



Connecting the Dots



Volume 11, Issue #1
February – April 2018

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

Winter greetings, all,

We enjoyed seeing many of you in Santa Fe at various activities at the Roundhouse during the Legislative Session. As always, at various times interesting, difficult, rewarding and frustrating, but ultimately a productive process. And as always a real pleasure to see the diverse peoples and cultures of New Mexico congregate and flow through the Roundhouse corridors! There were “wins” and “losses,” of course, for the State’s many constituencies, but we’re hopeful we can proceed forward on fairly solid ground, with an adopted State budget in hand and opportunities for investing in our communities.

As per tradition, the COG was an active member and facilitator for “McKinley County-Gallup Day at the Legislature,” which continued to build on its reputation as one of the premier community promotional events at each year’s legislative session. This was the 8th and final year of leadership of this event by McKinley County Commissioner Carol Bowman Muskett, whose enthusiastic and wise guidance will serve as one of her top legacy contributions.

The “energy equation” continues to garner attention and controversy, and few communities are as impacted by the fortunes of the energy industry as those in northwestern New Mexico. We concluded our regional “POWER” grant with the very successful “Four Corners Future Forum” in Farmington this past November ... but the work continues by virtue of our partnerships with many agencies and communities in the Four Corners region. As we head into Spring, look for news of follow-up meetings, initiatives and investments, as we work together for diversified and sustainable community economies throughout the broader region.

Along the way, we continue to serve our communities by “thinking regionally and acting locally,” and as a reflection of some of this work, I commend to you the articles in this quarterly Connecting the Dots newsletter.

Jeff

Jeff Kiely,
Executive Director

Table of Contents



REPORT FROM THE LEGISLATURE	4
McKINLEY COUNTY-GALLUP DAY	6
GGEDC	7
CDBG	8
RTPO	9
REGIONAL TOURISM	10
CWPP	11



Report from the Legislature

Your Council of Governments participates and maintains a presence for the entire Session, as a service to our members, our rural and tribal communities, and our Legislators. We are here to serve your needs and track items of interest for our members. Our organization does not lobby but we understand our region and communities, making us valuable to Legislators, staff, and your hired Lobbyists as an informational resource.

SB1: Nurse Licensure Compact

A multi-state agreement (compact states) permits nurses to hold licenses in compact states without foregoing additional licensure.

Status: Passed both Houses, Governor signed into law.

HB 2: State Budget

Provides a \$6.3B budget for FY19, based on increased revenues from oil and gas prices and production. This budget restores the State's reserves to 10%.

Status: Passed both Houses but will require Concurrence before going to the Governor for review.

SB245: Reauthorization Bill

The bill reauthorizes 143 capital outlay projects including those that changed purposes, agencies, or requested a time extension.

Status: Passed the Senate, currently in HTRC.

HB306: Capital Outlay Bill

The bill authorizes \$179.8M in severance tax bonds (SB) and other funds for statewide agency projects, local projects, and other priorities.

Status: Passed the House, currently in SFC.

SB94: General Obligation Bond Bill

The bill authorizes \$165.3M in general obligation bonds (GOB) for senior citizen facilities, libraries, higher education, and schools.

Status: Passed the Senate, currently in HTRC.



Report from the Legislature

New Mexico Finance Authority and Infrastructure Program Bills

SB170: Water Project Fund Bill

The bill authorizes 22 projects that are proceeding through the Water Trust Board process.

Status: Passed both Houses, Governor to review.

SB43: Wastewater Project Fund Bill

The bill appropriates \$1.1M for the public project revolving fund (PPRF) for Clean Water (or Wastewater) State Revolving Loan Fund through NM Environment Department.

Status: Passed both Houses, Governor to review

SB43: Drinking Water Project Fund Bill

The bill appropriates \$1.8M for the public project revolving fund (PPRF) for Drinking Water (or Water) State Revolving Loan Fund through NM Environment Department.

Status: Passed both Houses, Governor to review

HB99: Public Project Revolving Fund Bill

The bill authorizes 111 projects to provide public project revolving loans as they move forward through NMFA's process.

Status: Passed the House, currently in SFC

SB23: Local Government Planning Fund Bill

The bill appropriates \$1.5M for the public project revolving fund (PPRF) to the local government planning fund through NMFA.

Status: Passed Senate, currently on House Calendar





COG Director Jeff Kiely facilitated the meeting of the McKinley County-Gallup Day delegation with Governor Susana Martinez, who spent the duration of the 75-minute meeting cradling this baby girl in her arms.

McKinley County-Gallup Day at the Legislature

In keeping with an impressive community tradition spanning over 15 years, on February 1st a strong delegation of local leaders and citizens descended upon Santa Fe for McKinley County-Gallup Day at the Legislature. The COG was again asked to play a significant role in this annual event, including compilation and publication of community-wide legislative priorities and moderation of specific events throughout the Day.

For the 8th year, this group was led by McKinley County Commissioner Carol Bowman Muskett, now serving in her last year as a Commissioner. And for the 8th year, the group gathered in the majestic Governor's conference room to share the community's needs and aspirations with Governor Susana Martinez – who was personally present for all but one of these occasions.

For the duration of the 75-minute meeting, the Governor cradled her two-month old granddaughter in her arms, contributing to a warm and relaxed atmosphere. She was accompanied by her Chief of Staff Keith Gardner, who has served in that role throughout the Martinez Administration.

With some 25 local citizens in the group, COG Director Jeff Kiely facilitated the discussion with the Governor, noting the positive reception she has consistently afforded the McKinley County-Gallup group and appreciating the positive relationship she has cultivated with the community. He called in turn upon principal representatives of key presenting entities. In the course of things, Mayor Jackie McKinney thanked the Governor for her District 6 appointment of Billy Moore to the State Transportation Commissioner. Mr. Moore, who also serves as COG Board Chairman, was also present at this meeting. The gathering was characterized by a friendly but substantive exchange between the Governor and the group, including coverage of areas of both agreement and controversy.

Prior to this session with the Governor, the McKinley County-Gallup Day contingent hosted a public information event in the Capitol Rotunda, also MC'd by Mr. Kiely, featuring presentations by Ina Burmeister on behalf of Rehoboth McKinley Christian Health Care Services, Dr. James Malm and Ralph Richards on behalf of UNM-Gallup, Ken Zylstra on behalf of Rehoboth Christian School, and Dudley Byerley on behalf of Gallup Inter-Tribal Indian Ceremonial. Also presenting during this event was Legislative Finance Committee Director David Abbey on behalf of LFC Chair Representative Patty Lundstrom, who was unable to escape her legislative responsibilities at that time. Mr. Abbey provided an upbeat summary of the budget as adopted nearly unanimously by the House of Representatives before its delivery to the Senate.

McKinley County-Gallup Day at the Legislature

Economic Development & Tourism

- Gallup Inter-Tribal Indian Ceremonial
 - ✓ Sustained Annual State Budget: \$50,000
 - ✓ HB2: \$27,000 rescinded to this event
- Gallup Business Improvement District
 - ✓ MainStreet: increased operational funding (\$200,000) and Capital Outlay (\$500,000)
- City of Gallup – HB306:
 - ✓ Secured \$335,500 for the Veterans Cemetery Access Road project
 - ✓ Secured \$50,000 for the Carbon Coal Road project
- McKinley County – met with DOT Secretary Church and Governor Martinez
 - ✓ Support for County Road 19 project
 - ✓ Includes county bridge improvement projects for school bus routes
 - ✓ Allotment of over \$50 million in statewide NMDOT projects

Education

- Gallup-McKinley County School District
 - ✓ Support for funding increases for facility, staffing, and operational costs

Higher Education

- UNM-Gallup
 - ✓ SB94: Secured \$5 million in GOB
 - ✓ HB2: Secured \$200,000 for Career Tech Center and workforce programs
- Navajo Technical University
 - ✓ HB306: Secured \$200,000 for faculty housing
 - ✓ SB94: Secured \$3.7 million in GOB for academic building

Health

- Rehoboth McKinley Christian Health Care Services
 - ✓ State Nurse Licensing Compact passed
 - ✓ Increased funding for Medicaid and Behavioral Health Investment program

Public Safety

- City of Gallup
 - ✓ HB306: Secured \$226,000 for Gallup Police Department
- McKinley County
 - ✓ HB306: Secured \$50,000 for McKinley County Sheriffs Department

McKINLEY COUNTY- GALLUP DAY/2018



LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES “PLANTING THE SEED”

COG Planner Angelina Grey assisted the MCGD with design of the legislative priorities brochure.



Greater Gallup Roundtable

COG supports 8th Annual Economic Roundtable to focus on Workforce Development

Greater Gallup Economic Development Corporation (GGEDC) called once again on the technical and facilitation services of the COG in support of this year's Economic Roundtable, held at the La Fonda Hotel in Santa Fe in late January. This year's roundtable focused on Breakthroughs in Workforce, bringing together community leaders with experts from business and industry in an interactive workshop setting.

Serving as a reference point for this Roundtable was the recent report published by Innovate+Educate, Inc. under funding from the WK Kellogg Foundation, **"New Mexico Pathways—McKinley County,"** which provided extensive data on the workforce challenge in the Greater Gallup region, as well as recommendations on employer sectors with the highest potential for growth in the coming decade. Among those sectors were three that align directly with the economic-base job growth mission and focus of the GGEDC: Construction, Logistics; and Manufacturing.

Kellogg Program Office Alvin Warren, former New Mexico Secretary of Indian Affairs, also attended the Roundtable and offered encouraging remarks and pledges of long-term support for collaborative community efforts to provide employment opportunities for the area's citizens. The COG has been recommended as a key player in facilitating and coordinating such a long-term collaborative under Kellogg funding.

Emerging from the Roundtable was a substantial body of input from the participants, which will be drafted up into a report and then translated into action plans for collaborative work going forward. For this session, the focus was not on the challenges and barriers themselves, but on the solutions needed to overcome them. Perhaps the biggest take-away was that everyone involved appeared strongly committed to moving forward to resolve our workforce challenges, establish systems and partnerships that work, and leverage resources to strengthen the "bridge" that connects local citizens to real-time job opportunities.

"The most important issue facing local growth and the ability for companies to grow is a trained workforce. For the economic development community, delivering high quality workers is essential for a community to be competitive. And without the delivery systems of workforce development and workforce being aligned and working together, many communities will miss their ability to win in the race for jobs and improved standards of living"

—Jeff Finkle, President/CEO, International Economic Development Council

HM72: Escalante Generating Station

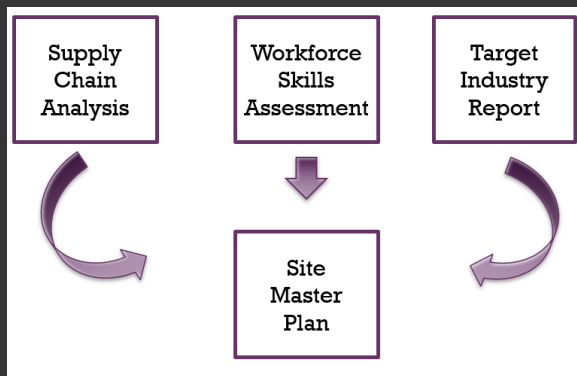


The COG has been an integral part of HM72, which was set out to find and build off opportunities from the Prewitt Industrial Cluster area. This area is home to tax base giants such as Escalante Generating Station, Lee Ranch and El Segundo mines, and McKinley County, and have unique transportation assets in terms of access from Interstate 40 and connected with the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe. The COG partnered with various state agencies, private sector representatives, Continental Divide, both counties and their Economic development organizations to bring investigated possibilities and potential opportunities to expand and/or deepen the business and employment opportunities in this strategic location.

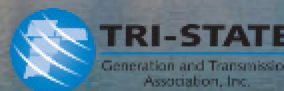
Over the course of the year the Team has:

- Held several meetings to flesh scope and discuss opportunities.
- Established private and public partnership with regional research labs,
- Leveraged and developed a *WorkKeys* assessment pilot with industry partners,
- Requested for two NMFA planning grants to fund this initiative,
- Presented to interim Legislative Committees on initial findings, and
- Updated HM72 via the new HM41, which passed this Legislative Session.

Working in collaboration with Cibola and McKinley Counties under NMFA planning grant funding, the COG is coordinating an economic and workforce study that will pull four key pieces together.



The State Legislature is supporting the efforts of the COG and its partners to spur job creation in our energy-driven region of New Mexico, so local communities and families have the economic stability to thrive.





CITY OF GRANTS

The first CDBG public meeting was held on January 10th for the upcoming CDBG application cycle. The meeting was attended by several participants, including city officials. Local citizens recommended a number of good projects for consideration, in which only three projects were finalized to be adequately *construction ready*.

On January 22nd, the City Council selected the **First Street - Phase 3** project, as it had a very competitive funding match from NMDOT as leverage.

Evan Williams provided support at the recent state legislative session for our region. Through the American Community Survey (ACS) database, the Local Government Division (LGD) has determined that the City meets the 51% LMI limit, therefore, no neighborhood LMI survey is not necessary. COG staff will continue assisting the City through the CDBG application process.



MCKINLEY COUNTY

The County has been vying for the CDBG funding since 2017-2018, but all recommended community development projects have been ineligible due to the state of piecemeal readiness, with two public meetings on record.

This upcoming funding cycle, the County acquired five recommended community development projects. The County held its third public hearing on January 11th. On the 23rd, the City Council selected the **White Cliffs Water Improvement Project** for a new 50,000-gallon water tank and updated water meter readers. The White Cliffs is not recognized by the ACS as a low-income, so a randomized community survey will need to be conducted for verification.

Contending with fiscal challenges, the project is currently moving forward with preliminary documentation, etc. to gain as main points as possible.



CDBG

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT



RTPO

New Mexico

Maintaining the forward progress of the **Zuni Mountains Trails Project**. 36-miles of new recreational trails were created with ArcGIS. The next stage is to construct on-the-ground trails in Spring/Summer 2018.

Continued support for Gallup's Energy Logistics Park and the Navajo Inland Port (probable). Projects are in direct connection with HWY 491, I-40, and BNSF Rail line, these projects have the highest potential for amplifying our region's economic development base for growth and opportunities.

REGIONAL UPDATES....

Regional leaders for the City of Grants will initiate a 20-year long-term plan for regional strategies and priorities, with a focus on short-, mid- and long-term planning to strengthen the City's prospects for funding and resources.

The NWRTPPO evaluated and submitted funding applications for our region's **5310 (Elderly and Disabled)** and **5311 (Public Transit)** programs. Aside from current fiscal challenges, regional transportation reps are interested in developing cross-jurisdictional transit partnership that supports region-wide transit opportunities to accommodate low-income citizens for specialty services offered only in distant areas (Albuquerque, etc.), in addition to transfer stations and vital transit services. Other opportunities such as overnight accommodations and efficient accessibility are also being considered under a region-wide feasibility assessment.

COG staff submitted **FFY18 First Quarter Report, FFY17 Annual Performance & Expenditure Report** (APER), and completed an amended Regional Work Program that reflects work function hours, based on FY17 experience and anticipated needs for FY18. In addition, there was over \$15,000 in unexpended carry over funds from FY17 into the FY18 Regional Work Program budget. RTPO members approved and authorized annual RTPO governing documents guiding program functions and processes that was updated during the course of FY17.

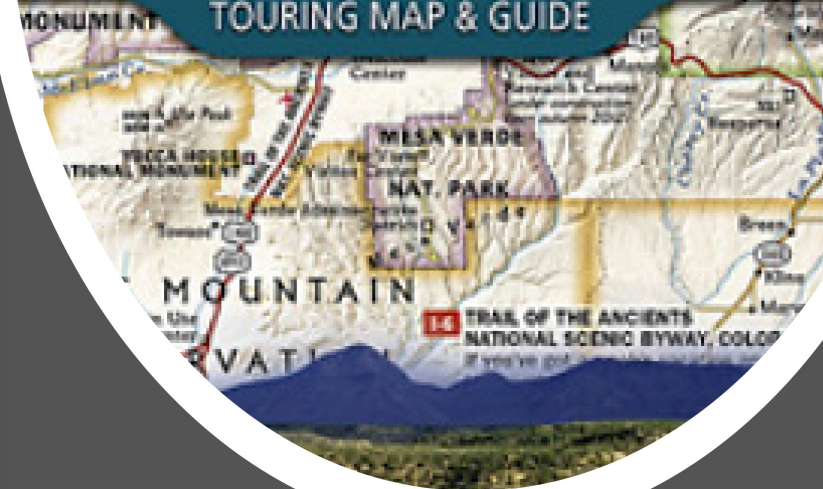
COG staff is preparing a **NM Indian Affairs TIF** application for road improvements for Deer Springs Road, on behalf of Nakaibito (Mexican Springs) Chapter. McKinley Commissioner and elected Chapter Official Carol Bowman Muskett organized a meeting with key NDOT staff, to discuss feasibility for this and several other key projects of interest.

An online survey was created to gather member input regarding the effectiveness and efficiency of the RTPO program, as well as recommendations on future priorities, training and webinars.

Four Corners Trail of the Ancients



DESTINATION TOURING MAP & GUIDE



Regional Tourism

The COG is working closely with McKinley County and the NM Tourism Department to improve and strengthen the **Four Corners Geotourism** website to market our region on a national and international scale and to boost the local economy. The challenge is developing transportation-related services that promotes regional tourism. This approach reaffirms the significance and magnitude of revitalizing transportation services and accessibility apart from the Trail of the Ancients Byway agenda.

Endowed through the National Geographic enterprise, the funding grant will assist with:

- Website development to feature attractions and places of interest, and
- Reestablishing the stewardship council to oversee operations and maintenance.

Funding is granted through the NM Tourism Department's FLEX program to upgrade the website, and the development of a final report. The COG will continue collaborating with the stewardship council in maintaining the website through an established a fiscal plan. It has been proposed that participating agencies and sponsors should contribute annual payments for costs and expenditures associated with website upkeep.

The Stewardship Council will comprise of regional representatives from all four states. Aside from upkeep, the Council will be responsible for managing website content, ensuring the validity of published data and information, and tracking local and regional marketed attractions.

The website will only market and advertise public and private venues of genuine and authentic representation of our region's diverse cultures, history, events, natural and recreational attractions, local cuisine, hospitality and state/federal parks/monuments; exceptionally consistent with our New Mexico True focus.

Go to www.4Cornersgeotourism.com to become acquainted with this international marketing tool that we hope will take our regional tourism and hospitality industries, along with sustaining the unique character of our region and quality of our environment – to a whole new level.



Community Wildfire Protection Plan

2018 McKinley Community Wildfire Protection Plan

The **County Fire & Rescue**, **NM Forest Guild** and the **Council of Governments** are collaborating to update the 2013 *McKinley Community Wildfire Protection Plan*, made possible through an endowment by the N.M. Association of Counties (NMAC).

Top priorities for the project team are as follows:

- Establish the scope of the plan per CWPP guidance,
- Establish task schedules (meetings, draft updates),
- Revise the County Fire District Core Team list for all participating agencies.**

The first Core Team meeting was held in November 2017, and the first public meeting was held on February 8, 2018.

The NM Forest Guild made the decision to develop an online survey in which each District is responsible for updating the following components:

- past accomplishments
- risk reduction
- priority actions going forward

The preliminary CWPP draft will be based on results of the online survey and public input of the kickoff meeting.

The 2nd Core Team and Public Meetings are scheduled for March. COG staff had also completed and submitted the first bi-annual report to the NMAC.

**NM & National Forest Service, Land Use Management., Utilities across jurisdictions, OEMs across jurisdictions, Soil & Water Sanitation Districts, Transportation Departments, U.S. Department of the Interior, BIA Fire agents, N.M. Forest Guild

Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments



106 West Aztec Avenue | Gallup, New Mexico 87301 | (505) 722-4327

www.nwnmcog.com