

The *Sustainable Local Journalism in New Mexico: Community Perspectives report* builds a rationale for the importance of vibrant local journalism to community well-being. By harvesting the wisdom of civically engaged leaders across New Mexico communities, this report acknowledges the need for accurate and relevant sources of information. Credible information from trustworthy sources allows community members to make informed decisions for their families, businesses, and civic institutions, engage in community-building efforts, and participate in the democratic process.

Lilly Irvin-Vitela, New Mexico First President and lead author, describes the community conversations that informed the report. “We sought out people who are committed to civic life through Rotary Clubs, Chambers of Commerce, entrepreneurial groups, and more. People generously jumped in to share their values, beliefs, and expectations of local journalism. Many New Mexicans still read their local papers both in print and online. They are listening to local radio and watching local TV.”

Community leaders are looking for information that is clear, accurate, and inclusive of community voices and the broader world. This information is being used to support decision-making about politics, social life, getting to and from work, where to enroll their children, and so much more.

Irvin-Vitela further noted, “It’s a mistake to underestimate the importance of local media to New Mexicans. We have a long storytelling tradition and while technology has changed these practices, our commitment to understanding the world and each other is just as important today.”

“The New Mexico Press Association and its members are excited the *Sustainable Local Journalism in New Mexico: Community Perspectives*
report has been released by New Mexico First,” Clara Garcia, president of the New Mexico Press Association and editor and publisher of the Valencia County News-Bulletin said.

“Journalists around our state vigorously work to report the news of our communities, and we are proud our readers value what we do and our commitment to the truth. Local journalism is valued and trusted, and we appreciate all those who participated in the focus groups. The mission of the NMPA continues to help improve the quality of member newspapers, encourage high journalistic standards, and promote journalism education around the state.” she continued.

Sarah Gustavus, program coordinator for the New Mexico Local News Fund, noted that “Local news is crucial for our democracy. We see an opportunity to bring together journalists and local stakeholders to discuss news and information needs in communities across New Mexico. This report will help us continue to shape community conversations about the future of local journalism in New Mexico.”

By Lilly Irvin-Vitela
President
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