. Francis

And in light of the growing risk of nuclear war and the terrible toll our global aggression and the resulting arms race is inflicting on our national priorities and identity, we want the City of Santa Fe to adopt a simple resolution that:

- 1. Formally opposes preparations for plutonium warhead core (“pit”) production at LANL, a well as actual production itself;**
- 2. Formally opposes the Trump Administration’s new requirement for LANL to produce at least 60 pits per year;**
- 3. Formally requests that the Administration prioritize the removal and disposal of legacy plutonium waste from LANL over the production of additional waste from LANL weapons activities;**



“Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace.” The statue of St. Francis in front of City Hall, from whose faith Santa Fe derives its name.

- 4. Formally requests that the New Mexico congressional delegation do its best to:**
 - Remove the current statutory pit production requirements and prevent passage of further production requirements;
 - Oppose the production of new or additional nuclear weapons;
 - Decrease federal spending on nuclear weapons; and
- 5. Opposes additional LANL satellite campuses in or near Santa Fe.**

These proposed measures align with, and would bring up to date, several City resolutions from the 2003-2008 period, which you can read at <https://tinyurl.com/ydxyrnbd>.

Local resolutions are powerful

We know from nearly four decades of shared experience in Washington, DC that a resolution along these lines would powerfully influence federal policy. Given the centrality of LANL pits in the new nuclear arms race,

such a resolution would be a significant contribution to cooling President Trump’s “nuclear weapons fever.”

For its part, Santa Fe County, as of April 2025, has already gone on record opposing plutonium pit production at LANL. The above measures, if passed as a resolution by the County, would clarify and extend the County’s position, and make it much more powerful.

Meanwhile the Town of Taos, just last month, passed a strong resolution against all pit production at LANL, and called upon the President and Congress to prioritize removal of legacy plutonium waste from LANL over further production of such waste from nuclear weapons activities. You can see this new Taos resolution and many others at the above link.

Happy 30th anniversary! On July 8, 1996, the International Court of Justice concluded that:

“[T]he threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law applicable in armed conflict, and in particular the principles and rules of humanitarian law [‘laws of war’]; [and]

...“There exists an obligation* to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.”

*This is a binding legal obligation. It refers in part to Article VI of the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which reads:

“Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.”

This week is also the anniversary of the Russell-Einstein Manifesto of July 9, 1955. Which path will we choose?

“...There lies before us, if we choose, continual progress in happiness, knowledge, and wisdom. Shall we, instead, choose death, because we cannot forget our quarrels? We appeal, as human beings, to human beings: Remember your humanity, and forget the rest. If you can do so, the way lies open to a new Paradise; if you cannot, there lies before you the risk of universal death.”

LANL is just beginning preliminary production. Most of the costs and impacts lie in the future. Authorization and funding for LANL pits must be requested and approved year by year. Nothing is set in stone. This giant project is fragile and poorly justified. How long will Congress fund two simultaneous pit production efforts, which together are expected to cost \$60 billion dollars just to start up? While very unlikely, it is not beyond the realm of possibility that LANL could acquire the entire pit production mission, at a greatly expanded scale.

The ultimate scale and duration of LANL’s WMD manufacturing program will depend in part on how well the region supports the new mission morally and politically. What is happening right now is that the mission is expanding in the absence of clear local opposition. Santa Fe is asleep, and the Trump Administration is writing the future of the region.

The believers in the benefits of nuclear welfare have been proven wrong by our 80-year record of social decline, despite all the nuclear spending.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

We urge you to reach out to Santa Fe city councilors you may know or who represent your district, by phone or in writing, and talk to them about the issues that concern YOU most about LANL’s new nuclear production mission. Beyond issues of national policy, the new pit mission has many negative local impacts as mentioned in the first column, many of which have been discussed in somewhat greater depth in previous ads (<https://lasg.org/LASG-ads.html>).

LANL’s direct impacts on quality of life are hard to quantify but real. Just 5 minutes of additional traffic delay every day costs drivers hundreds of dollars each year in lost time and increased car maintenance. And if we arbitrarily assume that the thousands of well-paid LANL commuters that have moved to Santa Fe in the last few years have had, for example, a 5% impact on average rental costs, this amounts to more than a thousand dollars a year for each renter in the City. No matter what assumptions you choose, the aggregate cost to City residents works out to tens of millions of dollars per year.

In the meantime, we hope you will join the many people and organizations opposing LANL’s bomb factory by filling in the short form at [StopTheBomb.org](https://stopthebomb.org). We will then be able to notify you about meetings, educational events, targeted actions, and ways to volunteer. There are plenty of ways to do so. Start with that short form!

This summer, we have a rich schedule of public and private events in which you can take part, in Santa Fe, Albuquerque, and Los Alamos. The first step is to endorse the “Call for Sanity, Not Nuclear Production,” at the link above or by using the QR code below.

Next, reach out to your friends and contacts and encourage them to join you in endorsing the Call at [StopTheBomb.org](https://stopthebomb.org). Organizational, religious community, business, and elected official endorsements are particularly valuable. This is a small state. You may know state legislators and county commissioners. Talk to them. Write them. Send them this ad. Perhaps they will endorse “The Call,” for starters, or schedule time to learn more about the issues.

As we have emphasized throughout this ad campaign, these are not partisan issues, nor can they be resolved at the ballot box. We aim to educate, not propagandize. We encourage you to come to your own conclusions.

Finally and not least, contribute if you can, to help support these ads, our two enthusiastic interns and others who will follow them, our lobbying in Washington, DC, and all our other work!



Scan to join “The Call for Sanity, Not Nuclear Production!”
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For more, visit lasg.org

