

CONNECTING THE DOTS

NEWSLETTER



The Connecting the Dots Quarterly Newsletter is a product of the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments

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Director's Note

This first quarter of fiscal year 2021 was ripe with opportunities. The direction to COG staff was to stack as many wins as possible because after this tidal wave of CARES Act funding subsidies there might be a several lull in Federal and State investments. The COG also made some decisions to stay in its lane and not jump in everywhere.

The COG continued to balance with this push for investment with local government work programs and regional planning updates. Both our Annual Report and this Connecting the Dots newsletter highlight many of the successes we have been able to attract to our region.

For this article, I wanted to promote a new performance management tool the COG has developed to track metrics and create a real time dashboard based on key indicators of impact and goal setting. The report "Impact for the Numbers" is two pages of data points. The first shown below is quantitative points that showcase return on investment and equity investments into our assets. The second is more qualitative points like audit results, member satisfaction, employee turnover rate, industry recognition, etc. The point is to provide our staff, our Board, members, and partners a real time report of COG performance.

For example, last year the COG was able to attract about \$6.5M in investment (mainly grant funding). This year, we set a goal of \$10M and in the first quarter alone COG staff has already attracted \$8.2M in investment. This is an astonishing achievement that might otherwise went unnoticed and even uncelebrated. I am proud of our team and my staff as the collective impact of these wins elevates our region and its overall economy.

Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments

IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

Performance Report, FY21
as of October 1, 2020

Impact Area	Metric	Goal	Progress	Gap
Investment	Grant Funding	\$10,000,000	\$8,288,506	\$(1,711,494.00)
Leverage	Federal	\$647,321	\$1,635,721	\$988,400.00
Leverage	State	\$310,000	\$310,000	\$-
Dues	Membership	\$235,000	\$220,000	\$(15,000.00)
Investment	Brownfields	\$220,000	\$-	\$(220,000.00)
Leverage	Fee for Service Contracts	\$144,000	\$89,000	\$(55,000.00)
Building Improvements	Roof Repair #4	\$126,000	\$-	\$(126,000.00)
Building Improvements	Gates	\$3,000	\$-	\$(3,000.00)
Building Improvements	Garden Project	\$1,200	\$-	\$(1,200.00)
Building Improvements	Interior Upgrades	\$-	\$-	\$-
Total		\$11,686,521	\$10,543,227	\$(1,143,294.00)

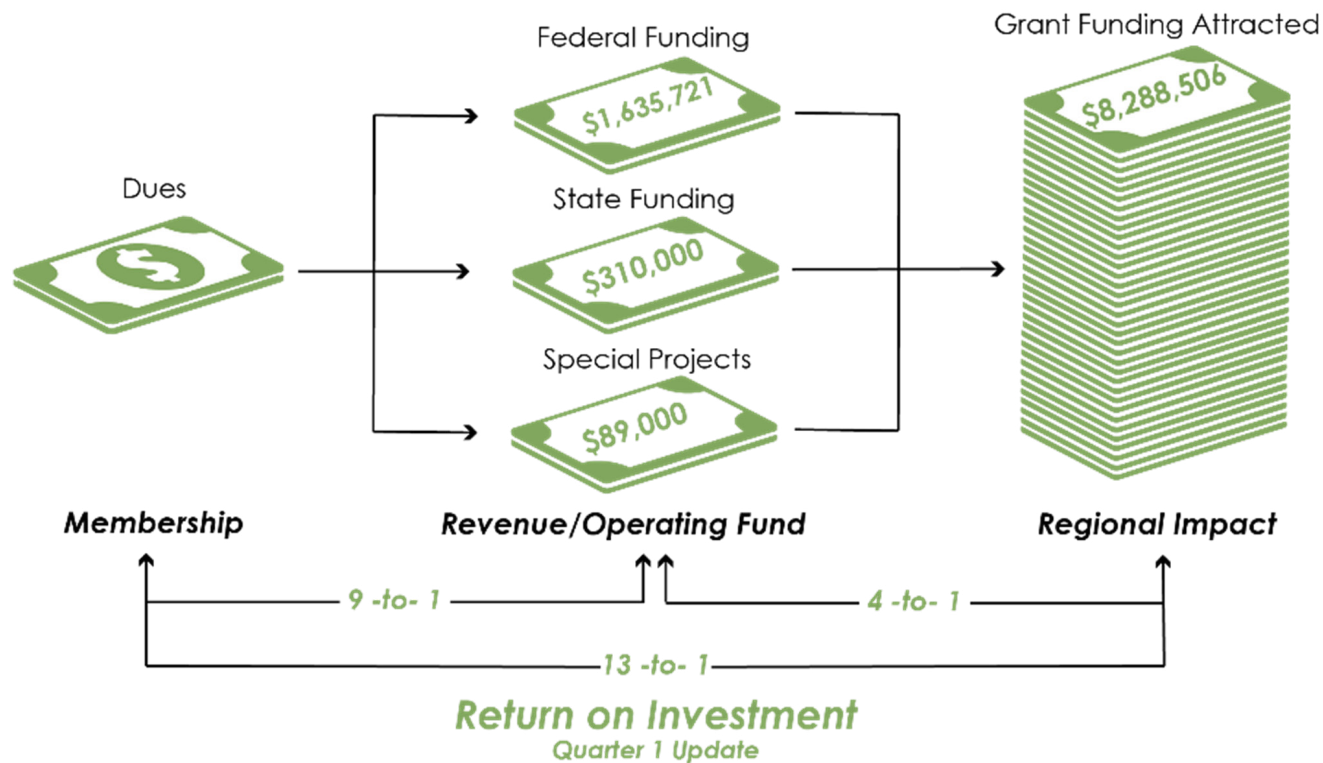
Progress, Minimum Value and Goal



In an effort to track outputs and impacts, the COG staff has put together a number of performance metrics and set goals for fiscal year 2021 based on previous year's performance and expectations for the current year. Using Microsoft's Power BI application, the COG can track this and report in real time providing a new level of transparency and accountability to our members, clients, partners, and to the region.

Comparison (FY20 vs. Q1, FY21)

<u>Metrics</u>	<u>FY2020 (Annual)</u>	<u>Q1, FY2021 (Quarter)</u>
Member Dues	\$235,000	\$220,000
Leverage	\$ 1,425,158 6 to 1	\$2,034,721 9 to 1
Investment	\$6,657,500 11 to 1	\$8288,506 13 to 1



Performance Webpage: <http://www.nwnmcog.com/annual--financial-reports.html>

EDA Investments

On May 7, 2020, U.S. Department of Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross announced that the US Economic Development Administration was set to receive and solicit proposals for \$1.5B in CARES Act and COVID-19 recovery application. The COG has been very active and aggressive in building a portfolio of investment-ready project and proposals and taking the following proactive steps.



1. Establishing and soliciting input towards the creation of a Regional COVID-19 Recovery Plan.
2. Setting up and facilitating weekly EDA-COG meetings to update on avalanche of opportunities, best practices, and what other regional, State, and Federal agencies are doing to build resilient economies.
3. Setting up an online pre-proposal system that is automated and leads to a project feasibility session with COG staff.
4. Setting up bi-weekly and on-demand pre-application meetings and project competitiveness meetings with Trisha Korbass, New Mexico & West Texas EDA Economic Development Representative.
5. Providing technical assistance and application expertise for approximately 25 proposals, which include tribal EDO projects; Items in blue have been publicly awarded
 - a. Statewide Applications (3)
 - i. [NM Economic Development Department](#) (1.5M)
 - ii. Department of Information Technology
 - iii. Department of Tourism

- b. COG Applications (3)
 - i. [Non-Competitive District Support Application](#) (\$400,000)
 - ii. [Assistance to Coal Communities](#) (\$988,400)
 - iii. Revolving Loan Fund COVID-19 Program
- c. University Centers (1)
 - i. [San Juan College](#) (\$300,000)
- d. San Juan County (6)
- e. McKinley County (10)
- f. Cibola County (2)

6. Setting up and implementing our CARES program including hiring a Recovery Coordinator and several interns including the potential of re-starting a regional AmeriCorps*VISTA program.

7. Setting up and starting our Assistance to Coal Communities #2 and Revolving Loan Fund program.

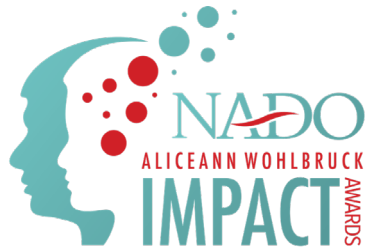
If you have investment-ready projects, please contact us to make sure they are covered in our Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy plan update and in our portfolio for investment opportunities.



Sources:

<https://www.eda.gov/news/press-releases/2020/09/30/santa-fe-nm.htm>
<https://www.eda.gov/news/press-releases/2020/08/20/nm.htm>
<https://www.eda.gov/news/press-releases/2020/09/17/gallup-nm.htm>
<https://www.eda.gov/news/press-releases/2020/07/31/university-centers.htm>

NADO Impact Award



Your Organization is Making an Impact in Your Region.
Get Recognized for It!

Each year, NADO recognizes member organizations that demonstrate valuable and effective approaches to regional economic and community development through our awards program. The breadth and scope of the winning projects is impressive and far-reaching and illustrates

the important role NADO members have in supporting regional development. For more information, go to the project webpage at: <http://www.nwnmcog.com/prewitt-industrial-park.html>

This year the COG was awarded an Impact Award for its role and leadership in the **Prewitt Industrial Park Master Plan & Design Project**. This includes our work in sustaining, expanding, and redeveloping the Prewitt Industrial Cluster that has a huge economic impact for McKinley and Cibola counties. This project concluded with master plan with 30% infrastructure build-out design and a 90% designed spec-building.

NADO AWARD HISTORY

2002 – Adventure Gallup & Beyond
2019 – Zuni Mountains Trail Project
2020 – Prewitt Industrial Park Plan & Design



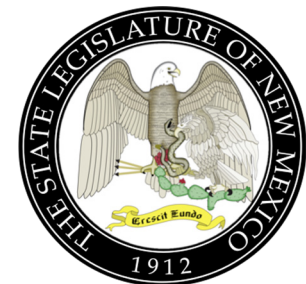
PARTNERS...



TRI-STATE



CONTINENTAL DIVIDE
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



2020 NADO Photo Contest

The NADO Photo Contest is an opportunity for our member organizations to tell the story of their regions through images that capture the people and places that make their communities wonderful places to live, work, and play. In addition, this year we have added a special category to feature your work in supporting with COVID-19 response and recovery.

The COG submitted two pictures that we felt represented the last year and a couple team projects we all worked together including our **Agriculture Project** and our **Mural Project**. More information and pictures are available at: <https://www.facebook.com/NADO.org/photos/>



COG Front Entrance
Agricultural Improvements
Summer 2020



COG Building - Alleyway
Mural Project
Fall 2019/Spring 2020

2020 NADO Photo Contest

For the 2020 NADO Photo Contest, our **Mural Project** was selected as Runner-Up in the “Building Vibrant Places” category. Below is our mural artist, Marina Eskeets’s (Pinedale, NM) narrative on her work. Here’s a snapshot on the progress of this project...



THE STORY: This mural is on the back of COG Headquarters in an alleyway that is under a major transformation from eyesore to a vibrant place. To be part of that change, the COG partnered with Gallup MainStreet, Art, and Cultural District and local Diné artist Marina Eskeets to develop this mural entitled: “Óódáát | Everyone Moving Forward”, which depicts shepherding as a traditional way of life and the storytelling that embodies that upbringing, as well as an eye to a more resilient future.

Much more than a mural project, Marina Eskeets involved participation by local high school art students, held several talks both in person and digitally, and collected shepherding stories from area elders. Our entire COG staff was involved in prepping the wall for the artist, which proved to be a great team building exercise and connecting our work to the community it serves. This project is part of the City of Gallup’s Alleyway Upgrade Program that aims at converting unappealing downtown alleyways into community portals that relocate all utilities sub-surface including trash cans to allow for a safe and accessible pedestrian and bike-friendly experience that is anchored amongst big wall murals and design context amenities for all people. This project reinforces the theme of everyone moving forward and creating vibrant and inclusive places. For more information, go to: <http://www.nwnmcog.com/cog-mural-project.html>

Regional Highlights

COG has embraced social media to help us market and capture regional news and highlights. Please subscribe, follow, and like our Twitter, YouTube and Facebook pages and associated videos and messages.

We are actively moving content including organization and program orientations onto online and digital platforms. Here some tweets from an impressive Q1.

Tweets...



Congress passed the Reinvigorating Lending for the Future (RLF) Act of 2020 (S. 4075 and H.R. 7388), which will eliminate burdensome "in perpetuity" reporting and releasing the federal interest in EDA RLFs after seven years, providing more local flexibility to EDA RLF operators.



NWNMCOG @NWNMCOG · Aug 24

Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments is now a proud member of the NM Outdoor Business Alliance. Our region is a true "Force of Nature" and the mecca for outdoor recreation businesses.

gonm.biz/uploads/docume...



.@CommerceGov invests \$988,400 in the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments, Gallup, #NewMexico, to support economic diversification and business growth in northwest #NewMexico #OpportunityZone: bit.ly/2RCi0Sw @NWNMCOG

Regional Highlights



NWNMCOG @NWNMCOG · Jul 22

Escalante coal plant approaching end of the line abqjournal.com/1478141
#abq via @abqjournal



Escalante coal plant approaching end of the line
Millions of dollars in economic impact, tax revenue going away
abqjournal.com



Pandemic Highlights Deep-Rooted Problems in Indian Health Service
Few hospital beds, lack of equipment, a shipment of body bags in response to a request for coronavirus tests: The agency providing health care to tribal ...
nytimes.com

CDBG News

ADA Facility Improvements

San Juan County

PROJECT NEED

This project entails exterior ADA improvements for 22 county facilities, including parking, signage, sloping, exterior routes, doors, and other site-specific improvements. These improvements have been identified as critical, and the following needs will be met:

Accessibility: Improving accessibility for 19,461 severely disabled residents and increasing availability of County services for the aging and disable populations.

Equity: This project will also serve any and all County employees that are hired or acquire a disability during their employment.

Countywide: Project is consistent with ADA Transition Plan and Comprehensive Plan and provides improvements at all facilities throughout the County.

PROJECT BY NUMBERS

CDBG Scoring Criteria	Full Project	Phased Project
CDBG Grant Request	\$750,000	\$520,000
Match (Local)	\$75,000	\$52,000
Leveraging	\$314,953.00^	\$314,953.00^
Total Cost	\$825,000*	\$572,000
Low-to-Moderate Income (LMI) Percentage	100% (Limited Clientele)	100% (Limited Clientele)
Number of Persons in Target Area	19,461	19,461
CDBG Cost per Beneficiary	\$38.54	\$38.54
Timeline for Completion	<24 months	<24 months
Number of Facilities Improved	22	11

Full: secure funding to complete all recommended upgrades for all 22 county buildings that need to meet ADA requirements.

Phased: would only include exterior ADA improvements at 11 of the 22 county facilities.

FEASIBILITY/READINESS:

- Strong community support and matching funds
- Currently #5 on the County's 2021-2025 ICIP
- Secured site control
- Environmental Review not required
- In lieu of a PER, an ADA Transition Plan was completed

Project was selected for an award amount of \$500,000. Once funded, the County will proceed with design. An RFP has been prepared in compliance with CDBG regulations.

Congrats to San Juan County, New Mexico on its BUILD Grant for \$2M for design of the freight rail project ([the-journal.com/articles/188302](https://thejournal.com/articles/188302)) and CDBG for \$750,000 for ADA upgrades at County facilities.



San Juan County, N.M., awarded \$2M grant for freight rail project
San Juan County has been awarded \$2 million to pay for the next steps in a project intended to bring freight rail service to San Juan County. Local...

West Logan Avenue Street & Drainage Improvement Project

City of Gallup

PROJECT NEED

This project will address blighted conditions developed from significant deterioration of existing curbs, gutters, sidewalks, street, drainage and subsurface utilities (water and wastewater). The focus is on West Logan Avenue from 6th Street to 9th Street, a proposed 3-block project.

This project can be the catalyst for community revitalization, redevelopment through blight elimination and reinvestment, as prioritized in the City's Growth Management Plan. This project has critical priority for the health, safety, and welfare of the community.

PROJECT BY NUMBERS

<u>Project Title:</u>	<u>Full Project</u>	<u>Phased Project</u>
West Logan Avenue (6 th to 9 th St.) Street and Drainage Project	Provides funding to complete 2 of the 3 blocks, starting from 9 th Street moving east to 7 th Street. The 9 th Street/West Logan Avenue corridor is the most impacted.	The phased project would only include 1 block, (9 th to 8 th Street). The 9 th Street/West Logan Avenue corridor is the most impacted, thus gains precedence.
<u>Total Project Cost</u>	<u>\$1,270,984.20</u>	<u>\$816,972.97</u>
<u>Amount Requested</u>	<u>\$1,000,000.00</u>	<u>\$680,822.67</u>
Matching Funds	\$100,000	\$65,955.79
Leveraging/Construction Mgmt.	\$170,984.20	\$91,459.33

Full: secure funding to complete 2-blocks, including street, gutter, curb, sidewalk, drainage and subsurface utilities. West end of street has critical priority, at 9th Street.

Phased: project will be the 1-block on the east end of the project corridor, at 6th Street, including street, gutter, curb, sidewalk, drainage and subsurface utilities.

FEASIBILITY/READINESS:

- Strong community and City Council support
- Currently #5 on the City's 2021-2025 ICIP
- Project in alignment with the City's Growth Management Plan
- Secured site control
- Received Categorical Exclusion (Cat-Ex)
- Environmental Assessment completed, final review
- Design in progress, scheduled to be completed DEC 2020

Project was selected for an award amount of \$1,000,000. Project will be *shovel-ready* upon the completion of the design.



Chihuahuita neighborhood, Gallup, NM

ICIP Projecteering

ICIP...

Project Development, or “*Projecteering*” is a critical part of Moving the Region Forward. Over the course of the last three months, the Council of Governments has been actively advocating for, encouraging agencies to participate, and assisting with the development of local Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plans (ICIP). As one of the primary and foundational tools to assist local agencies in infrastructure planning and project development, the ICIP has become a norm in northwest New Mexico and the COG has been one of the best advocates for the state led process.

Following suit with other processes, programs and initiatives statewide, the ICIP timeline, including trainings, technical assistance, and deadlines were modified to account for changes brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Instead of the usual COG co-hosted regional training seminar, local agencies were presented with a series of trainings on the ICIP, “Projecteering”, Capital Outlay, Capital Projects Monitoring System (CPMS), Cost Estimating, and various others. Understanding the importance the ICIP has in the region, the COG continued its ICIP technical assistance program and assisted local agencies from acequias and senior centers, to tribal and local governments. The COG continues to work towards a goal of 100% ICIP submission within the region.

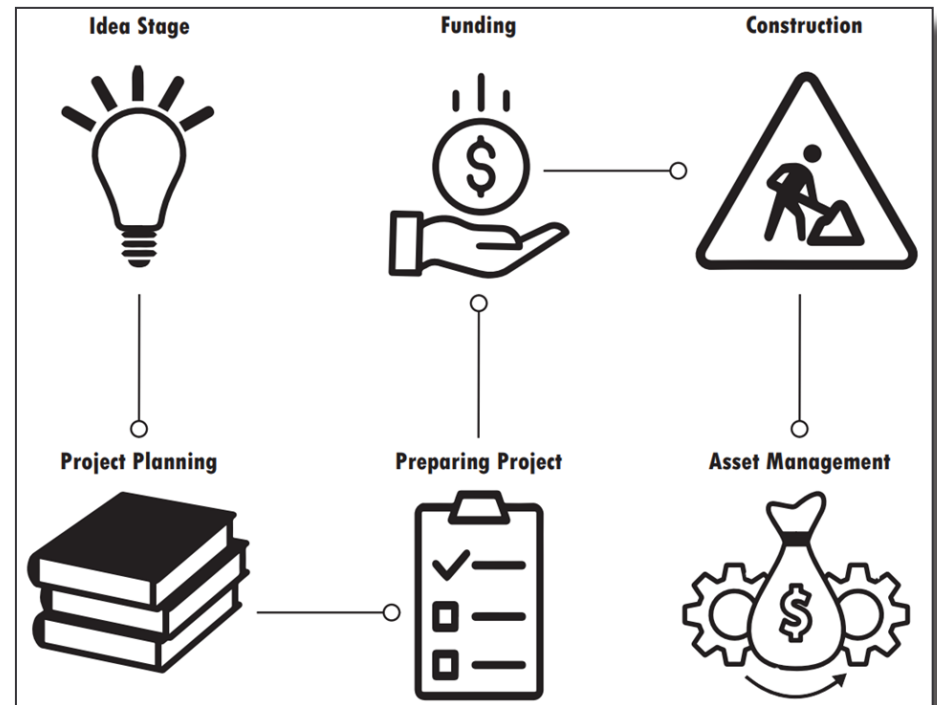
So Now What?...

To many, the ICIP is a daunting task that takes strategic thinking and planning, conversation with local experts and discussions with community members to develop a plan that truly represents the infrastructure needs of the community. Many are left with the question “so now what”?

With the realization that the ICIP is only a planning tool and a pre-requisite for applying for funding and is used to help policy officials focus and select priority infrastructure projects, the COG encourages local agencies to shift from planning to “projecteering”. “Projecteering” is the process of getting a project from the Idea Stage through to Management of the Asset after construction.

Understanding that projects are initiated throughout the year, the COG encourages local agencies to adopt a full cycle planning and full circle funding philosophy. With this philosophy, it ensures that local agencies regularly revisit projects to plan and develop with the intent to secure funding from one or more sources. With this type of approach, local agencies with their many needs, can “projecteer” 365 days a year.

With years of experience in project development and implementation, the COG has developed and employed an annual funding timeline with most of the major resources utilized within the region. We encourage local agencies to utilize the timeline to help their “projecteering” efforts.



http://www.nwnmcog.com/uploads/1/2/8/7/12873976/projecteering_cycle.pdf

CEDS Update

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS) document contributes to effective economic development in communities and regions through locally based, regionally driven economic development planning processes. A CEDS document is required by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) to maintain Economic Development District (EDD) status and must be updated at least once every five years to qualify for EDA assistance.

Region 1 is the designated Economic Development District for the three-county area of northwest New Mexico (Cibola, McKinley, and San Juan) and is responsible for preparing the CEDS update report.

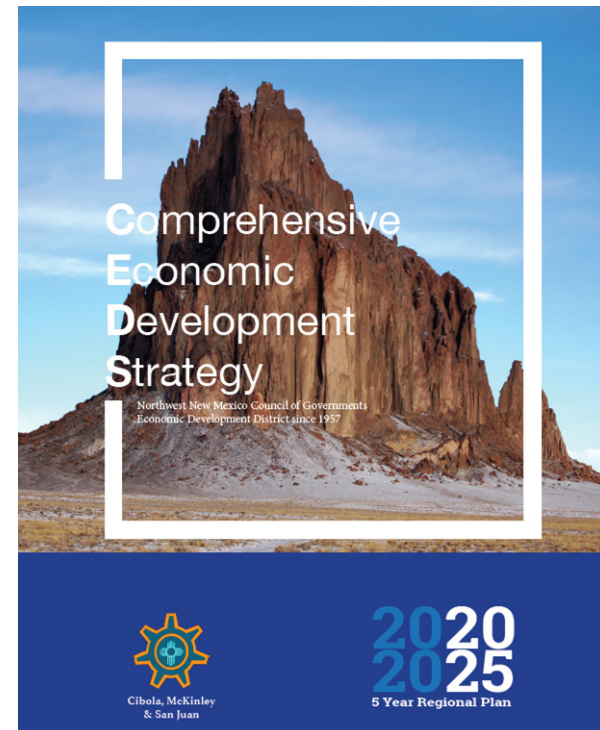
A CEDS is designed to:

- Bring together the public and private sectors
- Be an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen regional economies
- Analyze the regional economy
- Serve as a guide for establishing regional goals and objectives
- Be a regional plan for implementation and action
- Identify investment priorities and funding sources

NWNMCOG staff are in the process of updating the CEDS for 2020-2025. The CEDS will incorporate new EDA requirements such as an increased focus on economic resiliency, timely considering the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, new demographic and socio-economic information will help shed light on the current state of the regional economy. Along with an updated SWOT analysis, the new data will help to define goals and objectives to increase economic growth over the next 5 years. A final report will be posted on the COG website:

<http://www.nwnmcog.com/ceds-update-2020.html>

Considering the COVID-19 pandemic and the impacts on the local and regional economy from the diversification away from fossil fuels (crude, natural gas, and coal), the 2020 CEDS is one of the most important documents for region as we look to combat economic stagnancy and foster economic growth



RTPO: Where the Rubber Hits the Road

Northwest Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO)

Extensive work took place during our 3rd and 4th quarters (April – September) and is ongoing at this time to update our Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) – in sync. with the NMDOT’s major Long Range Transportation Plan update. Public outreach was difficult due to COVID-19 meeting restrictions, but we got some good input from outreach to around 70 regional stakeholders, who’s work or role included transportation within our three county, four tribe and multi-community region.

COG RTPO staff produced a power-point presentation on the intent and progress with the RTP, along with a survey for the RTP update on “Survey-Monkey”, both of which were forwarded to regional RTPO members and stakeholders. Staff also developed recommendations for goals and related objectives within our current RTP that have yet to be fully addressed.

A multi-million dollar project is commencing for major expansion and improvement to the US-491 and Carbon Coal road intersection in Gamero, in order to accommodate anticipated commercial trucking, related to the 4-CITE project for an Energy Logistics Park, and potential inland port – off loading between rail and trucking freight. This project includes paving the road for about 4.5 miles from the Gamerco intersection to the former Gamerco mining area. The \$30M planned upgrade of Carbon Coal Road and its intersection with US491 has been fully designed and is construction-ready. This project will provide a 4-lane access road to the Gallup Energy Logistics Park, a BNSF certified site.

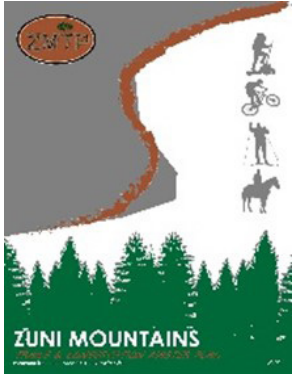
The COG also received \$120,000 with a \$30,000 local match totaling \$150,000.00 to support a Prewitt Area Transportation (PAT) Master Plan and the Prewitt/Milan Transportation Master Plan (TMP), for re-purposing existing industrial assets within the region’s Prewitt and Milan Industrial Parks. The project will actually look at the entire area between Thoreau and Milan, but with primary focus

on the industrial parks, as the Prewitt Escalante Electric Generating Plant will be closing this year – which could also impact the paper company associated with the plant.

The NWRTPO and NWNMCOG have applied for national designation for portions of our Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway within New Mexico, and are waiting to hear if this designation will be granted from the USDOT. This four state scenic byway is already nationally designated within Colorado and Utah; if the New Mexico proposed portions are so designated, then we can work on helping the Navajo Nation get the Arizona byway portion(s) which are primarily on the reservation, to get nationally designated. National designation, if properly promoted can result in tourism benefits in the millions of dollars.



ZMTP Update



The Mexican Spotted Owl (MSO) Court Injunction is still in effect since September 2019. This has halted trail construction regarding tree roots, tree-limbing and tree felling. Statement of work (SOW) and Request for proposal (RFP) are available for McGaffey area and Milk Ranch trail systems. Timelines are to be determined when MSO Court Injunction is lifted; for RFP, bid, pre-construction meetings and construction start dates. Work not affected by the US Forest MSO Court Injunction are signs, cattleguards, and equipment nearing its purchase and installation for the McGaffey, Milk Ranch, and Quartz Hill trail system infrastructure.

McKinley County is working on fabricating/welding cattle guards to USFS specifications. USFS data shapefiles were recently made available to the COG for ArcGIS mapping. Use of mechanized equipment to build trails are being incorporated into the bid process and considered for future construction. Partners continue to work hard to move the project forward!

COVID-19 has impacted the Nation and communication between all ZMTP Partners has been in the form of conference calls or videoconferencing methods. Meetings are pending between the Cibola County, McKinley County, Cibola National Forest, Northwest NM Council of Governments, and NM Department of Transportation. In the interim, this window of opportunity has allowed Carrie House, of the COG, to begin an internal revision process of the Zuni Mountain Trails and Conservation Master Plan (ZMTCMP) 2017. There will be a ZMTP partners and public comment period. Spring 2021 goal is to have the final draft of the ZMTCMP to be reviewed and approved.

Review ZMTCMP 2017 at: http://www.nwnmcog.com/uploads/1/2/8/7/12873976/zmtp_final_02.5.20.pdf





Image taken from Hard Ground Canyon Road/Nayajo Route 77 at Red Water Pond Road