

Energy Planning and Consultation On Rural and Tribal Lands

What This Means for Community Energy Costs

Many rural and Tribal households already face high energy costs. Without community involvement, energy system changes can lead to:

- Higher electricity bills
- Reliability challenge if upgrades do not keep pace with demand
- Delays in connecting local clean-energy or community scale projects
- Greater impacts on elders, fixed-income households, and small businesses
- Increase reliance on diesel generators during outages or peak demand

What This Means for Reliability and Resilience

Reliable power is critical for health and safety. Rural and Tribal communities often face:

- Long power lines exposed to weather
- Limited backup power options
- Longer repair times during outages

What This Means for New Mexico's Energy Transition

New Mexico's energy transition should move forward in partnership with rural and Tribal communities by:

- Respecting Tribal sovereignty and consultation
- Engaging communities early and often
- Supporting local energy solutions
- Connecting energy projects to local jobs and benefits

What This Means for Rural and Tribal Communities

Rural and Tribal communities are at a decision point:

- Energy demand is increasing across many sectors
- Clean-energy projects are expanding across the state
- Transmission and distribution systems need modernization
- Community energy burdens remain high

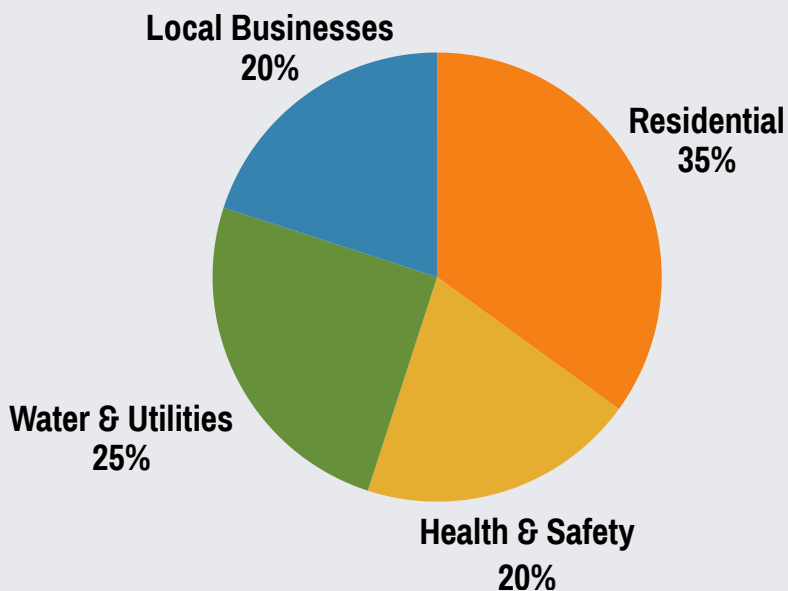
Decision Points Explained

- Respect Tribal sovereignty and local leadership in energy decisions.
- Consult early, clearly, and throughout the process.
- Keep energy upgrades affordable for households and small businesses.
- Ensure energy projects deliver real community benefits.
- Treat Tribes and rural communities as long-term partners.



Energy Planning and Consultation on Rural Tribal Lands

Current Community Electricity Use & Essential Service



Guiding Principles for Energy Planning



Community Role

Rural Tribal lands are central to New Mexico's system, hosting critical infrastructure that supports communities.



Tribal Energy Leadership

Tribal leadership in clean energy can deliver energy security, revenue, and grid benefits.



Investment & Incentives

Tribal land projects can access grants, tax credits, and incentives not available elsewhere.



Local Energy Solutions

Community-scale solar and storage can lower costs and improve reliability.



Sovereignty & Partnership

Respect partnerships and culturally appropriate assistance support Tribal energy decisions.

Key Insights

- Electricity use is growing faster than local grids were designed for, increasing strain on rural and Tribal systems.
- Infrastructure upgrades can raise electricity bills if costs are not shared fairly or paired with protections for households.
- Outages affect essential services, including water systems, clinics, schools, and Tribal facilities, making resilience planning critical
- Tribal lands hold a larger share of renewable resources than their land area—especially in New Mexico.
- Tribes are leaders in clean energy innovation, advancing projects that support sovereignty, resilience, and local economies.



<https://nmsu.link/CETS>