



NORTHWEST NEW  
MEXICO COUNCIL OF  
GOVERNMENTS

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Northwest NM Regional Solid  
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# Connecting the Dots...

*Serving San Juan, McKinley, and Cibola County Governments for 40 years!*

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## SPOTLIGHT: NORTHWEST NM BROADBAND PLANNING PROJECT

The Council of Governments is partnering with our region's Economic Development Organizations (EDOs) **Cibola Communities Economic Development Foundation**, **Four Corners Economic Development, Inc.**, and **Greater Gallup Economic Development Corporation** to develop the Northwest NM Broadband & Telecommunications Plan.

The COG is working to gain access to pilot project funds from the **New Mexico Department of Information Technology** and other State and local resources, to develop a plan will help to enhance educational opportunities, improved medical and educational services, additional economic development opportunities and an improved quality of life through high-speed internet and data access technologies for many communities in Northwest New Mexico.

In this connection, the COG has been working to facilitate a Regional EDO Collaborative, in which the partners agree that **lack of broadband access and availability** is a **critical barrier**

to recruiting, creating, and expanding business and industrial opportunities in Northwest New Mexico, if not all rural areas of New Mexico.

Upon completion, the plan will address feasibility, planning, integration of service and financing of **broadband in Northwest New Mexico**.

Specifically, this plan will initiate a needs assessment, conduct broadband education and application development strategies, "last mile" connectivity solution, and a preliminary engineering and construction estimate. The plan will also offer organizational and operational recommendations for future network implementation projects, and funding strategies for potential projects in Northwest New Mexico.



## New Staff: Council of Governments Brings on New Planner

In early January, the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments welcomed new Planner, Marco Pablo. Marco is originally from the local area, but has spent the last 30 years in Albuquerque. We're glad he's decided to return to Northwest New Mexico and has immersed himself in projects within Cibola County, the City of Grants, and the Village of Milan. His experience in the Engineering field and as Lead Designer on housing and residential sub-divisions and other commercial and mixed-use developments or re-developments certainly will bring added value to our COG team.

As New Mexico's "Adventure Capital", Gallup should prove to allow this father of 4 plenty of opportunities to indulge in his personal interests of mountain biking, horseback riding, and hiking!

Please help us welcome Marco to our COG family!



## State Land Commissioner Signs Joint Planning Agreement with Gallup and McKinley County



The New Mexico Commissioner of Public Lands is an elected state official responsible for administering the state's land grant trust. Thirteen million acres of land were granted to New Mexico in 1898 and 1910. Each tract is held in trust for the public schools, universities, as well as special schools and hospitals that serve children with physical, visual, and auditory disabilities. In fiscal year 2012, the trust lands and permanent funds produced a record amount of more than \$650 million in income for the beneficiaries.



*Representative Lundstrom at the signing of JPA with the NM State Land office*

(SANTA FE, New Mexico) – February 7, 2013  
Press release from the State Land Office:

The first of its kind agreement was signed between a state agency, a city, and a county [on February 7, 2013], between the New Mexico State Land Office, the City of Gallup, and McKinley County. The agreement pledges cooperative community planning efforts and additional measures to ensure transparency, with a goal of creating more jobs for the McKinley County/Gallup area through planned, responsible growth and development.

A Joint Planning Agreement (JPA) was signed by State Land Commissioner Ray Powell, Gallup Mayor Jackie McKinney, and County Commission Chairman Genevieve Jackson (District 2) in a ceremony at McKinley County-Gallup Day at the State Legislature, at the Roundhouse. State Representative Patricia Lundstrom (D-McKinley) was also present for the signing ceremony.

The JPA will establish a cooperative working relationship between the State Land Office, the City of Gallup, and McKinley County for marketing state trust lands for economic development purposes. It also pledges collaboration before any long-term lease, sale or exchange of state trust land occurs.

"This is an historic agreement that creates a partnership between State Land Office, the City of Gallup, and McKinley County. It will help create good jobs while protecting the quality of life and health of our state trust lands in this very special place," said State Land Commissioner Ray Powell. "By working with the outstanding leaders of Gallup and McKinley County, we will also create additional revenues for our public schools, universities, and hospitals and thus keep our taxpayer's bills lower."

"This agreement will help the Gallup area and McKinley County to be a model of planned economic development on state trust land within McKinley County," said State Representative Patricia Lundstrom. "I look forward to working with the State Land Office on future development projects."

"The City of Gallup has economic development opportunities for lands that border our city limits. The State Land Office controls some of those lands and we realize that we cannot develop the areas full potential with-

out the assistance and cooperation of the Commissioner of Public Lands," Gallup Mayor Jackie McKinney. "We feel this is a great first step to a coordinated effort with McKinley County, the State Land Office and City at economic development for the greater Gallup area and welcome this groundbreaking tri-party agreement."

"McKinley County is unique with its multi-jurisdictional 'checkerboard' land status. State Land Commissioner Ray Powell and his staff have worked to develop this agreement, which upholds the constitutional mandate of the State Land Office and at the same time creates this new opportunity for better communication and economic development in our community," said McKinley County Attorney/PIO Doug Decker.

Fine points of the JPA include: the City, County and the Commissioner will implement processes that streamline the dedications of important roadway and infrastructure rights of way on developments that cross state trust lands; the Commissioner will consult with the County prior to any annexations and the Commissioner will enter into annexation agreements with the City prior to any proposed annexations; and the City and County will provide typical services to state trust lands pursuant to terms of joint plans including how payment, if any, will be made by whom.

The JPA became effective upon signing. The photo below shows Chairwoman Jackson and Mayor McKinney and Public Lands Commissioner Ray Powell signing the JPA.



## TRANSPORTATION NEWS IN NORTHWEST NEW MEXICO

### “THE WHEELS GO ROUND AND ROUND...”

Led by the COG's RTPO Planner Bob Kuipers, the Northwest RPTO continued to advance the work of rural Transportation Planning in the region:

#### RTPO Roundtable

The Fall “RPO Roundtable” was held in November in Silver City. Highlights of the meeting included:

- Annual Transportation Day at the New Mexico State Legislature: scheduled for March 5th. The event is still “too close” to end of Session, but the RPOs and the DOT are discussing ways to make “Transportation Day” more timely and effective at the Roundhouse.
- Summit: Discussions also focused on holding a Statewide DOT/RPO Summit where participants would collectively identify priorities and develop funding strategies.

- Highway Bill: An update of the new MAP-21 law was given, including details about potential impacts to rural transportation.

- Complete Streets: DOT presented on the Complete Streets program.

#### Long Range Transportation Plans

Long-Range Transportation Plans and RPO audits are on the horizon for our RTPO. The Long-Range Plan process provides us with a great opportunity to take things to “the next level” in securing a sustainable future for rural transportation in our region.

#### Road Improvements in the Region

- Street and roads improvement projects continued in Grants, Milan, Acoma, and Laguna.
- Safety projects are happening on the Navajo Nation, including construction on US 491 from Naschitti to Sheepsprings.



Above: NM118 near Churchrock, NM

- A feasibility study on NM118 continues related to the frontage road between east Gallup and Churchrock.
- Funding is being sought for a new bridge over the Rio Puerco for Gallup's “Allison Road Corridor.”

#### Funding

Several member governments took advantage of the Safety project funding application process.

The RTPO's annual prioritization for the Regional Transportation Improvement Plan Recommendations (RTIPR) took place with 6 new projects and 1 update from Laguna, and 2 project updates from Gallup (one safety & one bridge project).

### New McKinley County Commissioner



On February 21st, Governor Susana Martinez appointed **Tony Tanner** to the McKinley County Board of Commissioners for the District #3 seat.

Commissioner Tanner replaces Bob Rosebrough, who resigned in early February for personal reasons.

He joins Commissioners Genevieve Jackson (Chair) and Carol Bowman-Muskett.

### MICROENTERPRISE INCUBATOR PROJECT ENTREPRENEURIAL TRAINING

#### IN PARTNERSHIP WITH TAOS, INC.

Under subcontract with New Mexico Community Capital (with funding from a WW Kellogg Foundation grant), the Council of Governments continued partnering with Tohatchi Area of Opportunity & Service, Inc. (TAOS) to carry out the Navajo Microenterprise Incubator Project.

The COG and TAOS have further partnered with UNM-Gallup to develop and deliver an all-encompassing curriculum which covers marketing, customer service, business management practices, finance, developing a sound business plan, ethics, and internet and web-based marketing. Courses also incorporate guest presentations from a variety of organizations throughout New Mexico and the Navajo Nation.

In fact, classes have already begun for 19 students, and 5 classes have been conducted to date! Students may also take advantage of resources offered by UNM-Gallup, including the computer labs to develop their entrepreneurial skills. Students will also engage in practical application of sales and marketing skills at the Navajo Visitors Center in Sheepsprings, NM. The current course runs through July 2013.



**CDBG****2013-2014**

The COG assisted several member governments with CDBG Construction grant applications for several projects. This year, the expected available funding is approximately \$8 million, which continues the trend of decreasing CDBG funds.

Applications were submitted by the deadline of February 15 and the CDBG Application hearings are scheduled for May 12, 2013 in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

## Cibola County: Public Health Center



Cibola County is seeking CDBG funds for the relocation and renovation of the Cibola County Public Health Center. Currently, the Public Health Center is located in an antiquated building which inhibits any expansion of health services to Cibola County citizens. With a significant patient load of approximately 62% that is underinsured and underserved, the Cibola County Public Health Clinic faces an urgent need to continue and expand upon the affordable, accessible and convenient health services it offers to Cibola County residents.

Cibola County has found a potential solution to the needs of the community and Public Health Center by acquiring property in the Lobo Canyon Shopping Complex. The plan is to renovate the property and move the Public Health Center to the new location. At completion, the renovation would double the floor space of the Health Center including doubling the number of exam rooms, enlarging the pharmacy, laboratory, and patient waiting areas, and providing the much needed office space for clinical/medical staff.

Total Project Cost:	<b>\$1,330,962</b>
Matching Funds/Leveraging:	The County has cash match of <b>\$850,000</b>
Low to Moderate Income %:	<b>56.42%</b>
Estimated Number of People in the Target Area:	<b>7,300</b>
Cost per Beneficiary:	<b>\$68.49</b>



Cibola County Public Health Center

## City of Grants: Johnson Street Project—Phase II

The City of Grants also submitted an application for CDBG funds to continue with the Johnson Street Roadway and Drainage Improvement Project. Johnson Street is inadequate in meeting the needs of the users of the road. The current road width is minimal, existing paving is inadequate and a turn-around for life safety services does not exist. Emergency services like the Police, Fire, and EMS encounter great difficulty in using this road as a result. The Johnson Street Project will:

- Increase access for Fire and EMS through geometric road improvements/new pavement
- Enhance pedestrian safety with the construction of sidewalks
- Alleviate flooding through enhanced drainage infrastructure including curbs and gutters.



Photos of Johnson Street  
Grants, New Mexico

Total Project Cost:	<b>\$515,981</b>
Matching Funds/Leveraging:	The City of Grants has cash match of <b>\$124,499</b>
Low to Moderate Income %:	<b>51.27%</b>
Estimated Number of People in the Target Area:	<b>9,250 persons</b>
Cost per Beneficiary:	<b>\$54.05</b>

## Gamerco Water System Improvements—Phase III



Nearly 10 years ago, McKinley County and Gamerco Water and Sanitation District embarked on a partnership to improve the drinking water in Gamerco, New Mexico, a community just north of Gallup. This is a multi-phase project to improve their aging water system and previous phases already replaced a water storage tank.

This next round of CDBG Construction grant applications includes Phase III of the four-phase project that would install nearly 3,500 linear feet of new 6", 8", and 12" water lines, more than 40 isolation and gate valves, 13 new fire hydrant assemblies throughout the water system and possibly 200 feet of 2-inch service waterlines. These improvements will virtually eliminate water outages due to water line breaks, dead-end lines with stagnant water, unnecessary flushing of the entire system, and will provide fire protection to the Gamerco community. Currently, the water system experiences frequent line breaks and leaks which put the public's health at risk with water contamination. The installation of gate and isolation valves should allow for the quick isolation and repair of water breaks, rather than what is experienced now by the community, shutting down the entire system to repair breaks and leaks because they're aren't enough isolation valves. The project also expects to help the community conserve water, improve the Gamerco W&SD's operation and maintenance costs, and overall service performance of the system.

Aerial Photo of Gamerco Water System  
Gamerco, New Mexico

Total Full Project Cost:	\$667,553.20
Required Match:	\$50,000.00
Local Contribution:	\$167,553.20

Total Phased Project Cost:	\$640,865.70
Required Match:	\$50,000
Local Contribution:	\$165,867.70



### Notes from the Director...

Mid-winter Greetings,

The news from Washington is, well, chilly and not too sunny.

In my new role on the Executive Committee of the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO), I was in Washington for a round of meetings in mid-February on Capitol Hill and with the Administration — 14 meetings in two days! Obviously, what your agency and mine are most interested in — non-Defense discretionary dollars — are just a fraction of the overall Federal budget. And those dollars are vulnerable to the chaotic and cost-cutting forces at play in the Nation's Capitol. (I'll be back on the Hill in mid-March — keeping us current & advocating for the "good programs" that help our region.)

Skyfall? No, I don't think the sky is falling.

But the impacts will be felt throughout the country. Sequestration or not, New Mexico stands to lose thousands of jobs as the Department of Defense cuts deep into its enormous budget. Federal funding to Indian Tribes will likely decrease. Funding for social programs will get tighter.

The big talk on both sides of the aisle, of course, is "jobs-jobs-jobs." Economic development is a very big deal - and the fight goes on regarding the role of "big government" in that arena.

But there are opportunities to access Federal resources that can assist with local and regional economic development. We are advocating for a \$257 million budget for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) — a drop in the Federal bucket, but funding that customarily leverages many dollars for every tax dollar spent. Hopefully, with strong economic development organizations in each of our three counties, we can bring forward some local projects that will capture some of those funds.

... continued on page 6 ...



## Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments

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**“Leading the Field  
to Empower Communities  
& Move the Region**

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*If you have an important event that  
you would like to share, please send an  
email to [pgarnenez@nwnmcog.com](mailto:pgarnenez@nwnmcog.com)*

Important Dates	Date	Place
Transportation Day at the Legislature	March 5	Santa Fe
NACo Legislative Conference 2013	March 2-6	Washington, DC
NADO Washington Policy Conference	March 11-13	Arlington, VA
NWRPO Meeting	March 13	TBA
Legislative Session Ends at Noon	March 16	Santa Fe
Northern Area Local Workforce Development Board Retreat	March 27-29	Embassy Suites Albuquerque
New Mexico Municipal League District 1 Meeting	April 1	Grants
Legislation not acted upon by the Governor is pocket vetoed	April 5	Santa Fe
New Mexico First “Facilitation for Success” Workshop	April 15-16	United Way Training Center Albuquerque
National Rural Transportation Conference/ RPO America	April 24-26	Greenville, SC
CDBG Application Hearings	May 12	Albuquerque
EPA Brownfields Conference 2013	May 15-17	Atlanta, GA
COG Board Meeting	May 27	McKinley County
EDA Regional Conference/SWREDA Training	June 5-7	Eldorado Hotel Santa Fe
NADO Summer Board of Directors Retreat	June 8-10	Eldorado Hotel Santa Fe
NMAC Annual Conference	June 18-20	Clovis

## Notes from the Director (continued from page 5)...

Santa Fé news, meanwhile, is mixed — but with results emerging. Our Deputy Director **Evan Williams** is at the Roundhouse throughout the Session, plying his considerable savvy in service to our Members & area Legislators. Keep an eye out for his “Snapshot of the Session” reports.

A shout-out to your COG staff for keeping the vision and moving the region:

- **Bebe Sarmiento** helped lead a resoundingly successful McKinley County-Gallup Day at the Legislature on February 7th.
- Planner **Prestene Garnenez** produced major work pieces, including the 2012

*Factbook*, our quarterly *Connecting the Dots* newsletters, *Annual Report* and a CDBG grant for McKinley County.

- New Associate Planner **Marco Pablo**, joining us in early January, jumped into the “deep end of the pool” and started lending a skilled hand to CDBG grants and other work for our Cibola County Communities.
- Finance Manager **Teresa Mecale** helped us through another clean audit, and she & Assistant **Martina Whitmore** added great energy and service to our administrative team.

- Planner **Bob Kuipers** lent his big heart & strong shoulders to keeping our work strong in Cibola County, while continuing to advance our work with the Northwest Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO).

Best wishes to all, & stay in touch!!

**Jeff Kiely**  
Executive Director

