



# NORTHWEST NEW MEXICO

## *Regional Transportation Plan*



# Acknowledgements

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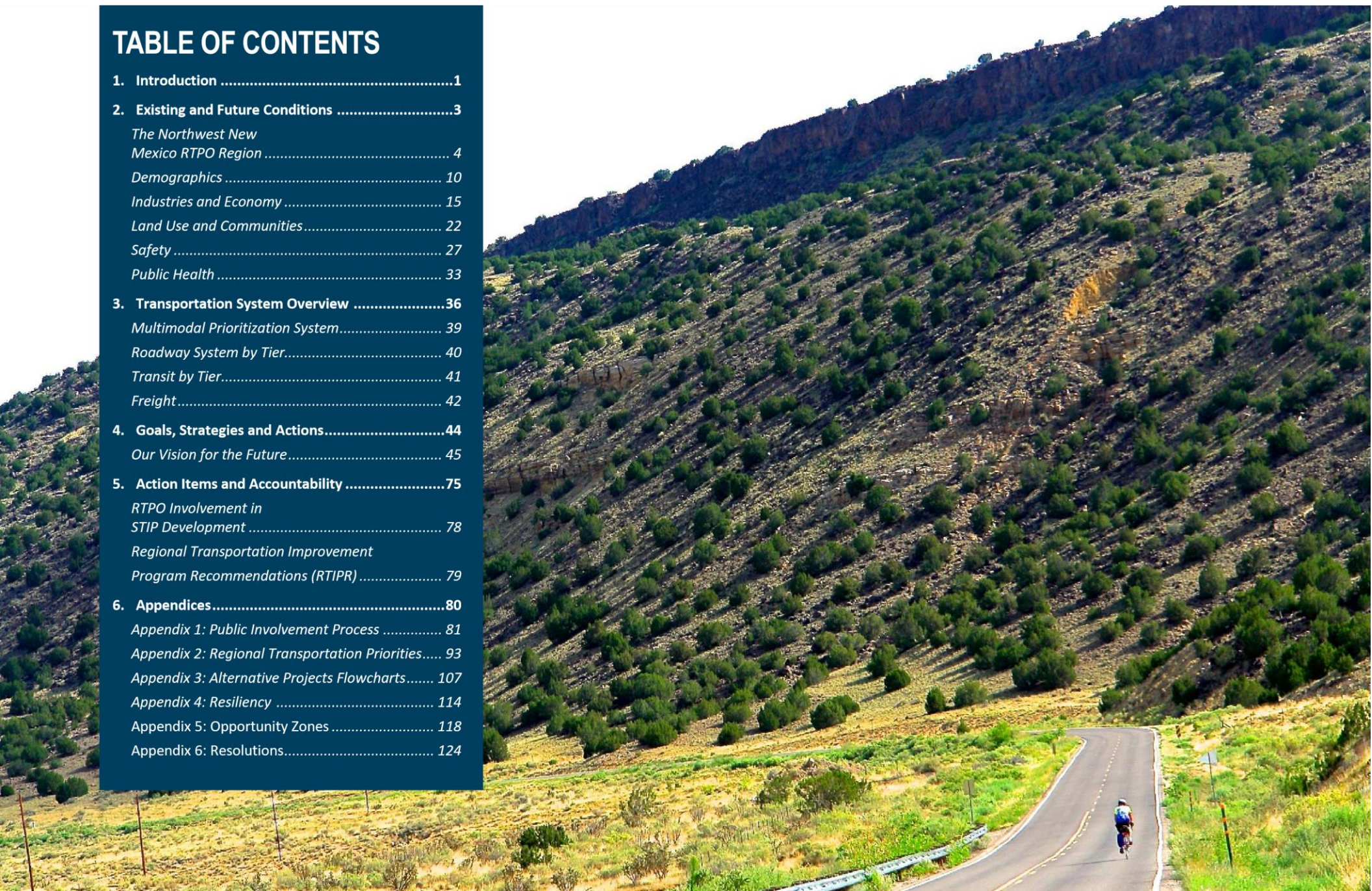
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# Introduction

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## Introduction

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## What is a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)?

The development of a long-range transportation plan provides an opportunity for elected officials, organizations, and individual citizens to determine how the transportation system in their area should be structured to better serve future needs effectively and efficiently. This Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for Northwest New Mexico is an integral part of the New Mexico Transportation Plan (NMTP), a federal requirement for the New Mexico Department of Transportation. The purpose of the RTP is to apply the State's vision, goals, objectives and strategies at the regional level. Under federal law, long-range transportation plans must look ahead at least 20 years, although the State of New Mexico chose to look ahead 25 years for its transportation planning. This Northwest New Mexico RTP provides a framework for thinking about the region's transportation system over the period of 2020 to 2045.

## About the Northwest RTPO

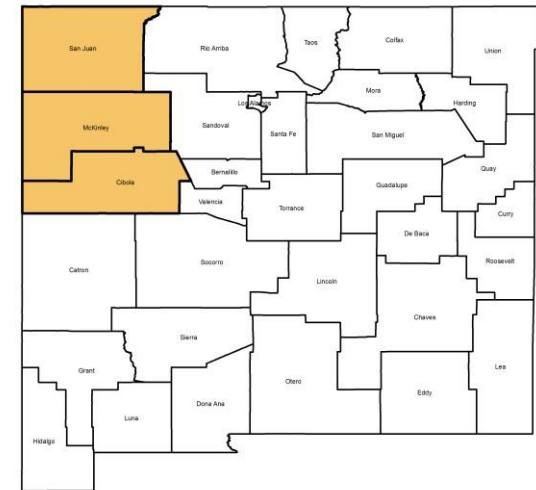
The Northwest New Mexico Regional Transportation Planning Organization (NWRTPO) is an interactive planning forum that was established in the early 1990s by the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) as a means to develop an ongoing and cooperative planning process and to ensure engagement by local officials in transportation decision-making. This process identifies current and future transportation needs, plans, and projects in the northwest region of New Mexico. NMDOT uses this forum to elicit informed recommendations for multi-modal transportation projects. It strives to promote and implement an efficient and sustainable transportation network within the northwest counties of San Juan, McKinley, and Cibola County. Our region encompasses municipalities, counties, tribal nations, federal lands, and other state subdivisions in the rural parts of the region. The Northwest RTPO acts as the state-required Regional Transportation Planning Organization for the area. Members that form this organization include elected officials and their designated alternates. Federal and state agencies, with a responsibility for transportation planning and programs in the region, are also represented as an advisory, non-voting participant on the NWRTPO Committee.

## Title VI

The Northwest New Mexico Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. For more information or to obtain a Title VI Complaint Form, please contact the NWRTPO Program

Manager/Title VI Coordinator at (505) 722-4327 or visit our website at [www.nwnmcog.com](http://www.nwnmcog.com) for more information.

Map 1: Northwest RTPO Region





# Existing and Future Conditions

## The Region

The Northwest RTPO (RTPO) encompasses approximately 15,500 square miles of the northwestern part of New Mexico, which occupies the southeastern quadrant of the Four Corners. The region's position as the gateway to the Four Corners, with transportation routes that cross the state borders of Utah, Colorado, and Arizona, provides a unique challenge and opportunity for our planning organization. Our region is home to approximately 230,000 people over a large rural expanse with a population density of about 14 persons per square mile. If our region were a state, it would rank 42<sup>nd</sup> behind West Virginia. The combination of vast distances between small and urban business and employment centers provides additional transportation planning and development challenges, as does connectivity and maintenance resources for our region.

Since our last Regional Transportation Plan, the Northwest RTPO region has updated several key trends and initiatives:

### Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project

In March 2009, Congress passed and the President signed off on PL 111-11, the Omnibus Public Lands Act, which authorized the construction of the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project, as part of a legal settlement of the Navajo Nation's water rights in the San Juan River. This \$1 billion project will provide water to over 40 Navajo Chapters, the southwest area of the Jicarilla Apache reservation, and the City of Gallup. Once completed in 2024, this strategic infrastructure project will provide a long-term, sustainable water supply to our region, thus providing northwestern New Mexico with a new competitive advantage with respect to this increasingly precious resource.

### Major Federal Program Investments:

Our region has been the recipient and beneficiary of three federal grants:

- **US491 Safety Improvements:** This national highway connects local communities of the Navajo Nation to other parts of New Mexico, Colorado, and the Four Corners area. It is a major trucking route with increasingly high volumes of commercial traffic. The full project expanded the width of US-491 over a corridor length of approximately 69 miles, constructing two new lanes adjacent to the two existing lanes, improving safety on one of the most dangerous routes in New Mexico. The road has a history of traffic accidents and safety problems. Statistics indicate that the fatality rate along the north portion of the corridor is about 3.6 times the state average and along the south portion is about 2.2 times the state average rate.



- **Pueblo of Laguna Bicycle & Pedestrian Route Plan and Trail Design:** The project pursued planning and design of approximately 40 miles of trails on the Pueblo of Laguna reservation to connect six distinct communities with a focus on traditional village core values. The project supports revitalization through the development of a comprehensive bike/pedestrian route plan for Pueblo of Laguna villages and complete engineering designs, including surveys, studies, environmental (NEPA) and archaeological clearances. The Pueblo has made significant progress on this trail network which is coming closer to completion.
- **San Juan County Freight Rail Service Planning Grant:** San Juan County entered in to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Navajo Nation to move forward in planning for the possibility of freight rail to serve San Juan County and Navajo Nation.

## US 491 Four-Lane Project Completed

Following the announcement of the State's allocation of approximately \$80 million to complete the four-laning of US 491, highlighted by a final groundbreaking in August 2014, the region saw its vision of a safer, more efficient north-south corridor along US 491 come to reality. This project provides New Mexico with a strategic corridor for economic and community development. This project provides New Mexico with a strategic corridor for economic and community development.

## Proposed Intersections and Corridors:

Many communities in our region are split by several natural and transportation corridors including Interstate 40, Historic Highway Route 66, Rio Puerco or Rio San Jose watersheds, and Burlington-Northern Transcontinental rail line, which are obstacles to connectivity and community growth. Several projects are being planned to provide for economic, social, and transportation connectivity, including:

- **Allison Bridge & Corridor Project (Gallup):** The New Mexico State Legislature allocated \$4.5 million to replace a wooden bridge on Allison Road on Gallup's west side, a former mine access road that had become an asset to north-south connectivity in Gallup. These funds served to catalyze subsequent state and federal investments to develop a commercial corridor, served by an I-40 interchange and frontage road system, strategically positioned to capitalize on I-40 travelers. Finished in 2018, the replacement of the Allison Road Rio Puerco Bridge and corresponding road connections is the first phase of improvements of the six phased, multi-million Allison Road Corridor project. The overall project mitigates existing geometric, physical, and operational deficiencies; improves safety; and provides system connectivity. It will make vast improvements to the transportation network for the City of Gallup and the I-40 corridor with the goal of promoting commercial development and facilitating economic growth in the Gallup area.
- **Mesa Hill Bridge Corridor (Acoma):** This roadway and bridge will span over the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway, Rio San Jose, a natural gas transmission line, traditional irrigation systems and traditional farming lands. The primary need for this bridge is to address safety concerns and promote economic development opportunities, including providing an alternate to two at-grade crossings.
- **Milan Interchange:** A new interchange is being proposed at the feasibility level to start planning a new Interstate 40 interchange that would support access and build-out of the Milan Industrial Park.

## Strategic Rail & Freight Networks

In 2011, Burlington Northern-Santa Fe Railway Company (BNSF) released a plan that links the population growth in the Sun Belt region to economic opportunities along the BNSF transcontinental (“Transcon”) corridor. The 2013 passage in New Mexico of House Bill 120, *Locomotive Fuel Gross Receipts*, provided an incentive for BNSF to reinvest in infrastructure that would support local economic development opportunities. The northwest New Mexico regional communities are geographically located in equal proximity to the ports in Long Beach, the Global Logistics Hub in Alliance, TX and in Chicago. The region’s advantages in transportation and energy have led to strategic plans for rural transloading outposts along the transcon corridor, which have included new rail capacity and industrial parks. This has been a model of what can be achieved through proactive planning, policy, and process. In 2015, the RTPO received funding to perform the “Four Corners Intermodal Transloading Equinox” (4CITE) planning process to assess, plan, and prioritize transportation infrastructure for the greater Gallup area in relation to potential economic development and transloading projects in the greater Gallup area. This study was finalized in November 2016 outlining and prioritizing transportation infrastructure improvements needed to accommodate growth and development of the Gallup Energy Logistics Park (ELP) and potentially a Navajo Inland Port. The COG has also participated in the design and development of several other rail served industrial parks in Gallup, Prewitt, and Milan. Finally, in 2020, San Juan County received a BUILD grant to study and plan the development of freight rail expansion from the BNSF transcon to the San Juan Basin.

The region has also benefitted from three major studies funded by the New Mexico State Legislature, including:

- **Navajo Nation Inland Port Study:** Initiated and led by three Navajo Chapters of Manuelito, Rocksprings, and Tsayatoh with support from the New Mexico Economic Development Department completed this study in 2015. This study highlights the potential of developing an inland port and details two top sites within the 4CITE sub-region.
- **Farmington Rail Study:** Completed in 2015 and led by the New Mexico Economic Development Department, this study details the feasibility of a short rail line to the outskirts of Farmington based on market demands for coal and agricultural products.
- **San Juan County Utility Study:** completed in 2017, provides guidance on growth patterns and utility needs of Navajo Chapters in the San Juan Basin.
- **Prewitt / Milan Transportation Master Plan:** With the recent closure of the Escalante Electric Generating Plant at the Prewitt Industrial Park, where around 100 employees lost their jobs, the NWRTPO undertook a planning project with Wilson & Co. Engineering Firm to improve railroad and freight trucking access to the Prewitt and Milan Industrial parks. The intent is to make these two parks more inviting for industry tenants by improving freight access via railroad and freight trucking.



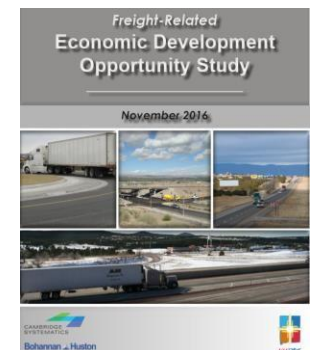
## Gallup Energy Logistics Park

The City of Gallup has long declared itself “landlocked” due to the ownership status of extensive private lands surrounding the City. In 2013, the family landholding trust Gamarco & Associates was court-ordered to sell 26,000 acres. International developers formed a company, Gallup Land Partners, to purchase the land for \$36 million and to develop it for economic purposes. In conjunction with the Greater Gallup Economic Development Corporation (GGEDC), Gallup Land Partners (GLP) announced its plans for development of the Gallup Energy Logistics Park. The master plan included a 2,000-acre business park, anchored by a state-of-the-art transloading facility, the first facility of its kind in New Mexico to anchor an Energy Logistics Park on the BNSF Railway Transcon corridor. In 2016, BNSF approved the rail plan. In early 2017, the Gallup Land Partners invested close to \$6 million in the construction of a rail terminal, which includes the addition of 11,000 linear feet of track and adding rail loops. Shortly thereafter BNSF designated this project as one of its new nationally certified sites for economic development related to rail service. Several priority projects are in development including improvements to US491 / Chino Loop Road intersection, NM264 / Rocksprings Road intersection, and **Carbon Coal Road pavement upgrades** to accommodate freight traffic for about 5.2 miles west from the Chino Loop intersection to the Energy Logistics Park with the **Ribbon Cutting Ceremony scheduled for November 30, 2022 at 10:00 am.**



## New Mexico Freight Related Opportunity Study

The federal surface transportation law, Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, created new requirements for freight truck drivers. The FAST Act indicates that truck drivers are required to stop for ten hours after driving for eleven consecutive hours. These changes were recognized by the New Mexico House of Representatives, who passed House Memorial 96 (HM96) to study emerging opportunities for statewide trucking accommodations. HM96 aims to capitalize on the presence of three major truck freight routes that cross New Mexico: I-10, I-25, and I-40 to develop multi-service locations for truck drivers reaching their eleven-hour limit. The expected outcome could provide enhanced economic and employment opportunities for New Mexico. In November 2016, the completed the Freight-Related Economic Opportunity Study, which will result in 4-6 potential locations for new or expanded trucking accommodations (NMDOT, 2016). Several potential locations along I-40 were evaluated as part of this study and continue to be advanced for potential development.



## Prewitt-Milan Transportation Master Plan

In 2020, the RTPO received funding to perform a similar sub-regional transportation master plan to assess, plan, and prioritize transportation infrastructure for the bi-county area around Prewitt, NM in relation to potential economic development opportunities including the Prewitt Industrial Park, Milan Industrial & Business Parks, after the de-commissioning of Tri-State's Escalante Generating Station, and replacement solar power project.

**This project completed planning recommendations for freight trucking and railroad infrastructure to improve access to both parks making them more inviting for new industrial tenants in 2022.**

## Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway

With the prospects of joining the federally designated byway in Colorado and Utah, the Native Heritage Trail Byway was renamed "Trail of the Ancients" in 2007 with approval by the New Mexico Tourism Department. A Corridor Management Plan was developed and several improvements were made, including byway signage. In 2010, the Trail of the Ancients Byway Association partnered with geotourism project of National Geographic Magazine to develop a Four Corners Geotourism MapGuide and interactive website<sup>1</sup> to boost the flow of tourism to this remarkable region. In 2018, the RTPO partnered with NM Tourism Department to re-design and boost the website to a 2.0 platform. President Trump signed the Reviving America's Scenic Byway Act of 2019 that allowed States to submit nominations to designate new National Scenic Byways, **and the NWRTPO submitted an application for this byway which was designated as a national scenic byway in 2020.**



## Ancient Way Arts Trail

In 2008, and as an adjunct to the Scenic Byway, the New Mexico Arts Division designated the Ancient Way Arts Trail as the first regional arts trail in Northwest New Mexico. This included the towns of Grants, Ramah, Pine Hill, Zuni, and Gallup. It also included places along NM53, NM602, BIA Route 125, and NM118/NM122. The creative economy, including the production of high-quality arts and crafts in the context of tourism, is a major economic driver in our region.

## Native American Gaming Facilities

Northwest New Mexico has seen a major rise in the addition of new gaming casinos. Due to heavy volumes of traffic and visitors, these venues have created new transportation challenges and opportunities. Unique partnerships, funding arrangements, and innovative design have emerged to improve I-40 exits, including Exit 102 (Sky City Casino), Exit 108 (Dancing Eagle) and Exit 140 (Route 66 Casino). The recent development of Navajo Casinos, notably Navajo FireRock Casino in Churchrock (and adjacent to the City of Gallup) and Northern Edge Casino outside Farmington, has introduced new safety challenges along roadways associated with those developments. Through a partnership with NMDOT and funding from the NM State Legislature, related Road Safety Audits and planned safety improvements are moving forward.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.fourcornersgeotourism.com/>



## National Recreational Trails:

Recreational Trails abound in our region; making it home to several National Recreational Trails recognized officially by the federal government with consent of the entities having jurisdiction over these lands. Today almost 1,300 of these trails have been designated throughout the county of which New Mexico has 33 and our region has the following four:

- **High Desert Trail System:** This trail system bordering the City of Gallup was designated as a National Recreation Trail. This trail system, located just north of Gallup, is designed in a series of "stacked loops"—narrow, singletrack trails that reveal great vistas and cap rocks. The three loops atop the mesas overlooking Gallup are named First Mesa, Second Mesa, and Third Mesa, in honor of the nearby mesa-dwelling Hopi people and the “Anasazi” people who once occupied this region.
- **Riverwalk Trail (Berg/Animas Trail):** This 4-mile trail connects Animas and Berg Parks along the Animas River in Farmington. These trails run along the river's edges, wind through groves of native cottonwoods, and cross the Animas River by bridge at two points.
- **Inscription Trail at El Morro National Monument:** This trail takes visitors back into the period of first contact to the pool and past hundreds of Spanish and Anglo inscriptions, as well as pre–historical petroglyphs.
- **Goose Springs Trail in Mount Taylor, Cibola National Forest:** At 9,500 feet you enter the spruce-fir type, one of the highest vegetation zones in the Southwest. The hiker has the opportunity to see varied flora and fauna, as well as enjoy the interesting geological formations of the area.



## Zuni Mountain Trail System

Led by the U.S. Forest Service and partners in McKinley and Cibola counties, the Zuni Mountain Trail Partnership (ZMTP) embarked on an ambitious 200-mile, non-motorized, single-track trail project through the Zuni Mountains. A master trails & conservation plan was completed to support the project planning, development, and maintenance. In May 2017, the U.S. Forest Service approved the Finding of No Significant Impact to finalize the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process and signed its official Decision Notice to approve the project.



## New Mexico MainStreets

Mainstreet projects enhance the local experience, develop live-work-play-stay opportunities, and create walkable, vibrant downtowns. The Cities of Aztec and Grants continued to improve NM550 and NM122 respectively. In July 2012, the Pueblo of Zuni became the first Native American community in the USA to be designated a MainStreet community. The City of Gallup, the Gallup Business Improvement District (BID), and Gallup ARTS worked to achieve a MainStreet designation through the Coal Avenue Commons project, and an Arts & Cultural District designation.

# Demographics

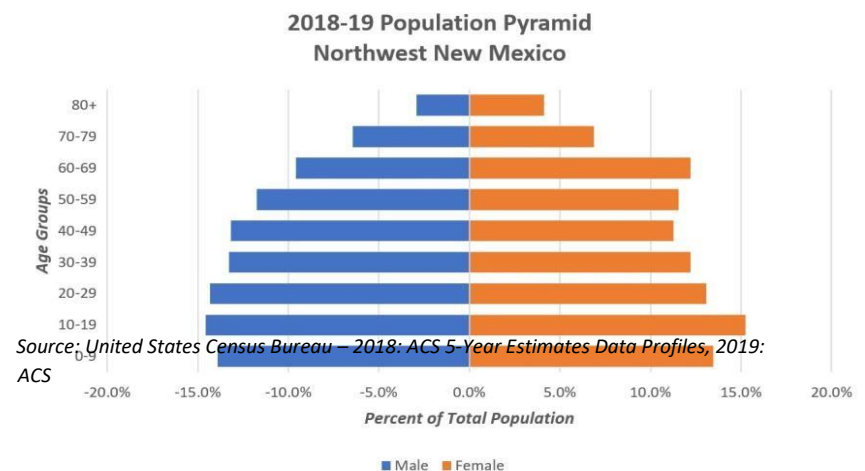
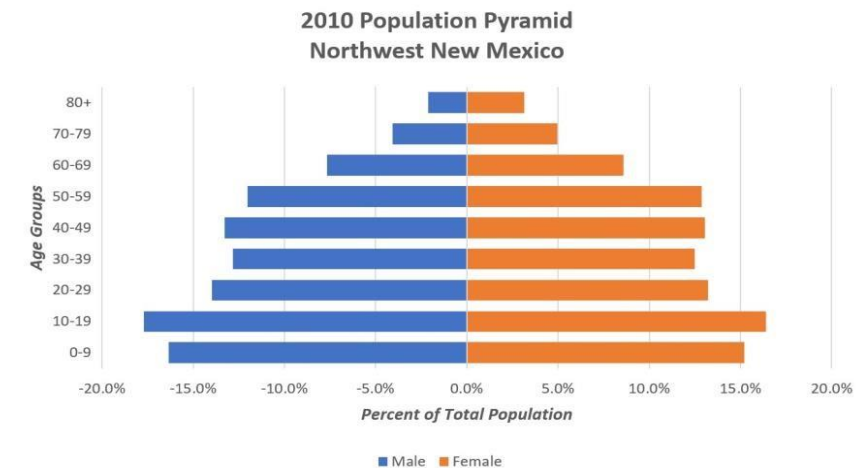
Like many other rural regions across the United States, Northwest New Mexico is experiencing a slight decrease in total population. This relative decline reflects the national pattern in which most rural communities throughout America have experienced population decline in the past decade, with predictions that these numbers will continue to decline in most cases. A predominant factor in this decline is the pattern of out-migration to urban centers, driven by metro areas' stronger economic conditions and better employment opportunities. People from rural communities frequently drive longer distances to access social, health, and academic services in larger centers. In addition, necessities such as food, clothing, supplies, and gasoline, are often purchased at larger centers. Frequent commuters from rural communities often move to urban centers where services are readily accessible and to alleviate the burden and cost of travel.

According to the last Decennial Census conducted in 2010, the total population of the northwest region of New Mexico was 228,749. More recent American Community Survey estimates from 2018 & 2019 indicate a slight decrease of approximately 6749 people. This represents a decrease of approximately 2.9 percent of the total population. However, current reductions in total population is not projected to continue. Projections indicate that by the year 2045, the region's total population will increase to 279,348. This represents a 25 percent increase from 2019 estimated total populations and is representative of a 0.991 percent annual increase over 25 years. Of course, this projection is a best-case scenario and is dependent on improvements to the economic environment and the overall quality of life in the region.

Like any other region in the United States, Northwest New Mexico has within itself, the dynamic of urban/semi-urban and rural populations. A large but not the majority of the population resides within a handful of urban and semi-urban centers including the City of Farmington (45,582) in San Juan County, City of Gallup

(22,105) in McKinley County and the City of Grants (9,063) in Cibola County. These urban and semi-urban centers account for approximately 34.6 percent of the total population in the Region.

Source: United States Census Bureau – 2010: Decennial Census



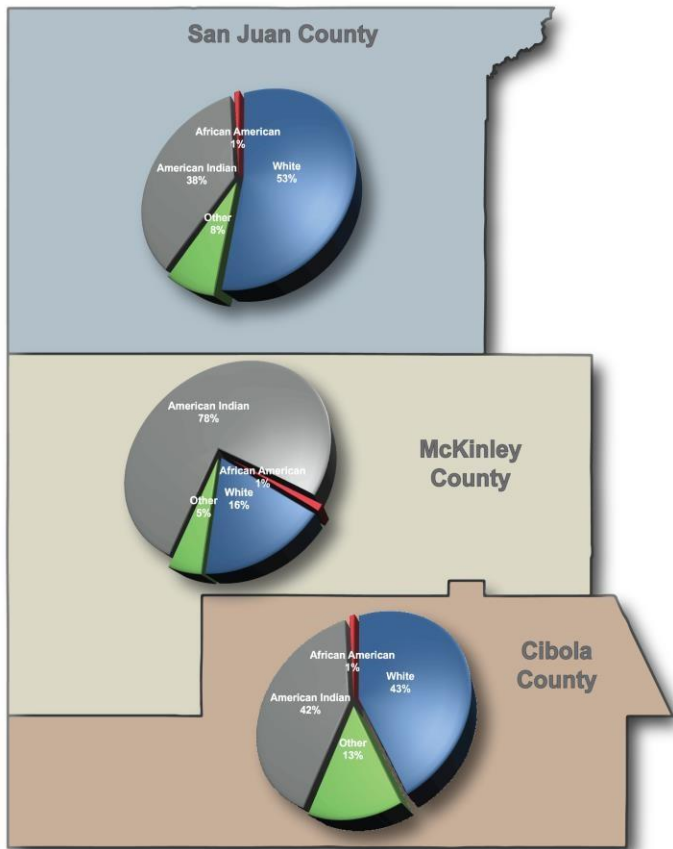
Source: United States Census Bureau – 2018: ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles, 2019: ACS



*1-Year Estimates Data Profiles*

Coupled with additional smaller municipalities, this number increases to approximately 43.2 percent of the total population. The remaining 56.8 percent of the population reside within the rural and unincorporated communities of the region. Many of which are located in close proximity to urban and semiurban centers.

Throughout the region, the age distribution is consistent with state and national trends. In comparison, 2019 estimates and 2010 census information indicate that a majority of the age distribution has remained relatively the same. However, it is important to note that two characteristics of age distribution are trending. First, populations between the ages 0 – 9 years old and 10 – 19 years old have decreased roughly 3 percent since 2010. This is indicative of national trends and can be related to the slight decrease in childbearing populations in the region and out-migration of college aged populations. Second, populations 60 years and older have increased since 2010. This is representative of long-standing residents now reaching retirement age and have decided to stay within the community and new retirees moving into the region.



Although there is an increasing percentage of an aging population 60 years and older, the working age group of 20-49 has remained steady. As indicated above the younger age groups (birth to 19 years) represent the highest population decrease since 2010.

Overall, the population and age group breakdown of Northwest New Mexico is representative of a region that would benefit from a multi-modal transportation network.

An important characteristic of the population is the overall predominance of Native Americans in all three counties, particularly striking in McKinley County. The region contains six specific Indian Reservations: Acoma, Tohajiilee (Navajo), Laguna, Ramah Navajo, Zuni, and the mainland Navajo Nation. According to the 2010 US Census, Navajo was the most populated tribe in the region with 173,667. Pueblo of Zuni was at 7,891, the Pueblo of Laguna at 4,043, and the Pueblo of Acoma at 3,011. The Navajo Nation is subdivided into “Chapters,” which define geopolitical communities and are the local governmental units of the Navajo Nation. These Chapters are distributed across the three counties of Northwest New Mexico as follows:

- 32 Navajo Chapters in McKinley County with populations ranging from 76 to 5,643 (note: some of these chapters extend into Arizona, with only a portion of the population residing in New Mexico).
- 21 Chapters in San Juan County; and □ 1 Chapter in Cibola County.

## Population Profile

Census population counts show that for the three decades between 1970 and 2000, the population in Northwest New Mexico more than doubled, growing from 95,725 to 228,749 between 1970 and 2010. Since 2000, the population growth for the region has been relatively flat, with a slowing growth rate of 0.7% from 2000 through 2010. However, since 2010 the total population of the region has slightly decreased approximately 2.9 % which is 222,000 in 2018.



More than half of the population in the region resides in San Juan County (123,958), which has also decreased in total population by roughly 4.7% over the past 8 years. McKinley County (71,367), the second most populous county in the region, has remained steady in population, reflecting a less than 1% decrease in 8 years. Cibola County (26,675) experienced slow decrease in population, showing a 1.9% decrease in 8 years. **(Source: United States Census Bureau – 2018: ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles, 2019: ACS 1-Year Estimates Data Profiles, 2010: Decennial Census)**

Table 1 displays the distribution of population in the Northwest New Mexico region between the Farmington MPO area and the Northwest RTPO area, comparing 2000, 2010 and 2018. The RTPO area does not include the MPO participating communities of Farmington, Aztec, Bloomfield and Kirtland. The majority of growth in the NWRTPD area was in large urban clusters and small-urbanized areas.

**Table 1: Regional Growth**

Area	2000	2010	2018/19
<b>Northwest COG</b>	214,194	228,749	222,000
<b>Northwest RTPO</b>	118,551	131,749	124,856
<b>Farmington MPO</b>	95,643	97,000	97,144

**Source:** US Census Bureau, UNM BBER, Farmington MPO, NWCOG.

## 2045 Population Forecast

Based on growth trends and development plans within the NWRTPD area, the Northwest COG developed population forecasts for 2040, based primarily on population estimates provided by UNM Bureau of Business & Economic Research and used by NMDOT in developing the New Mexico Transportation Plan. Northwest COG/RTPO staff consulted with the Farmington MPO to develop growth rate projections, concluding that overall growth in regional population will be relatively flat across the next 40 years, with most of the net growth occurring in the region's small-to-midsized urban centers. Such a growth bias is supported by local land use and comprehensive plans, which seek to promote increased density and infrastructure efficiency in those centers.

This trend toward incremental growth in small urban centers is predicted to continue in light of perceived trends in living preferences expressed by millennial and boomer populations. Members of these demographic cohorts prefer to live in places where choices of multiple modes of transportation exist. These preferences are often included in the concept of “livability,” reflected in places where a person can live, work and play without having to drive. While these preferences tend to paint an image of an urban landscape, the RTPO has noted that these types of places can exist within rural communities as well.

The City of Gallup, the Pueblos of Laguna, Acoma, and Zuni, the Village of Milan, and the City of Grants are exploring this “livability” type of planning by creating networks of trails, sidewalks/paths to connect community amenities and services from housing to schools, city halls, parks and other locale. The coordination of transportation planning with land use planning helps support local economies, protect the environment, preserve, and enhance natural and cultural resources, and promote public health. Furthermore, planning in accordance with federally established livability principles as outlined by the Partnership for Sustainable Communities (involving a federal partnership of USDOT, HUD, and EPA) can help to integrate and cross-leverage transportation, water, housing and other infrastructure investments and policies. The livability principles include: Provide more transportation choices; Promote equitable, affordable housing; Enhance economic competitiveness; Support existing communities; Coordinate polices and leverage investment; Value communities and neighborhoods.

The Farmington MPO is predicting lower population growth for the Farmington and San Juan County Region in general in the upcoming years, which may relate to the growing transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources.

**Table 2: Forecast of Growth in NWRTPO Region, 2010 to 2040**

Area	2010	2020	2030	2040
Northwest New Mexico	229,189	249,004	256,028	279,349



<b>San Juan County</b>	<b>130,145</b>	<b>146,388</b>	<b>161,593</b>	<b>175,678</b>
<b>San Juan County (RTPO)</b>	<b>33,145</b> 26,471	<b>34,255</b> 26,582	<b>35,389</b> 26,695	<b>37,174</b>
Rural Areas & Small Urban Clusters				26,874
Large Urban Clusters plus Small UZA (Shiprock)	6,674	7,673	8,694	10,300
<b>Farmington MPO</b>	<b>97,000</b>	<b>112,134</b>	<b>126,204</b>	<b>138,505</b>
Rural Areas & Small Urban Clusters	17,403	19,063	20,193	20,776
Large Urban Clusters plus Small UZA	79,597	93,071	106,011	117,729
<b>McKinley County</b>	<b>71,797</b> 41,812	<b>73,483</b> 41,980	<b>73,805</b> 42,012	<b>71,580</b>
Rural Areas & Small Urban Clusters				41,790
Large Urban Clusters plus Small UZA (Gallup & Zuni)	29,985	31,503	31,793	29,790
<b>Cibola County</b>	<b>27,247</b>	<b>29,133</b>	<b>30,630</b>	<b>32,091</b>
Rural Areas & Small Urban Clusters	15,080	15,268	15,418	15,564
Large Urban Clusters plus Small UZA (Milan & Grants)	12,167	13,865	15,212	16,526
<b>NWRTPO</b>	<b>132,189</b>	<b>136,870</b>	<b>139,824</b>	<b>140,844</b>

Source: US Census Bureau, UNM BBER, Farmington MPO, NWCOG.

Rural Area/Small Urban Cluster: Non-Urban area or urban area with 2,500 to 4,999 people.

Large Urban Cluster: Urban area with a population of 5,000 to 49,999 people.

MPO: Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Small UZA: Urbanized Area with a population of 50,000 to 200,000 people.

Large UZA: Urbanized Area with a population of more than 200,000 people.

TAP: Transportation Alternatives Program.

TMA: Transportation Management Area (=Urbanized Area with >200,000 people).

UZA: Urbanized Area.

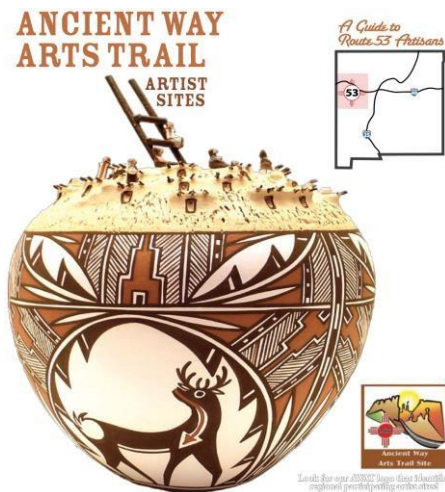


## Industries and Economy

The northwestern part of New Mexico is made up of the communities within the counties of San Juan, McKinley, and Cibola. This section discusses the industries that support our regional economy, including emerging opportunities and leveraging our unique transportation assets to diversify our economy.

### Tourism

Tourism and recreation are mainstays of the economy in all three counties of the region. Adventure tourism is an emerging niche industry. Assets include primitive wilderness areas, campgrounds, forest and woodlands, national monuments and state parks for hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation. Navajo Lake and several reservoirs provide venues for boating and water sports. As a gateway to the Four Corners, with the closest international airport located in Albuquerque, a significant amount of Four Corners travelers rely on highways, roadways, and byways in Northwest New Mexico. The RTPO spearheaded the State's designation of Trail of the Ancients byway, which connects the nationally designated Trail of the Ancients byways in Utah and Colorado. This byway provides a backbone for regional traveler, which require signage, interpretation, rest areas, visitor centers, and other transportation amenities to keep them safe and spending money in our regional communities.



Major attractions include Chaco Culture National Historical Park, Aztec Ruins National Monument, Salmon Ruins and Heritage Park, Bisti Badlands, Acoma Sky City, Bandera Volcano, El Malpais Monument, La Ventana natural arch, Ice Caves, Bluewater Lake State Park, El Morro National Monument, Old Laguna Pueblo, Pueblo of Zuni, Red Rock Park, Zuni mountains recreation area, as well as the five tribal casinos. There are two visitor centers located along Interstate 40, the State's Manuelito Visitor Center and the El Malpais Visitor Center in Grants. These centers are strategic in moving tourists into rural and tribal communities and along the Trail of the Ancients byway.

In addition, events such as the Gallup Inter-Tribal Indian Ceremonial, the Navajo Nation Fair, the Shiprock Fair, the Navajo Rug Auction in Crownpoint, and recreation and sporting events frequently bring visitors into our region. Our region is also known as a primary producer of high-quality Native American arts, crafts, and jewelry.

The need to maintain linkages between rural and urban areas is essential to the economy. A rural transportation system that supports tourism plays a central role to the region's tourism industry. It connects visitors to urban

areas and to key attractions. Ensuring a safe and reliable transportation system will continue

to attract more visitors to our region. Our region of Northwest New Mexico has an abundance of authentic historic and cultural venues for visitors who are seeking the more genuine experience of “New Mexico True.”

## **Strategic Economic Base Industries**

The interrelationships between the economy, the transportation system, and land use are critical elements to the vitality and long-term sustainability of the region’s future. Direct investments in efficient transportation infrastructure have significant economic impacts and opportunities generated by a strategic regional transportation plan. Such a plan will not only stimulate economic growth and job creation, but it will yield efficient economic productivity and movement of goods throughout the region. A plan that addresses the needs for logistics, shipping distribution, and the movement of goods in a region is essential to the establishment of favorable conditions that will fuel economic growth and activity.

Northwest New Mexico is undergoing a significant shift away from being one of the state’s and nation’s strategic energy corridors. This transition will dramatically alter the economic vitality of the region and calls for rapid diversification to ensure the region maintains its economic health. At this point in time, the energy industry still encompasses a large portion of the region’s economic base. The production of energy elements and value-added products provides substantial base power to regional markets, generating severance tax revenue for the state. A shift away from this traditional economic base will require substantial efforts to replace its place in the regional economy.

The production of energy requires transport of materials to and from power plants and other end-users in the Northwest region, as well as Southwest, West Coast, Mexico, and international markets. While providing a strong economic base and traditional job markets, these extractive industries result in a heavy use of roadways and highways and a disproportionate deterioration rate and overall impact for the population size of our region. Much like the energy sector, diversification into other economic based industries would likely result in continued heavy use of the transportation network. Improving and maintaining the region’s transportation network play an integral role in ensuring the long-term economic health of the region.

The movement of goods and people rely on a secure and safe transportation network. The region must meet future transportation demand by upgrading heavily used roads and invest in a freight transportation system that will efficiently move goods to and from the region.

A healthy economy reflects a high export value and a relatively low import value to generate sufficient regional revenue. To get to this level of economic stability, a region must various economic based industries that are producing more than what they import from outside of the region. These industries must have a low leakage rate to ensure that value stays within the region during and post-production. With the shift away from traditional energy production methods, the region needs to focus efforts on other industry sectors such as agriculture and food processing, light manufacturing, and logistics. An effective and efficient network of freight transportation systems will help achieve this goal. The establishment and operation of a national or global logistics park will require a sophisticated, safe, reliable transportation network that will export and import goods with efficiency. Operational efficiency and logistical advancement are vital to maintaining a competitive advantage for our region.

## Regional Industry Cluster

Industry clusters are used to quantify and illustrate how concentrated a particular industry is in a region compared to a larger geographic area. The industry cluster analysis graphs shown on the following pages compared the Northwest region of New Mexico to the entire United States. These analyses reveal important information about the regional economy<sup>2</sup>:

It helps determine which industries make the regional economy unique.

It helps identify “export-orientation” of an industry and identify the most export-oriented industries in the region.

It helps identify emerging export industries beginning to bring money into the region.

It helps identify endangered export industries that could erode the region’s economic base.

Special attention should be given to industries with higher Location Quotients (LQ) since they typically bring money into the region and form a strong economic base for the region. These industries generally produce a multiplier effect for the region by creating jobs in other dependent industries such as retail trade, food service, hospitality, etc. However, a high LQ industry with a small number of jobs may be an export-oriented industry but may not be a vital driver for employment in the region’s economy. A large, high-LQ industry with declining LQ over time represents a dangerous trend in the regional economy<sup>3</sup>.

Industry clusters drive regional economies. They produce exports and build value within the region they are located. A diverse portfolio of clusters within a region, at different stages or lifecycles, provides a region with a basis for economic success. It is also important to create policies and processes that can optimize competitive performance and retain the high multipliers generated by these clusters.

### BNSF Logistics Park in Seattle, WA

The goal of cluster initiatives is to develop one or more economic sectors in a geographic



<sup>2</sup> Economic Modeling Specialist Inc. *Understanding Location Quotients*. Resource Library, p. 1-4.

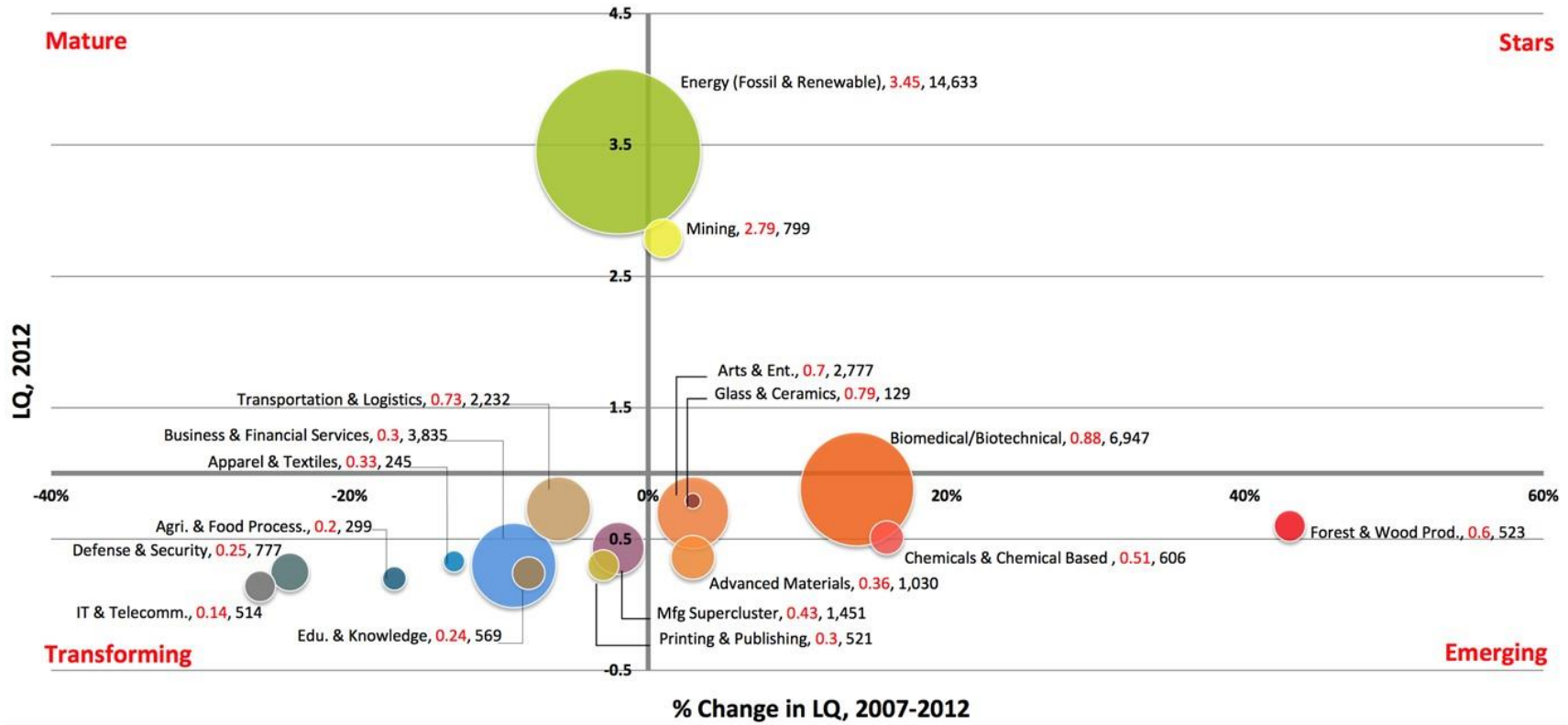
<sup>3</sup> Ibid.



region that will attract new businesses or to revitalize an industry. Regional clusters depend on reliable and efficient networks of transportation to establish and sustain competitive advantage. Industry clusters that often benefit greatly from rail transportation are mining, agriculture, and manufacturing industries, which can generate significant economic-base revenues from the export of regional products.

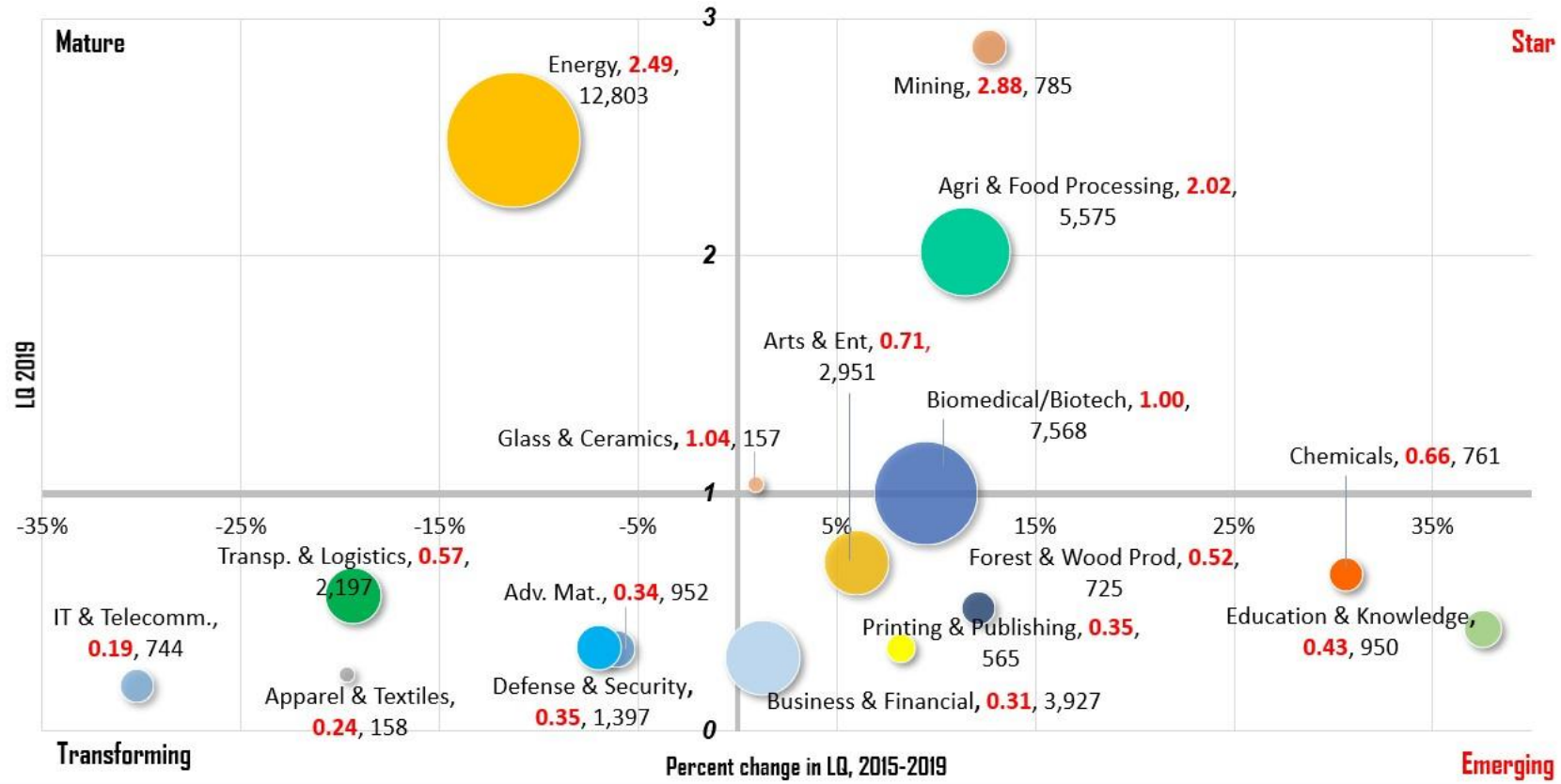
Graph 1, “Industry Cluster Analysis 2007-2012”, showcases the industries that contribute to the makeup of the regional economic base. During this period, the northwest region of New Mexico began to see a transition away from its historical composition. The two leading contributors, energy, and mining, which combined for a total of 15,432 jobs, walked the line of “maturity” and “star” characteristics. Both industry sectors unfortunately showcased a negative trend toward maturity and have since seen decline. The next most influential industry sector is biomedical/biotechnical. This “emerging” industry sector employs approximately 6,947 individuals and just falls under the national average of shares in the overall economy. As represented, the biomedical/biotechnical industry was an “emerging” sector with the potential to become a key contributor. Other emerging economic based industries included forest & wood products, chemicals & chemical based, advanced materials, arts & entertainment, and glass & ceramics. Having “emerging” characteristics, these industries were in position to expand and represent a larger portion of the regional economic base. Transforming industries are considered to be immature and have not yet grasped enough momentum to ensure long-term growth.

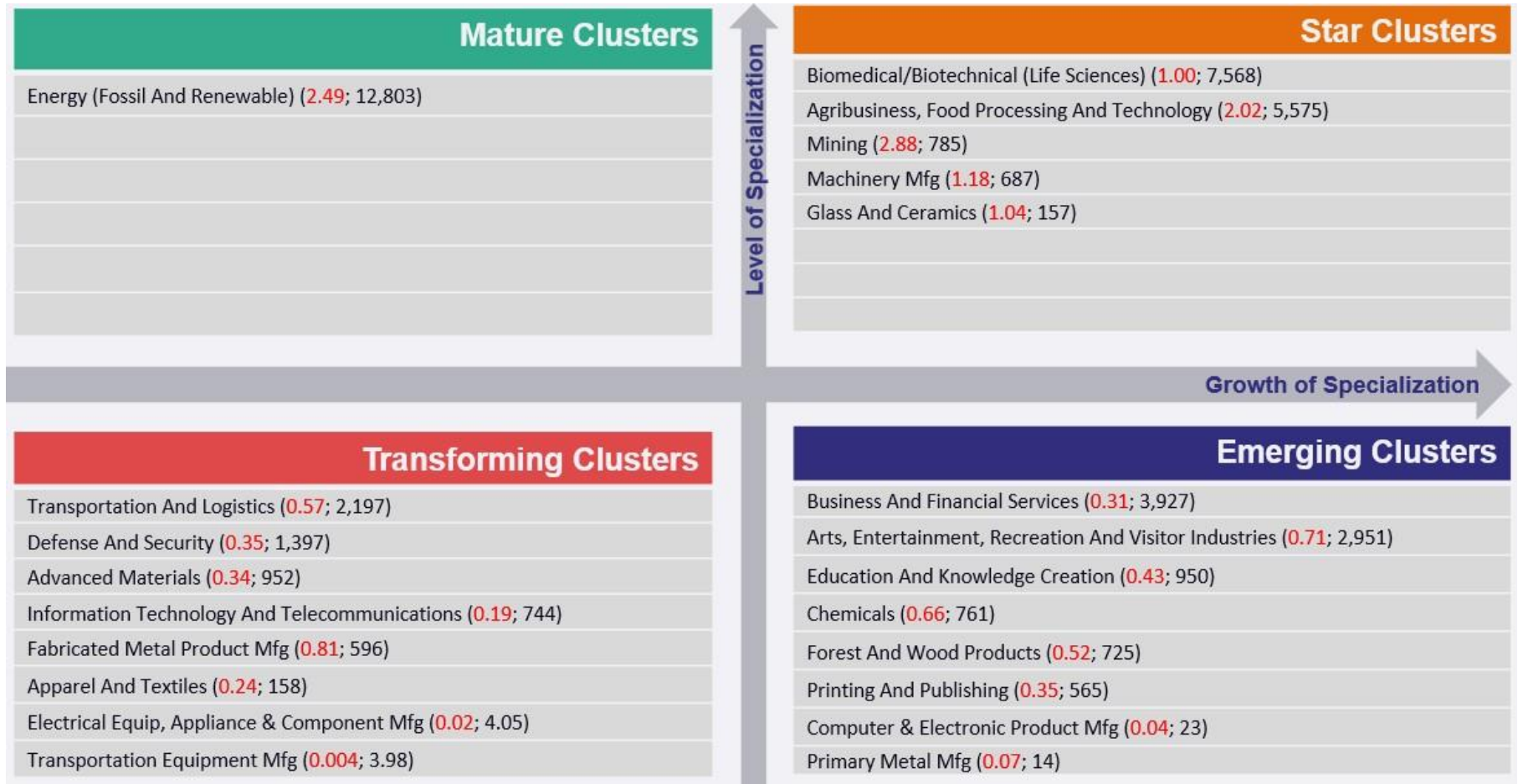
Graph 1: Industry Cluster Analysis 2007-2012



Graph 2, “Industry Cluster Analysis 2015-2019”, illustrates the current economic base of the northwest region of New Mexico. Most notably, the region’s two industry staples, energy, and mining, continue to represent a large share of the regional economic base. The energy sector is now a “mature” industry and has continued to showcase negative trends including a decrease in employment, and a reduction in its share of the regional economic base. The mining industry, however, has remained at the levels shown in 2007-2012 and has assumed a larger share of the regional economic base due to the reductions in the energy sector. Both industries still reflect higher concentrations than national averages, which indicates reductions at the regional level and shifting away from traditional energy production and extractive industries at the national level. One of the more noticeable change in the regional economy is the rise in agriculture & food processing industry. This sector was previously categorized as “transforming” and has since grown to represent a large share in the regional economy and now has “star” characteristics. Lastly, the biomedical/biotechnical industry did not reach anticipated projections and has remained an emerging industry but still has the potential to become a key contributor to the regional economy. **Graph 2: Industry Cluster Analysis 2015-2019**

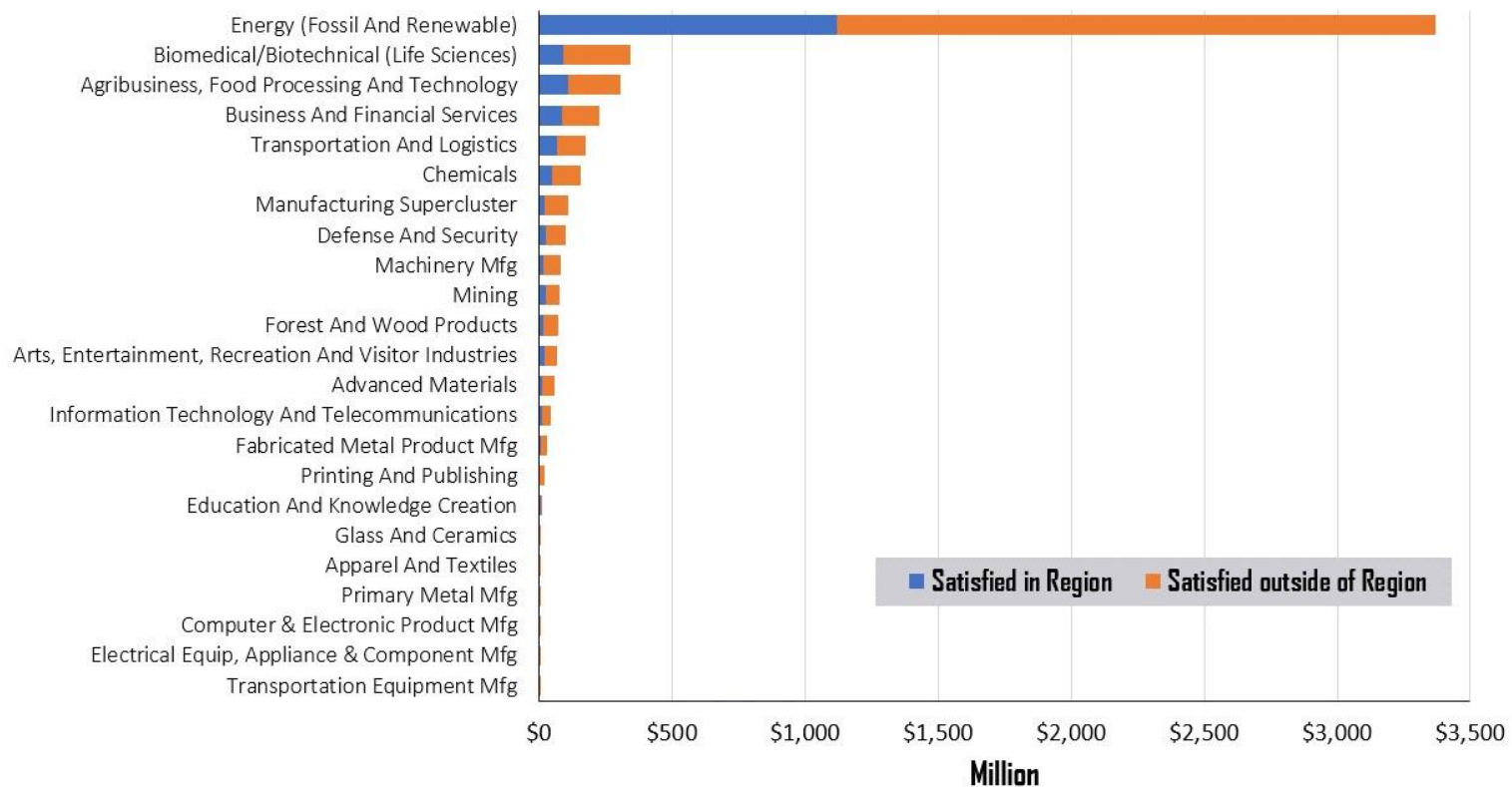






## Economic Leakage

Economic leakages are inevitable, but they can be proactively managed through processes that maximize the region’s ability to build and improve its production and efficiency of exporting goods. The chart below illustrates the region’s expenditures and leakages from 2019. Most clusters, including those that make up a significant portion of the region’s economic base, show high leakage figures which indicates that materials and supplies needed for operation and production are satisfied by sourcing outside of the region. This dynamic has created the need for a network of efficient transportation routes and strategic economic development activities that centralize the movement of goods and products. The region’s biggest industry clusters, Energy, Agribusiness & Processing, Biomedical/Biotechnical and others also represent the largest portion of leakage. Improving the production and export of these industries from the region with the establishment of new freight lines and centralized logistic hubs may minimize leakage. [Regional Requirements, Expenditures & Leakage - 2019](#)



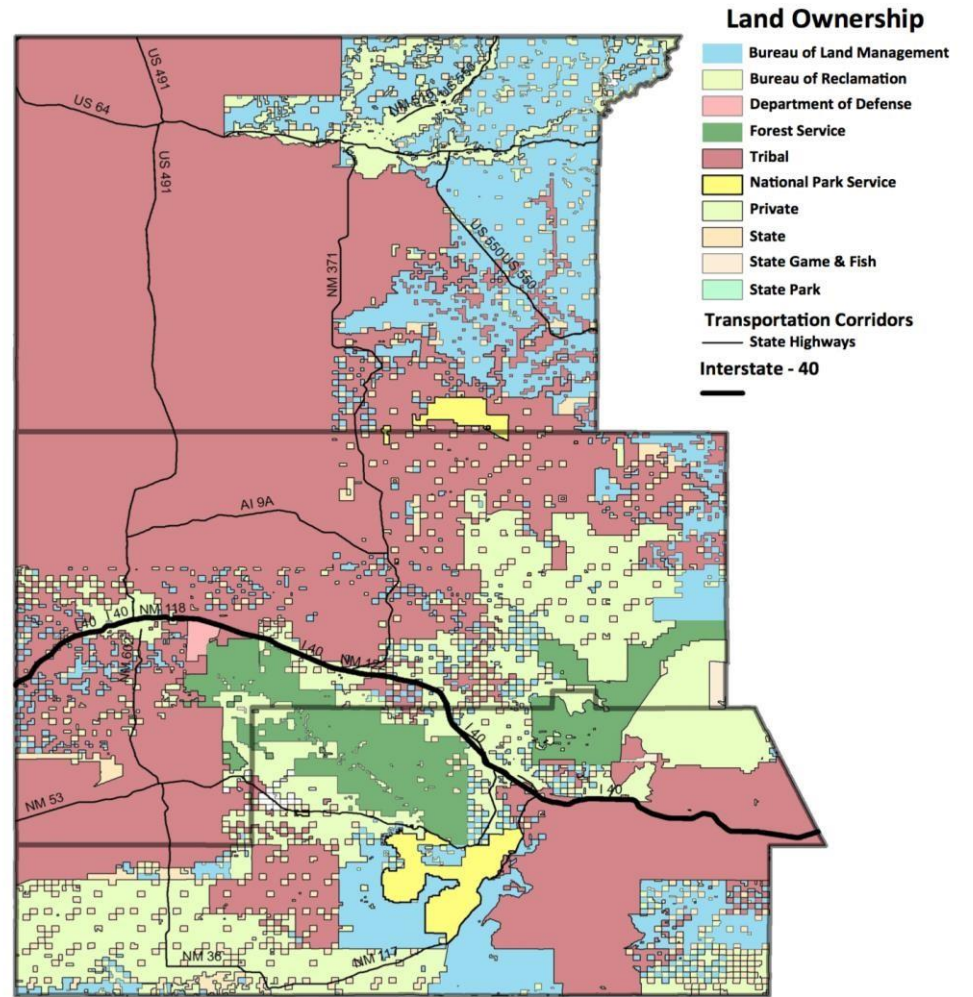


## Land Use and Communities

Our region is made up of about 75 “historic communities.” Each community has its own unique identity and sense of place. The significance of the land and our connection to these lands remains constant across the various American Indian Tribes, as well as Mexican and Hispanic land grants and ranchers, conservationists, and travelers alike. Water is the source of life, but it is the major limiting factor on the carrying capacity as well as opportunities for business expansion and industrial recruitment.

The region’s complex land ownership pattern affects transportation planning in two major ways. First, regulatory, policy and right-of-way issues can become extremely complicated and problematic. For example, the failure to resolve the right-of-way issues between New Mexico and the Navajo Nation created a significant delay in implementation of the project to widen US 491 between Gallup and Farmington. Second, the multiple jurisdictions that may be involved in a single project can complicate funding strategies, especially for major projects. Given the complexities of land ownership in this region, effective partnerships are critically important to the successful implementation of key transportation projects.

The complexity of having a mosaic of overarching political systems and processes underscores the unique sovereignty of tribal nations but can be a complex bureaucracy to navigate in terms of transportation planning and development. Key routes in the region can range in responsibilities from various Federal entities (FHWA, BIA, NPS, BLM, USFS) to the State Department of Transportation to city, county and tribal routes and roads. Inter-jurisdictional coordination is an overarching goal not only in this plan but in all regional plans that the Northwest NM Council of Governments has facilitated and assembled.



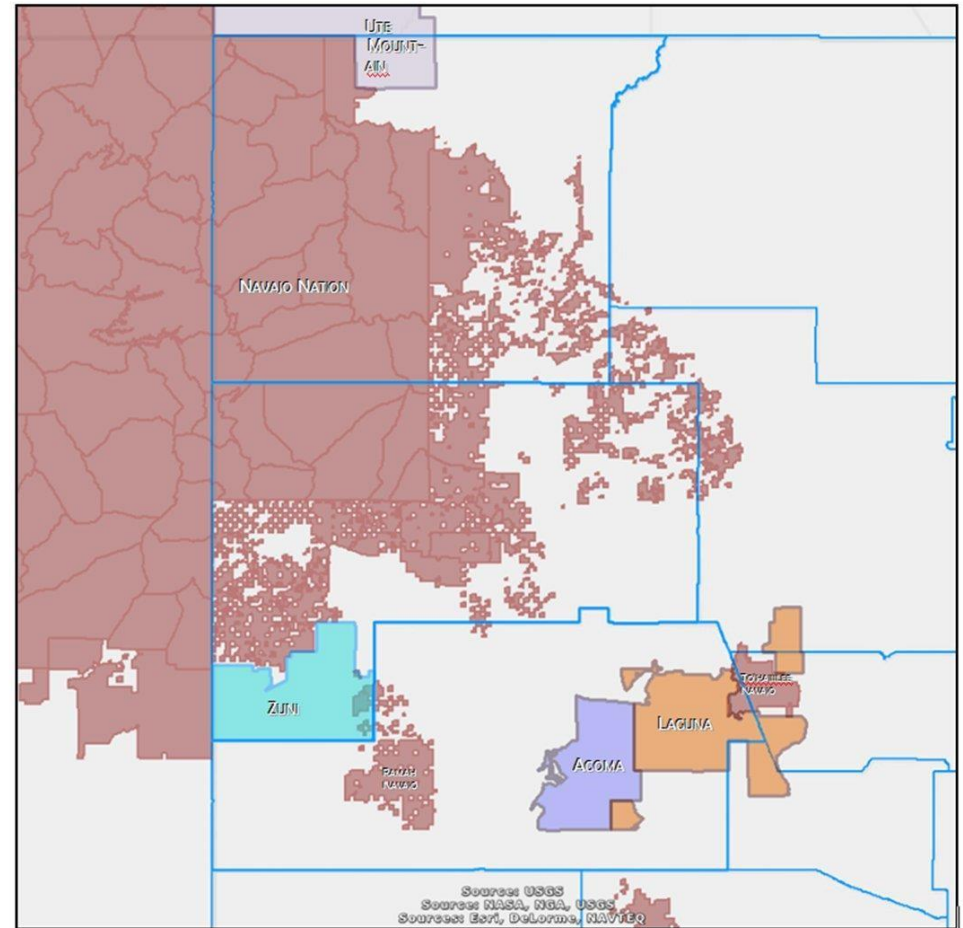
Map 2: Land Ownership in Northwest New Mexico

The Northwest region of New Mexico is made up of four tribal nations: the Navajo Nation and the Pueblos of Acoma, Laguna, and Zuni. The Navajo Nation is the largest reservation in the United States, and spans into vast portions of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. Each tribal government has its own unique governance structure, for example, the Pueblo of Laguna has six villages each with its own officials.

In Northwest New Mexico, there are 54 Chapters that rest within three Agencies (Eastern, Northern and Fort Defiance). The levels of Navajo Chapter government and jurisdiction are Nation, Agency, District, and Chapter. The Chapters are the most local form of government in the Navajo governance structure. On April 27, 1998, Navajo Nation President Thomas Atcitty signed the “Local Governance Act,” which provides major improvements to Chapter government by recognizing local governmental authority over local matters and requiring local officials and administrators to govern with responsibility and accountability to the local citizens by adhering to the principles of checks and balances and the separation of powers. In the Northwest New Mexico region, there are 14 certified Navajo Chapters, including Littlewater, Baahaali (Breadsprings), Whiterock, Ojo Encino, Baca-Prewitt, Naschitti, Newcomb, San Juan, Tse’Daa’Kaan (Hogback), Sheepsprings, Toadlena/Two Grey Hills, T’iistoh Sikaad (Newcomb), Beclabito, and Upper Fruitland.

About half the land area in the region is administered as American Indian Reservations. Governments hold 78 percent of the land in the region, including 24 percent Federal land, 49 percent trust land, and 5 percent held by the State of New Mexico; Deeded lands in private ownership account for the remaining 22 percent. Land ownership patterns are complicated by "checkerboarding" in areas where land ownership is parsed out in small square units divided between Indian reservation lands, national forest areas, private ownership and several other categories of land ownership. The complexity of land ownership and land availability constrains economic opportunities. Our region plans strategically to navigate this complex lattice of land ownership, governmental policies, procedures, and jurisdictions. It often involves robust collaboration with local agencies and landowners to plan and complete projects.





**Map 3: American Indian Lands in Northwest New Mexico**

**Table 4: Local County, City, and Tribal Plans within the Northwest New Mexico Region**

Name	Type of Government	Plans
<b>San Juan County</b>	County	Growth Management Plan (2018)
<b>McKinley County</b>	County	Comprehensive Plan (2020) Zuni Mountains Trail Master Plan (2014)
<b>Cibola County</b>	County	Comprehensive Plan (2015) Zuni Mountains Trail Master Plan (2014)
<b>City of Aztec</b>	City	Airport Plan (2008) Animas River Trail System (2020) Comprehensive Plan (2002) North Main Corridor Concept Plan (2014) Aztec Vision Plan (2014)
<b>City of Bloomfield</b>	City	Comprehensive Plan (2007)
<b>City of Farmington</b>	City	Metropolitan Transportation Plan (2010) Bike/Pedestrian Plan (2010) Comprehensive Plan (2021) Parks, Recreation, Cultural Affairs Plan (2014)
<b>City of Gallup</b>	City	Growth Management Plan (2018) Gallup-McKinley County Trails & Open Space Plan Gallup Area Transportation Safety Plan (2019)
<b>City of Grants</b>	City	Comprehensive Plan (2017) Bicycle Trails Map
<b>Village of Milan</b>		Comprehensive Plan (2018)

<b>Pueblo of Laguna</b>	Pueblo	Long Range Transportation Plan Bike/Pedestrian Route Plan (2012) Laguna Village Comprehensive Plans (2012-2015)
<b>Pueblo of Acoma</b>	Pueblo	Long Range Transportation Plan (2013)
<b>Pueblo of Zuni</b>	Pueblo	Four-way Redevelopment Project
<b>Navajo Nation</b>	Tribe	Long Range Transportation Plan (2016) Airport System Master Plan (2014)
<b>Cebolleta Land Grant</b>	Land Grant	Comprehensive Plan (2008)
<b>Cubero Land Grant</b>	Land Grant	Comprehensive Plan (2008)

<b>Navajo Chapters</b>	<b>Agency</b>	<b>Plans</b>
<b>Baahaali Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Eastern)	Land Use Plan (2006)
<b>Burnham Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Northern)	Land Use Plan (2005)
<b>Gadii' Ahi Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Northern)	Land Use Plan
<b>Two Grey Hills Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Northern)	Land Use Plan (2004)
<b>San Juan Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Northern)	Land Use Plan (2002)
<b>Beclabito Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Northern)	Land Use Plan (2011)
<b>Sanostee Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Northern)	Land Use Plan (2004)
<b>Shiprock Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Northern)	Land Use Plan

<b>Tse Daa Kaan Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Northern)	Land Use Plan (2007)
<b>Baca Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Eastern)	Land Use Plan (2005)
<b>Huerfeno Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Eastern)	Land Use Plan
<b>Littlewater Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Eastern)	Land Use Plan (2004)
<b>Manuelito Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Eastern)	Land Use Plan (2003)
<b>Mariano Lake Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Eastern)	Land Use Plan (2004)
<b>Pinedale Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Eastern)	Land Use Plan (2004)
<b>Pueblo Pintado Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Eastern)	Land Use Plan
<b>Red Rock Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Eastern)	Land Use Plan
<b>Standing Rock Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Eastern)	Land Use Plan
<b>Ramah Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Eastern)	Land Use Plan (2003)
<b>Breadsprings Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Eastern)	Land Use Plan (2001)
<b>Chichiltah Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Eastern)	Land Use Plan (2005)
<b>Churchrock Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Eastern)	Land Use Plan (2002)
<b>Counselor Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Eastern)	Land Use Plan (2002)
<b>Crownpoint Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Eastern)	Land Use Plan (2004)
<b>Nageezi Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Eastern)	Land Use Plan (2004)



<b>Iyanbito Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Eastern)	Land Use Plan (2001)
<b>Nahodishghish Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Eastern)	Land Use Plan (2004)
<b>Ojo Encino Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Eastern)	Land Use Plan (2003)
<b>Smith Lake Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Eastern)	Land Use Plan (2005)
<b>Thoreau Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Eastern)	Land Use Plan
<b>Torreón Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Eastern)	Land Use Plan (2002)
<b>Tsayatoh Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Eastern)	Land Use Plan
<b>White Rock Chapter</b>	NN Chapter (Eastern)	Land Use Plan (2001)
<b>Downtown Associations</b>		
<b>Grants MainStreet</b>	Grants, NM	Grants Main Street Master Plan (2010); MRA Plan (2018)
<b>Gallup MainStreet, Arts &amp; Cultural District / MRA</b>	Gallup, NM	Metropolitan Redevelopment Act (MRA) Plan and Cultural Plan (2021) Arts & Cultural District Assessment (2014) Gallup Downtown Pedestrian Safety (2011) 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Quiet Zone Study (2009)
<b>Zuni MainStreet</b>	Pueblo of Zuni	Zuni Community Plan
<b>Farmington MRA</b>	Farmington, NM	Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA) Plan (2009)

# Safety

The northwest region of New Mexico is mostly rural. Travel distances are expansive between rural communities and urban centers. Distance and frequency of travel greatly increase the risk for vehicular crashes. Residents from these rural communities may travel frequently to urban centers for work, school, and other commitments. Travel on weekends usually involves recreation, shopping, or other social outings. Although traffic crashes frequently occur in urban areas, the rates of fatal crashes are much higher in rural areas. This is an important distinction when it comes to policy and planning for rural transportation. Several factors of road design may contribute to higher crashes in rural areas, such as lack of passing lanes, lack of signage and reflectors, inadequate road shoulders, poorly marked (striping) lanes, open grazing leading to livestock on the road, etc.

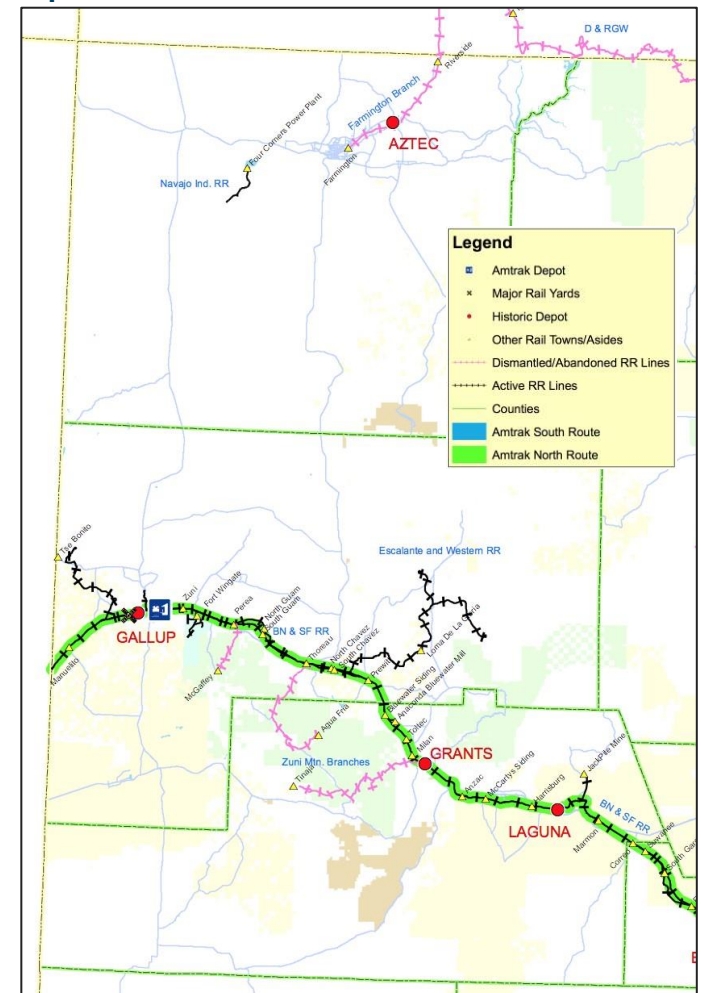
## Areas for Concern

The railroad has a major passageway through McKinley and Cibola counties. Passenger and freight trains pass through this region very frequently, increasing the rate for vehicle-train crashes in communities along this corridor. Recurring crashes are apparent in bigger towns like Gallup, Grants, Milan, and Laguna.

This region has a very high concentration of pedestrians, but an inadequate amount of pedestrian safe infrastructure. Most of the communities within the region do not provide adequate sidewalks, safe pedestrian crossings, and sufficient lighting. Hitchhikers loiter alongside busy highways (NM 64, 124, 264, 279, 491, & 602) on a regular basis, looking for a ride back to their rural communities. Pedestrian accidents increase at night when they are more difficult to see crossing a busy highway or when they are hitchhiking along a busy road. In addition, the lack of safe pedestrian crossings at railroad tracks, mostly in urban communities, results in recurring accidents and fatalities.

Weather also plays a major factor in vehicle crashes, especially in the winter months. Major highways, such as I-40, NM 602, and NM 53 pass through the mountains of Zuni and the Continental Divide. Snow-packed roads, ice, black ice, and blizzards increase the odds significantly for crashes. During the spring, wind gusts can often reach speeds of 70 miles per hour. The wind contributes to poor visibility as it kicks up debris and dust. The monsoon rains also contribute to poor visibility and flash floods during the summer months.

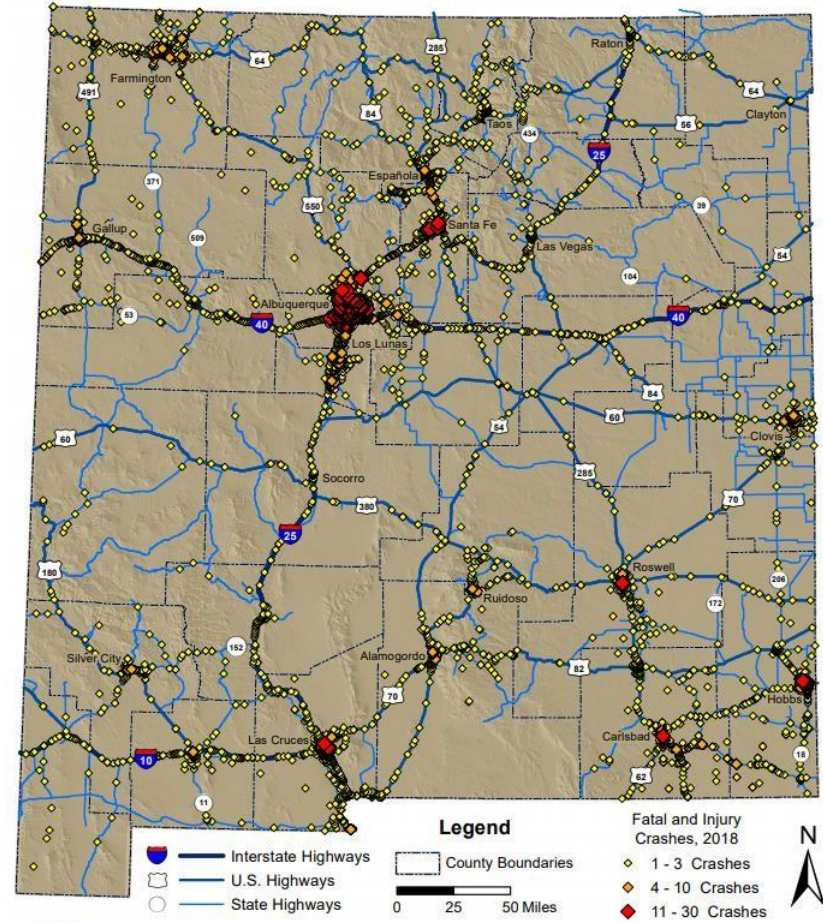
Map 4: Railroad in Northwest New Mexico



The region contains three major mountain chains, the Zuni Mountains, the Chuska Mountains, and the Continental Divide. Four of the region's major highways (NM53, NM602, US491, and I-40) pass alongside or through these mountains. Elk migration patterns have recently shifted, resulting in increased movement across NM 602 and NM 53. Parts of these highways have no signage indicating elk or deer crossing. As a result, the likelihood for vehicles crashing into wildlife animals has increased. In addition to animal crashes, most rural community members in our region own livestock. The State mandates a closed-fence corridor, but most areas along the roads are open range. Poor compliance with State regulations regarding fencing contribute to vehicle crashes with livestock. These risks increase after dark, when animals are significantly more difficult to see. Traffic along New Mexico Highways 602, 53, and 371 has increased with the addition of commercial traffic. These roads were primarily designed for local, rural, medium-capacity traffic flow. However, construction projects and the delivery of supplies have added commercial traffic to rural residential roads. The combination of commercial and residential traffic on rural residential roads has increased crash risks. Without passing lanes along these roads, drivers often risk passing slow moving traffic at location they see fit, despite the dangers of passing up a hill. Furthermore, small communities located along highways 64, 602, and 491 have been experiencing traffic passing through their communities as high speed. The community of Tohatchi has been considering several traffic calming designs to slow down traffic through their community. Other communities may soon follow behind.

Improvements to these major roads in our region will help increase safety and decrease vehicle and pedestrian accidents. Such improvements will benefit local residents, businesses, and school busses. Highway 602 made improvements to its road by adding turnout lanes at a couple of locations. Roads within our region can improve safety by posting signage, providing adequate pedestrian infrastructure, implementing traffic calming designs, building passing lanes and turnout lanes on busy highways.

Map 5: Fatal and Injury Crashes, 2018



Prepared for the New Mexico Department of Transportation, Traffic Safety Division, Traffic Records Bureau. Under Contract CO6093 by the University of New Mexico, Geospatial and Population Studies, Traffic Research Unit (TRU) tru.unm.edu October 2019 tru@unm.edu

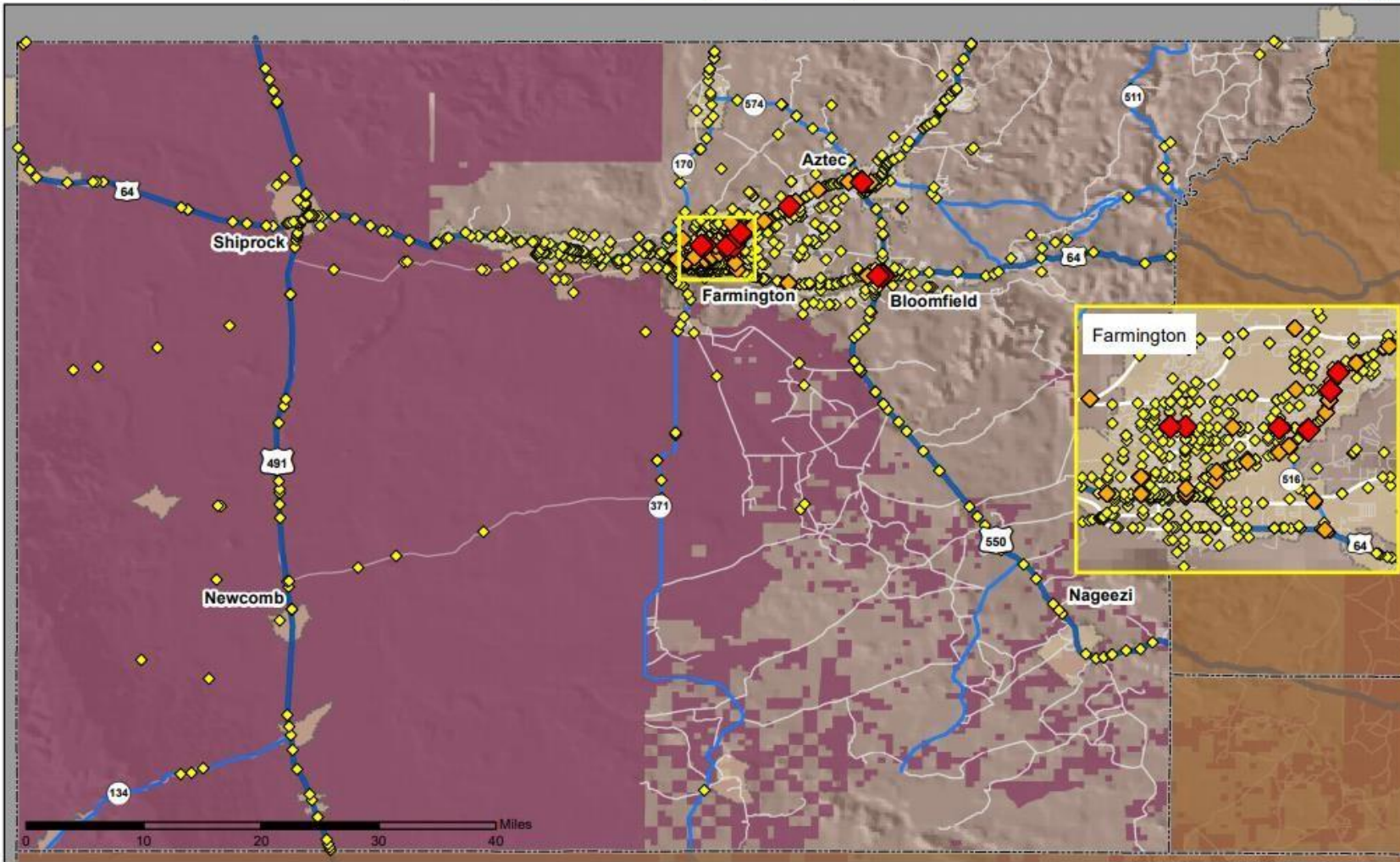






# Crashes in San Juan County, New Mexico, 2018

Map created by the Traffic Research Unit, Geospatial & Population Studies at UNM



## Legend

Data Source: NMDOT Crash File 2018  
<http://tru.unm.edu> CO#6093 tru@unm.edu

- Forest & Wildlife Areas
- Reservations & Pueblos
- County Boundaries
- City Boundaries
- Interstate Highways
- U.S. Highways
- State Highways
- Streets & Roadways

## Crashes 2018

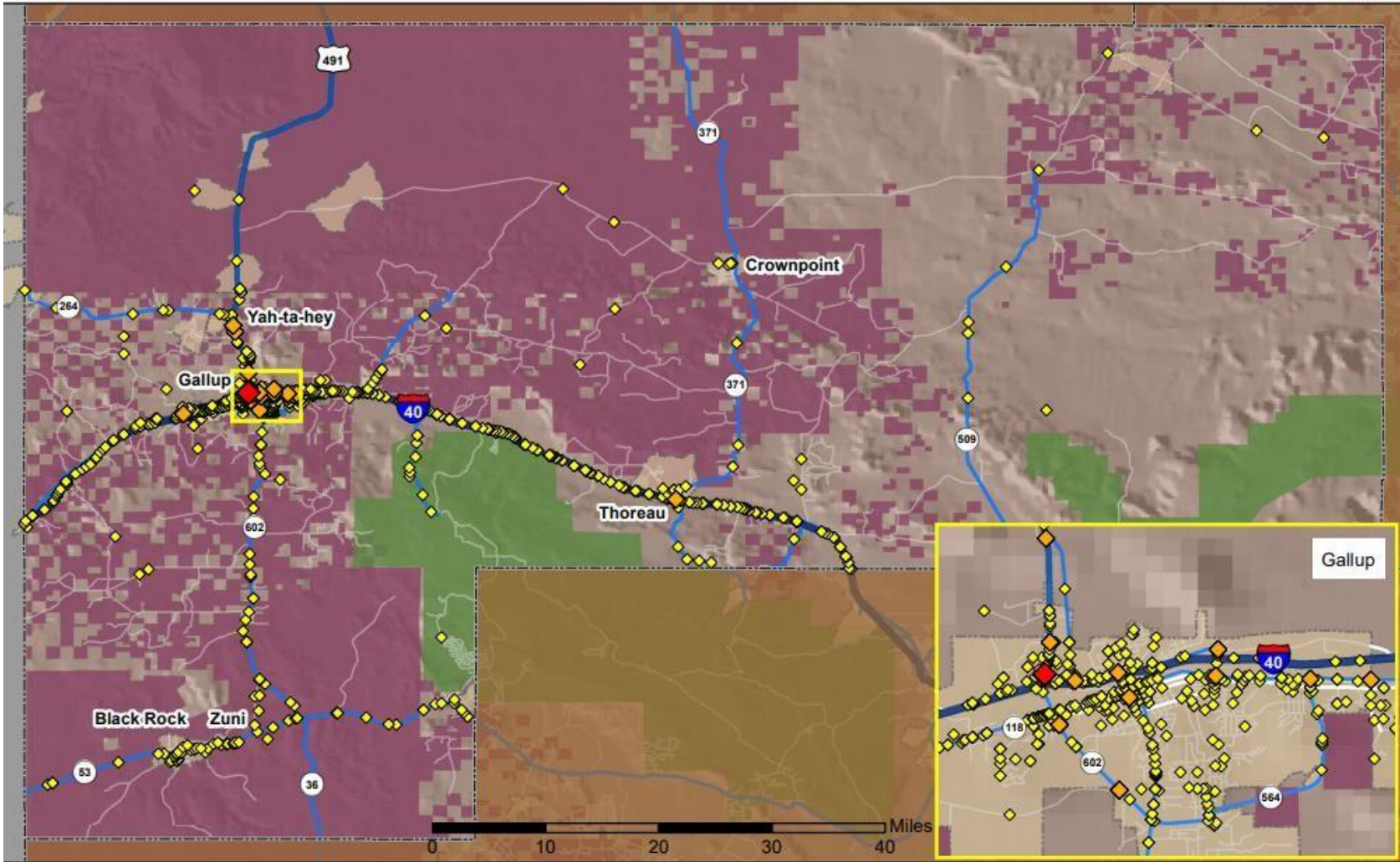
- 1 - 5 Crashes
- 6 - 10 Crashes
- 11 - 20 Crashes





# Crashes in McKinley County, New Mexico, 2018

Map created by the Traffic Research Unit, Geospatial & Population Studies at UNM



## Legend

Data Source: NMDOT Crash File 2018  
<http://tru.unm.edu> CO#6093 tru@unm.edu

- Forest & Wildlife Areas
- Reservations & Pueblos
- County Boundaries
- City Boundaries
- Interstate Highways
- U.S. Highways
- State Highways
- Streets & Roadways

## Crashes 2018

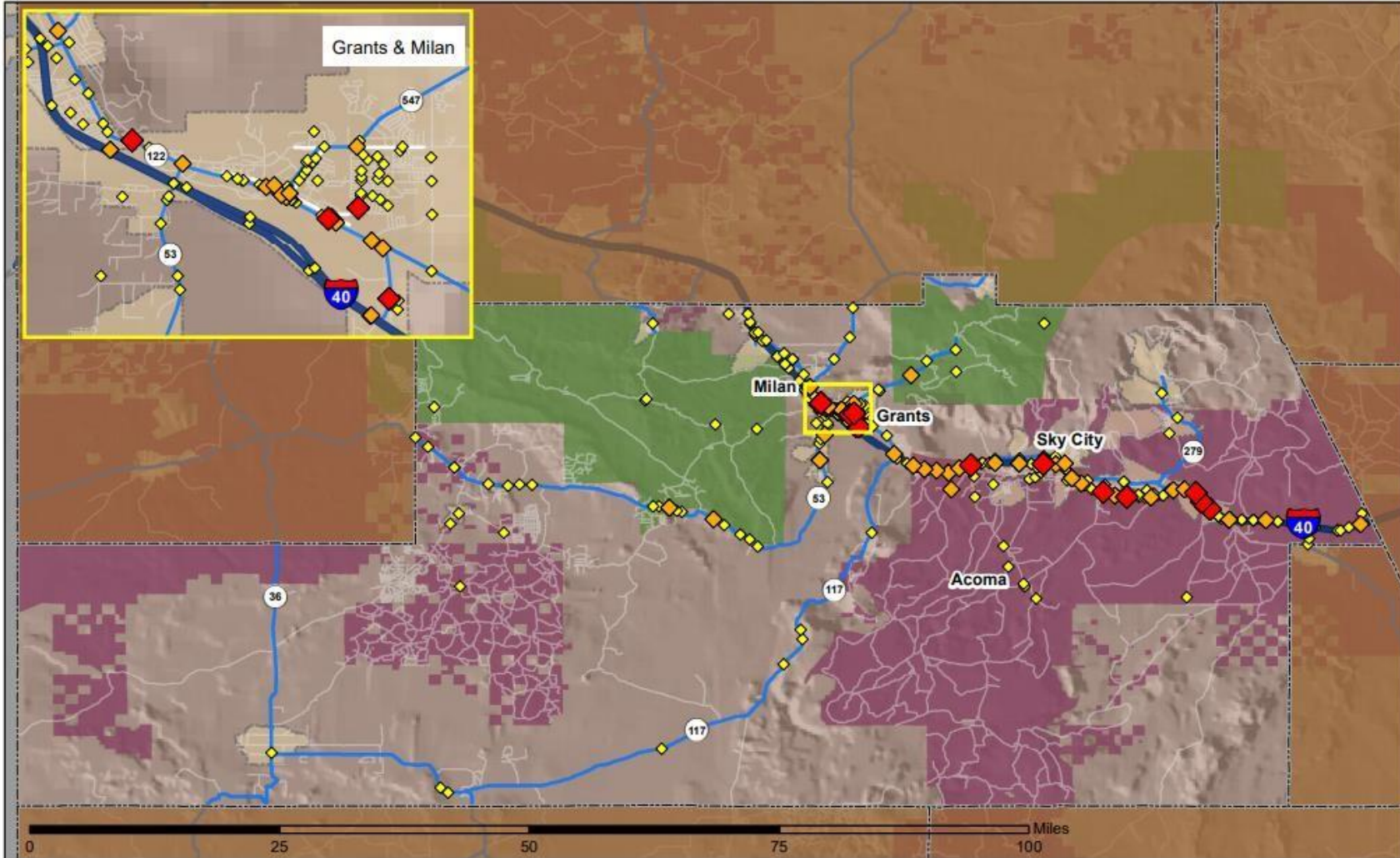
- 1 - 5 Crashes
- 6 - 15 Crashes
- 16 - 61 Crashes





# Crashes in Cibola County, New Mexico, 2018

Map created by the Traffic Research Unit, Geospatial & Population Studies at UNM



## Legend

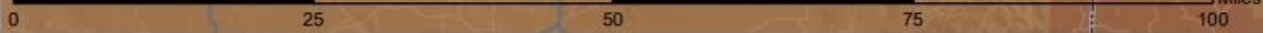
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- Forest & Wildlife Areas
- Reservations & Pueblos
- County Boundaries
- City Boundaries

- Interstate Highways
- U.S. Highways
- State Highways
- Streets & Roadways

### Crashes 2018

- 1 Crash
- 2 - 4 Crashes
- 4 - 6 Crashes



## DWI

The northwest New Mexico Region has the highest number of alcohol-involved crashes of any region in the state. Drivers under the influence of alcohol pose a significant threat to the lives and safety of drivers and pedestrians using these roads. The chart below shows the top ten counties in New Mexico with the highest rates for alcohol-involved crashes in 2014 - 2018. McKinley County exceeded the state rate by 11.9 percent, followed by San Juan County at 2.9 percent. McKinley County fluctuated between 155 to 180 alcohol involved crashes between 2014 - 2018. San Juan County fluctuated between 161 and 185 alcohol involved crashes between 2014 - 2018. Continued collaborative partnerships with the communities, the tribe, the state, county, and local law enforcement may help mitigate future accidents and fatalities.

**Table 5: Top 10 Counties for Alcohol-Involved Crashes, 2014-2018**

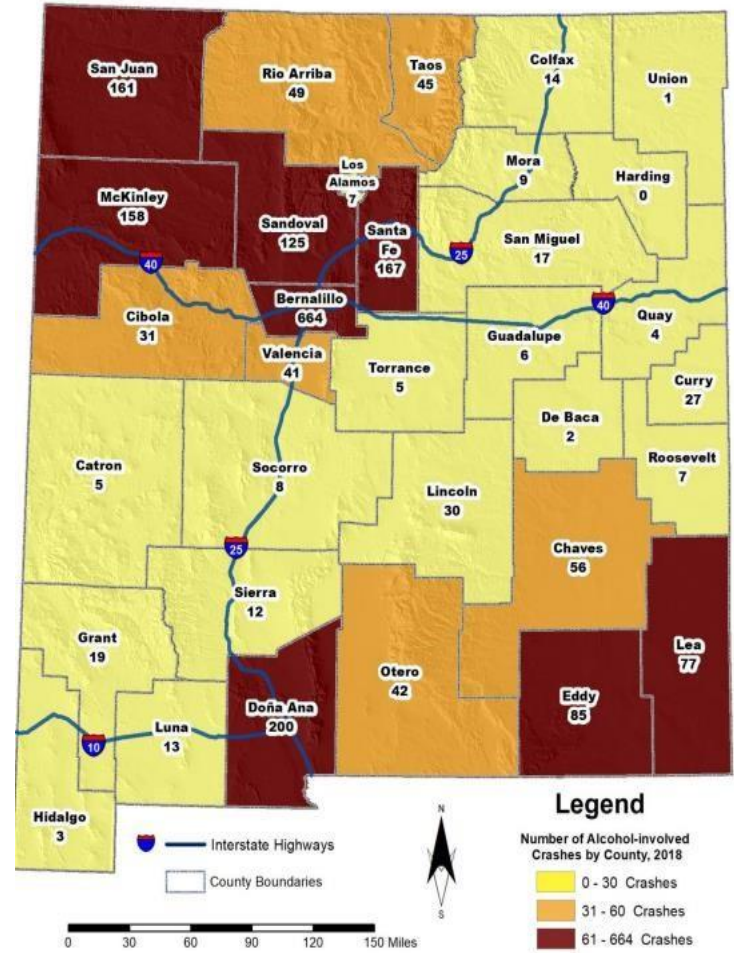
2018 Rank	County	Alcohol-involved Crashes					2018 Population	2018 Vehicle Miles Traveled (100M VMT) <sup>1</sup>	2018 Alcohol-involved Crashes per 10,000 County Residents <sup>2</sup>	2018 Alcohol-involved Crashes per 100M VMT <sup>2</sup>
		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018				
1	Bernalillo	635	675	689	664	664	678,701	58.41	9.8	<b>11.4</b>
2	Doña Ana	191	195	174	196	200	217,522	21.43	9.2	<b>9.3</b>
3	Santa Fe	172	161	179	172	167	150,056	20.17	<b>11.1</b>	<b>8.3</b>
4	San Juan	185	181	163	169	161	125,043	19.33	<b>12.9</b>	<b>8.3</b>
5	McKinley	177	180	155	169	158	72,290	13.85	<b>21.9</b>	<b>11.4</b>
6	Sandoval	89	94	109	114	125	145,179	15.43	8.6	<b>8.1</b>
7	Eddy	75	64	51	54	85	57,900	9.52	<b>14.7</b>	<b>8.9</b>
8	Lea	69	50	39	37	77	69,611	9.94	<b>11.1</b>	<b>7.7</b>
9	Chaves	63	56	41	47	56	64,689	6.84	8.7	<b>8.2</b>
10	Rio Arriba	42	58	63	49	49	39,006	6.45	<b>12.6</b>	7.6
All Other Counties		343	420	410	379	348	475,431	91.5	7.3	3.8
Statewide Total		2,041	2,134	2,073	2,050	2,090	2,095,428	272.88	10.0	7.7

<sup>1</sup> Statewide VMT is greater than the sum of all county VMTs, because it includes VMTs measured from roadways that cross county boundaries.

<sup>2</sup> The numbers in bold red represent counties that exceeded the statewide rate.



Map 9: Alcohol-Involved Crash, 2018



All maps are available in high-resolution color at [tru.unm.edu](http://tru.unm.edu).

# Public Health

The incidental impacts that transportation planning and land use decisions have on the health of the region’s residents are significant. Providing a convenient network of multi-modal infrastructure often stimulates the public to utilize alternative forms of transportation, such as walking, biking, public transit, and increased physical activity. However, safety for multi-modal participants is critical. The transportation infrastructure currently in place for Northwest New Mexico greatly favors automobiles. Generally, the public feels unsafe and vulnerable to harm when trying to cross a busy road or while biking along a highway teeming with high-speed traffic. Transportation infrastructure that incorporates safe road crossings, pedestrian sidewalks, and bicycle lanes encourages more physical activity, ultimately lowering obesity rates for the region. The obesity rate for Northwest New Mexico is at 32%, while the national average is 27% and the state average is 24%. Obesity rates were higher among females at 43.7% (U.S. average for females 36.1%) and males at 36.3% (U.S. average for males 33.8%). Furthermore, there was an overall increase in obesity by the third grade for children in New Mexico.

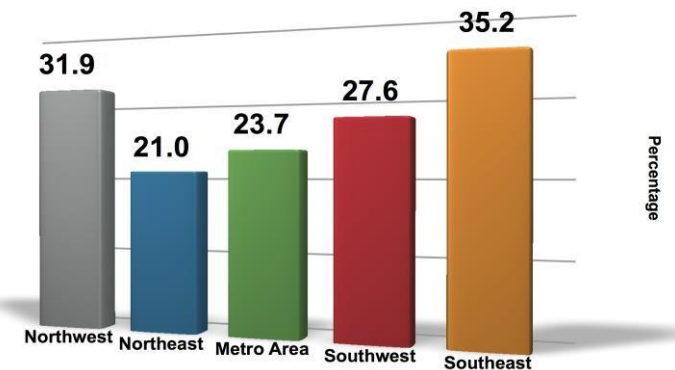
A study from the American Journal of Prevention Medicine found that each additional hour spent in a car per day was associated with a six percent increase the likelihood of obesity<sup>4</sup>.

**Table 5: Northwest NM Obesity Prevalence, 2011**

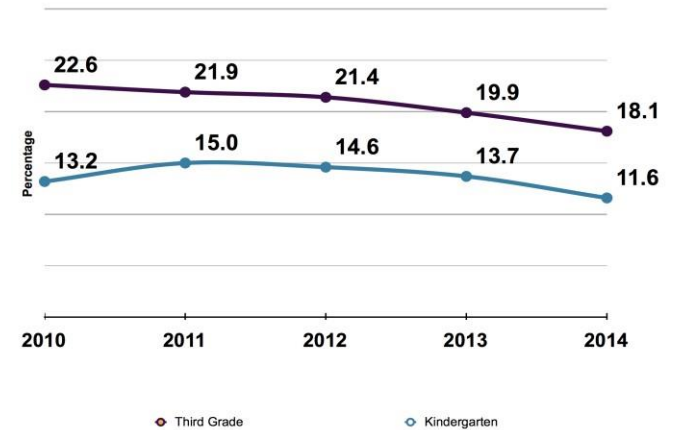
Gender	Regional Average	National Average
Male	36.3%	33.8%
Female	43.7%	36.1%

**Source:** Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, University of Washington.

**Obesity - BMI  $\geq$  30**  
Among New Mexico Adults  
by Region - 2013



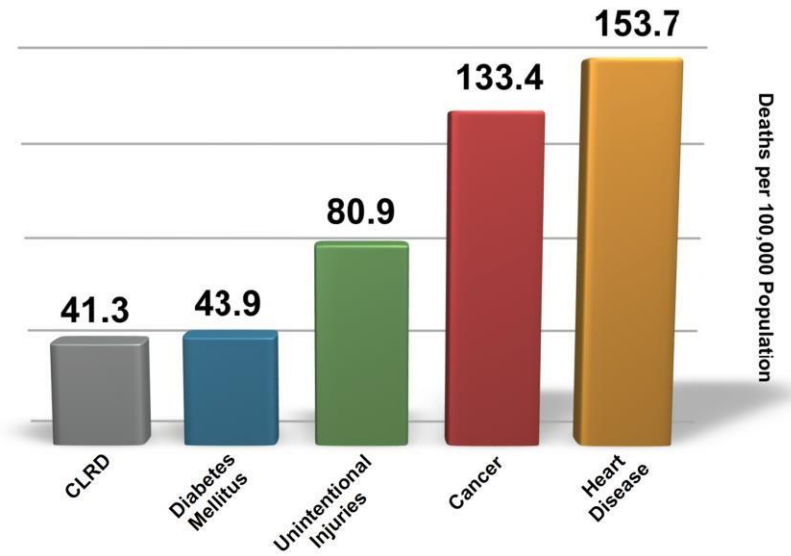
**New Mexico 2010 - 2014**  
Percent of Students Obese by Grade



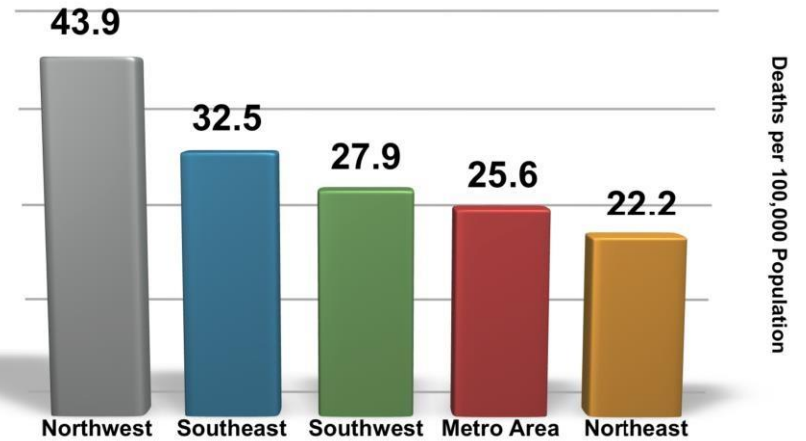
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<sup>4</sup> Frank LD, Andresen MA, Schmid TL. *Obesity relationships with community design, physical activity, and time spent in cars*. American Journal of Preventive Medicine. 2004 Aug; 27(2):87–96.

### Leading Cause of Death Northwest Region, 2013



### Diabetes Death Rates by Region, 2013



Obesity is often linked to diabetes and heart disease, reducing the region's life expectancy.   
 New Mexico Northwest Regional Transportation Plan





expectancy to below national average. According to the University of Washington, the life expectancy for males in 2010 was at 73.0 years, while the national average was at 76.1. Female years were at 78.8 years and the national average was at 80.8 years. In fact, the leading cause of death in Northwest New Mexico is heart disease, followed by diabetes as the fourth leading cause of death. The region also ranked the highest for death by diabetes in New Mexico.

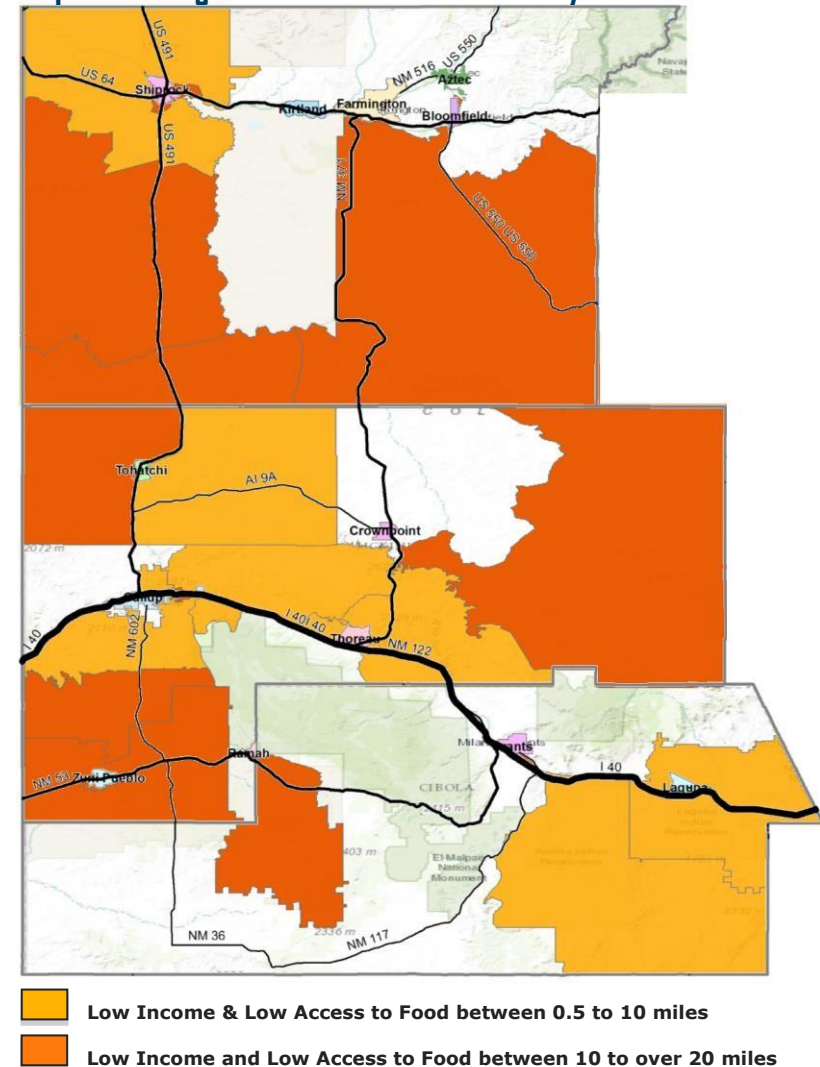
Considering the health of the public, a safe and reliable transportation network is necessary for patients to see their doctors, access treatment centers, and pharmacy. In addition, exercise and healthy diets are also important to increase the health of public. An accessible multi-modal system would help decrease and prevent chronic disease.

## Food Deserts

The region’s vast expanses of rural territory and rural residents’ lack of proximity to urban amenities have resulted in the existence of a “food desert” in which access to healthy foods is limited. Transportation plays a vital role in access to healthy foods. Communities that are located far from major transportation corridors like Interstate 40, US 491 and US 550 are at a tremendous disadvantage since the shipment of fresh food is dependent on a suitable network of transportation infrastructure for efficient freight transportation. The USDA indicates that poor and rural American communities are at high risk for chronic diseases related to limited access to affordable and nutritious foods. Their primary concern is that poor and rural areas do not have access to supermarkets, grocery stores, or other food retailers that offer the large variety of foods needed for a healthy diet<sup>4</sup>.

Despite the critical impacts of transportation planning and infrastructure on public health, conventional transportation evaluations tend to overlook public health impacts. However, creating an environment that supports strong local and regional food systems access will help benefit the health and welfare of a community. In addition, the health and vitality of the region depends on how well the transportation network functions. A successful transportation plan allows the residents of the region to access multi-modal infrastructure that would enable them to get from one place in the region to another in a safe and timely manner. Alternative modes of travel contribute to the general welfare of communities by saving energy, increasing health benefits, and improving environmental impacts.

Map 10: Driving Distance to Nearest Grocery Store



<sup>4</sup> USDA. *Access to Affordable and Nutritious Food: Measuring and Understanding Food Deserts and Their Consequences*. Economic Research Service, June 2009, p. 1-150.



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## Transportation System Overview

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This section provides a system overview of the transportation systems within NWRTPO boundaries. It also reviews NMDOT's roadway system by tier, transportation system overview of the NWCOG region, transit, recreational and tourism, scenic byways, and freight.

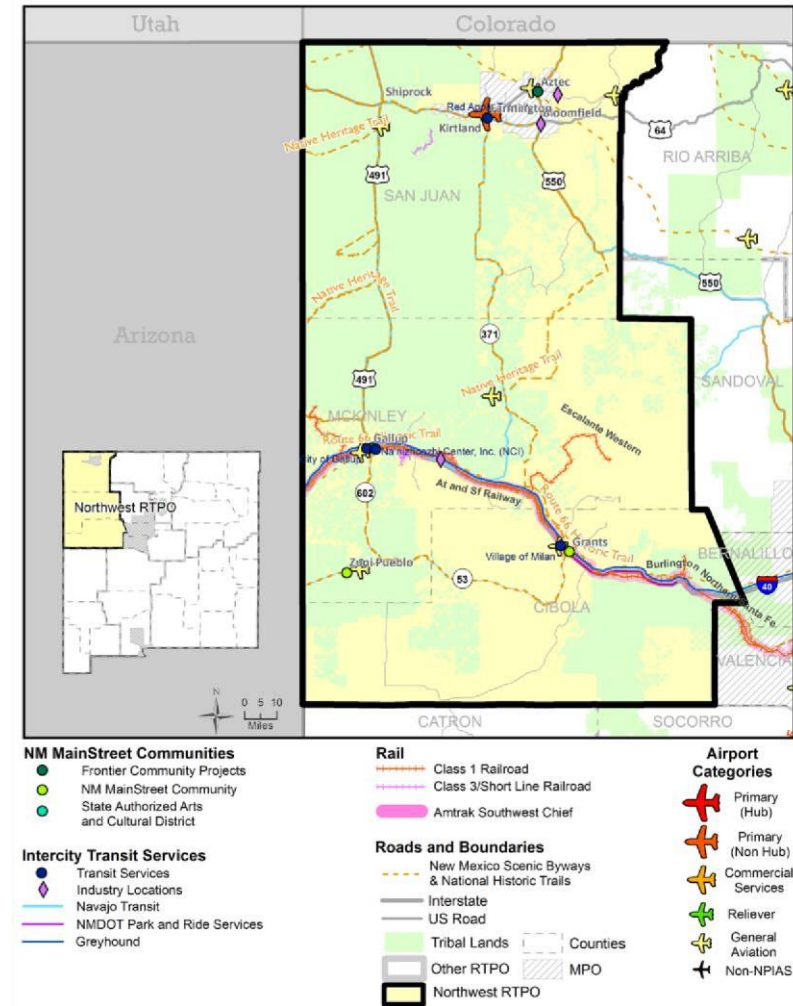
### Key Routes

- Interstate 40
- US 491
- NM 371
- NM 602
- US 550
- US 64
- NM 53
- NM 118 (Route 66) & NM 124 (Route 66)
- NM 605 NM 509
- NM 134

### Scenic Byways

- Trail of the Ancients (shown on Map as Native Heritage Trail)
- Route 66 Historic Trail

### NWRTPO Transportation Overview



## Airports/Airstrips (2012 Enplanements)

Four Corners Regional – Farmington (16,337)

Gallup Municipal – Gallup (5)

## Rail Lines

BNSF Railway (BNSF) – Class I

Amtrak Southwest Chief – Intercity Passenger Rail

Escalante-Western Railway – Private (55 miles)

Navajo Mine Railroad – Private (13 miles)

## Transit Service Ridership

City of Farmington – Red Apple Transit (117,636 - 2019)

Village of Milan – Carrot Express (also serving Grants & Cibola County) (15,560 - 2019)

City of Gallup – Gallup Express (89,233 - 2019)

Navajo Nation - Navajo Transit System (14,174 - 2019)

Laguna Pueblo - Shaa'skr'a Transit (9,133 - 2019)

Pueblo of Zuni – Ashiwi Transit (39,893 – 2019)

## Border Crossings:

States of Arizona, Colorado, and Utah

Sovereign Nations of Navajo Nation, Pueblo of Laguna, Pueblo of Acoma, and Pueblo of Zuni





## Multimodal Prioritization System

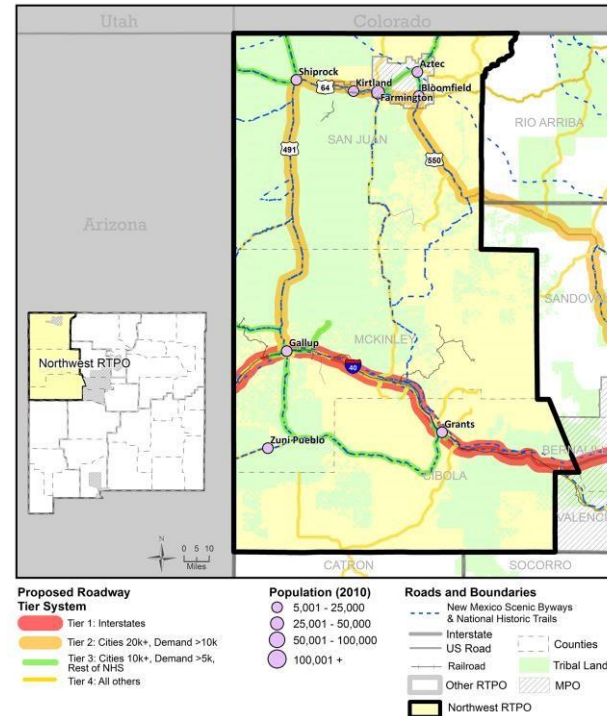
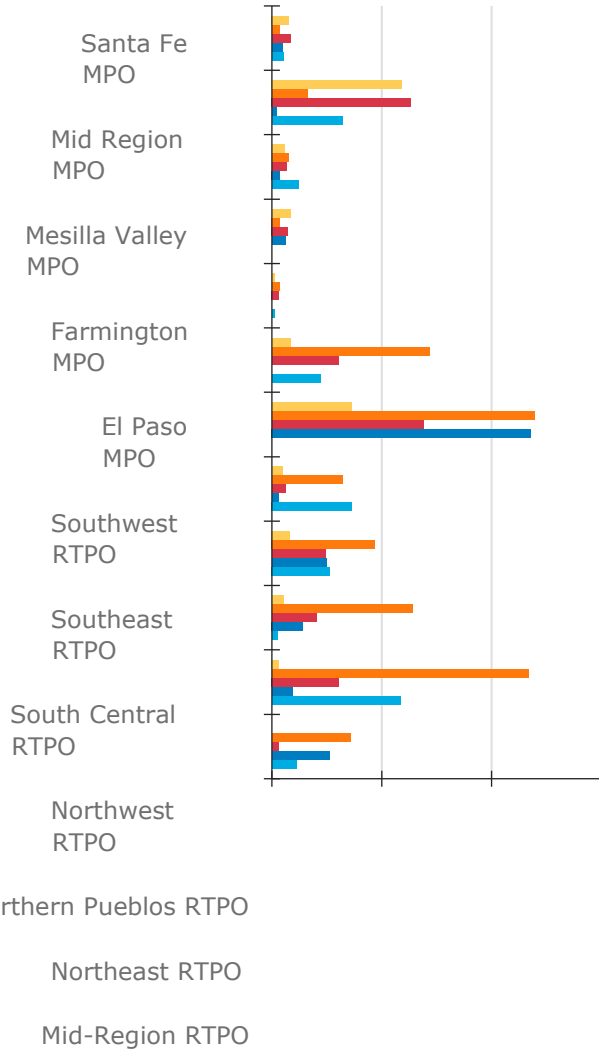
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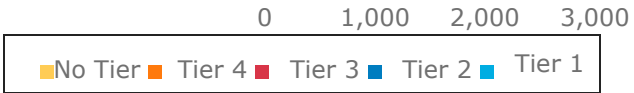
Since the 2015 Northwest New Mexico Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), the NMDOT has moved away from the tiered prioritization system. Working in coordination with its partners, NMDOT will use its own multimodal prioritization system to establish performance targets and make resource allocation decisions. The New Mexico 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan will be a better document to reference for this system and its ranking components that reflect the different levels of importance of different types of transportation facilities and services for moving people and goods, as well as standards for maintenance and operations. Given the higher performance targets, NMDOT will also make the higher-ranking facilities and services the primary focus of its capital investment. In the case of transit, NMDOT will prioritize investments on the basis of the New Mexico State Management Plan for the Administration of Federal Transit Grants.

# Roadway System by Tier

Total Lane Miles by Tier

Roadway System by Tier

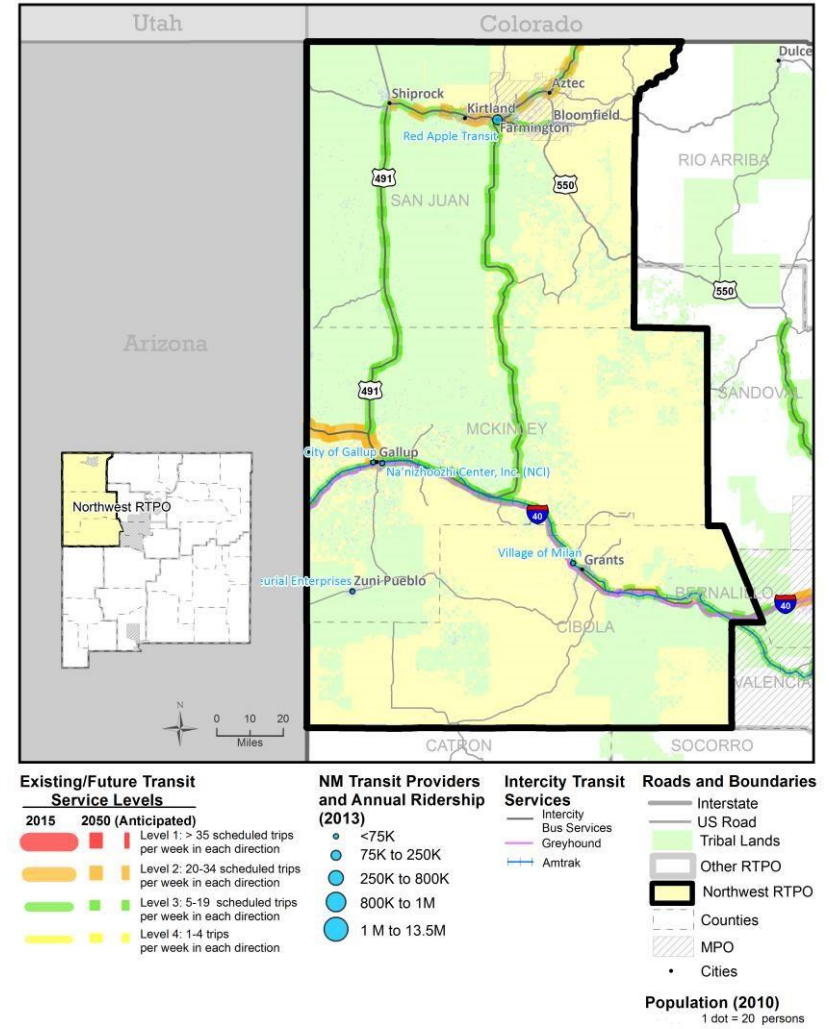




# Transit by Tier

NWRTPO Transit Map

Transit is a very common topic of discussion among communities within the NWRTPO area and a recurring theme when developing and obtaining feedback for this RTP, including from the individual transit providers themselves. Northwest New Mexico is well covered in terms of local transit service providers to help citizens get to both employment and services, which will be critical for a growing elderly population. There are a few transit providers that offer intra-regional transit and even inter-regional transit, including Navajo Transit, Shaa'skr'a Transit, and ZEE, Inc. (Zuni). There is a growing need to increase and better coordinate the service with the local transit providers. NWRTPO can help to facilitate this conversation between local communities, NMDOT, and transit providers to improve existing transit and identify areas or gaps in areas that need transit services.





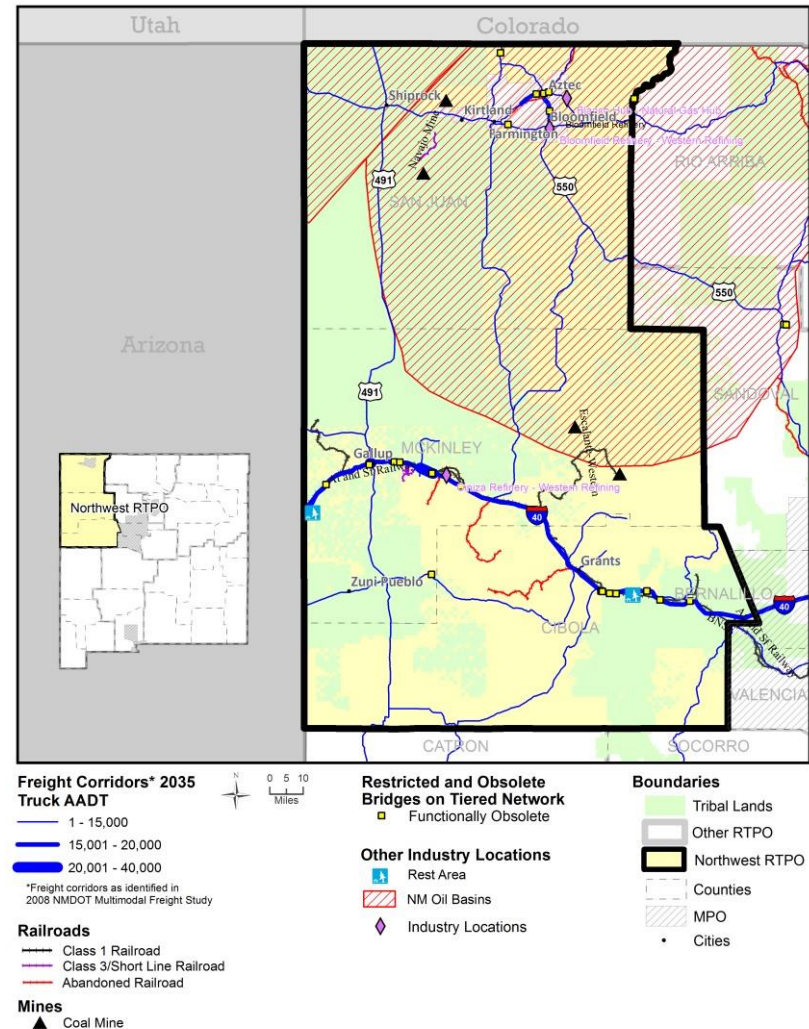
# Freight

Freight is a significant issue in the Northwest, with the extraction of oil and gas **NWRTPO Freight Map** from the San Juan Basin growing to significant levels in the coming years and agriculture also creating significant freight traffic. Other natural resources, such as coal and uranium are also predominant and have potential for future expansion and development with transmission needs. The map at the right presents the level of truck traffic in the Northwest, as well as identifying some of the major freight generation issues.

The movement of freight within the NWRTPO area is an important consideration because there are significant economic implications related to freight movement. Ensuring that major freight corridors within the MRRTPPO area are reliable can ensure a competitive edge and provide efficient freight movement. Interstate 40 serves as a major cross-country freight route because it connects the Port of Long Beach, CA, to eastern markets. NMDOT estimates that heavy trucking will grow steadily along I-40, and already there are portions that could use truck passing lanes, rest areas, and improved road shoulders (e.g. Continental Divide).

The Four Corners and San Juan Basin are crucial places for freight movement in New Mexico. US491 and NM371 are the major trucking routes to move freight north and south. From a market standpoint, energy and agricultural products need to be delivered to I-40 and to the BNSF transcontinental line. In turn, the shipment of supplies north to support these operations dictates the criticality of these highways. Safety, due to heavy truck traffic, has been a historic problem, which led to the four-laning of US491. The closest north-south interstates to US491 are east to US25 (Albuquerque) and west to US15 (Las Vegas), making it a critical freight route.

Market driven demands for producing and transporting energy to national and international markets, along with predicted growth in the Southwestern United



States, has collided into transloading operations, crude oil terminals, and logistics

opportunities in Northwest New Mexico, especially in communities along the I-40 and BNSF Transcon line. With a resurgence of drilling and crude oil production in the San Juan Basin, there is even current investigation of building a short line railroad directly from the San Juan Basin to the BNSF Transcon line. A growing challenge will be to match transportation investments to growing economic opportunities that provide safe and reliable freight movements, leading to leveraging transportation improvements to diversify the economy, and paving the way to stable growth and balanced development.

## Recreation and Tourism

Tourism is a significant economic driver in Northwest New Mexico. Being the gateway to the Four Corners, Northwest New Mexico offers authentic cultures, world renowned archeological sites, and recreational adventures. This region has made a conscious effort to build a unified tourism network that links site-seeing opportunities with site-doing. Northwest New Mexico is “New Mexico True,” aligned with our State’s tourism campaign motto, which embodies its tag “Adventure Steeped in Culture”. The Trail of the Ancients Byway and Route 66 National Byway offer our small urban, tribal, and rural communities an opportunity to capitalize and cross-promote to the traveling public. NWRTPD members have also supported significant regional multi-use recreational trails development in recent years.



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# Goals, Strategies, and Actions

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## Our Vision for the Future

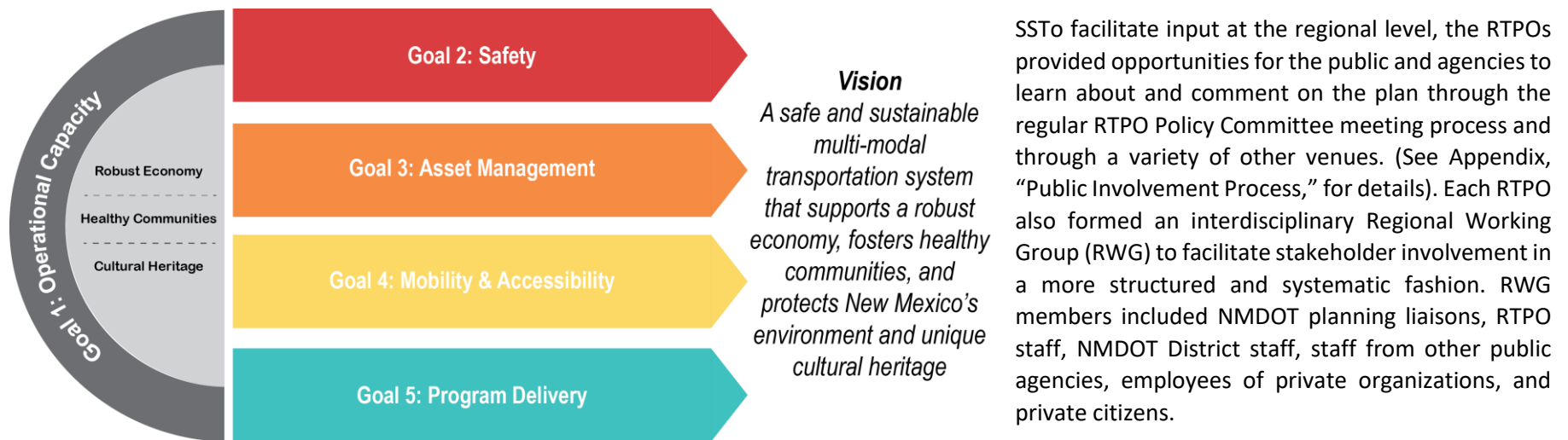
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The New Mexico Transportation Plan and this Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) are organized around five goals that lead to a vision for the future of transportation in the state. All goals are supported by a process that prioritizes transparency and accountability in all decision-making. This section explains the specific strategies developed for each goal and how they will be applied. The goals and strategies for the plan were developed collaboratively, based on input from a broad range of public and private stakeholders from across New Mexico. Seventy-two (72) stakeholders from our region participated in the 2020 RTP update including representation from public transportation, school bus, elected officials, freight and private industry, highway commissioners, transportation engineers, active transportation (BPE) representatives, tribal representatives, air travel, public health, economic development, finance, utilities, tourism and NMDOT – from our three counties, four tribes, and all communities therein. The NWRTPO members from all participating county, municipal and tribal governments also contributed to the 2020 RTP update.



NMDOT’s 2045 New Mexico Transportation Plan (NMTP) provides the foundation for seven Regional Transportation Plans (RTP) in New Mexico. The RTPs share NMDOT’s goals and strategies, however, since each region has its own unique identity and set of challenges, the statewide framework has been adapted to each region and will be carried out on a regional basis.

NMDOT cooperated closely with the state’s seven Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPO) and five Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) to develop the NMTP. It also established a robust public and stakeholder engagement process to help ensure that the plan’s vision, goals, strategies and actions would reflect a broad cross-section of statewide and regional perspectives.



The Northwest RTPO Regional Working Group (RWG) included 72 stakeholders and RTPO members who participated in the process that included the following public participation opportunities:

- (1) A public survey was conducted with all RWG members, partners, and available to public. Findings were recorded and information was incorporated into the plan update.
- (2) Regional Transportation Planning Organization Meeting conducted virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions.
  - a. June 10, 2020 – Presentations on NM Transportation Plan Update and NW RTP Plan Update including process, outline, and schedule.
  - b. July 8, 2020 – Update & Discuss: RTP 2020 Update including ideas based on review of 2015 plan.
  - c. August 12, 2020 – Review & Discuss: Draft 2020 RTP Update including trends, projects, strategies, goals, and action section review.



- d. September 9, 2020 – Review & Discuss: Draft 2020 RTP Update including the posting and public comment period guidelines.
- e. October 14, 2020 – Review & Discuss: Draft 2020 RTP Update including comments received from public comment forms.
- f. December 9, 2020 – Discussion/Presentation: RTP Update on progress and finalization.
- g. January 13, 2021 - Adoption of Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

(3) Regional Transportation Plan 60-day Public Comment. Posted September 15, 2020. All comments received were addressed and were appropriate revised into the plan.

(4) Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments Board of Directors, October 21, 2020. Presentation of Draft Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

(5) Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments Board of Directors, January 20, 2021. Adoption of Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

The feedback and information collected from this coordination with stakeholders from our three-county region helped to shape this update to our 2020 Regional Transportation Plan. Since each County has its own unique set of challenges, our regional stakeholders and RTPO members enabled a closer look at our region and how we should develop transportation infrastructure and services from now until the year 2045. The Northwest RTPO's RWG contributed toward key regional issues, how to address and achieve goals and guide the planning process.

### Key Issues Raised in the Northwest Region RTPO Working Group

- Need to address infrastructure maintenance, especially bridges.
- Continue to improve inter-jurisdictional coordination and collaboration (Tribal, County, Municipal, Federal, and State).
  - Facilitate solutions to address the issues surrounding right-of-way especially across tribal lands for road projects.
  - Facilitate solutions to collect and share uniform data, inventories, and priority lists across local, tribal, State, and Federal jurisdictions.
  - Need for improved regional public transportation service with cross-jurisdictional coordination and collaboration.
- Northwest New Mexico’s economy is transitioning from energy and extractive industries, which has impacts of transportation and growth patterns.
- Need for rail connectivity for our current oil/gas, coal, fly ash, and agriculture products. □ Address unpaved roadways and improve school bus routes based on prioritized routes.
  - Create innovative financing solutions to upgrade priority local roads from dirt to all-weather.
- Find solutions to address replacement bridges needed as many school districts have prohibited passage due to load limits and structural integrity, as well as any public safety or emergency vehicles.
- Develop alternative and secondary access into communities for emergency and natural disasters such as fire, winter weather, etc.
- Population growth or decline trends in our three-county region.
- Promote HUD-DOT-EPA Livable Community principles.
- Improve access to funding for rural transportation projects.
- There is a need to increase wayfinding signage for our region.
- The region has embraced outdoor recreation as an economic driver, so increase investments into trails, byways, mainstreets, outdoor venues, parks, and business sites.



## Goal 1: Operational Capacity

### Operate with Transparency and Accountability

Ensure that all NMDOT decision-making processes are data-driven and transparent and that NMDOT is held accountable for the efficient, timely, and cost-effective delivery of projects and programs. NMDOT shall be held accountable for its decisions based on two essential criteria:

1. **Consistency with the NMTP:** The extent to which its decisions support the goals for the transportation system that are described in this plan and reflected in the plan's performance measures.
2. **Data-Driven:** The extent to which its decisions rest on a strong foundation of accuracy, timeliness, consistency, uniformity, and complete data.

NMDOT recognizes the importance of maintaining the public's trust by efficiently and effectively managing the transportation and financial resources for which they are responsible. Achieving the state's 2045 transportation vision requires employee dedication, proactive collaboration with our planning partners, and a strong foundation of data to support decision-making. This section describes the strategies and actions to achieve these objectives.

Additionally, representatives of tribal and rural communities have expressed the feeling of being left out of the planning process, and better coordination with tribal and rural communities and the NMDOT will be critical in future planning efforts. The rural region especially relies on NMDOT for implementation and funding support for many projects. Acting upon this goal requires leadership from NMDOT in better coordination with NWRTPO. Northwest RTPO can help to further serve as a liaison and facilitator with local and tribal governments to ensure this goal is met. In recent years, the stronger level of coordination and collaboration between DOT Districts 5 and 6 and the NWRTPO and its participating member governments is notable and appreciated.

### Key Priorities Raised in Working Group

- Regional Input also identified the goal of operating with transparency and accountability as a regional concern, based on confusion and lack of communication during previous NMDOT projects.

- Address the lack of inter-jurisdictional collaboration (between federal, state, local, and tribal entities) to the extent possible in all decisions, including planning, project readiness requirements, data collection, prioritization, and funding decisions. It should be noted that cross-jurisdictional collaboration has improved significantly in the transportation arena in recent years including tribal, municipal, and county governments within San Juan, Cibola and McKinley Counties, along with the NMDOT. Data sharing still needs some work around cross-jurisdictional agreements.
- Continue existing and create new partnerships with transportation stakeholders.
- Ensure the cross-jurisdictional availability and user-friendliness of good transportation-related data for decision-making.
- Data gaps exist in Northwest NM for complex reasons, incremental progress should be made in collection, management, and sharing of data. Until this occurs funding decisions should include qualitative data, testimonials, and locally driven inputs.
- Remove barriers or increase flexibility with match requirements for funding opportunities. Providing large local matches can be very difficult for rural and tribal communities.

### **Strategy 1.1: Employee Excellence and Customer Service**

As administrator of the Northwest RTPO, the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments embraces the commitment to “moving the region forward” by cultivating employee excellence and delivering outstanding customer service in leading and supporting the implementation of this Regional Transportation Plan. The COG will work to strengthen its ability to deliver on the actions identified in the New Mexico Transportation Plan (NMTP) and Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) by recruiting, rewarding, and retaining outstanding, customer-focused employees; actively promoting their health and wellbeing; investing in their professional development; and entrusting them with the tools and responsibilities to do their jobs well.

#### Action Items

- Produce an enhanced annual report that highlights: (1) how the RTP is being implemented (including performance measures), (2) linkages to other planning processes including NMTP, other RTPs, CEDS, tribal and local plans; and (3) projects completed during the year and how they support the RTP and NMTP goals and compliance with the NWRTPD Annual Work Program.
- Provide hands-on communication training on engagement for customers, stakeholders, and partners.
- Train employees to understand the importance of having accurate, timely, consistent, uniform, and complete data.
- Expand use of technology to communicate important messages about service delivery, transportation information, and performance.
- Improve the NWNMCOG and Statewide RTPO website and make it user-friendly for customers, including their ability to locate and download project status, plans, documents, and data.



- Develop performance-based plans for employees that link to the RTP and the Policy Procedures Manual.
- Develop programs to actively promote employee health and well-being.
- Conduct annual NWRTPO Member satisfaction surveys. [Performance Measures](#)
- NWRTPO Annual Performance & Expenditure Report – aligned with Planning Procedures Manual deadlines of each year.
- Number of training opportunities provided to RTPO staff and members.
- Performance based on annual Quality Assurance Review by RTPO Liaison.
- Employee turnover rate in the RTPO Program.
- NWRTPO Member rating in annual customer satisfaction surveys

### **Strategy 1.2: Partnerships and Coordination**

As administrator of the Northwest RTPO, the Northwest COG embraces its responsibility to coordinate trusting and working partnerships between federal, state, regional, tribal, local and other entities to implement projects and programs. The COG will build trust and leverage external support for transportation initiatives by coordinating early, frequently, and productively with federal, state, regional, tribal, local, and other agencies to plan, fund, and implement projects and programs.

#### Action Items

- Continue to staff and enhance the RTPO Committee as an interactive forum that encourages collaboration and communication. Continuous improvement of RTPO meetings:
  - Inclusion of policy officials and other stakeholders (health, economic development, etc.); from reporting and presentations to dialogues and discussions to developing solutions to regional and local issues and bottlenecks (e.g. lighting agreements, ROW requirements, etc.)
  - Real-time project tracking and status updates with Panoramic software. **This has declined in recent years; need to explore whether this platform could continue to serve statewide RTPO's to evaluate project progress.**
- Participate with NMDOT's MPO/RTPO Coordination Committee (MRCC), Freight Advisory Committee (RAC), Strategic Highway Safety Plan Working Groups, and Interagency Coordinating Committee (ICC), which provide venues for addressing coordination needs during plan implementation and preparing for future coordination of plan updates. **NWRTPO participates as / when invited from NMDOT.**

- Bring back information and possibly expand our RTPO Committee Member to become a Regional ICC to add value for our members and increase partnerships.
- Our RTPO Annual Work Program defines milestones, working groups, and other initiatives (e.g., County Road Forum) that support our overall goal for inter-jurisdictional collaboration.
- Coordinate with economic development organizations, schools, and county health councils as appropriate in relation to regional projects and plans.
- Continue to build partnership with Farmington MPO and other RTPOs.
- Regular orientation and tours of NMDOT, District 5 and District 6 offices, to orient NWNMCOG to key staff and their roles.

### Performance Measures

- Number of RTPO Committee non-member participants and number of new participants.
- Number of NMTP Implementation Committee meetings attended by RTPO staff and stakeholders from our region.

### **Strategy 1.3: Financial Stewardship**

The Northwest RTPO supports and will partner with NMDOT to improve financial accountability, minimize financial risks and manage NMDOT and NWRTPO in a cost effective and cost-efficient manner.

### Action Items

- Develop, communicate, and manage NWRTPO annual work program and budget based on the relationship between program funding levels and expected program results in order to manage cost-efficient and effective budget appropriations.
- Take corrective action to resolve external audit findings; monitor activities and processes to ensure implementation. **The NWNMCOG annual audit (which includes the NWRTPO) has improved in recent years with generally no serious findings.**

### Performance Measures

- Number of Budget Amendments compared year over year.
- Number of annual external financial audit findings.
- A percentage of previous year's financial audit findings resolved. **Previous year findings resolved.**

## Strategy 1.4: Access to Integrated, High Quality Data and Information

The Northwest RTPO supports and will partner with NMDOT to provide access to integrated, high-quality data and information. Working with NMDOT, NWRTPO aims to enhance internal and external (stakeholder and public) access to integrated spatial and non-spatial data to improve data quality and the ability of NMDOT employees and stakeholders to evaluate the effectiveness of projects and programs.

### Action Items

- Bringing together tribal, state, and local entities to discuss complexities of data gathering and data sharing across jurisdictions as highlighted by the 2015 New Mexico Strategic Highway Safety Plan Summit.
- Include local and tribal participation. Support NMDOT's action to develop a data business plan that establishes key data items and standards, roles for NMDOT and partners (including the Department of Information Technology), and governing principles for collection, management, and sharing that can be used by all agencies.
- Support NMDOT in the development of a self-service data portal for NMDOT employees and RTPO/MPO Planners, and the public to ease access to and management of NMDOT data.

### Performance Measures

- Facilitating and co-hosting an annual transportation data symposium

## Strategy 1.5: Climate Change

The Northwest RTPO supports and will partner with NMDOT to advance Climate Change mitigation in line with Executive Order #2019-003 "Advancing Climate Change and Energy Waste Prevention including the Climate Change Task Force and its New Mexico Climate Strategy. Working with NMDOT, NWRTPO aims to educate and increase adoption of climate change measures through its membership and commits to leading by example with its own policies, procedures, and investments. While the specific implementation strategy is contained in Strategy 5.3, this section confirms that the RTPO staff will review transportation plans, programs, projects, and investments with an overarching lens of how to best limit climate change impacts and best advance cross-cutting strategies.

### Action Items

- Bringing together tribal, state, and local entities to discuss climate change actions that they are engaged in already or plan to implement to provide examples and if possible statistics to NMDOT.
- Continued implementation by RTPO staff in a recycling program and an agricultural education project with native growing practices.

- Continued implementation of virtual meeting technologies to reduce the RTPO's vehicle miles traveled (VMT) even after COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.
- Ask questions related to Climate Change on transportation applications, e.g. PFF consultations and transit applications.

### Performance Measures

- Provide an annual presentation on the State's Climate Change Plan at a RTPO meeting.
- Host and participate virtually in RTPO meetings, training, and events.





## Goal 2: Safety

Safety is a serious concern on New Mexico's roadways, one death is too many. It is critical to work toward making travel as safe as possible for all users of the state's transportation system. NWRTPO and NMDOT are working to reduce collision-related fatalities and serious injuries for all modes through data driven, innovative, and proactive processes.

### Key Priorities Raised in Regional Input

- Safety improvements on I-40 for increased truck traffic, especially in the Continental Divide area.
- Enforcement of freight and trucking safety regulations, including speed and load size;
  - Provide emergency shoulders on State Highways in high traffic or commercial areas, where slower traffic is turning and heavy traffic is passing through, and where enforcement agencies can perform safe traffic and inspection stops.
  - Provide proper turning lanes for visitors and site-seers near attractions and destinations.
  - Need to work with companies on a "share the road" philosophy especially on State Highways that are major tourist and visitor gateways. Tourists or local visitors that feel unsafe will seldom return.
  - Policy: deter companies from paying drivers by the load, but rather on an hourly wage as to dis-incentivize speeding.
- Improve or remove all at-grade railroad crossings and improve safety for all modes across railroad lines.
- Data gaps exist in Northwest NM for complex reasons, incremental progress should be made in collection, management, and sharing of data. Until this occurs, funding decisions and evaluation criteria should include qualitative data, testimonials, and locally driven inputs. **Staff have commenced a data file – informing on and collecting data from state and federal sources.**
- The development of and incorporation of Tribal Highway Safety Plans into RTP and NM Highway Safety Plan.
- Fencing concerns and signage for wildlife crossing and livestock areas.

- Create multiple transportation options to healthcare facilities, including strategic rural heli-pads.
- Improve safety of multimodal users.
- Utilize context sensitive plans/policies that are flexible for communities.
- Prioritizing State Highways for comprehensive corridor studies and road safety audits, especially along corridors that have economic development interest or opportunities and heavy truck traffic. Also in communities that voice concerns about balance of use, use conflicts, and/or major safety concerns.

## **Strategy 2.1: Data Driven Process – Reduce fatalities and serious injuries through data-driven, innovative, and proactive processes that include examination of safety hot spots and systemic safety concerns.**

### Action Items

- NWRTPD will support NMDOT in the following actions and collaborate at the regional and local levels:
- Implement the New Mexico Strategic Highway Safety Plan, Tribal safety plans, and regional safety plans by identifying countermeasures to reduce crashes when maintaining, upgrading, or reconstructing infrastructure and evaluating the effectiveness of safety investments.
- Include safety of all modes as a prioritization factor to rank all types of projects prior to incorporation into the RTIPR and then the STIP.
- Improve safety data quality (e.g., working with law enforcement to collect accurate location information) and timeliness.
- Emphasize safety for the most vulnerable system users (e.g., older citizens, children, pedestrians, and bicyclists).
- Identify the top safety risks in the state and conduct detailed systemic safety planning efforts, including evaluating potential strategies.
- Conduct Road Safety Audits (RSA) at both the state and regional levels to identify road safety deficiencies and risk characteristics and implement countermeasures over time.
- Adopt transportation safety policies related to Complete Streets, pedestrian design, and access management.
- Work with Tribal partners to ensure that accurate data are available to support safety planning on Tribal lands.

### Local and Tribal Communities

- Work to improve or develop data collection and sharing protocols that lead to a system to provide data and information to NMDOT and other sources that base decisions on funding.
- Recently funded RSA's in the NWRTPO region include: NM118 – Gallup area, NM602 south of Gallup for Chapter road intersections, NM53 – Zuni thru Ramah area, and most recently US491 for Chapter and other major road intersections north of Gallup for Twin Lakes, Mexican Springs, and Tohatchi Chapters.
- Create projects utilizing safety data.
- Integrate safety planning for all users into project planning.

### Performance Measures

- Total number of traffic fatalities.
- Total traffic fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (statewide, rural, and urban).
- Total number of serious injuries resulting from traffic incidents.
- Serious injuries and serious injuries per 100 million VMT (statewide, rural, and urban).



- Pedestrian fatalities and serious injuries per 100,000 population (statewide, rural, and urban)<sup>5</sup>.
- Bicyclist fatalities per 100,000 population (statewide, rural, and urban)<sup>6</sup>.
- Number of Road Safety Audits (RSA's) funded in NWRTPO region.
- Number of RSA's completed in the NWRTPO region.
- Number of Countermeasures implemented related to RSA's.
- Inform the NWRTPO Committee members of the "Systemic Safety Process" used by NMDOT to identify and prioritize multimodal safety improvements used in combination with transportation safety policies and safety programs currently being used.

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<sup>5</sup> From NMDOT NMTP \* Note: Pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities include those typically considered in the FARS reporting process (i.e., those involving motor vehicles on public roadways). NMDOT will also strive to reduce and measure fatalities (and injuries) that either do not involve motor vehicles (e.g., bicycle / pedestrian collisions) and/or do not occur in the motorized space of roadways (e.g., pedestrian injuries or fatalities on sidewalks or multi-use trails).

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.





## Goal 3: Asset Management

With limited funding available, maintaining existing infrastructure and services is crucial to a successful transportation system. While the regional working group did not identify key issues or strategies related to this goal, it will still be a critical component to future planning efforts. The strategies and actions outlined with Goal 3 are intended to be consistent with the NMTP.

### Key Priorities Raised in Regional Input

- Maintain existing infrastructure.
- Improve quality and functionality of roadways by improving infrastructure and implementing safety improvements for all modes of transportation.
- Improve, maintain and develop rail infrastructure for a growing economic base
- Improve critical rural infrastructure including school bus routes to all-weather roads over time.
- Replacement or improvement of existing bridges to allow weight limits for emergency vehicles and school buses.
- Sustainable funding and resources for rural road and transportation projects.

### Strategy 3.1: Asset Management

The Northwest RTPO embraces the philosophy to develop and implement a “preservation-first” asset management strategy to ensure that NMDOT will maintain all existing and future elements of the state’s multimodal transportation system in a state of good repair. [Action Items](#)

## NMDOT

- Create and maintain a comprehensive inventory and Geographic Information System (GIS) database of all assets, starting with pavement and bridge, including historic condition information, assets needing replacement, and current and projected future use.
- Implement Transportation Asset Management Plan (TAMP) that identifies appropriate treatments (maintenance, preservation, rehabilitation, reconstruction) to ensure that all NMDOT assets are brought to and remain in a state of good repair.
- Incorporate life-cycle cost considerations when modeling future asset condition and selecting maintenance activities and construction projects (preservation, rehabilitation, reconstruction).
- Define key work activities (e.g., maintenance, rehabilitation, reconstruction), document their typical unit costs, and detail their ideal timing and sequencing.
- Adapt information from TAMP for use by communities and RTPOs/MPOs.
- Prioritize maintenance and operations before adding new capacity.

## NWRTPO

- Assist in adapting information from TAMP for NWRTPO region.
- Provide NWRTPO staff and member training on transportation asset management, techniques, and technologies, including life cycle cost analysis training for ongoing maintenance.

## Local and Tribal Communities

- Adapt findings of asset management plan for local communities.
- Prioritize maintenance and operations before adding new capacity.
- Prioritize projects based on findings of TAMP.

## Strategy 3.2: Support Investment Decisions Based on Life-Cycle Cost

The Northwest RTPO supports the NMDOT proposed application of life-cycle cost analysis techniques (consistent with best national practices) as one of several factors for evaluating and prioritizing capacity expansion activities.

### Action Items

#### **NMDOT**

- Utilize life-cycle cost analysis in project development.
- Identify data needs and evaluation tools to accurately estimate life-cycle costs of all project types (preservation, rehabilitation, reconstruction, capacity expansion).
- Implement existing training (or develop new training) for NMDOT and partner agency staff (MPOs, RTPOs, local agencies) on life-cycle cost analysis.

#### **NWRTPO**

- Build the skill levels needed to conduct life-cycle cost analyses.
- Utilize life-cycle cost analysis in project development.
- Provide assistance to local governments in project development through data acquisition and evaluation.

#### **Local and Tribal Communities**

- Build capacity needed to conduct life-cycle cost analyses.
- Utilize life-cycle cost analysis in project development.

### **Strategy 3.3: Priority Tiers and Minimum Standards**

With limited funding available, the Northwest RTPO understands NMDOT's strategy to prioritize investment of funds by "tier" to achieve minimum standards for design, maintenance, and efficient operations.

### Action Items

#### **NMDOT**

- Integrate tiered performance evaluation criteria for all modes into the STIP project prioritization process.
- Develop asset condition performance targets for the tiers of all modes (e.g., maintain some tiers of roads as good, some as fair).

## NWRTPO

- Provide regional and local perspective to NMDOT as it develops its criteria.
- Over time, work to develop criteria for Tier 4 for prioritization of all other roads and modes.
- Develop and work with communities on alternative financing strategies for projects that do not meet tiered criteria.

## Local and Tribal Communities

- Provide tribal and local perspective to NMDOT as it develops its criteria.

## Strategy 3.4: Address Legacy Challenges<sup>7</sup>

With limited funding available, the Northwest RTPO understands NMDOT's strategy to ensure that NMDOT can affordably meet the condition standards set for each roadway tier by right sizing the State-owned network to provide the needed capacity to support state connectivity standards.

### Action Items

#### NMDOT

- Identify opportunities to better support local community needs by capacity-building and shifting responsibility for roadway maintenance and management to local agencies.
- Use corridor tiers and relevant data to prioritize future investment.
- Evaluate integrity and connectivity of the state highway system to ensure support for primary NMDOT objectives.
- Develop criteria to evaluate adaptive re-use proposals for NMDOT assets.

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<sup>7</sup> Legacy Challenges refer to the large constellation of issues associated with the trend toward “disinvestment” in roadway and other transportation infrastructure that has come about as a result of the inability (or, is it unwillingness?) on the part of elected officials to provide sufficient funds to maintain current assets in a state of good repair.

## NWRTPO

- To facilitate conversations and discussions about shifting state responsibility to local entities and community concerns about right-sizing state owned facilities and roadways, especially with regards to context and culturally sensitive solutions.

## Local and Tribal Communities

- Provide tribal and local input and perspective to NMDOT as it shifts responsibilities and right-sizes state assets in communities.

## Performance Measures

- Percent of pavement in good/fair/poor condition by tier
  - Percent of bridges in good/fair/poor condition by tier
  - Percent of transit assets in state of good repair by mode (bus, rail)
  - Number of pavement miles preserved by tier<sup>SEP</sup>
  - Percent of airport runways rated “good”
  - Total maintenance expenditures and maintenance cost per capita.
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## Goal 4: Mobility and Accessibility

Transportation is critical to New Mexico's prosperity. It allows people to get to work, students to travel to school, goods to reach businesses, and visitors and residents to access recreational opportunities and attractions. Helping to ensure the future prosperity of New Mexico requires implementing programs and projects that make efficient use of resources, target new capacity where it can provide the greatest benefit, and complement and support efforts by regional, local, and Tribal partners throughout the state to improve economic and social opportunities in their communities. **Key Priorities Raised in Regional Input**

- Improve public transportation to connect residents to jobs and healthcare, tourists to destinations.
- Improve school bus routes that are critical rural connectors.
- Invest in rail and freight infrastructure that catalyzes economic development.
- Integrate technology into transportation/transit programs and projects.
- Improve public transit services and regional connectivity including route evaluation, schedule, and locations.
- Create a Regional transit alliance or District to regionalize investments and coordination.
- Coordinate with municipal, county, and tribal governments on land use and connectivity
- Coordinate with other agencies and senior centers for the benefit and coordination of the aging population.
- Improve accessibility and ensure ADA compliance.
- Promote connectivity between all modes of transportation.
- Improve roadways for tourists including turnouts or pullouts, interpretative signage, and improved directional signage in rural areas.
- Improve and enhance active and multimodal transportation modes (transit/bicycle/pedestrians) to address health and safety.
- Improve transit connectivity between Albuquerque and the rural areas; Farmington and Colorado communities
- Context sensitive plans/policies that are flexible for communities

- State Highways: need to provide a balance between mobility, safety, and local community culture and activities.
  - Maintaining and enhancing State corridors – It is essential to maintain what we have in light of decreasing state and federal budgets. Small but effective enhancements can go a long way to promote tourism, safety, and quality of life along State Highways.
  - Balancing Interests and Uses – Example Highway 53, especially in the frontier communities of El Morro, Ramah Village, San Rafael, and Zuni. Large truck traffic, overweight loads, and speeding are major concerns for safety, encouraging active transportation modes (walking and bicycling), protecting agriculture and vulnerable system users, and long-term maintenance of the highway.
  - MainStreet – For many of New Mexico’s small and frontier communities, their MainStreet is a state highway. Need interactive dialogue and guidance with NMDOT and MainStreet program on how to promote small business development, promote HUD-DOT-EPA Livable Community principles, and create walkable communities.
  - Bicycling Facilities – State highways need appropriate and safe shoulders to accommodate users, bicycle tours, and travelers, especially on desired routes including State Scenic Byways and especially along Highway 53 where several accidents have occurred.
- **Local and Rural Connectors.** Better coordination between local, state, tribal, and federal jurisdictions to maintain and improve roads in Checkerboard areas, an example raised by Pueblo of Laguna is NM124. There are so many excuses not to partner and improve these roads that are main rural connectors to all services, including schools, commercial and employment centers, health services, etc. Need to develop and market models of collaboration, pilot projects, and best practices, especially in rural areas.
- **Public Transportation:**
  - Optimize opportunities in northwest New Mexico corridors, both infrastructure and interconnections.
  - Better integration of public transportation and technology (i.e. Trip Planner). This recommendation also includes better marketing to increase ridership.
  - Increased transit ridership will come from consistency in schedules. ○ Maximize east/west corridor linkages to the north/south corridors.
  - Increase the availability of public transportation in smaller communities. There is an economy of scale issue from a public transportation management perspective.
  - Need to know what is driving public transportation ridership.
  - Need a policy to ensure public participation in public transportation route changes made. This is an important environmental justice issue.

## Strategy 4.1: Operations and Demand Management First

NWRTPO agrees that NMDOT must invest efficiently and strategically in state transportation systems to achieve statewide and community economic and quality of life goals. With limited funding available, the Northwest RTPO understands NMDOT’s strategy that as the default approach to addressing congestion, proactively implement all reasonable operations and demand management strategies before committing scarce capital funds to expand capacity.

### Action Items

#### NMDOT

- Develop a strategic plan with stakeholder input to identify and coordinate Traffic Demand Management (TDM) activities in New Mexico, including real-time traveler information and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS).
- Work cooperatively with planning partners (particularly MPOs and RTPOs) to identify, coordinate, and implement Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSM&O) strategies where appropriate.
- Provide training to NMDOT, MPO, and RTPO staff on TDM and TSM&O to help ensure successful implementation.
- Align the information provided via the “NMRoads” website with the TDM Strategic Plan and TSM&O strategies to ensure that transportation system users have access to appropriate, timely, high quality, and user-friendly information on road conditions, public transit schedules, rest area parking information, etc.
- Work collaboratively with partners (e.g., US Forest Service, New Mexico Tourism Department, RTPOs, Tribes, transit agencies, trucking companies, etc.) to identify information needs and provide on-going feedback on the types and quality of information provided on NMRoads and other NMDOT information sources.
- Develop a check list that links the database of TDM strategies to corridor planning and project development. Strategies would be categorized as required, advisory, or not relevant for a given corridor type.
- Consider some form of training to help RTPO staff and members understand our role and responsibilities around “Transportation Systems Management and Operations” and whether this impacts upon RTPO staff’s work program.

#### NWRTPO

- Support the NMDOT – where and as appropriate for NMDOT’s implementation of TSM&O, ITS, and TDM strategies where appropriate for NWRTPO region. As needed, request training for TSM&O, ITS, and TDM strategies and what role RTPO staff and members play; and whether this only relates to state corridors, or any corridor which is a major collector or higher in functional classification?

- As needed or appropriate seek training for NWRTPO staff and members on TDM, ITS and TSM&O activities and strategies when and as these strategies may apply to areas within our region where collaborative support and participation with the NMDOT is appropriate.
- Support transit stakeholders in their pursuit of establishing a Regional Transit Alliance and/or Regional Transit District (RTD).
- Participate when needed or as appropriate in establishing “Capacity Expansion Evaluation Criteria” for determining when all demand management strategies have been exhausted and under these circumstances, a method for prioritizing new transportation capacity investments thru the RTIPR and for STIP consideration – based on transportation infrastructure needs supporting public access, private and freight transportation efficiency or effectiveness, relevant safety and regional cross-jurisdictional priorities.

#### **Local and Tribal Communities**

- Provide tribal and local input and perspective to NMDOT on use and implementation of TSM&O, ITS, and TDM strategies.

### **Strategy 4.2: Strategic Investment in Key Corridors**

The Northwest RTPO supports the NMDOT goal of prioritizing projects, programs, and activities that help minimize transportation infrastructure and service costs through coordination of transportation and land use planning (including site selection for public facilities).

#### Action Items

##### **NMDOT**

- Establish criteria and thresholds for establishing tiers for modes not already established in the NMTP (e.g., public transportation, bicycle, pedestrian, etc.).
- Invest in data and tools to help NMDOT and its planning partners to better understand travel patterns and travel mode choices for all segments of New Mexico’s population of residents and visitors.
- Establish “Capacity Expansion Evaluation Criteria” for determining when all feasible operational and system demand management strategies have been exhausted and, if so, for prioritizing roadway capacity investments in the STIP.
- Refine and officially designate a priority truck network based on a prioritization approach that reflects patterns of goods movement, intermodal connections, and US-Mexico border crossing volumes.
- Participate in the Western Connected Freight Corridor Coalition to address permitting and connected vehicle applications.

- Provide support to local partners to identify opportunities to establish RTDs for intercity and regional transit services.
- Continue to work with local agencies to coordinate schedules and make web-based transit information more accessible, including through the NMRoads website.
- Develop a state bicycle, pedestrian, equestrian (BPE) plan to refine the strategies set forth in the NMTP and establish priorities for facility development.
- Use routine resurfacing projects as an opportunity to improve or maintain bicycle facilities and connectivity along identified corridors.
- Adopt state-of-the-art, ADA-compliant design standards for sidewalks, curb ramps, crosswalks, and other pedestrian elements that meet all of the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Develop design guidance (including model plan and profile views for streets) to address pedestrian needs along NMDOT facilities in local communities.
- Promote all facets of aviation including educational and career opportunities, historic aviation corridors and aviation tourism, and local recreation and other connections at smaller airports.
- Support investment in NextGen aviation technologies to increase system efficiency and safety.
- Evaluate zoning standards and opportunities to incentivize compatible development opportunities near and around airports.

#### **NWRTPD**

- Provide regional and local perspective to NMDOT as it develops its modal tiered criteria.
- Develop and work with communities on alternative financing strategies for projects that do not meet tiered criteria.
- Support transit stakeholders in their pursuit of establishing a Regional Transit Alliance and/or Regional Transit District (RTD).
- Participation in the development of a State BPE plan, and consideration toward Title VI and ADA compliance when designing pedestrian and bicycle accommodations where state and local transportation system infrastructure interface.
- Participation in the implementation of several sub-regional plans, such as the Prewitt/Milan Transportation Master Plan.
- Collaborate on transportation planning and development needs to spearhead investments in Opportunity Zones in Northwest New Mexico.
- **Consider, research and participate in planning around autonomous vehicles, and appropriate corridor infrastructure to accommodate safely.**



### Local and Tribal Communities

- Provide tribal and local perspective to NMDOT as it develops its modal tiered criteria.
- Financing plans to support increased and integrated transit services.
- Participation in the development and implementation of a State BPE plan with regards to access and connectivity.

## Strategy 4.3: Land Use-Transportation Coordination

NWRTPO supports NMDOT's objective to make efficient use of both transportation and non-transportation resources to reduce costs and improve mobility of residents and visitors. With limited funding available, the Northwest RTPO understands NMDOT's strategy to prioritize projects, programs, and activities that help minimize transportation infrastructure and service costs through coordination of transportation and land use planning (including site selection for public facilities).

### Action Items

#### NMDOT

- Work with the Interagency Coordinating Committee, State of New Mexico General Services Administration, health councils, and other agencies to coordinate the planning and siting of public facilities (e.g., senior centers, libraries, hospitals, schools, etc.) and other key travel destinations to reduce transportation costs, improve safety, and enhance user experience.
- Develop guidance to help local communities adopt location-efficient and transit-supportive development and site planning ordinances.
- In collaboration with tribes and other agencies, refine NMDOT access control guidance for existing and new facilities to ensure that state roads can serve appropriate functions.
- For each roadway tier, establish standards that must be achieved for adding capacity to NMDOT facilities (new lanes, interchanges, intersections, signalization, turn lanes, etc.) in response to new development, regardless of developer contributions.

#### NWRTPO

- Educate and advise local governments about land use and transportation planning.
- Request to provide comments (coordination) on local government decisions affecting land use and transportation planning.

- Provide technical assistance, guidance and recommendations to local governments conducting local planning efforts and/or projects to locate community facilities (like schools) in locations that utilize existing infrastructure.

#### **Local and Tribal Communities**

- Prioritize projects that incorporate land use and transportation planning (For example, utilize existing infrastructure and review Sustainable Communities livability principles).

### **Strategy 4.4: Changing Demographics**

The Northwest RTPO applauds NMDOT's objective to maintain a transportation system that allows mobility and access for all New Mexicans, regardless of age or ability, and its strategy to align the transportation system to be responsive to changing demographic trends. [\*Action\*](#)

#### Items

##### **NMDOT**

- Use the Coordinated Transit Service Plan development process to:
  - Identify travel needs for older adult residents and visitors.
  - Identify gaps in transit service, especially focused on access to healthcare and services.
- Work with the New Mexico Department of Aging and Long-Term Services and other partners to identify transportation safety features needed to better support an older traveling population.

##### **NWRTPD**

- Foster a partnership with New Mexico and Navajo Nation Area Agencies on Aging.

#### **Local and Tribal Communities**

- Involve aging populations in transportation project planning.

#### Performance Measures

- Transit Provider annual ridership
- Household transportation costs as a percentage of median household income

- Other: Work with NMDOT to develop measures that can be rolled up from the local level to the regional and then to NMDOT such as:
  - Completion of Transportation Master Plans in our region
  - Investment in transportation projects identified in these plans
  - Number of certified rail-served industrial parks



## Goal 5: Program Delivery

Respect NM Cultures, Environment, History, Health and Quality of Life

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New Mexico is a diverse and beautiful state with a wide variety of cultures, languages, terrains, and beliefs. As an agency representing this state, the NMDOT remains committed to treating all New Mexicans with respect. This goal is shared by the NWRTPO and its members.

## Key Priorities Raised in Regional Input

- Maintaining quality of life for local residents (i.e. impacts on residents from industry driving up costs of water).
- Promote New Mexico MainStreets.
- Support Byways.
- Promote access and connections to trails system.
- Developing cleaner energy resources within the region
- Rural and urban equity: rural communities need more representation in the process as well as resources and capacity to support projects.
- Expanding public/private partnerships.
- Context sensitive plans/policies that are flexible for communities.
- Bring awareness to and support existing Scenic Byways.
- Improve and expand recreational trails.

## Strategy 5.1: Context Sensitive Solutions

NWRTPD supports NMDOT's strategy when developing projects and programs to find a "best fit" transportation solution for the local and regional context that meets the expectations of both NMDOT and community stakeholders.

### Action Items

#### **NMDOT**

- In collaboration with tribes, local communities, and other agencies, develop criteria and checklists for NMDOT project types to ensure successful implementation of CSS principles.
- Evaluate the success of past projects in meeting NMDOT's CSS goals.
- Provide training for NMDOT, regional, and local staff on Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS).
- Refine the NMDOT public engagement process as expressed in the NMDOT Location Studies Procedures.

- Identify opportunities to implement road diets where appropriate and desired by local communities, and where local plans exist to support their function.
- Identify process improvements to ensure that Tribal entities participate from the beginning of any project that takes place on Tribal lands.

#### **NWRTPO**

- Participate in the development of NMDOT's criteria and checklists for CSS principles.
- Provide NWRTPO staff and member training on CSS.

#### **Local and Tribal Communities**

- Provide tribal and local input and perspective to NMDOT in the development of NMDOT's criteria and checklists for CSS principles.

### **Strategy 5.2: Require and Respect Local and Tribal Plans**

The Northwest RTPO supports NMDOT's strategy to target funds to support communities that develop local transportation plans that are consistent with the NMTP and that demonstrate the financial and administrative capacity to implement them successfully. [Action Items](#)

#### **NMDOT**

- Provide guidance to local communities to develop performance-based transportation plans that are both consistent with the NMTP (and NMTP performance measures) and feasible to implement.
- Work with RTPOs to develop procedures for NMDOT to assist local governments to develop performance-based transportation plans and successfully fund and implement projects that are compatible with the cultural landscape.
- Develop and adopt design standards for local communities that respond to context; provide high-quality, but cost-efficient options; and comply with all relevant design guidelines.

#### **NWRTPO**

- Work with NMDOT to develop procedures to assist local governments to develop performance-based transportation plans and successfully fund and implement projects that are compatible with the cultural landscape.

#### **Local and Tribal Communities**

- Provide tribal and local perspective to NMDOT on this strategy section.



## Strategy 5.3: Climate Change and Environmentally Friendly Practices

NWRTPO supports NMDOT's objective to minimize or avoid negative impacts of facility development and operations on the natural environment, where possible; and provide guidance to RTPO's around recommended strategies to address climate change in a manner that helps preserve transportation infrastructure for the long term.

### Action Items

#### **NMDOT**

- As the NMDOT vehicle fleet is replaced, procure more fuel-efficient vehicles and adopt training and maintenance practices that help to minimize emissions and fuel costs.
- Implement FHWA's INVEST rating system for highway projects and the LEED standards for buildings or develop a New Mexico-specific rating system for sustainability and context-sensitivity.
- Conduct early evaluations of sensitive lands for major projects.
- Cooperate with New Mexico Game & Fish and tribal wildlife programs to reduce vehicle/wildlife collisions.
- Assure that development and expansion does not impact New Mexico wet lands, related to environmental policies for these rare areas supporting wild life and the New Mexico natural environment.

#### **NWRTPO**

- Invite presenters to inform the RTPO about State goals, strategies, and actions that can be supported by the region and its entities.
- NWRTPO will procure more fuel-efficient vehicles.
- NWRTPO staff will encourage for opportunities to host virtual meetings and promote webinars for trainings.
- Work with NMDOT for a transportation maintenance and management focus that incorporates climate change consideration into all decisions around infrastructure development or maintenance.
- Encourage citizens, businesses, local governments and agencies to invest in landscaping to plant environmentally resilient trees, shrubs, grass and plants all of which absorb carbon emissions.

#### **Local and Tribal Communities**

- Adopt their own climate mitigation strategies and commitments and report progress at the RTPO and to the State.

## Strategy 5.4: Recreation and Tourism

The Northwest RTPO supports NMDOT’s objective to work proactively with public and private-sector partners to advance state, regional, and Tribal tourism and recreational goals while minimizing adverse impacts to cultural resources.

### Action Items

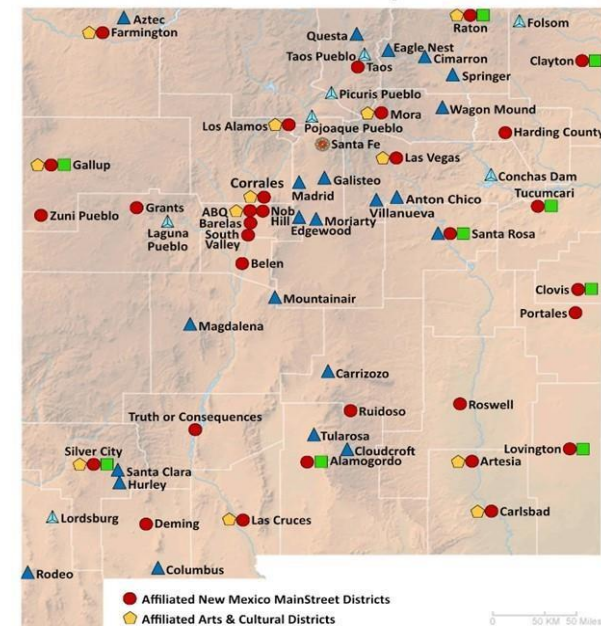
#### NMDOT:

- Work with New Mexico Department of Economic Development, Tribal governments and economic development organizations, Councils of Government, and other partners to define 'cultural corridors,' collect more data on tourist visitation patterns, improve travel routes to public lands destinations, and promote other transportation-oriented tourism opportunities to improve the quality of the visitor travel experience in New Mexico.
- Support other state agencies (Tourism, Economic Development, Historic Preservation, etc.) to achieve the goals of New Mexico MainStreet, the state authorized Arts and Cultural Districts, and other programs through context sensitive design and management of NMDOT’s multimodal transportation assets.
- Help state, Tribal, and federal land management agencies preserve and protect their land and resources through context-sensitive design and management of NMDOT’s multimodal transportation assets.
- Partner with state and federal agencies to identify transportation projects that align with the preservation and development of New Mexico’s national historic trails - important assets of the state's heritage, economic development, tourism, quality of life, and future transportation network.

#### NWRTPO

- Promote and foster business growth along our Scenic Byways, MainStreet corridors, and support with appropriate transportation infrastructure.

New Mexico MainStreet Network Map



**NEW MEXICO MAINSTREET**  
 ENGAGE PEOPLE • REBUILD PLACES • REVITALIZE ECONOMIES

New Mexico MainStreet  
 Engage People • Rebuild Places • Revitalize Economies  
[www.nmmainstreet.org](http://www.nmmainstreet.org)  
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[info@nmmainstreet.org](mailto:info@nmmainstreet.org)  
 Updated May 2020

- Support local Mainstreet and Arts & Cultural Districts with appropriate context sensitive transportation infrastructure.
- Develop a recreation trails planning and mapping function.

#### **Local and Tribal Communities**

- The local or tribal entity itself should determine its own approach to recreation and tourism based on community context, culture, and control.

#### Performance Measures

- Tourism/Visitor numbers
- Number of communities with recently updated comprehensive plans or other local plans
- Investment in recreational projects and number of National Recreational Trails designations □ Trail Users

### **Strategy 5.5: Designing Healthier Communities for Healthier New Mexicans**

The Northwest RTPO believes that active living by design leads to healthy communities. Health professionals should be included in public participation and input processes across all transportation projects and modes of travel. Based on input and projects submitted in the recent “Call for Transportation Projects”, many of the communities in the Northwest region are prioritizing walkable communities, ADA compliance studies, community trail systems, and recreational trails for safe and local opportunities to improve fitness. [Action Items](#)

#### **NMDOT**

- Health is an integrated activity throughout the New Mexico 2045 Plan.

#### **NWRTPD**

- Develop a community trails planning and mapping function within the RTPO, partnering with National Parks Service-Rivers, Trails, and Conservation program, private consultants, and community experts to encourage community consensus, trails planning, and mapping to assist them in developing master trails plans.
- Beyond the Zuni Mountain and Mt. Taylor recreational trails, continue support and collaboration with the National Parks and National Forest Service for exercise and recreational opportunities – including trails in the national forests and parks, and fostering environmental stewardship thru adequate facilities, safety and asset management, resource protection and strategic investment for responsible recreational multi-modal transportation opportunities within our national parks and forests. Transportation Infrastructure is essential for our local, regional and out of state citizens, visitors and tourists to experience the New Mexico outdoors to the fullest capacity. (A. Bality)

- Provide training and assist communities in developing systems to track use and impact of these investments, utilizing Park Rx, Prescription Trails Program, and the Parks, Trails, and Health Workbook<sup>8</sup>, put out by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and NPS.

#### **Local and Tribal Communities**

- The local or tribal entities continue to interact health into transportation planning and encourage best practices in terms of active transportation and recreational projects and measuring impact.

#### **Performance Measures**

- Investment in active transportation and recreational projects.
- Trail Users
- Assess the multi-modal economic impact around recreational transportation

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<sup>8</sup> Parks, Trails, and Health Workbook: [https://www.nps.gov/public\\_health/hp/hphp/press/Parks\\_Trails\\_and\\_Health\\_Workbook\\_508\\_Accessible\\_PDF.pdf](https://www.nps.gov/public_health/hp/hphp/press/Parks_Trails_and_Health_Workbook_508_Accessible_PDF.pdf)  
**New Mexico Northwest Regional Transportation Plan**

# Park Rx

Ask your doctor for a park prescription today! [www.ParkRx.org](http://www.ParkRx.org)

Obesity costs the U.S. **\$190 billion** each year.

Being obese puts a person at **greater risk for chronic illness**, including coronary heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, type 2 diabetes, cancer, and reproductive problems.

**29 million Americans** suffer from diabetes and are at higher risk of heart disease, stroke, blindness, kidney failure, and lower limb amputation.

Coronary heart disease is the **leading cause of death** for both men and women.

15.7 million adults reported having at least **one major depressive episode** in the past year.

Outdoor activity improves both **mental and physical well-being** more than indoor activity.

Spending time in nature is associated with **better cognitive development** in schoolchildren.

The closer we are to green space, **the less we suffer** from cardiovascular, musculoskeletal, mental health, respiratory, neurological, and digestive diseases.

Diabetics who spend more time in nature are more physically active and show **better blood sugar control**.

Spending more time in parks translates to being **more physically active**.

Spending time in Nature helps to **decrease high blood pressure**.

Spending time in nature **decreases anxiety and negative thinking** and lowers levels of depression and stress.





## Action Items and Accountability

While RTPO’s are not required to set performance targets, the Northwest Regional Transportation Planning Organization has developed an RTP Implementation Evaluation Tracker to guide whether progress is being made. This annual tracker measures performance on a quantitative basis and measuring static qualitative data on a year over year perspective to see if our actions are moving the needle in relation to the goals and strategies.

The RTP Implementation Evaluation tracker measures actions in terms of timeframe/need (When is this needed?) and progress (what level has this action been taking?) based on the following legend. Each item is provided a self-assessed rate (based on the symbols) and comments are provided. These are measured annually, and we can review change or progress year to year.

Legend					
<b>Timeframe/Need</b>	●	●	●	●	○
	Within 5 years	Within 5-10	Within 10-15	Within 15-20	< 20 years
<b>Progress</b>	●	●	●	●	○
	Institutionalized	Good	Improving	Limited	No Action

Here are a few examples of our tracker and information relating back to our set actions and performance measures. This information also helps us identify data gaps.

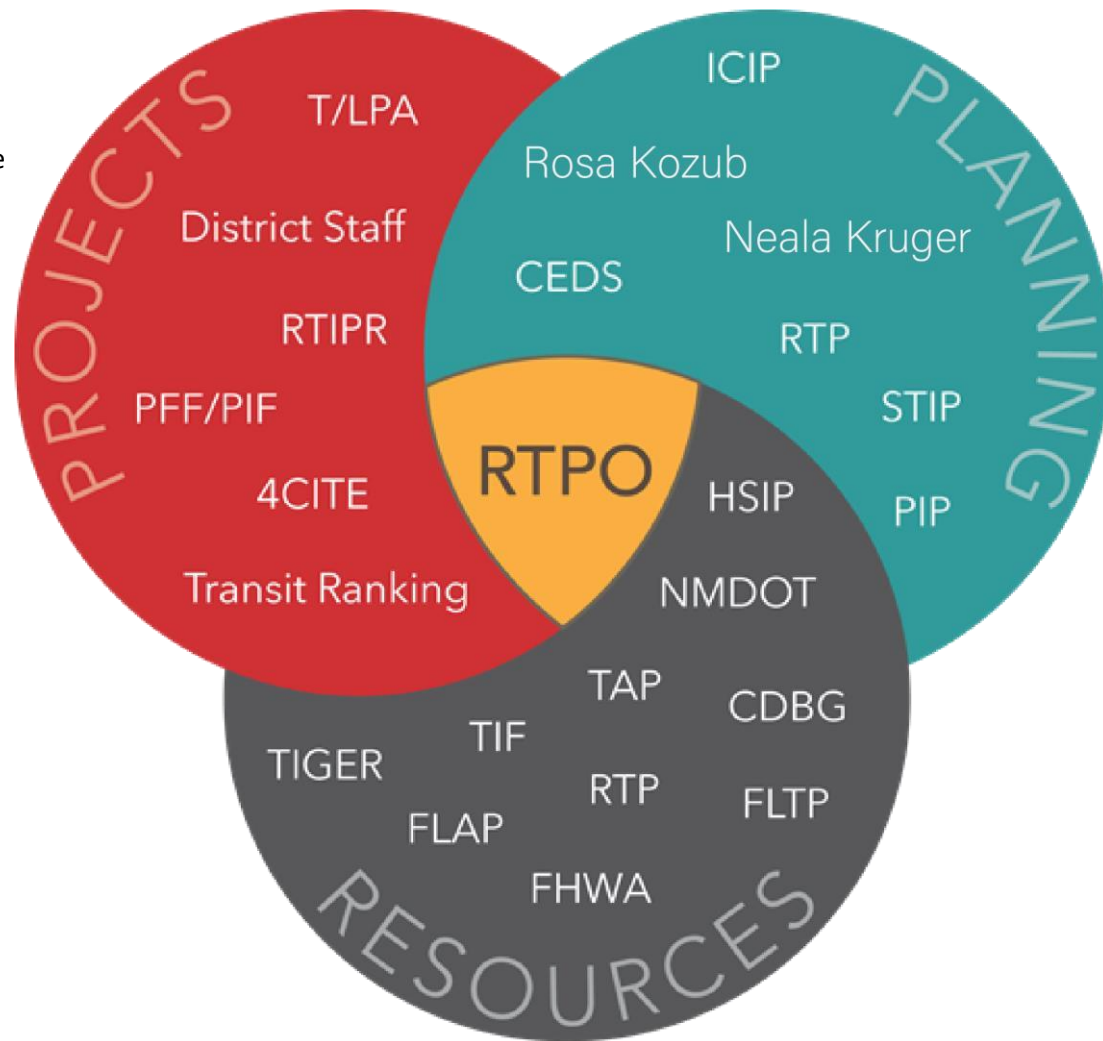
## NWRTPO Regional Transportation Plan Implementation Tracker

GOAL #2		Timeframe/ Need	Progress	Comments	Performance Measures	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Improve Safety for All System Users</b>										
Strategy 2.1	Data Driven Process	●	🔄							
Action 2.1.A	Implement all Safety Plans by identifying, improving and evaluating safety countermeasures	●	🕒	(1) Several tribal communities updated their Strategic Highway Safety Plans; (2) During Call for Transportation Projects process, several RSA/HSIP projects were submitted; (3) RTPO staff supported three funded RSAs (NM118, NM602, NM53) but safety countermeasures have not been implemented or funded.	Total # of traffic fatalities	65	69	78	82	
Action 2.1.B	Prioritize safety in all modes for RTIPR	●	●	During Call for Transportation Projects process, all project types were scored on safety.	Total traffic fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled	1.09	1.44			
Action 2.1.C	Improve safety data quality	●	○	No action during this year	Total # of serious injuries resulting from traffic injuries.	168	111	123	127	
Action 2.1.D	Emphasis safety for vulnerable users	●	●	During Call for Transportation Projects process, all project types were scored on safety - this item was part of that scoring process.	Serious injuries per 100 million VMT					
Action 2.1.E	Implement SHSP Summit workgroups to identify top risks, strategies, and groups.	●	○	No action during this year or invitations from NMDOT to participate.	Pedestrian fatalities per 100,000 population	18.52	20.4	3.54	17 total	
Action 2.1.F	Conduct RSAs	●	🕒	RTPO staff supported three funded RSAs (NM118, NM602, NM53) in 2016 and need to revisit the proposed safety countermeasures and how to move them forward.	Bicyclist fatalities per 100,000 population	0.84	0	0	0	
Action 2.1.G	Adopt favorable policies (Complete Streets, etc.)	●	🔄	RTPO staff has tracked progress by FMPO and Statewide Working Group on Complete Streets.	Inform the NWRTPO Committee members of the "Systemic Safety Process"	0	0	0	0	0
Action 2.1.H	Work with Tribal data and processes	●	🔄	RTPO staff has begun collecting baseline data with Navajo, Acoma, Laguna, and Zuni. RTPO staff has created a data use agreement and have several agreements place, but have not seat down to dive deeper.						

## RTPO Involvement in STIP Development

There are several avenues by which local government members of NWRTPO can have projects moved onto the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). All projects must be consistent with the New Mexico Transportation Plan (NMTP) and this Regional Transportation Plan to be eligible to receive funding. When projects go through both the project feasibility phase and project identification phase, they will be prioritized based on consistency with the NMTP and RTP and weighted based on how well the project meets the goals, strategies and performance measures within these plans. Additionally, it is important to note that it is highly encouraged that any local plans include specific local project priorities. The Regional Working Groups (RWG) have been invaluable in terms of providing a multi-modal perspective in the planning process. The NWRTPO would like to consider their ongoing participation in the implementation, evaluation, and updating of this Plan.

Amendments will be considered in a similar process as STIP Amendments, which must be time-sensitive, critical, and receive approval of the RTPO Committee. Amendments must also be consistent with the processes set forth in the NMTP.



# Regional Transportation Improvement Program Recommendations (RTIPR)

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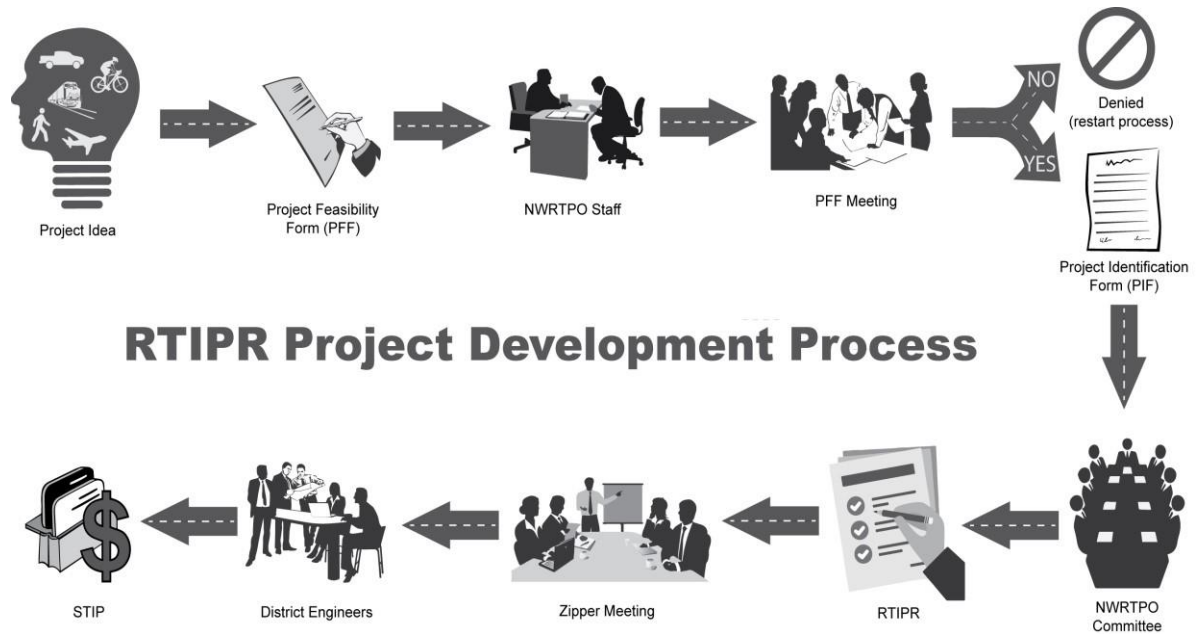
The NWRTPO works in conjunction with NMDOT to regularly issue a call for projects. Local or tribal government entities submit transportation projects through a Project Feasibility Form (PFF). These projects are then vetted by RTPO, District staff, and DOT Liaisons and a meeting with entity is held to discuss need, consistency, and overall feasibility, including potential funding sources and whether the project is ready to move forward.

If the project is selected to move forward, the local or tribal entity provides a Project Prospectus Form (PPF). The PPF is then reviewed and projects are prioritized based on consistency with the NMTP and RTP and weighted against goals, strategies, and performance measures (consistent with Federal law).

A Regional Transportation Improvement Program Recommendations (RTIPR) ranking list is discussed, negotiated, and approved by the NWRTPO Committee. The final set of rankings serves as the final RTIPR. For NMDOT districts in which there are multiple RTPOs, there is a “Zipper” meeting. At this meeting, each RTPO’s RTIPR are combined and reprioritized to create the final Zipper. NMDOT district engineers determine whether there is district funding to fund Zipper projects.

Ultimately, the District offices make the final determination of projects that are submitted to the STIP. If so, then these projects are moved into the STIP. If not, the RTIPR serves as a pool of vetted projects for each RTPO and when funding is available, there are viable potential projects. A pictorial representation of the process is shown here.

For projects outside of the RTIPR, the PFF process is the same except when NMDOT district engineers approve a project. The local government will also complete any correlating application such as Transportation Alternative Program (TAP), Recreational Trails Program (RTP), Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), Federal Lands Access Program, etc.



## RTIPR Project Development Process



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# Appendices

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# Appendix 1: Public Involvement Process

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## Overview of Public Outreach Process

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In 2015 the NWRTPO undertook a major RTP update public process thru a series of meetings that engaged both regional stakeholders and the public. In our 2020 update we updated our regional stakeholder list and involved 72 regional stakeholders including public transportation, school bus, elected officials, freight and private industry, highway commissioners, transportation engineers, bicycle – pedestrian – equestrian reps., tribal reps., air travel, public health, economic development, finance/banking, utilities, tourism and NMDOT – from our three counties, four tribes, and all communities therein. Most of the 2015 recommendations are still relevant today.

The 2020 the Regional Stakeholders from the organizations cited above participated primarily via email, due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions on public meetings. Those that responded with contributions for inclusion in the 2020 RTP update, were considered and incorporated as appropriate into this document. The RTPO also conducted a NWRTPO 2020 Regional Transportation Plan Update survey with RTPO members and regional stakeholders. Based on survey responses it appears members and stakeholders feel future investments in a) bicycle infrastructure and trails / facilities ranks high, b) public transportation ranks high, c) reducing freight congestion ranks high, d) economic development transportation investment ranks high, e) improving transportation system resiliency ranks high, f) investment for non-highway infrastructure and services ranks high, and g) funding for highway facilities ranks exceptionally high. Respondents were favorable toward gas tax increases for transportation investments. Respondents had a mixed 50/50 response to increasing vehicle registration fees or sales tax, or state general funds for transportation investments. Respondents were generally favorable toward NMDOT issuing more bonds to pay for transportation investments.



### Summary:

Based on these responses it appears RTPO members and regional stakeholders are generally satisfied with our transportation infrastructure and services; although there is mounting concern expressed regarding pavement conditions. It appears that interest is growing for multi-modal options and trails for pedestrians and bicycles. The vast majority of our residents use personal vehicles with a 10 to 30 mile commute to work, school and services. Respondents favor transportation investment in multimodal infrastructure, public transportation, economic opportunities, system maintenance and resilience, improving regional highways and general road infrastructure, and reducing freight congestion. Respondents favor gas tax increases and bond funding for transportation investments, but are less favorable toward using vehicle registration fees, sales tax, or state general funds.

### Synthesis of 2045 Vision Discussion

Lack of coordination is a huge barrier. Different entities of jurisdiction (BIA, BLM, Navajo Nation, Allotment Lands, municipal, county, forest and park state or federal lands, and NMDOT) need to coordinate and be on the same page. NMDOT can facilitate bringing different entities together. In our 2020 update, the NWRTPO seems to be accomplishing this when needed, or at least moving in a stronger collaborative position through our multi-jurisdictional RTPO committee and relationship with state and federal agencies.

Improving rural roads is important. Poor roads and long distances deter students from attending school; and accessibility for buses and emergency vehicles at bridges and turn-arounds are needed. In our 2020 update, the lack of transportation funding for rural areas, and functional classification requirements at the federal level creates barriers to resolving these problems. However, the State of New Mexico has generated new state funding

sources (*Local Govt. Transportation Project Fund – LGTPF / Local Transportation Project Fund – LTPF*) to help mitigate and move some of these projects forward without functional classification restrictions. The ongoing NM Local Govt. Road Fund also accommodates funding projects without regard to functional classification.

Rural funding without functional classification restrictions: As previously cited, in 2019 -2020 the State of New Mexico created a new source of revenue for rural transportation development in the form of the LGTPF (*Local Govt. Transportation Project Fund*) / then LTPF (*Local Transportation Project Fund*) fund with no functional classification restrictions, which while modest in amount, was able to make a significant difference in our region, with a total of 14 projects funded between the Farmington MPO and the NWRTPO at a total of \$12,834,576.00 with \$12,192,847.00 from the state source and \$641,729.00 in matching funds from our regional participating governments. Benefiting local governments included the City of Bloomfield and City of Farmington from the Farmington MPO, and from the NWRTPO – San Juan County, Cibola County, McKinley County, City of Gallup, City of Grants, Village of Milan, Pueblo of Acoma, Pueblo of Laguna, and Navajo Nation including Baahaali (Bread Springs) Chapter, Bahastl’ah (Twin Lakes) Chapter, Mexican Springs Chapter, and Tohatchi Chapter. With appreciation to the State of New Mexico for stronger consideration toward the needs of our rural communities and regions for transportation infrastructure in the creation of this fund, we have high hopes that this opportunity will continue to be provided from state revenue sources. We may anticipate a several year gap, due to the current impact of COVID-19, on small business closures, and the related reduction in state tax revenues.

Future is in alternative modes of transportation. In our 2020 update, alternative transportation modes have achieved a higher level of both public and governmental favor and support.

It is important to track demographics, because hubs may shift and create different priorities for investment.

Linking a Regional Transit System is desired. In 2020 this remains a difficult issue to resolve – while some collaborative transit links have been developed within our NWNM region - improving cross-jurisdictional connectivity, it remains difficult in rural New Mexico to connect different public transit systems for longer range connectivity (our region to Albuquerque for example) due to high costs and lack of adequate / consistent ridership. None the less when regional collaborative opportunities arise, they receive the support of the NWRTPO – a recent example is the collaboration between Pueblo of Zuni – Ashiwi Transit, and Gallup Express to extend service to the Ramah Navajo area.

Need to match infrastructure with economy and jobs. Take advantage of current infrastructure and augment to create jobs.

### **Synthesis of Key Challenges Discussion**

Coordination and collaboration between jurisdictions is one of the issues that makes regional transportation planning more difficult and complicated - multi-jurisdictional complexities can be problematic resulting in project delays or cancellations. In the 2020 RTP update it appears that cross-jurisdictional collaboration around regional transportation priorities is improving thru the NWRTPO, which meets on a monthly basis with representation from counties, communities and tribes – inviting and engaging state and federal land management agencies as needed.

Conflicting regulations.

Disconnect between decision-makers and local governments in the region.

Local pueblo chapters need to be certified with local government authority.

Limited funding for rural maintenance and development.

Current mind-set not toward multi-modality. In our 2020 update multi-modal options for transportation infrastructure, especially around safety issues for pedestrians and bicycles is a more central and favorable issue for future planning among all participating jurisdictions.

Need for genuine performance measures. Would like to customize performance measures, but this will be guided by Federal performance rules. (As the Federal performance rules are rolled-out, NMDOT wants to have projects prioritized in order to take advantage of funding opportunities.)

Need to counteract urban bias in favor of rural areas. Rural areas are battling NMDOT “functional classifications” of roads. It is difficult for rural roads to receive funding even when they are important roads for the transportation/connectivity of the community or pueblo. As cited in the second and third bullet on the previous page (“*Synthesis of 2045 Vision*”) the 2019 - 2020 LGTPF fund created by the State of New Mexico, followed by its new title – “Local Transportation Project Fund” is helping to provide additional funding for rural areas and roads that do not qualify for federal funding – with appreciation that the majority of our state is rural!

The 2020 update was difficult to engage the public due to COVID-19 virus meeting restrictions and difficulty in involving the public in virtual meetings; so most of our feedback and recommendations came from our regional stakeholder group, who are professional transportation or transportation related / dependent professions, along with some minor participation from the public. The NWRTPD also engaged a survey provided to stakeholders, RTPO members, and the public to the greatest extent possible.

### **Synthesis of Common Themes:**

Optimize opportunities in northwest New Mexico corridors around needed infrastructure, maintenance, cross-jurisdictional collaboration, and sharing responsibility across jurisdictions for funding and maintaining transportation infrastructure and services.

Support integration of public transportation and technology, including marketing to increase ridership as well as convenience for elderly or disabled citizens. Promote better cross-jurisdictional collaboration around our three county, four tribe, and multiple municipal region for public transportation connectivity across jurisdictions, improving access to services and institutions on behalf of our regional citizens – especially for those who are elderly, disabled or unable to drive their own vehicles.

Thru the NWRTPD engage stronger regional collaboration and cooperation to share responsibility for transportation infrastructure and services development and maintenance, in a manner that strengthens regional corridors, while respecting and honoring the various jurisdictions thru which they traverse.



As previously cited in 2019 – 2020 the State of New Mexico created a new source of revenue for rural transportation development in the form of the LGTPF (“Local Govt. Transportation Project Fund” – now named the “Local Transportation Project Fund”) with no functional classification restrictions and \$50 million available statewide. While modest in amount, this source funded 14 projects in our region making a significant difference with a total of \$12,834,576.00 (\$12,192,847.00 from the state and \$641,729.00 in local match) for participating governments within the NWRTPD and Farmington MPO.



## Northwest RTP Approval

The following process was followed resulting in approval of the update by both the RTPO and the Council of Governments Board of Directors:

- (1) A public survey was conducted with all RWG members, partners, and available to public. Findings were recorded and information was incorporated into the plan update.

- (2) Regional Transportation Planning Organization Meeting conducted virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions.
  - a. June 10, 2020 – Presentations on NM Transportation Plan Update and NW RTP Plan Update including process, outline, and schedule.
  - b. July 8, 2020 – Update & Discuss: RTP 2020 Update including ideas based on review of 2015 plan.
  - c. August 12, 2020 – Review & Discuss: Draft 2020 RTP Update including trends, projects, strategies, goals, and action section review.
  - d. September 9, 2020 – Review & Discuss: Draft 2020 RTP Update including the posting and public comment period guidelines.
  - e. October 14, 2020 – Review & Discuss: Draft 2020 RTP Update including comments received from public comment forms.
  - f. December 9, 2020 – Discussion/Presentation: RTP Update on progress and finalization.
  - g. January 13, 2021 - Adoption of Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).
- (3) Regional Transportation Plan 60-day Public Comment. Posted September 15, 2020. All comments received were addressed and were appropriate revised into the plan.
- (4) Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments Board of Directors, October 21, 2020. Presentation of Draft Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).
- (5) Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments Board of Directors, January 20, 2021. Adoption of Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

## Public Comments:

The following eight bullets represent contributions from Attila Bality – National Park Service Outdoor Recreation Planner – New Mexico Field Office – provided on 9/25/20:

- Crownpoint Chapter is nearing completion of a “Pathways Plan” to formalize many of their recently developed trails and paths.
- With regard to performance measures and injuries or fatalities – would be more meaningful to present % of increase or decrease in injuries or fatalities throughout the represented years.

- Goal 4 needs a section that provides information on multimodal “active transportation” options developed in recent years for pedestrians and bicycles. While the title includes multi-modal, there isn’t much information about bike or pedestrian facilities, trails, or development.
- Recommend collaboration with the new NM Office of Outdoor Recreation within the NM Tourism Division.
- Recommend that our region’s communities include goals or strategies related to parks, trails, and open space. Performance measures could include “Bike Friendly Community designations”, “Trail Town designation” “IMBA Ride Center” – etc. – these might appeal to tourists or prospective new residents.
- More guiding signs and materials are needed for visitor “way-finding” – along with maintenance to some of our rest areas, historical markers and other road-side visitor amenities.
- The National Park Service for our region is also completing a Long Range Transportation Plan related to forest and park facilities, trails and services.

**State Highways:** Need to provide a balance between mobility, safety, and local community culture and activities.

- Maintaining and enhancing State corridors. It is essential to maintain what we have in light of decreasing state and federal budgets. Small but effective enhancements can go along to promote tourism, safety, and quality of life along State Highways.
- Balancing Interests and Uses. Example Highway 53, especially in the frontier communities of El Morro, Ramah Village, San Rafael, and Zuni. Large truck traffic, overweight loads, and speeding are major concerns for safety, encouraging active transportation modes (walking and bicycling), protecting agriculture and vulnerable system users, and long-term maintenance of the highway.
- MainStreet. For many of New Mexico’s small and frontier communities, their MainStreet is a State Highway. Need between dialogue and guidance with NMDOT and MainStreet program on how to promote small business development, promote HUD-DOTEPA Livable Community principles, and create walkable communities.
- Bicycling Facilities. State Highways need appropriate and safe shoulders to accommodate users, bicycle tours, and travelers, especially on desired routes including State Scenic Byways and especially along Highway 53 where several accidents have occurred.

**Scenic Byways:** Trail of the Ancients Byway in Northwest NM, including all of Highway 53. Need a mechanism to preserve and enhance the intrinsic qualities of communities along State and/or Federal byways. This designation needs to mean something, whether it allows communities to prevent developments that make the Byway less desirable to travelers and locals alike or a way to promote improvements along a Byway that are supported in its

Corridor Management Plan;

- Business and Community Zone – Reduced Speed Limits. Allowing for unincorporated communities the ability to work with the County to create a business zones where traffic speeds could be reduced along State Highways and provide safe, walkable crossings to commercial establishments.
- Local Informed Policies to Maintain Rural Lifestyle and Promote Tourism. Allowing for unincorporated communities to work with NMDOT on policy to restrict Jay-Braking along the Byway.
- Utilize of technology to enforce speed limits and deter speeding along Byway, especially coming to business areas.
- Special signage and notification during major community events, e.g. Ramah Pioneer Days, Ancient Way Harvest Festivals, etc.
- For larger byways, there might need to be smaller byway section management plans. This needs a funding mechanism, and these plans need to be both stand-alone and incorporated into the larger Corridor Management Plan.

**Local and Rural Connectors.** Better coordination between local, State, tribal, and Federal jurisdictions to maintain and improve roads in Checkerboard areas. There are so many excuses not to partner and improve these roads that are main rural connectors to all services, including schools, commercial and employment centers, health services, etc. Need to develop and market models of collaboration, pilot projects, and best practices, especially in rural areas.

**Rural Heli-pads.** Developing strategic heli-pads at County Fire Stations to provide emergency air lifts to health facilities, especially in rural areas where you must travel over 60 miles in any direction to get to the nearest Emergency Room.

**Freight & Trucking:** enforcement of speeding, load size, and other regulations on State Highways.

- Provide emergency shoulders on State Highways in high traffic or commercial areas, where slower traffic is turning and heavy traffic is passing through, and where enforcement agencies can perform safe traffic and inspection stops.
- Provide proper turning lanes for visitors and site-seers near attractions and destinations.
- Need to work with companies on a “share the road” philosophy especially on State Highways that are major tourist and visitor gateways. Tourists or locals alike that feel unsafe will seldom return.
- Policy: deter companies from paying drivers by the load, and rather on an hourly wage to dis-incentivize speeding.

**Trails:** support for the Zuni Mountain Trail System (250-miles of multi-use, singletrack trail) being planned and under NEPA review by the US Forest Service. Need to improve access and trailheads to this system, and plan for future use. A major economic driver is adventure tourism, so the theme heard time and time again was “trails, trails, and more trails” of both non-motorized and motorized.

**Corridor Study or Road Safety Assessments:** prioritizing State Highways for comprehensive corridor studies and road safety audits, especially along corridors that have interested economic development and heavy truck traffic. Also, in communities that voice concerns about balance of use, use conflicts, and/or major safety concerns. Don't wait until 3 deaths occur to do something; be proactive.

**Support Local Mainstreet Programs:** The Gallup Mainstreet Arts & Cultural District was established as a 501 ( c ) 3 in 2015. As an accredited Main Street Program the organization plans and executes the revitalization work of the Mainstreet program integrated with the cultural economy work of a statedesignated Arts & Cultural District. **This citation provided from Jennifer Lazarz – Tourism & Marketing Manager – City of Gallup, and Kara Smith – Executive Director for the Gallup Mainstreet Arts and Cultural Distrct, provided on 9/25/20.**

**NWRTPO RTIPR Update:** The NWRTPO also undertook an RTIPR Revision this year rather than a full Call for Projects. Due to the COVID 19 impact on state revenues with extended small business closures, the NWRTPO does not anticipate much project funding for the next year or two. With this in mind, rather than a full Call for Projects, the revision was conducted simply with Project Feasibility Forms to place new projects or next phases in the RTIPR.

Note that these public comments are a combination of comments offered in our FFY2014 – 201`5 major update that are still relevant to our RTP today; and more recently comments from our FFY 2020 – 2021 major update.



# Appendix 2: Regional Transportation Priorities

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## Priorities

### Overview

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This report summarizes perspectives from RTPO members, regional stakeholders and comments received from the public, both verbally and in written form from our 2015 and 2020 updates. In addition, a number of recent comprehensive plans and transportation plans were analyzed and their key priorities used in preparing recommendations in this section. In our 2020 update, public participation was difficult due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions on public meetings, so we had to rely more on RTPO members and regional stakeholders as cited on p. 72, with limited public participation.

### Regional Priorities Summary

Combining the regional public and stakeholder comments received through meetings or email, priorities identified in other transportation plans in the region, the following priorities have been identified for the northwest region:

Develop and maintain a multi-modal transportation network that enhances safety for all, promotes walking and bicycling for both transportation and recreation, is mindful of ADA principles, and encourages an interlinked system for the efficient movement of people and freight.

Maintain existing transportation infrastructure and seek both traditional and creative ways to capture funding to do so; establish protocols for ongoing maintenance.

Develop a regional system of interlinked highways and railroads to efficiently move freight and encourage tourism, while being mindful to preserve the safety, character and cultural resources of communities along such routes.

Expand access to the region's airports and ensure adjacent roadways are developed to encourage the potential for economic development.

Enhance safety along major highways, including lighting provision, steel barriers, and turn lanes where appropriate.

Balance transportation planning with land use and economic development goals within each community, especially in downtown areas where a “sense of place” may be more important than level of service.

Design and build transportation infrastructure that can withstand flooding events.

Make roadway improvements when practical, especially with regard to prioritized maintenance of gravel/dirt roads that connect to regional highways based on traffic count and regional priority.

Encourage “Complete Streets” planning in any roadway improvement project where pedestrian, bicycle, or transit activity is evident.

Encourage the use of alternative intersection designs where appropriate, such as roundabouts or diverging diamond interchanges.

Promote intergovernmental cooperation among local, tribal, state, federal, and private entities in planning and implementing transportation system and roadway projects.

Promote initiatives and activities that reduce fossil fuel use and air pollution in the region.

Promote a thorough public involvement process in planning for transportation infrastructure and services.

Most of these priorities continue to guide our development and maintenance of multimodal transportation infrastructure in our 2020 update for our region. In the 2020 update there is more of an economic emphasis on integrating freight opportunities that are emerging for both trucking and rail – in a manner that balances in safety planning around mixing freight with multimodal personal transportation options. Multi-modal is another emphasis in our 2020 update, with major recreational trails development in the Zuni Mountains (around 200 miles of single track trails) – McKinley and Cibola Counties, and Mt. Taylor in Cibola County along with riverside trails in San Juan County.

Public outreach was difficult in 2020 due to COVID-19 and restrictions on public meetings, so while we did get some public input thru virtual (on-line) meetings, most of our recommendations came from a large group of regional professional stakeholders cited on page 72.

## Regional Local Governments' Transportation Plan Priorities Review

Plans were reviewed and have been summarized from the following entities: City of Gallup, City of Grants, Village of Milan, Navajo Nation, Pueblo of Acoma, Pueblo of Laguna, Cibola County, McKinley County, and San Juan County. Other entities will submit finalized transportation plans as they are adopted, and a summary of their specific priorities will be forwarded to NMDOT. While the information below is from our 2015 RTP update, most of these recommendations remain appropriate and valid for our 2020 update, as most of our rural governments are fortunate to get one or at most two projects completed thru the state and federal funds every one to two years.

### City of Gallup

Gallup's primary goal is to develop a well-balanced transportation system that will provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods to, from and within Gallup. The various objectives and action items related to this goal are as follows:

Develop and maintain a multi-modal transportation network.

- Maintain and continue to improve the highways and arterial streets as the primary network of Gallup's traffic circulation system.
- Interconnect collector and local streets to assure that the transportation network consists of many routes accommodating lower volume traffic.
- Implement traffic calming strategies for local, collector and arterial streets to reduce auto speeds to safe and acceptable levels.
- Maintain low speed limits in Central Gallup.
- Emphasize all modes of transportation (e.g., automobiles, transit, pedestrians, and bicyclists) in all street improvement projects.
- Comply with Americans with Disabilities Act standards for wheelchair accessibility in street improvement projects.
- Design streetscape improvements consistent with the recommendations, goals and policies in the Urban Design Element.
- Avoid supporting and developing costly loop roads that would likely serve very limited travel demand and may induce sprawl patterns of land use.
- Continue a high level of snow removal and periodic cleaning of streets.

Enhance pedestrian safety in Gallup.

- Reduce pedestrian accidents through street design, education and law enforcement.
- Build missing links in the sidewalk system.
- Replace sidewalks that are in irreparably bad condition.
- Complete sidewalks on I-40 overpasses, including Muñoz and Miyamura.

- Support development of off-street urban trails in the city that provide safe and convenient pedestrian routes to work, school and shopping consistent with the Trails and Open Space Element.
- Support development of recreational trails in the city for pedestrians and bicyclists consistent with the Trails and Open Space Element.

Manage congestion in major business districts.

Support means to reduce congestion on U.S. 491 and West Maloney Avenue, including the development of an Allison-I-40 interchange.

Support new street extensions in a grid pattern in the U.S. 491 business district.

- Create alternative routes for dispersed trips.
- Incorporate streetscape improvements and traffic calming.
- 
- Support grade separation of Second and Third Streets with the railroad tracks.
  - Consider underpass sidewalks accompanying an underpass street or, alternately, a pedestrian bridge over the railroad tracks. Create a system of interlinked transit services serving Gallup.
- Support the local Gallup Express bus system.
  - Encourage routes serving significant destinations in the community.
  - Encourage frequent service and weekend service.
  - Develop bus stops for scheduled routes, including bus shelters, benches and trash receptacles.
- Encourage all transit services, including Greyhound Buses, to serve the Multi-Modal Center.
  - Determine ways to staff the facility while open, maintenance of public bathrooms, and address any safety concerns.
- Seek coordinated schedules of transit services, including Amtrak, Navajo Transit, ZEE, Inc. Transit, Greyhound and Gallup Express, to allow for convenient transfers among providers. Create a system of bicycle lanes, trails and routes.
  - Develop a bicycle network map using bicycle lanes, trails and routes.
    - Designate bicycle routes on selected local streets where bicyclists share the unmarked travel lanes with automobiles.
    - Designate bicycle lanes on minor arterial and collector streets.
    - Generally avoid principal arterial streets for bicycle lanes due to excessive costs, liability potential, and safety concerns.
- Develop a bicycle lane on the north side of Mendoza Boulevard to create a pair of one-way bicycle lanes pending available funding.
- Coordinate with the Trails and Open Space Committee, Adventure Gallup and Beyond, and other advocacy groups.

Utilize an advisory structure and appropriate planning studies to guide transportation improvement decisions.

- Create a transportation committee of citizens appointed by the city, with some insulation from politics, to study transportation network alternatives, transportation issues, and provide transportation planning recommendations.

- Update the 1992 City of Gallup Transportation Master Plan to be consistent with the Growth Management Master Plan in areas including but not limited to: land use recommendations, street network guidelines, street spacing principles, and transportation goals and policies.
- Develop a plan for median replacement of continuous turn/center lanes on selected segments of U.S. 66, either in the transportation master plan update or in a corridor plan.
- Develop in the transportation master plan, or alternately, in a sub-area plan a street lay-out of the U.S. 491 Business District, including traffic forecast modeling to determine the degree to which a multi-modal network reduces congestion on U.S. 491 and Maloney Avenue.
- In the transportation master plan, study and make a recommendation about the reversion of Second and Third Streets to two-way traffic flow.
- Develop a circulation plan for the anticipated new Gallup Indian Medical Center at a site to be finalized.

Support transportation funding alternatives at the state level, and devise appropriate local funding options.

- Support transportation funding alternatives at the state level
  - Advocate for public-private partnerships, spending of all transportation-related revenues on transportation needs, indexing of taxes to inflation, and establishing a state-level permanent fund.
- Seek NMDOT planning and programming of city projects.
- Update the city's annual ICIP.

### City of Grants

The City of Grants Comprehensive Plan has a major transportation element that aims to “guide improvements to the existing 61.6 miles of streets in Grants, and any expansion of the transportation to meet the demands of the existing population and future growth over the next 20 years.” The following goals & policies have been prioritized for the city:

Maintain existing streets in the city.

- Continue regular City improvements of City streets.
- Follow a phased approach to paving new streets according to priorities based on the need and where joint project opportunities exist.
- Accept dedicated streets from developers only when they meet City standards.
- Improve landscape and drainage as part of projects for new street building and major street repair.
- Replace street signs where needed and maintain them.

Promote long-term enhancement and continued maintenance of Santa Fe Avenue and NM 122.

- Lower the speed limit and explore other methods of making Santa Fe Avenue more pedestrian friendly.
- Participate in the New Mexico Department of Transportation planning process regarding the avenue to assure that City concerns are addressed.

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- Support the Main Street program and its efforts at beautification of the street and implementation of the DPAC study.

Promote walking and bicycling in the community for both transportation and recreation.

- Keep Grants highly walkable, with regular evaluations of walkability and improvements as necessary.
- Design Santa Fe Avenue as a pedestrian-oriented street and find a suitable location for parking for the downtown core area.
- Develop trails, both pedestrian and bicycle to link the various areas and public facilities in the City.
- Partner with other organizations and the FFFC in its efforts to create trails for recreation and health of area residents.
- Identify bicycle routes that should be improved through Federal Highway Administration enhancement funds.
- Create a bikepath/walkway over the railroad overpass from the hotels on the eastern edge of the City into Grants.

Establish a program to provide sidewalks throughout the City that are contiguous and ADA accessible.

Keep access limited to secondary streets along Sakalaris Boulevard and not access by curb cuts.

Work with the state and federal governments on future changes to I-40.

- Examine reducing the speed of I-40 for safety reasons and/or creating a safety corridor in the Grants/Milan area.
- Work with the state and local ranchers along I-40 to reduce overgrazing and resultant soil erosion in order to prevent blowing dust, which is a safety hazard for drivers.

Support efforts to develop the linking of I-40 with I-25 by enhancing Highways 117 and 60 to create a by-pass.

Work with the state and federal governments to build a new I-40 interchange into the center of Grants.

Increase accessibility to the El Malpais National Monument and the El Malpais National Recreation Area.

- Support efforts to pave County Road 42 to create a link between NM 53 and NM 117 that would expand park access.

The capacity of the Grants-Milan Airport should be expanded to increase both people and commerce coming into and out of the area.

- Increase runway capacity including adding new runways, and lighting existing runways.
- Design and promote the future of airport growth as an alternative to the metropolitan areas, including handling overflow and/or diverted air traffic.
- Enhance airport facilities to allow for the inclusion of fire suppression services being based or located there.
- Increase hangar capacity and the airport's ability to support commerce in the area.
- Develop the capacity to interact with the casinos and the recreation opportunities in the area.
- Work to develop better access to the Grants-Milan Airport including improved signage directing people to the airport and a study of access alternatives into the airport including an off-ramp at the bridge area and I-40 into the airport.

### Village of Milan

The Village of Milan has a vision that focuses on: "A safe, efficient, up-to-date transportation system that will include highways, streets, gutters, sidewalks, bike/pedestrian paths, the railroad, and the airport. Highway design will calm traffic through town and encourage people to stop. The Grants/Milan Municipal Airport and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad will be utilized as critical links for commerce and economic development." The following priorities were identified in the Villages more recent comprehensive plan:



Street and sidewalk construction and reconstruction that has a continuous level of funding and focuses on implementing sidewalks where none currently exist.  
 Traffic safety features for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians that focuses on the creation of dedicated bike lanes and traffic calming features to slow traffic.  
 Public transportation is requested from 43 percent of public meeting participants.

Railroad service to Milan needs to focus on safety, noise pollution, and other negative impacts as well as determine if an overpass or bridge is justified as opposed to an at-grade crossing.

Air transportation is a potentially important economic development prospect for the Village, but is deemed to need improvements.

Transportation's impact on the community's character is a necessary focus since Route 66 currently does not enhance the small town character that the Village values. The creation of multiple routes between origins and destinations is necessary for the efficient and safe movement of drivers.

Enhancing the aesthetic qualities of transportation corridors is essential for promoting the community's character.

Development around the airport will focus on transportation-related manufacturing businesses, but also allow for period events and air tours.

The potential for an industrial park centered on the railroad should be studied for feasibility.

### Navajo Nation

Looking specifically at the major population centers within New Mexico, the Navajo Nation Transportation Plan focuses on aviation and state highways. Goals and objectives specific to each region are listed below:

Shiprock Area:

- Create networks of streets to expand the use of land for the purpose of economic development towards the south and serve the government center.
- Create two street networks separated by the San Juan River, each providing an efficient distribution of traffic to reduce congestion and accidents.
- Provide an alternate crossing of the San Juan River towards the west.
- Create alternate routes and increase accessibility.
- Minimize environmental and cultural impacts by conserving areas adjacent to the San Juan River for recreation, and building new improved routes on existing dirt roads.
- Strengthen the historical sense of the place by creating a new government/town center upon old settlement area known as the Shiprock chapter house/BIA compound.
- Enhance multi-modal options and mobility by providing a pedestrian bridge across the San Juan River, safely linking the two primary development areas within Shiprock. Fort Defiance Area:
- Create a growth center's street system that provides access and travel continuity as well as promotes new development.
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- Create an efficient street system that promotes network connectivity, distribution of traffic and enhances pedestrian and bicycle mobility. Crownpoint Area:
- Become a self-sustaining community. Promote economic and tourism development to create and sustain jobs, contribute to tax base, and share local traditions and customs.
- Balance land uses and development to strengthen community's vision, rural character and lifestyle.
- Create an attractive community while preserving the character of the community and protect traditional and cultural properties.
- Provide adequate community facilities and services to protect health, promote safety and welfare of general public.
- Identify areas for orderly development.
- Provide adequate infrastructure to meet current and future needs of Crownpoint while not exceeding its physical capacity and preserve water resources.

#### Aviation Goals:

- Develop a system of safe, efficient airports which meet acceptable development standards of federal, state and local agencies, as well as the aviation industry.
- Plan for future growth of the aviation system consistent with national, state, and local air transportation needs through continuous updating of the Navajo Nation Aviation Systems Plan and to take actions to land bank and avoid operational restrictions at existing and new airports.
- Provide a system of airports, which will provide a minimum level of service and meet acceptable performance standards.
- Identify improvements needed to ensure adequate access to all system airports and users.
- Enhance opportunities for local economic development and improved employment consistent with local growth policies and plans. Finance aviation facility development to maximum feasible extent with innovative techniques taking full advantage of private sector initiatives and opportunities to assist in developing and operating facilities in the public aviation system. Establish operating procedures, budgets and an organizational structure to ensure proper maintenance of all Navajo Nation airports.
- Provide a framework for aviation planning and programming to meet needs in areas of airport development, airspace utilization and air navigation facilities and services.
- Provide a variety of transportation modes for both pedestrian and vehicular traffic while keeping in mind the need for emergency access.

#### NM State Highways

- Install street lights on US64 from MP 20.0 (Shiprock High School) to MP 23.4.
- Reduce speed limit from MP 20 – MP 24.
- Widen US64 along the Shiprock High School zone, MP 20-22.
- Address transportation needs for future developments above.
- Install street lights, sidewalks, and complete US64 widening to 4-lanes from MP 20 to MP 24.6 to provide safety for future development including turning lanes at access road to Gadiiahi Chapter and Tokoi communities.
- Redesign US491/US64 SW and NE intersections.

- Install street lights at Twin Lakes Chapter House, N9, N30 (Mexican Springs), N108/N130 (Tohatchi Chapter House and schools), Nashitti School/Chapter House, N5001 (Newcomb school/Chapter House), N19/N5 (Two Grey Hills), N34 (Sanostee), and N13 (Red Valley/Cove) junctions.
- 4-lane widening from Shiprock to Cortez, CO is recommended in distant future.
- Traffic signal and lights at NM197, and street lights in Cuba.
- Gravel and partially pave NM57 with respect to the National Park's need to minimize disturbance to the ruins.
- Widen NM118 to 4-lane road and acquire land to resolve roadway widening and drainage problem.
- Create an I-40 Interchange to provide access to Church Rock Chapter, industrial park and the Fire Rock Casino.
- Install street lights and 3-lane widening of NM134 and US491 at Sheep Springs to improve safety and accommodate Sheep Springs Visitor Center, commercial store, day care and NHA housing traffic.
- Use highly reflective road paint/markers from MP 19 to MP 36 and reduce speed to 50 MPH from MP 24 to MP 30.
- Install street lights from Arizona POE or AZ/NM state line to Hill Top School.
- Pavement reconstruction and Improve roadway cross grading for better drainage between Black Hat and Yah-Ta-Hey (MP 7 – MP 14).
- Pavement improvement where condition is severe.
- Addition of accelerate and decelerate lanes at Becenti NHA housing project entrance.
- Addition of accelerate and decelerate lanes at Whiterock Chapter access road
- Addition of accelerate and decelerate lanes at Lake Valley Chapter access road • Addition of accelerate and decelerate lanes at Smith Lake Chapter access road and N49.
- Roadway widening to five lanes to accommodate future development in Crownpoint.
- Installation of warning sign and reduced speed are needed for the NM566/N118 intersection. • Installation of a street light and access management at NM118/NM566 intersection
- Install a Chevron sign for end of T-intersection on NM602 at the NM602/N7062.
- Installation of lights at the NM602/N7046 and NM602/N7062 Junctions.
- Roadway widening to add turning lanes at the NM602/N7046 and NM602/N7062 Junctions.

### *Pueblo of Acoma*

The most recent transportation plan update from the Pueblo of Acoma includes a number of specific project objectives throughout the reservation, including: Fatima Hill (SP 34) Road Design / Construction: Six (6) miles of road reconstruction, including paving, widening, shoulders, drainage improvements, and bridge rehabilitation.

Pinsbaari Road (SP 32) Road Planning / Design / Reconstruction: 5.3 miles of road construction, including complete planning (all clearances and certifications), design and utility relocation, paving, widening, shoulders, drainage improvements, sidewalks, curb and gutter, and lighting.

Cowboy Drive, Sunflower Drive and Castillo Road (SP 302) Paving / New Construction: Grading, draining and paving of SP 302, including Cowboy Drive, Sunflower Drive and Castillo Road. SP 302 will be improved for 1.6 miles. New construction will include curb and gutter, pedestrian path, drainage and utilities.

Drainage Study: A drainage study will be conducted to identify Pueblo roads vulnerable to flooding. Mitigation strategies will be recommended based on the observed conditions.

SP 342 Improvements: Road and drainage improvements for about 1.6 miles of Daaskra Road, Mound Drive and Lakota Drive.

SP 55 Improvements: Road and draining improvements for about 1.0 mile of Hidden Valley Road.

Haaku Road (SP 38) Road Planning, Design and Reconstruction: Reconstruction of 12.4 miles of Haaku Road, including complete planning, project development, design, drainage improvements, utility relocation services, paving, widening, shoulders and lighting.

SP 857 Reconstruction: Reconstruction of Sunrise Road (installation of curb/gutter where needed).

SP 858 Reconstruction: Reconstruction of Pinon Road (installation of curb/gutter where needed). Pinon Road provides access to the Skyline Housing subdivision.

SP 856 Reconstruction: Involves (Phase II) reconstruction of Evergreen Drive, Blue Bird Road and Knot's Landing (installation of curb/gutter where needed).

M122 Bridge Design and Construction (on Fatima Hill Road): Reconstruct Bridge at M122, bringing the bridge to acceptable condition. Outdated approach guardrail end treatments to be replaced.

Hollywood Boulevard (SP 345) Design: Grading, draining and paving of Hollywood Boulevard (an existing gravel road). Road improvements will extend from SP 34 to SP 30 (0.9 miles).

Canipa Road (SP 322) Design: Grading, draining and gravel or paving of Canipa Road, an existing gravel road.

Beverly Hills Road and Rodeo Drive (SP 304) Design: Grading, draining and paving of Beverly Hills Road, an existing earth road.

Shutivaville Road (SP 351) Improvements: Improvements to Shutivaville Road, including grading, draining and gravel or paving of the existing gravel road.

Arrowhead Drive (SP 305) Design: Grading, draining and paving of Arrowhead Drive, an existing gravel road.

Hunters and Western Trails Road (SP 330) Design: Grading, draining and paving or gravel of Hunters Lane and Western Trails Road, an existing earth road.

SP 36 Extension and Mesa Hill Bridge Construction: New road and bridge construction.

Veteran's Boulevard (SP 301) Design and Construction: Reconstruction of Veteran's Boulevard, including complete design and construction services.

Diichuna Road (SP 26) Improvements: Grading, draining and paving of approximately 1.7 miles of road.

Canada Road (SP 341) Improvements: Grading, draining and paving of approximately 1.9 miles of road.

Stockyard Road (SP 343) Improvements: Grading, draining and graveling of 1.9 miles of Stockyard Road.

Aatsaya (SP 321) Improvements: Improvements to Aatsaya Road, including grading, draining, graveling and culvert work of approximately 2.8 miles of road.

McCarty Road (SP 380) Improvements: Grading, draining and graveling of approximately 1.9 miles of road.

SP 37 Improvements: Improvements to SP 37, including grading, draining and graveling of 17.1 miles of road. This route acts as a north-south collector, as well as provides potential tourist and recreational area access.

Barela Road (SP 26) Improvements: Grading, draining and paving of approximately 1.2 miles of road.

Drainage improvements along reservation roads that experience standing water or are vulnerable to 50-year flood conditions. Recommendations from the planned drainage study (under short-term projects) may be implemented. Drainage systems under I-40 will be addressed, as well as SP30 and certain back country roads (TBD).

FEMA funding will be pursued for select projects.

M-124 Bridge Design and Construction (on Fatima Hill): Repairs to Bridge M-124, bringing the bridge to acceptable condition. Outdated approach guardrail end treatments will be replaced.

Guardrail will be upgraded to meet AASHTO standards. Cracks and spalls in the top slab, barrel walls, wingwalls to be replaced.

Design and Construction of Proposed Road South of I-40 / W of Anzac Road: Design and construction of a proposed road south of I-40 and west of Anzac Road, to provide access to newly-purchased land that will be used for commercial development.

Safety study of the curve on NM 124: Formal study to assess safety issues related to driver visibility / line of site and intersection configurations in select areas.

Bridge Design and Construction. Stockyard Road at Rio San Jose: Design and construction of a new bridge for Stockyard Road and Rio San Jose. The bridge will resolve flooding challenges along Stockyard Road.

Trail Design / Construction: Design and construction of biking / walking trails for recreational purposes.

### *Pueblo of Laguna*

The Pueblo of Laguna's Long Range Transportation Plan has not yet been adopted but a summary of its proposed priorities is listed below. Almost all projects are roadway-focused and specific:

Construction of L501(1)2&4 Capitol Drive.

Construction of L22(3)2&4 Casa Blanca Road.

Construction of L24(2)2&4 Rainfall Road.

Construction of L26(2)2&4 Rainfall Road.

Design and construction of San Jose River Bridge M137.

Design and construction of San Jose River Bridge M108.

Striping and enhancement of various roadways.

Road reconstruction of L500 section 110 Baytree Road.

Road reconstruction of SR124.

New interchange construction at I-40 MM 112.

Bridge replacement at I-40 MM 114 Bridge.

Road reconstruction of L47 Encinal Road section 40-70.

Road reconstruction of L23 Seama Road section 10.

Road reconstruction of L24 Rainfall Road section 110.



Road reconstruction of L24 Rainfall Road section 10.  
Road reconstruction of L26 Rainfall Road section 80.  
Road reconstruction of L240 Sacred Shield Road section 10.  
Road reconstruction of L22 Casa Blanca Road section 20.  
Road reconstruction of L22 Casa Blanca Road section 50.  
Road reconstruction of L243 Acorn Road section 10.  
Road reconstruction of L244 Rainstorm Road section 10.  
Road reconstruction of L245 Raindrop Road section 10.  
Road reconstruction of L248 Blue Sky Road section 10.  
Road reconstruction of L248 Blue Jay Road section 20.  
Road reconstruction of L248 Blue Corn Road section 30.  
Road reconstruction of L 248 Blue Star Road section 40.  
Road reconstruction of L50 Santa Fe Road section 40.  
Road reconstruction of L500 Mountain Ash Loop.  
Road reconstruction of L503 Veterans Memorial Loop section 10.  
Road reconstruction of L540 Veterans Memorial Road 40.  
Road reconstruction of L504 Moon Drive section 10.  
Road reconstruction of L507 Roadrunner Road section 10.  
Road reconstruction of L520 Mesita Road section 100.  
Road reconstruction of L520 Mesita Road/Rito Road Intersection.  
Road reconstruction of L520 Industrial Parkway Loop section 120.  
Road reconstruction of L520 Marble Loop section 130.  
Road reconstruction of L520 Pine Needle Loop section 140.  
Road reconstruction of L520 Cedar Berry Loop section 150.  
Road reconstruction of L520 Mason Road section 160.  
Road reconstruction of L53 Mesita Road section 10.  
Road reconstruction of L490 Dusty Hill Road section 30.  
Road reconstruction of L200 Old Bridge Road section 15.  
Road reconstruction of L200 Postal Road section 30.  
Road reconstruction of L200 Twin Lakes Road section 100.  
Trail construction at I-40 Interstate Underpass for Rainfall Road.  
Shoulder Bikeway and Improvements at NM279.  
Road Diet at SR124.  
Roundabout construction at SR124.



Separated Trail construction at SR124 Seama to Paraje.  
 Separated Trail construction at SR 124 Paraje to NM279.  
 Separated Trail construction at Old Route 66 Laguna to Mesita.

### Cibola County

Cibola County just completed its comprehensive planning process in Fall 2014. The major transportation objectives and action items are as follows:

Prioritize future county road improvement projects according to their classification and use (i.e. school bus route, arterial, collector, local road, etc.).

Encourage municipalities to prioritize future road improvement projects according to their classification and use (i.e. school bus route, arterial, collector, local road, etc.).

Identify areas warranting special consideration due to frequent accidents.

Identify areas warranting special consideration for storm drainage for which many areas are cited in the City of Grants and Village of Milan Drainage Master Plan.

Provide a transportation system that focuses on the immediate needs of the community.

Continue to incorporate the anticipated cost of the prioritized street improvements into the Cibola county budget.

Pursue fair and efficient roadway upgrade and maintenance agreements with the other entities within the County that have roadways, including subdivisions, municipalities, NMDOT, the Pueblos, the BLM, and the Forest Service.

Pursue financial assistance from the CDBG Construction Grant Fund, NMDOT Local Government Road Funds, State and Federal Legislative Appropriations and other sources to complete construction of the prioritized roadway infrastructure improvements.

Pursue improvements cited in the Northwest New Mexico Regional Long Range Transportation Plan pertaining to Cibola County with regard to other plans that have common suggestive improvements. Some considerations for roadway improvements may include:

- Improving the Back Country Byway (also known as County Road 42) to a graveled road as it would connect Zuni Canyon Road with Pie Town Road to provide a graveled roadway through central Cibola County.
- Improving Zuni Rd from dirt to an all-weather surface as it is a travel path to newly acquired lands for the Zuni Pueblo. It is recommended that Cibola County consult with the Zuni Pueblo to propose that the Pueblo fund a roadway upgrade from dirt to gravel.

### McKinley County

McKinley County has a number of transportation goals and objectives that have been outlined in its comprehensive plan. The following are prioritized in the plan:

Develop an interconnected transportation network. Strategies may include:

- Preparation of a County “strategic connectivity plan” to identify needs for network improvements. Some new connections for currently deadend roads may be needed to enhance the network. Roads on new alignments may be needed. Priority should be given toward networking (connecting) major corridors that serve larger populations.
- Control and minimization of new costs by restraining growth in County road-miles, including minimizing road improvements and extensions that serve very few residents.

- Joint investigation with the Bureau of Indian Affairs of the feasibility of transferring road ownership and maintenance responsibilities, or a joint powers agreement for mutual and shared maintenance responsibilities (e.g., Apache County, AZ-BIA-NN) to achieve greater network connectivity and efficiency.

Prioritize County road dedications and improvements. Strategies may include:

- Revamping the County's road projects prioritization process to increase public participation, consider all projects in comprehensive groupings, and integrate with the State of New Mexico's Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan (ICIP) process. This can include tasking the County Smart Growth Commission with making recommendations on road project priorities and utilizing PIFs to solicit information.
- Assigning priority for funding to those road projects with express (dedicated) rights-of-way, and to those roads considered more essential to network connectivity.
- Development of objective and standardized criteria for prioritizing road projects, e.g., to include number of residents and/or school children served, network connectivity plans, and funding available from other sources besides the County.

Promote intergovernmental cooperation among local, tribal, state, federal and private entities in planning and implementing transportation system and road maintenance projects. Strategies may include:

- Ensuring follow-up communication and coordination on transportation planning and programming based on the County Road Forums begun in 2011, to include ongoing consultation with the Navajo Nation, Bureau of Indian Affairs and the State of New Mexico, as well as annual replication of the Forums.
- Coordination with the Pueblo of Zuni to identify possible needs by the Pueblo for partnering with the County as a contractor to build or maintain roads on the Zuni Reservation.
- Consideration of the feasibility for the County to take responsibility for maintaining BIA roads if the BIA provides additional funding. [NOTE: Fund sharing and coordination of manpower may make it possible to improve efficiency and productivity. The ability of the County to maintain additional roads on tribal lands depends on funding from the Navajo Tribe and Zuni Pueblo for projects and maintenance.]
- Pursuit of a joint powers agreement between the County, the Navajo Nation and the Pueblo of Zuni to commission the Northwest Regional Transportation Planning Organization (NWRTPO) to conduct a forum from which to report problems and recommend improvements to participating governments.

Promote and support plans, projects and initiatives focused on transportation safety on all facilities and services within the County. Strategies may include:

- Ensuring consideration of the safety of pedestrians in road design projects, including pedestrian access and crossings where appropriate.
- Working with the Navajo Nation Department of Transportation to provide signage to warn for and/or reduce livestock on roads.
- Engaging the NWRTPO can provide a forum from which to report problems and recommend improvements with regard to transportation-related safety.
- Addressing the risk of recurring flooding and drainage problems along the corridor encompassing NM-118, Historic Route 66, and I-40 in the vicinity of Church Rock and Iyanbito Chapters, and on the US-491 corridor around Mexican Springs and Tohatchi. This should include consultation with the Navajo Nation, New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT), US Army Corps of Engineers, and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to resolve this recurring safety concern and to fund and implement drainage improvements.

Promote an orderly and cost-effective process for transportation maintenance and improvements. Strategies may include:

- Collaboration with the BIA, Navajo Nation, NMDOT and the NWRTPO in development of a regional maintenance plan that assigns road maintenance responsibility, identifies locations of maintenance yards, and allots number of personnel. If JPA's or MOU's are needed to facilitate this level of cross-jurisdictional support for maintenance of roads serving mutual constituents, it may be most efficient for the County to take a lead role in promoting this opportunity. The strategic location of new maintenance yards may result, thus achieving the highest mutual benefit to all parties.
- Review utilizing new materials (e.g. rubberized asphalt) from local sources like NWNM Regional Solid Waste Authority.

Encourage alternative modes of transportation. Strategies may include:

- Support for multimodal connectivity with attention to bike and pedestrian options, public transit, and recreational trails development supporting economic development, to include cooperation with the City of Gallup in planning bicycle routes, trails and lanes that enter unincorporated areas.
- Support for retaining Amtrak rail service to and through McKinley County, e.g., the Southwest Chief route.
- Collaboration with Navajo Transit, Gallup-McKinley County Schools, Gallup Express, and other current and potential bus service providers to support enhancing and sustaining bus transit service in the County.
- Consultation with Gallup Express on potential extension of routes serving unincorporated areas of the County.
- Pursuit of follow-up studies on the potential for expanded inter-community transit service along the I-40 corridor between Gallup and Albuquerque, building on prior studies commissioned by the Northwest Regional Transportation Planning Organization.
- Partnership with neighboring communities and the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy on preserving rail corridors for trails projects, including the consideration of rail banking to prevent removal of critical infrastructure during rail abandonment processes by the Surface Transportation Board.

Promote initiatives and activities that reduce fossil fuel use and air pollution in the County. Strategies may include:

- Review and establish a vehicle purchase policy that outlines the County minimum fuel-efficiency standards for each class or type of fleet vehicle purchased, and creates a preference to hybrid and alternative energy vehicles, when use, affordability, and availability are applicable. (Exception for emergency and special- use vehicles as outlined in the County's Energy Plan).

Expedite and advocate for strategic and major roadway improvements to promote safety, economic development, population growth and environmental protection.

Strategies may include:

- Federal and State Corridor Development – involving advocacy and collaboration with all regional partners to finish US 491, improve NM 371, begin planning the four-laning of NM 602, and to design re-construction of NM 400 to McGaffey Lake Recreation Area.
- Collaboration with regional partners in optimizing the County's crossroads assets through development a major freight hub in Gallup and Thoreau as an economic base builder.
- Consultation and collaboration with Navajo Chapters within McKinley County on joint financing and shared responsibility for planning, design, and construction of joint priorities for County road development.

Specific project priorities:

- Support completion for the phases of four-lane reconstruction of US-491 within McKinley County.
- County Road 19 road construction to chip seal or pavement, and safety improvements for the large – six chapter community population that depends on this corridor (supported by a 2012 safety award from NM-DOT HSIP Program).
- NM-118 Rehoboth (mp27) to Church Rock (mp30) road widening reconstruction and safety improvements (where econ. dev. has outgrown traffic capacity causing safety & congestion concerns).
- Next phases of NM-400 reconstruction to address safety, and recreational economic development opportunities along this corridor.
- Safety improvements to County Road 1 (supported by a 2012 safety award from NM-DOT HSIP Program).
- Support the City of Gallup for new construction for the re-alignment of the Allison Corridor and I-40 interchange.
- Support the City of Gallup for 4-lane reconstruction of NM 602 from Muñoz overpass to 2nd Street intersection.
- Seek ways to mitigate safety and congestion concerns for BNSF at-grade railroad crossings (with the main Iyanbito crossing as a top priority).
- Support the City of Gallup and NM-DOT Dist. 6 for reconstruction of west US-66 (NM-118) in Gallup, including drainage improvements.
- Ramah Navajo 113 reconstruction from NM-53 to Ramah Mid & High Schools, and adjacent Ramah 110.
- County Road 77 improvements.
- Navajo Route 9 improvements.

### San Juan County

San Juan County has a number of goals and objectives in the transportation element of its comprehensive plan. The following were highlighted in its most recent update:

Promotion of a thorough public involvement process in planning for transportation infrastructure and services.

- Ensure broad-based, early and continuing involvement of the public in all aspects of the transportation planning and implementation process.
- Provide complete information, timely public notice, and full access to decision-making processes by all affected populations (including those traditionally under-served or under-represented in the planning and design process). Support for transportation projects that improve safety for all modes of travel.
- Give highest priority for transportation funding to projects and programs that improve or maintain safety for all users of the transportation system, including the users of both motorized and non-motorized travel modes and people of all incomes, ages and physical abilities.

Secure rights-of-way to develop trails along and access to the San Juan, Animas and La Plata Rivers.

- Acquire a trail easement and construct a regional multiuse pathway along the former Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad grade between Farmington and Durango.

Support for preservation and maintenance of the transportation system.

- Give priority to preserving and maintaining existing transportation facilities over roadway system expansion.

Assurance that roadway system expansion projects meet critical travel needs and support desired compact land use patterns.

- When roadway system expansion is deemed necessary, give priority to facilities that ensure the creation of efficient, compact land use patterns in San Juan County.

- Conduct an alignment study and the engineering required to extend Piñon Hills Road eastward from Farmington to (and through) Crouch Mesa.
- Develop a “framework plan” for roadways on Crouch Mesa that supports the creation of compact, walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods and respects the area’s rural context and spectacular viewsheds.
- Develop multimodal design standards for streets and roadways on Crouch Mesa and elsewhere in San Juan County.

Design of roadway networks and facilities that are context-sensitive and cost effective, and support alternative modes of travel.

- Design roadway networks and facilities with sensitivity to their environmental, historical and community context and to support development patterns that minimize public infrastructure costs; minimize costs of providing public services; encourage walking, bicycling and use of public transportation; facilitate the efficient movement of goods; and help to improve air quality in San Juan County.

Promotion of intergovernmental coordination in the planning and operation of transportation systems.

- Coordinate among the local, regional, tribal, and state jurisdictions (including those in both New Mexico and Colorado) that own and operate the different elements of the region’s transportation system in order to ensure efficiency and promote local and regional economic health.
- Work with the Farmington Metropolitan Planning Organization to regularly update the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and with the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments to update the Regional Long Range Transportation Plan, promoting actions that include:
  - Determine how to improve the productivity of the Red Apple transit service to unincorporated growth centers.
  - Identify opportunity sites for park-and-ride and other transit supportive infrastructure in the San Juan region (including bus stops along major roadways).
  - Realize opportunities to establish bus transit service between the Farmington area and Durango.

Promotion of transportation alternatives that are free of barriers to people of all ages and abilities.

- Provide easier access to more and better transportation choices for travel throughout the region by people of all ages and abilities.
- Improvement of the energy efficiency of transportation systems.
- Ensure that the transportation system promotes efficient use of energy.

Design of regional streets accessing multiple communities with differing design components based on the functions and character of surrounding land uses.

- Design regional streets to reflect the function and character of surrounding land uses, consistent with regional street design concepts and the need to ensure the safety of all roadway users (including bicyclists and pedestrians).
- Develop access control standards for turn lanes and driveways along state highways and other arterial roadways in unincorporated areas of the county.

Creation of a street network that is highly interconnected.

- Design street networks with high levels of interconnectivity to reduce dependence on major streets for local circulation.





# Appendix 3: Alternative Projects Flowcharts

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These diagrams below are still valid in concept with the update that the PIF (*Project Identification Form*) is now called the PPF (*Project Prospectus Form*).

# NWRTPO PROJECTS

## PROJECTEERING

- ❖ Assist members to develop PFFs and PPFs
- ❖ Track the progress of transportation projects
- ❖ Rank and rate projects into RTIPR
- ❖ Assist members in financing strategies

## RTIPR

- ❖ Transit Applications Prioritization
- ❖ Regional Transportation Improvement Program Recommendations (RTIPR)



# NWRTPO PROJECT PROCESS



# NWRTPO ALTERNATIVE PROCESS

## T/LPA DRIVEN PATHWAY



## SCENARIO EXAMPLE

1. Local businesses along a state highway: Provide funding for feasibility study/road safety audit.
2. T/LPA applies and is funded for Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) and State Capital Outlay to design and construction project.
3. Coordinate ROW, environmental, public outreach, design, and construction with District and Central Regional Design.
4. Maintenance will usually be pushed toward the T/LPA since it initiated the project.

# NWRTPO ALTERNATIVE PROCESS

## NMDOT OR DISTRICT DRIVEN PATHWAY



## SCENARIO EXAMPLE

1. NMDOT funds and provides a Road Safety Audit along a state highway due to concerns from the school district and NMDOT.
2. District prioritizes project in RTIPR and the STIP, funds identified within District budget.
3. District coordinates ROW, environmental, public outreach, design, and construction.
4. Maintenance will remain with NMDOT since it initiated the project.





# NWRTPO NM FUNDIT

**An Economic or Community Development Project That Needs Viable Transportation Improvements**

An economic or community development project identifies a transportation need (private, tribal, or local)

**CONTACT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDERS:**  
(To help create a customized Project Development & financing Plan)

- New Mexico Economic Development Department (Regional Representatives)
- Economic Development Organizations (EDO), including Navajo RBDO
- Council of Governments Staff (RTPO and EDD)
- New Mexico DOT District Staff

New Mexico  
FUNDIT

# NWRTPO PROJECT DEVELOPMENT



## Non-Transportation Sources of Funding – or apply at NM's FUNDIT

- Private Sector Financing
- New Mexico Finance Authority Local Government Planning Fund (monthly)
- Local Government Division/DFA Community Development Block Grant (CDGB) Planning Grant (ongoing)
- New Mexico Capital Outlay (annual)
- USDA Socially-Disadvantaged Groups Grant
- DHHS-ACF: Dept. of Health & Human Services-Admin. For Children & Families, Administration for Native Americans, Social and Economic Development Strategies
- New Mexico Indian Affairs Department- Tribal Infrastructure Fund (annual)
- Navajo Nation: Business & Industrial Fund and 1% Set-Aside Business Activity Tax
- Private Sector Financing
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Economic Development Grant
- New Mexico Legislative Capital Outlay (annual)
- Economic Development Administration
- Local Economic Development Act (LEDA)
- New Mexico Indian Affairs Department- Tribal Infrastructure Fund (annual)
- Navajo Nation: Business & Industrial Fund and 1% Set Aside Business Activity Tax

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# Appendix 4: Resiliency

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## Resiliency

Extreme weather, sea level change, and changes in environmental conditions threaten the considerable federal investment in transportation infrastructure. FHWA is working with States and metropolitan areas to increase the health and longevity of the Nation's Highways through:

Assessing vulnerabilities

Considering resilience in the transportation planning process

Incorporating resilience in asset management plans

Addressing resilience in project development and design

Optimizing operations and maintenance practices

State and regional transportation agencies across the country are facing an increase in extreme weather events that damage roads, bridges and other transportation facilities. Heat waves, drought, storm surges and heavy downpours are becoming more frequent and severe. These climate change and extreme weather events pose significant risks to the safety, reliability, effectiveness, and sustainability of the Nation's transportation system. FHWA is now requiring that long-range transportation plans develop a Resiliency section and this section only is a start at working towards a full vulnerability assessment framework as shown herewithin.

Extreme weather events can profoundly impact transportation infrastructure. Adaptation involves adjusting the way the transportation community plans, designs, constructs, operates, and maintains transportation infrastructure to protect against impacts caused by changes in climate and extreme weather events. Creating a more resilient transportation system is a priority for FHWA and is consistent with a U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) policy statement in June 2011 on climate change adaptation. (See: <http://www.dot.gov/docs/climatepolicystatement.pdf>). The policy statement noted DOT's intention to integrate consideration of adaptation into its planning, operations, policies, and programs, and described some of the guiding principles.

In 2019 thru 2020 we learned about the impact that health pandemics can make on available funding for infrastructure including transportation with the COVID-19 Virus Pandemic. With the closure of most small businesses nationwide, for extended periods of time and limitations on public gatherings, we anticipate a significant decrease in available tax revenues, which could have a multi-year impact on available transportation funding, or funding for any other kind of infrastructure, while citizens are distancing with masks.

From the Northwest New Mexico Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), below is a matrix of vulnerabilities both in terms of weather, natural disasters, as well as regional disruptions and national/international disruptions. It also identifies planning, programs, or projects that could reduce risk of these vulnerabilities.



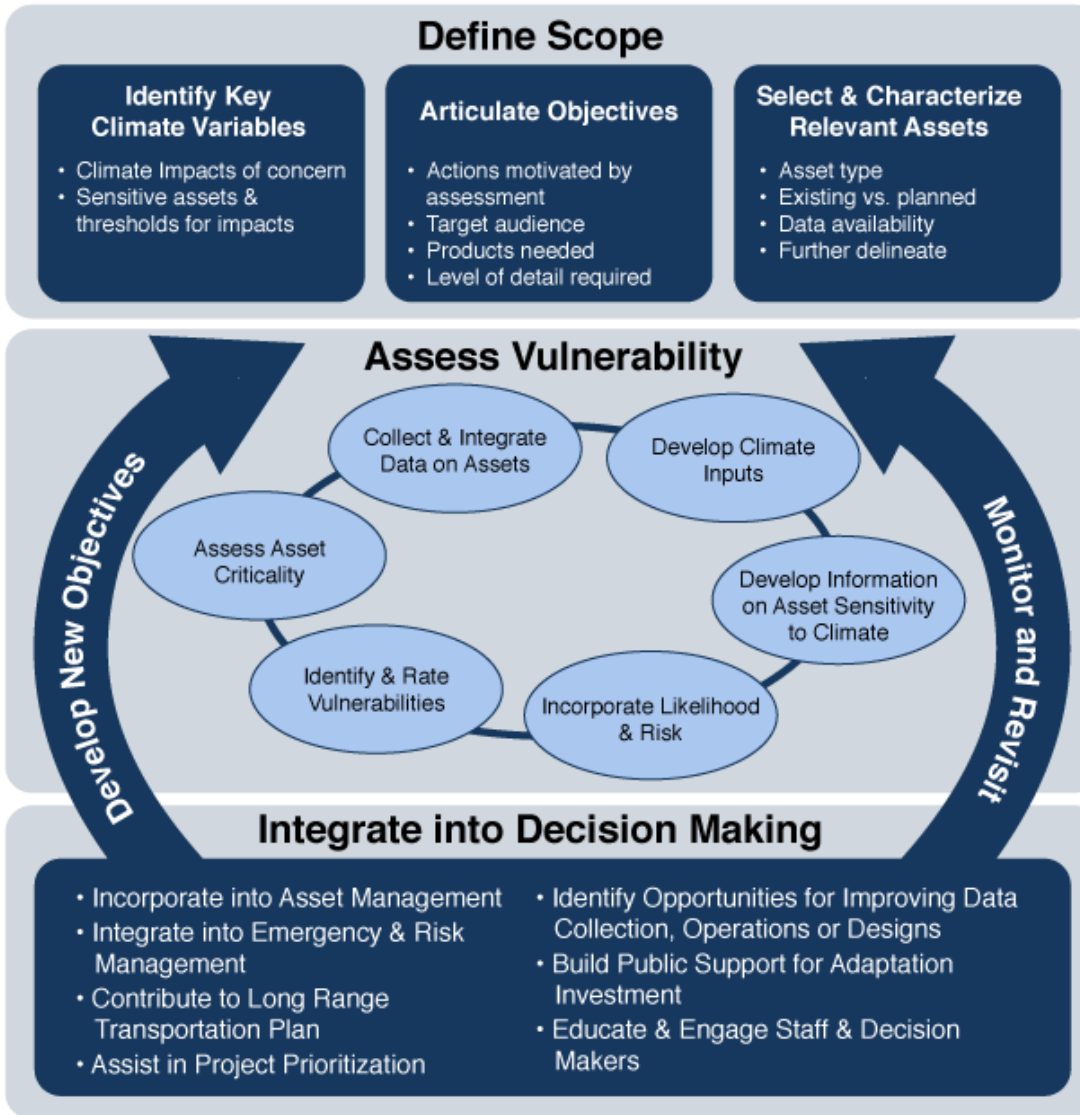
### NM CEDS Economic Resiliency Matrix

Weather	Natural Disasters	Regional Disruptions	National/International Disruptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Flashfloods:</b> Drainage Planning and project development across jurisdictions; properly sized culverts</li> <li>• <b>Severe winter weather:</b> clearing snow; inter-agency emergency agreements for road maintenance; food shortages; temporary shelters</li> <li>• <b>Wind</b></li> <li>• <b>Heat</b></li> <li>• <b>Dust Storms:</b> warning signs; soil treatments; working with property owners</li> <li>• <b>Desertification:</b> magnifies this issue and makes road improvements themselves more intensive.</li> <li>• <b>Lack of Road Network and Emergency Routes:</b> many communities only have one way in and out (need to build this into decisionmaking process)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Drought-</b> Drought Management Plan Water Conservation Plans; Regional/State Water Planning</li> <li>• <b>Fire-</b> Forest Thinning, Prescribed Burns, Fire Fighting Resources, Training</li> <li>• <b>Flooding-</b> Forest Restorations, Erosion Control, Watershed Management</li> <li>• <b>Extreme Weather -</b> Emergency Preparedness Plan</li> <li>• <b>Earthquakes-</b> Emergency Preparedness Plan, International Building Code</li> <li>• <b>Spills-</b> Gold King Mine spill</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Boom/Bust Cycles of extractive industries-</b> concerted effort to diversify regional economies</li> <li>• <b>Contaminated water/food supply-</b>EPA, NMED, National Guard</li> <li>• <b>Infectious Disease Outbreak –</b> NM Health Department, CDC</li> <li>• <b>Hazardous Waste</b></li> <li>• <b>Terrorism –</b> Homeland Security ○ <b>Key Infrastructure Attack/Bombing</b> (I-40, BNSF, natural gas pipelines, utilities)</li> <li>• <b>Military Base/National Labs Reduction</b></li> <li>• <b>Brownfields and Superfund Sites</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Oil overstock disrupting pricing markets</b></li> <li>• <b>Global and National Recession</b></li> <li>• <b>Climate Change</b></li> <li>• <b>Lower cost of fuel/electricity</b></li> <li>• <b>Energy alternatives</b></li> <li>• <b>Reduction in Federal spending</b></li> </ul>



**Vulnerability Assessment Framework:**





In FHWA’s 2013-2015 Climate Resilience Pilot Program: Outcomes, Lessons Learned, and Recommendations Report (July 2016), FHWA invested in a 2013-2015 Climate Resilience Pilot in Arizona, where the Arizona DOT (ADOT) team conducted a study to identify hotspots where highways are vulnerable to associated hazards from high temperatures, drought, and intense storms. The project focused on the Interstate corridor connecting Nogales, Tucson, Phoenix, and Flagstaff, which includes a variety of urban areas, landscapes, biotic communities, and climate zones and presents a range of weather conditions applicable to much of Arizona.

Illustrative project findings and key outcomes includes the following:  
 “Because the study scope covered a 300-mile stretch of highway, it helped screen for areas that require a closer analysis of specific assets’ vulnerabilities. The study found that while temperature increases may reduce winter maintenance and operations costs, extreme heat may also require a reevaluation of design standards for heat-resistant pavement and affect protocols for construction windows and worker safety. The assessment also found that future precipitation and wildfire trends are uncertain, though increases in the magnitude of events could pose a threat to ADOT assets.”

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# Appendix 5: Opportunity Zones

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## What Are Opportunity Zones?

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An Opportunity Zone is an economically-distressed community where private investments, under certain conditions, may be eligible for capital gain tax incentives. Opportunity Zones were created under the [law by President Donald J. Trump on December 22, 2017](#), to stimulate economic development and job creation, by incentivizing long-term investments in low-income neighborhoods. There are more than [8,760 designated Qualified Opportunity Zones](#) (PDF) located in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and five United States territories. Investors can defer tax on any prior gains invested in a Qualified Opportunity Fund (QOF) until the earlier of the date on which the investment in a QOF is sold or exchanged or until December 31, 2026.

### EDA and Opportunity Zones

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) provides strategic investments through competitive grants that foster job creation and attract private investment to support development in economically distressed areas of the United States.

EDA is encouraging our economic development partners to think of Opportunity Zone investment as a new arrow in their quiver to not only enhance ROI for business interests, but also to encourage the public/private partnerships needed to drive private investment to distressed areas. Steps EDA has taken to prioritize Opportunity Zones, include:

In FY18, EDA issued a [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) that made Opportunity Zones eligible for funding from EDA, through its special needs category, even if the area would not meet EDA's economic distress criteria.

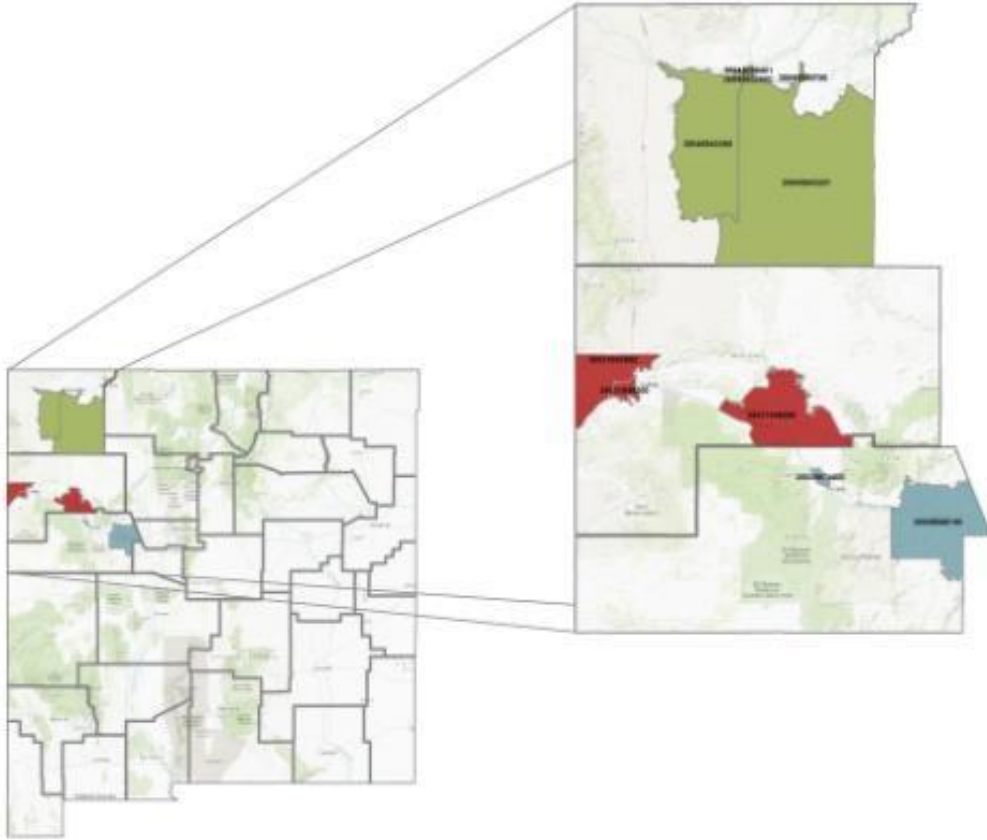
In June 2019, EDA added [Opportunity Zones](#) as one of its five Investment Priorities to help significantly increase the number of catalytic Opportunity Zonerelated projects we can fund.

As part of the White House [Opportunity and Revitalization Council \(WHORC\)](#), Assistant Secretary Fleming is providing overviews of EDA's role in the initiative at Opportunity Zone roundtables that are bringing together local elected officials, business leaders, community groups, and others across the country.

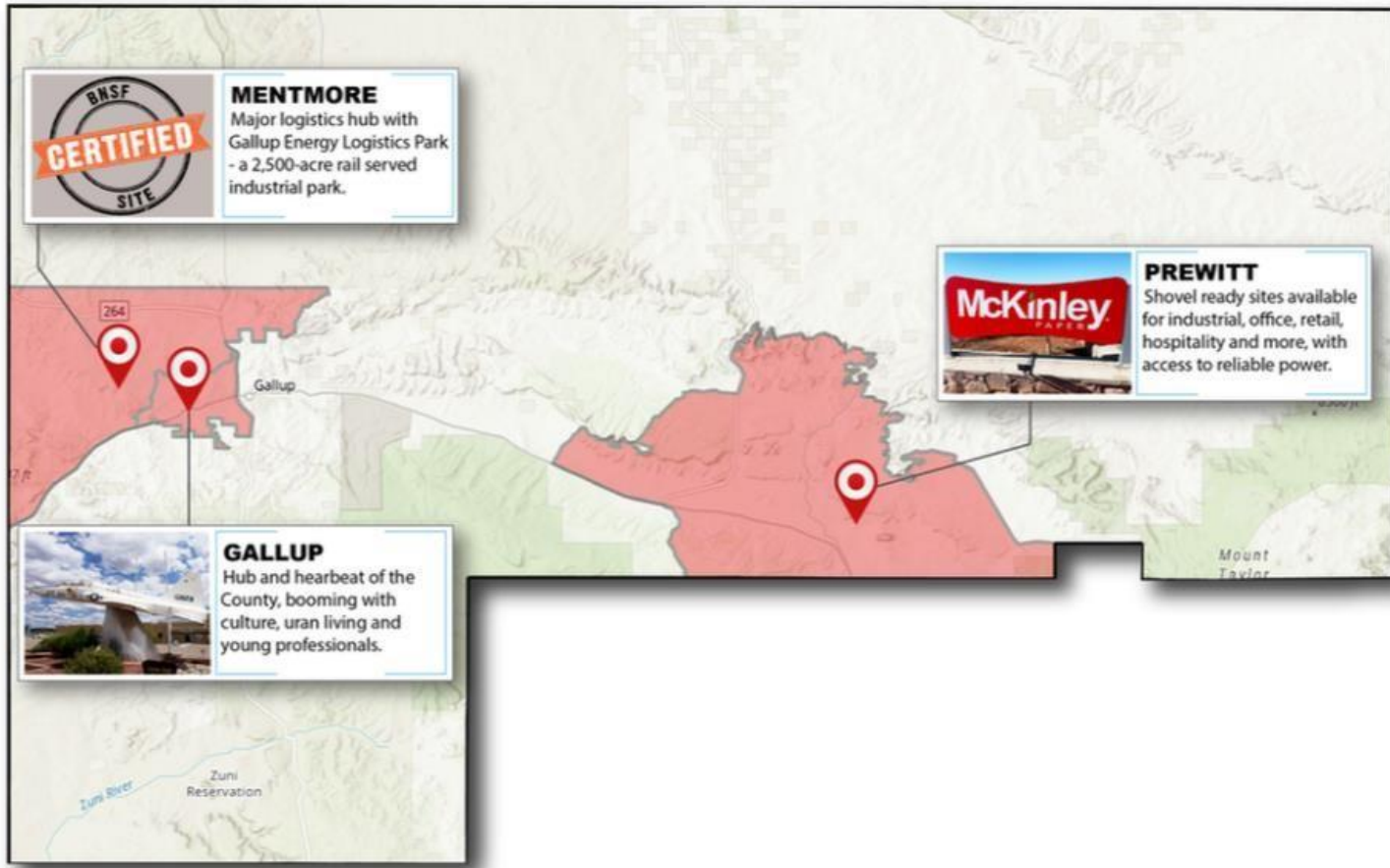
## Opportunity Zones in Northwest New Mexico

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Northwest New Mexico has actively engaged in the EDA Opportunity Zones program. The region has a total of 10 opportunity zones (OZs) that span across the three-county region. 2 Opportunity Zones are in Cibola County, 3 in McKinley County and 5 in San Juan County. The Opportunity Zones located in the region are a mixture of rural and semi-urban zones that focus largely on economic based industrial development but does provide opportunity for other industry sectors including retail trade, Educational Services, Health Care & Social Assistance, Manufacturing, Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation, and Transportation & Warehousing to name a few.



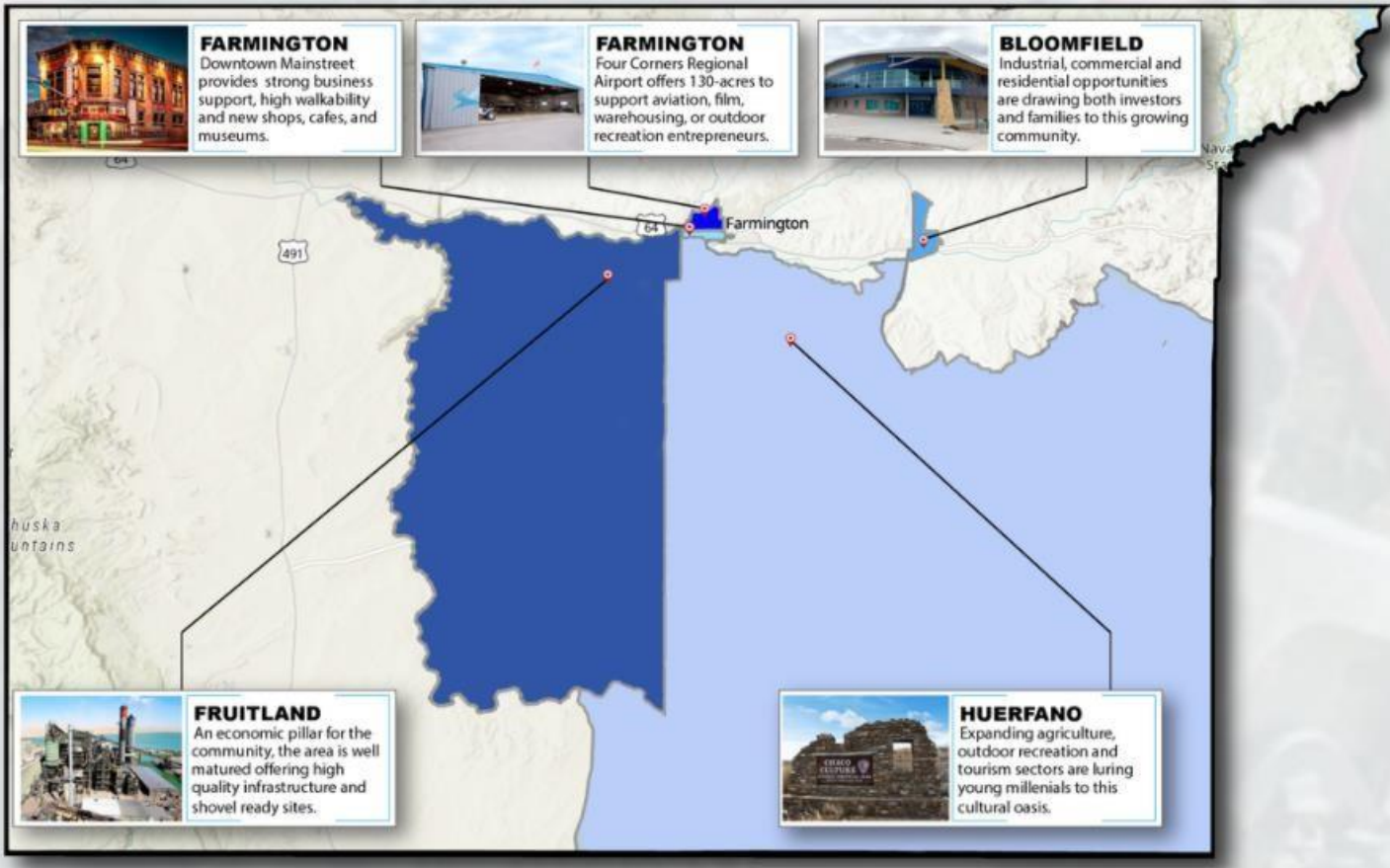
# McKinley County



Download our McKinley County Community Profile at:

[http://www.nwnmcog.com/uploads/1/2/8/7/12873976/mckinleycounty\\_communityprospectus\\_final\\_3\\_.pdf](http://www.nwnmcog.com/uploads/1/2/8/7/12873976/mckinleycounty_communityprospectus_final_3_.pdf)

# San Juan County



Download our San Juan County Community Profile at:

[http://www.nwnmco.gov/uploads/1/2/8/7/12873976/sanjuancounty\\_communityprospectus\\_final.pdf](http://www.nwnmco.gov/uploads/1/2/8/7/12873976/sanjuancounty_communityprospectus_final.pdf)





Download our Cibola County Community Profile at:

[http://www.nwnmcog.com/uploads/1/2/8/7/12873976/cibolacounty\\_gozprospectus\\_final.pdf](http://www.nwnmcog.com/uploads/1/2/8/7/12873976/cibolacounty_gozprospectus_final.pdf)

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# Appendix 6: Resolutions

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**NORTHWEST NEW MEXICO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**

106 West Aztec Avenue  
Gallup, NM 87301  
Phone: (505) 722-4327  
Fax: (505) 722-9211

US Economic Development District #1  
NM State Planning District #1  
www.nwnmcog.com  
Executive Director: Evan Williams

**RESOLUTION NO. 2021-03**  
of the NWNM Council of Governments Board of Directors  
Supporting the Northwest RTPO Regional Transportation Plan

Adopting and Approving a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)  
for the Northwestern New Mexico

- WHEREAS, the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) is finalizing the New Mexico Transportation Plan (NMTP) for the State of New Mexico; and
- WHEREAS, the NMDOT requested that the Northwest New Mexico Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) staffed by the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments (NWNMCOG) develop a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for the area covered by the RTPO; and
- WHEREAS, the RTP developed by NWRTPPO for our region and its communities will be incorporated into and as part of the overall NMTP; and
- WHEREAS, Northwest COG staff coordinated its RTP update planning process to align with the NMTP, both of which were updated in FFY2021 according to federal policy and guidance; and
- WHEREAS, the RTP provides a basis for planning and programming transportation projects within the NWRTPPO area; and
- WHEREAS, the NWRTPPO Joint Technical & Policy Committee and Northwest Regional Working Group has worked with NWRTPPO staff to develop goals, objectives, and performance measures for our Regional Transportation Plan; and
- WHEREAS, a draft RTP was released for public review on September 15<sup>th</sup> for a 60-day comment period and an opportunity for direct public comment was provided as part of a NWRTPPO monthly public meeting; and
- WHEREAS, stakeholder and public comments were compiled and recommendations were made by NWRTPPO to the NWRTPPO Joint Technical & Policy Committee on September 9, based on consensus NWRTPPO staff finalized the RTP; and
- WHEREAS, on January 13<sup>th</sup>, the Northwest New Mexico Regional Transportation Planning Organization (NWRTPPO) passed a resolution in support of the Northwest Regional Transportation Plan; and

"Leading the Field to Empower Communities and Move the Region"



**NORTHWEST NEW MEXICO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**

106 West Aztec Avenue  
Gallup, NM 87301  
Phone: (505) 722-4327  
Fax: (505) 722-9211

US Economic Development District #1  
NM State Planning District #1  
www.nwnmcog.com  
Executive Director: Evan Williams

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments Board of Directors that the Northwest New Mexico Regional Transportation Plan is approved, adopted, and recommended to the New Mexico Department of Transportation for inclusion in the New Mexico Transportation Plan for the State of New Mexico and use by the NWRTPPO staff and its members for implementation.

**PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED** by the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments Board of Directors at a duly called meeting held on January 20, 2021.

SIGNED:

Billy Moore, Chairman  
Board of Directors

ATTEST:

Evan Williams, Executive Director  
Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments

"Leading the Field to Empower Communities and Move the Region"

## Northwest RTPO

NORTHWEST NEW MEXICO REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
designated by the New Mexico Department of Transportation

administered by  
NORTHWEST NEW MEXICO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
306 West Aztec Avenue  
Gallup, NM 87301  
(505) 722-4327  
www.nwrtpo.org

RAYMOND CONCHO, JR., RTPO COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN  
JEFF IRVING, RTPO COMMITTEE VICE-CHAIRMAN

### RESOLUTION NO. 2021-01 of the Joint Technical & Policy Committee of the Northwest RTPO

#### Adopting and Approving a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for Northwestern New Mexico

**WHEREAS**, the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) is finalizing the New Mexico Transportation Plan (NMTP) for the State of New Mexico; and

**WHEREAS**, the NMDOT requested that the Northwest New Mexico Regional Transportation Planning Organization (NWRTPO) staffed by the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments (NWNMCOG) update the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for the area covered by the NWRTPO; and

**WHEREAS**, the RTP developed by NWRTPO for our region and its communities will be incorporated into the NMDOT LRTP as and where appropriate; and

**WHEREAS**, Northwest COG staff coordinated its planning process to align with the NMTP, both of which were updated in FFY2020 according to federal policy and guidance; and

**WHEREAS**, the RTP provides a basis for planning and programming transportation projects within the NWRTPO area; and

**WHEREAS**, the NWRTPO Joint Technical & Policy Committee and Northwest Regional Working Group has worked with NWRTPO staff to update goals, objectives, and performance measures for our Regional Transportation Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, a draft RTP was released for public review on September 15<sup>th</sup> for a 60-day comment period and an opportunity for direct public comment was provided as part of a NWRTPO monthly public meeting; and

**WHEREAS**, stakeholder and public comments were compiled and recommendations were made by staff to the NWRTPO Joint Technical & Policy Committee on September 9, based on consensus NWRTPO staff finalized the RTP; and

**WHEREAS**, on January 13, 2021 RTPO staff presented the Northwest Regional Transportation Plan for adoption, at which time, the RTPO membership endorsed the plan for strategic development and maintenance of transportation infrastructure and services for the NWRTPO region of McKinley, San Juan and Cibola Counties along with the communities and tribes therein, along with the process for evaluating and ranking projects for financing; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Northwest New Mexico Regional Transportation Planning Organization Joint/Technical & Policy Committee that the Northwest New Mexico Regional Transportation Plan is approved, adopted, and recommended to the New Mexico Department of Transportation for supportive reference toward the NMDOT 2025 Transportation Plan update for the State of New Mexico and use by the NWRTPO staff and its members for implementation.

**PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED** by the Joint Technical & Policy Committee of the Northwest Regional Transportation Planning Organization at a duly called regular meeting of the Committee held on January 13, 2021.

SIGNED:



Dave Deutsawe, Chairman  
RTPO Joint Technical & Policy Committee

ATTEST:



Robert Kuipers, NWRTPO Planning Staff  
Northwest RTPO Program  
Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments

MEMBERS OF THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION FOR NORTHWEST NEW MEXICO

MEMBERS OF THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION FOR NORTHWEST NEW MEXICO

Cibola County San Juan County	McKinley County City of Gallup	City of Grants Village of Milan	Navajo Nation Pueblo of Zuni	Pueblo of Acoma Pueblo of Laguna
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