

Section 1: Comments Received During the Formal Comment Period.

These comments were received during the formal comment period for the 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (March 1 through April 7, 2011).

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

5/4/2011

Thanks for your presentation to PIC on Thursday 4/7/11.

If the MTP is about identifying challenges out to 2035, why do you not feel it would be advantageous to at least recognize the need for one or two I-25 interchanges beyond Paseo de Volcan? If the intent is to guide residential and commercial development, I would think developers could be required/encouraged to expand in controlled directions and locations. I would also think the planned extension of east-west roads both north and south of I-25 would be advantageous.

Also, in your presentation you showed a Eugene bus traveling on a median. You also talked about the cost of a Rio Grande river crossing and the problems with related infrastructure. I would like to hear a discussion some time about the feasibility of a river crossing just for track or road mass transit.

Response:

Response Date:

5/4/2011

Thank you for your interest in the 2035 MTP and accept my apologies for the delay in responding to your email.

Here are some thoughts on your comments.

You mentioned additional interchanges on I-25 past Paseo del Volcan but I assume you meant I-40 because that is where PdV meets an interstate. The 2035 MTP does identify an additional interchange on I-40 beyond the West Central/Paseo del Volcan interchange. There is be an interchange for the new western alignment of Paseo del Volcan. There is also a new interchange proposed at 118th Street which is east of the West Central interchange. These are shown on map 3-4 on page 3-23. I-25 will also have new interchanges for Mesa del Sol Blvd (not yet built) and just south of Los Lunas for the new river crossing arterial.

Regarding planning arterials to guide development, that is something we have been discussing. In the next couple years we will be updating the Long Range Roadway and Transit plan. One of the consequences of doing so would be encourage development in areas served by planned arterials and transit lines.

Currently, the Rio Metro Regional Transit District is conducting a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) study to connect the NW Metro area with the I-25 corridor. The study will identify both short term and long term projects to implement and incrementally expand a BRT system across the river. The concept of transit-only lanes or bridge will be investigated. The Request for Proposals (RFP) has been issued and the study should be underway later this year. We would be happy to include you on our mailing list of public meeting notifications, etc.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

4/7/2011

I wish to comment on the 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan and the Final Draft of the FY 2012-2017 Transportation Improvement Program and corresponding Amendment to the FY 2010-2015 Transportation Improvement Program. My greatest concern stems from the daily influx of approximately 75,000 cars to the main UNM campus, which surely must seriously degrade the air quality of the immediately surrounding neighborhoods. Therefore, I strongly support the aspects of these plans that promote alternative means of transportation that are more efficient than single occupant vehicles. I specifically urge that these options be developed in accordance with air quality measurements in the neighborhoods. This might, for example, lead to drastically reduced use of cars on this campus, with direct shuttle bus service from more distant collection points like the transportation center at the Coronado shopping mall. UNM should be proud to make this important contribution toward the protection of the health of residents in nearby neighborhoods and the more general reduction of the gases that cause global warming.

Response:

Response Date:

4/8/2011

Thank you for your interest and comments on the MTP. The best way to answer some of your questions is to point you to the latest study being done by MRCOG and CNM/UNM. This is a travel demand study that I believe will help to address many of these suggestions/concerns. You can read more about it on the web at <http://www.mrcog-nm.gov/transportation-mainmenu-67/metro-planning-mainmenu-188/unm-cnm-study>. This report outlines some near term activities that can be undertaken to help achieve project goals and goes on to recommend that the effort continue and pursue the development of an inter-jurisdictional Travel Demand Management Strategy and a formal Alternatives Analysis. The Alternatives Analysis, which would require additional funding, would identify and assess potential transit technologies and alignments that would best serve the transit demand in the corridor. A preferred alternative (technology and alignment) would be identified and eligible for potential federal funding for design, environmental and eventual implementation.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

4/5/2011

We are fortunate to have the Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments, its regional focus and its formidable technical analysis tools.

I would like to encourage MRCOG to employ these attributes in the strongest possible manner in the service of aligning land use and transportation planning and policy.

While the chapter discussing such a link and the Appendix illustrating a process for compacting growth are encouraging, they are, as well, almost frightening in their tentativeness.

We need regional policy with regard to where and how growth occurs and we need to tie our investments in infrastructure to that policy. Further, we need an entity with the authority to forge the discussion and decision making that creates that policy and the authority to enforce that policy.

It is a good thing that all of the governmental entities in the region are talking to one another but that is not enough to create the quality of existence and sanity of investment that we seek in this region. Take a look at what you have projected to happen to VMT, time spent in transit, and the need for \$ over the next 25 years. Pick a table, any table. It's a story told again and again.

The integration of land use policy with transportation policy and planning is a rich vein, and the yield from that vein could be hugely beneficial. Generating the political will and the new thinking that will be required to mine it is a formidable task, but one that I hope will be taken on – and soon, not as a vaguely defined “future direction”.

I'd like to give two examples of how integrating land use and transportation might work. One is small and very specific, the other is broad.

1. It is our great good fortune to have several train stations now. They could be huge influences on the surrounding land uses and the surrounding land uses could hugely influence not only the ridership but how the stations themselves work. I am not aware that these mutual positive influences have been explored, much less that there is a policy of maximizing the value of these significant transportation investments by requiring (or even encouraging) supportive land uses adjacent to them.

2. The entire MRCOG region suffers from too much housing and too little employment on the west side of the river. This imbalance will contribute more and more significantly to a decline in our quality of life and it is already the dominant contributor. A regional entity could decide to incentivize employment on the west side. A regional entity could decide to assess west side housing for its impacts on river crossings, the streets they give onto and on major east side intersections crossing these streets. It would not be necessary to undertake such an assessment if an incentive program were in place for west side employment.

But where is such employment to be located? It can't be in the old St. Joseph's Urban Center (which is still on the books) because that has become housing and someday a shopping center. It can't be in the 7-Bar Industrial Park because that has become Cottonwood retail and big box center. Volcano Mesa looks promising, but we have seen promising become housing and shopping. Areas along I-40 seem like a natural but why are they not becoming employment centers?

We can't just recognize that we have a jobs/housing balance problem. We can't just wring our hands. We have to say we have an excellent location (let's say a genuine alternative to Journal Center) for your business on the west side, and maybe the location is in Rio Rancho but everybody – from Los Lunas to Albuquerque to Algodones -- supports it.

Thank you for all that you do. I hope you will consider doing more in the area of integrating land

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

use and transportation policy and planning.

Response:

Response Date:

4/8/2011

Thank you for your comments on the 2035 MTP. Your thoughts are right in line with the regional discussions we are having with our boards and committees. While the MRCOG is not an entity responsible for making policy decisions, it is surely our responsibility to encourage and facilitate discussions that transpire into action at the local level. Certainly the projected growth in the MTP has generated a great deal of discussion and translate into some concrete steps at the local level to plan for the kind of congestion and quality of life issues that arise from a 'business as usual' approach.

Your point about exploring land use surrounding train stations that promote ridership and the stations place in the community is excellent and an avenue we have pursued vigorously with our work in the area of transit oriented development. MRCOG planners have worked closely with each community with a rail station to design a station area plan that incorporates the unique nature of each community and maintains a focus on maximizing multimodalism, accessibility, and an appropriate mix of uses. Please visit the 'Station Area Plans' section of the MRCOG website (www.mrcog-nm.gov) where we the station area plans are available for viewing.

Your second point related to jobs housing balance is one of exceptional attention among our boards and committees and we believe that this issue will gain momentum and translate into some positive actions at the local level. As you pointed out, Volcano Mesa is one promising area that may absorb a large amount of employment, and there is certainly more potential to be realized for employment on the Westside. This will actually be the follow up to the Compact Development Scenario in Appendix C, as we will develop "Jobs Housing Balance Scenario. More to come on this. . .

MRCOG sees an opportunity through our committees and boards and a genuine willingness to work together for the greater benefit of regional mobility and sustainability. While we are not a planning authority, there are positive steps being taken at the local level that contribute to the regional good and we see those only increasing in the future.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

4/5/2011

First of all, I would like to congratulate you on putting together a fantastic document. I found it to be very well written and easy for a non-specialist like myself to navigate and understand.

I was happy to see that the draft plan envisioned transit service playing an important role in providing mobility. However, I have some observations/questions/recommendations about the details of several of the proposed (and existing) routes:

1. Proposed Rio Rancho BRT line: Why is the proposed placement along US 550 / Paseo del Volcan / Unser Blvd, which is largely undeveloped currently? Why not place it along NM 528 which is an existing employment (including Intel) and housing corridor? Placing this line along NM 528 would encourage more compact development than the proposed alignment. If and when the planned development of Rio Rancho ever does come to fruition, this proposed alignment can be added.
2. Proposed SW Mesa BRT line: This line will link a badly underserved, low-income area of AMPA to downtown, Rail Runner and other BRT lines. Does the planned Bridge Blvd renovation incorporate BRT-only ROW, or at least provide for queue-jumpers?
3. Proposed NW Mesa BRT line: Park and Ride-oriented transit is less than ideal (most tail-pipe pollution occurs when warming up a car to operating temperature), but is better than having commuters cross the river in Single Occupancy Vehicles. The east end of the proposed route is along Jefferson, but why don't we take this opportunity to place it along the North Diversion Channel in BRT-only ROW instead and link up with the proposed Montgomery BRT line (see below)?
4. Proposed Montgomery BRT line: At the east end, this route ought to be sure to pick up the CNM Montoya campus north of Montgomery off of Juan Tabo; At the west end, it should extend beyond San Mateo, all the way to the North Diversion Channel, thereby providing access to Lovelace Women's Hospital and the high density housing along Montgomery between San Mateo and I 25. It could then run south in dedicated ROW along the North Diversion Channel all the way to the UNM/CNM area. This line would thereby link NE Heights residential areas with relatively large numbers of UNM/CNM users directly with the campuses, increasing the likelihood of them using transit.
5. Regarding current and improved service to UNM/CNM: Why can't the existing BRT routes running along Central turn south onto University for less than a half mile, stop at Coal for CNM students, then turn back up University to rejoin Central where it turned off. Eastbound passengers intending to go to UNM could have the option of disembarking at the SW corner of the campus before the bus made the turn onto University if they chose to do so. This minor change would have a large benefit for CNM students/facility/staff at minimal cost to other riders.

In addition to these specific changes to these proposed routes, I would also like to see MTP 2035 incorporate roadway improvements such as queue-jumper lanes and signal priority along existing as well as proposed routes.

Regarding bicycle and pedestrian facilities: Realistically, bicycling and walking are going to be used for local trips and for access to transit, not for long-distance work commutes. I think the highest priority should be for projects (such as the bridge across Coors at PDN trail or the intersection of Alameda Blvd and Coors/Corrales Rd .) that improve local non-vehicular accessibility to employment/shopping and to public transit lines. Second priority should be given to improving crossings of the freeways and the Rio Grande. Lowest priority should be given to building new recreational trails or improving the continuity of existing trails. Analysis should be performed around Park and Ride stations on existing and proposed BRT routes to identify improvements that would encourage walking and bicycling to the stations in question (Bike and Ride, as it were). Bicycle storage facilities should also be incorporated into planning for BRT stations and stops.

Finally, I would propose that the "Compact Scenario" be made the baseline plan. It is clear that

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

doing things the same in the future as we have in the past will only result in an outcome that is unsatisfactory for everyone involved. The "Compact Scenario" is not a panacea, but is certainly a step in the right direction.

Thanks for your attention and for all the hard work you put into the MTP 2035.

Response:

Response Date:

4/8/2011

1. Thank you for your comment about the Rio Rancho BRT line. The actual corridors have not been selected yet but rather this is a preliminary conceptual plan and evaluation. Further study will need to take place. For long term planning, Unser/Paseo del Volcan is ideal for ensuring the needed right-of-way is acquired and infrastructure put in for rapid transit. NM 528, however, will also be assessed for providing more express service in some form. 2. MRMPO is working with Bernalillo County as a partner in the process for the Bridge Blvd corridor plan. BRT is going to be analyzed as part of this plan, including items such as queue-jumpers to determine how best to ensure that BRT can be incorporated into this corridor. 3. Park and Ride is much more ideal and more likely to be used in this area and can significantly impact taking single occupancy vehicles off the bridge crossings. Thank you for these excellent suggestion we will consider your recommendations in the development of the BRT plan. 4. Also excellent recommendations that will be assessed. 5. Currently, there is a CNM/UNM travel demand study being done by MRCOG and CNM/UNM that will help to address many of your suggestions/concerns. You can read more about it on the web at <http://www.mrcog-nm.gov/transportation-mainmenu-67/metro-planning-mainmenu-188/unm-cnm-study>. This report outlines some near term activities that can be undertaken to help achieve project goals and goes on to recommend that the effort continue and pursue the development of an inter-jurisdictional Travel Demand Management Strategy and a formal Alternatives Analysis. The Alternatives Analysis, which would require additional funding, would identify and assess potential transit technologies and alignments that would best serve the transit demand in the corridor. A preferred alternative (technology and alignment) would be identified and eligible for potential federal funding for design, environmental and eventual implementation.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

4/4/2011

I am a resident, biker and builder here in Abq. Here are my thoughts on saving money and getting what we want at the same time.

My sister-in-law works for Metro in Portland Oregon and deals with transportation planning including bicycle paths. Some of you have met her and have consulted with her in the past. She was in Abq. While the bike path was being built along Academy east from San Mateo. Here was my question to her that also applies to all future Abq. Projects.

Why did we tear up both sides of the road including curbs and gutters (times 2) and make 2 bike paths when we had ample room to build a path down the center of the oversized median?

I summarize in my thoughts below:

1.We should not be using road engineers and road construction design criteria to build bike paths. They do intersect and need to work together, but watch out for projects that are over designed.

2.It is easy to spend tax-payers money and present an "A+ Cherry Project" with our name on it, when there could be less expensive methods to achieve safe, attractive alternatives.

3.We don't have to spend the entire amount allocated for a project. People should be recognized and rewarded for their creative money stretching ideas that bring projects in under budget. How about a plaque that says "This project came in under budget by \$25,000.00 because Sarah and John found ways to do the job less expensively ...etc." And the money saved went to starting the next bike project earlier than planned.....

4.I noticed that there are 8 benches aimed at the new round-a-bout at Masthead and Tiburon NE. Have you ever sat and watched traffic at a busy intersection? It makes you feel sick and you have to leave. There are only a few benches on the bike path along Tramway from Central, north to the Tram. Can we move those unused benches?

5.A modern swing set with padded ground can cost \$750,000.00. When we were kids, a pile of dirt on the playground was the focus and center of all other activities. We loved that simple, inexpensive and fully adequate play mound.

Keep up the good fight. Stretch and conserve every way possible. Ask the contractor that is awarded the next project if they would give some of their profits, without favoritism or breaking the law, toward another project. You might be surprised. Be creative; consider those dollars as yours and you have to make them do more than the normal city contract would allow.

Response:

Response Date:

4/7/2011

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

The safety issues of putting a multi-purpose path in the median outweigh the cost savings.

MRCOG is pursuing a Complete Streets Policy that takes into consideration the needs of all roadway users: pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders and motorists, in the planning and development of roadway projects. Often taking into the consideration of pedestrians and bicyclists when roadways are first built lead to savings because expensive retrofitting projects are not needed later on – retrofitting project such as narrowing medians in order to provide bicycle lanes.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

4/4/2011

Problems

Bottlenecking just north of the Big-I @ Comanche Rd and @ I-25 @ Paseo del Norte northbound. Coors southbound @ Sequoia to I-40 was improved with the Coors I-40 Interchange.

What should be done

The grid system in Albuquerque works well! I think it needs to follow through to all areas of growth.

Response:

Response Date:

4/8/2011

Currently, the NMDOT is conducting an operations study for the North I-25 Corridor between the Comanche Interchange and Tramway Interchange. This study is evaluating the short term and longer term access needs for the interstate along with the adjacent frontage road system. The study is being closely coordinated with the I-25/Paseo del Norte Interchange Study to ensure that all system performance evaluations and project recommendations are consistent with each other and that the full build out of the corridor provide the most optimal set of improvements to facilitate mobility and safety within the corridor. This particular ramp configuration at Comanche (assuming you are referring to the northbound direction) is being proposed for mitigation with several alternatives being considered. Note that the southbound direction is also included in the recommendations. Further, the I-25/Paseo del Norte Interchange Study is nearing completion with numerous ramp and lane reconfigurations included in the proposed final design. Funding constraints necessitate that both projects consider phased implementation, therefore, each of these projects will likely be built over a period of time. Since both studies are currently under way, no final recommendation has been arrived at, however, both projects do have websites for more detailed project information. See www.i25pdn.com We agree that the grid system works well, as do most other planners and engineers. However, available right of way and topology issues tend to preclude the grid from being fully implemented in the entire region.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

4/2/2011

The Board of Directors of the Bicycle Coalition of New Mexico (BCNM) urges the MRCOG, in its 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, to support and fully fund a complete, connected network of bicycle facilities, both east and west of the Rio Grande, each facility meeting or exceeding standards spelled out in the "AASHTO Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Bicycle Facilities" draft, soon to be approved, guidelines seen here:

<http://design.transportation.org/Documents/DraftBikeGuideFeb2010.pdf>

BCNM urges the MRCOG to follow the best practices adopted by planners and engineers in Platinum-level Bike Friendly Communities: Davis, CA, Boulder, CO, and Portland OR, (see <http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/bicyclefriendlyamerica/communities/>) if the AASHTO guidelines are silent, or otherwise found to be insufficient.

Response:

Response Date:

4/7/2011

MRCOG coordinates the allocation of federal transportation funds and develops long range plans such as the 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. MRCOG's role in the region does not include designing and constructing projects. However, although we do not design bicycle facilities, we do strive to provide a comprehensive transportation network.

Our effort to fully fund the bicycle network is demonstrated by project prioritization of federal funds. Projects that include bicycle and pedestrian elements receive higher priority points. This way many bicycle projects get completed as part of roadway projects. Due to this funding prioritization nearly 40 percent of all projects in the MTP have a bicycle or pedestrian element in them if they are not already a non-motorized project. This effort to fund bicycle projects can also be seen in 2010 Benchmarking Report from the Alliance for Bicycle and Walking where Albuquerque has the highest per capita spending of 2004-2008 federally obligated transportation funds in the nation.

Although MRCOG does not design projects, included in this MTP is a Complete Streets initiative. As MRCOG carries out this transportation plan over the next four years, we hope to adopt a Complete Street policy and encourage member agencies to also adopt Complete Streets policies. This policy sets the framework for transportation professionals to take into consideration the needs of all roadway users: bicyclists, pedestrians, transit users and motorists.

Finally, MRCOG regularly hosts training for transportation professionals in an effort to bring best practices to this region.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

4/2/2011

Hello, I appreciate the opportunity to comment, and applaud the MPO's efforts in tackling transportation planning, and your continuing efforts to face extremely difficult challenges. What follows are some thoughts regarding themes of the draft plan that could be strengthened, and additional opportunities related to transportation.

Augment existing bike path network: develop a network of bike trails as analogs to interstate highways with minimum interference from automobile traffic, extending to major centers of the area. There are simply too many interruptions and safety hazards, along with an existing network of dedicated paths that is too limited in extent, for most bikers to seriously consider bicycle commuting. But the potential for replacing vehicle traffic is huge. We recommend focusing the limited resources given to bicycle transportation on dedicated bike trails, adding key legs to the network (e.g., Albuquerque downtown), adding necessary bypasses, etc. to create a system of free-flowing bicycle highways with no/minimal interruptions.

Stop bending to neighborhood associations: the current Lead-Coal project is a tragedy for Albuquerque citizens apart from a relative few local homeowners. Until now, the Lead-Coal conduits were a model for efficient transportation planning and a successful legacy of early officials of Albuquerque. It's not the first time in recent years that effective vehicle transportation has suffered by the interests of a few specific neighborhoods. It may have been different if the Lead-Coal conduits were newly proposed for building through established neighborhoods; but, these roads had already given Albuquerque drivers decades of successful service and will be impossible to replace.

Albuquerque is already feeling the effects of this project in terms of traffic and air quality. The Lead-Coal project is truly a poor concept for transportation planning.

Combine transportation centers: the current downtown stations for Amtrak, Railrunner, the bus lines, and metro transportation could be combined into a grand central station relatively easily to leverage commercial and efficiency potential. It's a shame that the current centers are only a few feet apart, yet not integrated and sharing the synergy of a common center. Such a center should be rounded out with light rail connection to the airport and south valley. Various sections of corridor already exist that could make this needed service a reality.

And here again, developing a connection to the airport will only get more expensive and problematic with time.

A freeway loop should be considered through the west, from 448 north to 528 or Unser and back to I25. Alternatively, a light rail system could service the area and connecting to the Railrunner route in both the north and south. As you know this is where growth is concentrated, and will continue to concentrate. Adding lanes, widening bridges, improving interchanges, and so forth are locally effective strategies, but don't provide a systematic solution to burgeoning population centers and commuter ways.

Again, I thank you for the opportunity to provide input to an extremely important planning process. As you know your measures will have ramifications for decades, and will require not just smart solutions, but courage to address long-term needs against short-term frustrations. Thank you for your efforts.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Response:

Response Date:

4/8/2011

The creation of free-flowing bicycle highways with no/minimal interruptions would be wonderful. The currently existing Bosque Trail provides this experience and it is very popular. The Bosque Trail also connects to the North Diversion Channel Trail. This plan includes four undercrossings on the North Diversion Channel Trail at Osuna, Comanche, Candelaria and Menaul. These improvements will provide a nearly completely "free-flowing" trail between the Los Ranchos Rail Runner Station, the Journal Center and the University of New Mexico.

This plan also includes improvements and overcrossings along Albuquerque's Bear Canyon Arroyo Trail to provide an east-west trail connection in Albuquerque's Eastside and 35 miles of new trails in Rio Ranch and Albuquerque's Westside along arroyos.

The creation of free-flowing bicycle highways with no/minimal interruptions would be wonderful. The currently existing Bosque Trail provides this experience and it is very popular. The Bosque Trail also connects to the North Diversion Channel Trail. This plan includes four undercrossings on the North Diversion Channel Trail at Osuna, Comanche, Candelaria and Menaul. These improvements will provide a nearly completely "free-flowing" trail between the Los Ranchos Rail Runner Station, the Journal Center and the University of New Mexico.

This plan also includes improvements and overcrossings along Albuquerque's Bear Canyon Arroyo Trail to provide an east-west trail connection in Albuquerque's Eastside and 35 miles of new trails in Rio Ranch and Albuquerque's Westside along arroyos.

Planning and implementing trail projects have many challenges that keep the region from constructing more trails. There is not much available land on Albuquerque's Eastside to provide space for trails. This is why trails are often located along utility easements and arroyos. Due to the lack of space there are no trails planned to connect to Downtown Albuquerque. Fortunately, there is strong evidence that a broad range of facilities and initiatives increase levels of cycling. This plan also includes 181 miles bicycle lanes and programs that provide education and encouragement of cycling, walking and using public transit. Although trails are very important, we find that we cannot rely solely on them for non-motorized transportation.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

3/16/2011

I feel that often-times the debate about cycling (and other forms of alternative transportation) vs. driving a car gets bogged down in small details and we miss the big picture. My statement "Alternative Transportation" tries to focus on the big picture for the greater Albuquerque Metro area.

In light of the latest 2010 U.S. Census data published yesterday, I hope you will agree that the issue of improving the safety of everyone who chooses a form of transportation other than a car or truck is a real issue.

We need to start today to address these transportation issues we face. You can help this process by adding perspective to the public discourse. House Bill 68 is something that Duke City Wheelmen Foundation has backed for just this reason; we have to improve the safety of alternative road users for the benefit of all.

Response:

Response Date:

4/7/2011

MRCOG sees "Alternative Transportation" as bicycling, walking and taking public transit. Our public outreach in the area has found that people who feel they have access to many different modes of transportation are more satisfied. Also, in the analysis for the plan, traffic congestion is predicted to get much worse by the year 2035. Because this region is limited in the space available to add lanes to roadways and additional bridges across the Rio Grande River are contentious, this Metropolitan Transportation Plan looks to alternative modes to address future congestion.

Also included in this plan is a key strategy to promote bicycling, walking and transit use: Complete Streets. Complete Streets is a policy that provides the framework for transportation professionals to take into consideration the needs of all roadway users when planning and building streets. People are more likely to bicycle and walk if they can do so on comfortable and well maintained bicycle lanes, shoulders, trails and sidewalks.

Finally, included in this plan is the goal of reducing fatal and injury crashes by 2.3%. This is in support of the New Mexico Comprehensive Transportation Safety Plan to have a 50 percent reduction in all crashes by the year 2030.

Section 2: Comments Received Prior to the Formal Comment Period

These comments were submitted prior to the formal comment period for the 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

10/18/2010

Thank you for the meeting. I thought it was very productive in ideas.

We believe that large darkgreen area to the West of us here in the South Valley is unworkable. 10,000 people won't be able to move. Rio Bravo is backed way up in the evening already. I got stuck in it the other night. I'd seen it before, but never experienced the stop and go. From where I got on at 2nd, to Isleta where I turned off, I spent half an hour waiting. That usually takes 5 minutes.

Further disadvantage to the development is lack of water. The river is running dry.

Response:

Response Date:

10/19/2010

Thank you for your comments. I have entered them into the record for the 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. This plan seeks to address the rapid growth seen on the west side of the Rio Grande, given the constraints of a fiscally constrained transportation plan.

We hope that the plan we are revising addresses this growth to your satisfaction. I share your sentiment that water (more properly, the lack of it) ultimately will be a great constraint on growth.

Thank you for interest in the Plan, and for your comments. If I may be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me directly,

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

10/15/2010

Problems:

Congested passage on Main St during rush hour & school traffic. Several times a year the bridge and part of Main St are totally closed, making getting across totally impossible for several hours because of parades. Throw in road construction that's regularly done on the only street from one side of the river to the other.

Future:

Put in another corridor across the river, soon! It would be nice to have more pick-up times on RailRunner and more cars going to Santa Fe. It's standing room only by the time it gets to last couple of stops in Albuquerque. Also need more bike lanes for bicyclists.

Response:

Response Date:

3/16/2011

Main Street (NM 6) has experienced a tremendous increase in travel demand over the years, hence the purpose of Los Lunas Transportation Corridor Study currently underway. The study is tasked with considering current and future travel conditions to identify appropriate project levels of mitigation to serve this demand. Anticipated from this study is an additional East West corridor to increase overall travel capacity and travel options across the river, however, additional attention to construction and "special event" travel conditions present additional circumstances that can be addressed with other, more creative approaches to mitigating congestion. Those can include efforts associated with the common-practice of establishing temporary traffic control plans for construction activities whereby a specific transportation plan is developed specific to the actual construction phasing taking place, or the increased application of Intelligent Transportation Systems whereby electronic devices can be deployed along the roadway to facilitate remote travel conditions monitoring by transportation agencies to allow for quicker response to changes or increases in congested travel conditions.

Numerous public input opportunities are part of the study process, and these comments will be forwarded to the study team accordingly.

This plan includes eight projects that will result in bicycle lanes being built in Los Lunas that will provide 5 miles of additional lanes for approximately 11 million dollars.

These projects are:

- Courthouse Rd from NM 314 to Los Lentos Rd
- NM 314 from Morris Rd to NM 6 (Main Street)
- Carson Drive bicycle lanes from Castillo Street to NM 6 (Main Street)
- Camelot Blvd bicycle lanes from the southern Village boundary to NM 6 (Main Street)
- Los Lentos Rd bicycle lanes from Morris Rd to Castillo St
- Castillo St bicycle lanes from Los Lentos Rd to Carson Dr
- Sun Ranch Village Rd bicycle lanes from Bachelor St to NM 6 (Main Street)
- Morris Rd Bicycle lanes from the western Village boundary to Los Lentos Rd

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

10/12/2010

No pressure from me. I just couldn't make the meeting last week and can't go tonight either. I am interested first in what is being proposed. Then, like others, I'll be interested in finding out what folks thought and then what the results of all that are. But first things first, is there a place on line where the initial proposals can be found?

When I read Ms. Watkins' ppt about population projections, (http://www.mrcog-nm.gov/images/stories/pdf/transportation/2035_mtp/2035Forecast_BCCommission2.pdf), I was struck by the phrase: "Given current development patterns and plans, the region is projected to dramatically increase its developed land area." Whatever happened to Focus 2050 and the idea that we wouldn't just sprawl? What about suggesting to the County and the City, for instance, that higher densities on the mesas might be a good policy?

Response:

Response Date:

3/28/2011

This is a great question. While Focus 2050 continues to be an important document and the only example to date of a Regional Plan that addresses long-range land use, it unfortunately was never adopted by local governments and has therefore not realized its potential as a guiding force in local planning efforts. This past decade we have seen over 20,000 acres developed into residential use, thus expanding our residential footprint by 25%. If this continues, 80,000 more acres will be consumed by 2035. However, it is important to understand that while the 2035 forecast presents one picture of growth based on current patterns, the metropolitan area is not bound to it. MRCOG believes there is an opportunity to renew efforts towards Regional land use planning activities and recognizes a willingness by member governments to work together to address some of the complex issues facing the metropolitan area that pertain to growth. Seizing this energy and pursuing regional collaboration regarding land use strategies will be a key area of emphasis in the future.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

10/7/2010

You're on the wrong track.

Get a meeting of Warren Buffet, Mr O'Laughlin of the MagLev manufacturers in Pennsylvania, the representatives from the Navajo nations and a mostly privately funded, low cost, effective, green-environment approach that has already proved effective elsewhere.

Response:

Response Date:

3/30/2011

Thank you for your interest in the 2035 MTP. Please contact us with more information about your interest in setting up a meeting. For more information about transit in the 2035 MTP please take a look at Chapter 3 Public Transportation and Passenger Facilities and the BRT Scenario provided in Appendix B of the 2035 MTP.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

10/7/2010

1. Add lanes to Paseo del Norte, possibly add level like Oakland Bay Bridge
 2. Use reversible lanes on Montano and Paseo
 3. Expand capacity on US 550
-

Response:

Response Date:

No contact information was provided for this comment.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

6/9/2010

(Problems)

It is focused on the Rio Grande Corridor and the City of Albuquerque. What about us up here in the East Mountains?

(What Should Be Done)

Hwy 14 is a State Bike Route for 6 miles from I-40 north to Frost Rd. What about extending the bike route all the way up to the Rail Runner station at [NM] 599 By-Pass? Then road bikers could ride one way on the Turquoise Trail National Scenic Byway, and take the train home!

Response:

Response Date:

3/16/2011

There are several projects in this MTP that would improve non-motorized mobility in the East Mount area. Here is the list:

Construct a multi-use trail along NM 333 from Tramway to NM 14

Lead Agency: Bernalillo County

Location: From Tramway to NM 14

Cost Estimate: \$4,700,000

Frost Rd Trail Extension

Lead Agency: Bernalillo County

Location: From Camino Alto to Valle Hermosa Rd

Cost Estimate: \$700,000

NM 14 Trail Extension

Lead Agency: Bernalillo County

Location: From Frost Rd to La Madera Rd

Cost Estimate: \$400,000

Mountain Valley Rd shoulder improvements to widen shoulders to accommodate bicycles and improve safety

Lead Agency: Bernalillo County

Location: From I-40 to the section with existing shoulders

Cost Estimate: \$300,000

Frost Rd shoulder construction

Lead Agency: Bernalillo County

Location: From Vallecitos Dr to Mountain Valley Rd

Cost Estimate: \$200,000

Construction of new sidewalks, bike facilities, median landscaping, and ADA upgrades along NM 333 frontage

Lead Agency: Village of Tijeras

Location: From NM 333 Mile Marker 6.45 to Mile Marker 7.25

Cost Estimate: \$1,400,000

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Construction of a right-turn lane from eastbound NM 333 to Patricio Garcia Rd; designate a school bus stop and install advance "School Bus Stop Ahead" signs; develop a separated pedestrian walkway to remove peds from driving lanes; pavement markings & signage

Lead Agency: Village of Tijeras

Location: NM 333 at Patricio Garcia Rd

Cost Estimate: \$600,000

Primera Agua Pedestrian Improvements/Trail Enhancements: Install lighting, improve pedestrian access and provide ADA compliance

Lead Agency: Village of Tijeras

Location: From Village of Tijeras line (2,500 miles south of NM 333) to NM333

Cost Estimate: \$300,000 Phase I, \$200,000 Phase II

A key issue in this plan is reducing traffic congestion, in particular congestion crossing the Rio Grande River. The East Mountain area is an important part of the region; however this area will not face as severe of congestion issues as commuters crossing the Rio Grande. Efforts to ease congestion by providing alternatives to the single occupancy vehicle work effectively when destinations such as work, school, shopping, etc. are close by and with relatively dense populations. The more urban areas such as around the Rio Grande Corridor have destinations for daily needs closer by and with higher densities than the East Mountains. This leads to an emphasis to providing pedestrian, bicycle and transit in the more urban area over the East Mountains.

Although comparatively there is more focus on the Rio Grande Corridor than the East Mountains due to the issues this plan faces, the East Mountain area is not left out. There are several projects related to the East Mountains: eight projects for an approximate total of 8.8 million dollars to provide 14 miles of improvements.

Your idea to extend the State Bicycle Route to NM 599 is great. Indeed many cyclists ride NM 14 to Santa Fe to take the Rail Runner back to Albuquerque. This trip would involve the alternative modes of bicycling and rail for regional travel. However, the reason for the trip would primarily be recreational and it extends beyond the boundaries of this plan. The idea has merit, but it is not suitable for this plan.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

6/9/2010

Can't make the meeting on Sep 17 but wanted to give you my thoughts as an avid bicyclist in Albuquerque.

I bicycle for transportation.

* Bicycle racks on the bus are great! I have noticed on busy routes (e.g., Central) the racks are sometimes full, especially in the evening.

* I do not use the bike trails because of goat heads.

* The bike routes and lanes are nice but I ride mainly on Juan Tabo.

* I see bicycles on the sidewalk but that is even more dangerous because motorists do not look for fast moving vehicles on the sidewalks.

* There needs to be some major public education regarding right of way on public streets. I get cursed, yelled at, honked at, and sometimes attempted murder. I ride right next to the gutter but some people BELIEVE that bicycles DO NOT belong on the road. They go out of their way to let me know - like yell at me to get on the sidewalk or honking right next to me. Sometimes I catch up to them at a light and give them a piece of my mind. So one of these days, someone's road rage is going to turn violent. I was going by a side street one day (not even an intersection) and someone wanted to turn.

I was going up hill and into the wind. He started yelling at me to get out of the way and would have run me over if I had not veered out of the path of his oncoming vehicle. I followed him to his place of business and asked why he did this. He proceeded to threaten to kill me so I called the cops (who never showed up).

Maybe there needs to be a war, like the wild west. Or maybe some vigilantes need to clean things up. Or ... a few billboards, radio, and TV commercials could go a long way to educate the public about respecting those who save gas and the environment. With the attention on health care lately, exercise saves everyone a lot of money as well.

Response:

Response Date:

3/16/2011

Thank you for bicycling for transportation.

This plan includes some good initiatives for bicyclists on the regional level. There is an education program that includes broad media outreach to motorists about bicycles. The plan also includes an action item is to improve the connectivity of the street system. Improving connectivity would open up side streets to help bicyclists travel to destinations. This plan also includes a Complete Streets initiative. Complete Streets policy sets a framework to include sidewalks, bicycle lanes or trails in roadway projects where there is evidence that people walk or ride in the area or there will be future walkers or bicyclists that would need access.

Juan Tabo is one of the harder cases. Juan Tabo is in a part of the metro area that is new enough that it is not nestled in a grid system of residential streets. However it is old enough that the surrounding land area is built out therefore making it difficult to improve connectivity of the street system and provide bicycle lanes. There are no proposed improvements traveling north-south along Juan Tabo in this plan from I-40 to Eubank.

This does not leave you in a good position with your current commute – even though this plan also includes education targeting motorists.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Here are some options:

- 1.You can continue riding on Juan Tabo. However it is not advisable and it might get more complicated. The City of Albuquerque is beginning to investigate an overlooked law that bicyclists are not allowed on “access controlled” roads such as Juan Tabo. Access control refers to controlling the number of driveways along the roadway. Currently it is not legal to bicycle on Juan Tabo; unfortunately it is also not legal bicycle on Coors, Montano, Gibson, Rio Bravo and other roads that have bicycle facilities. The City of Albuquerque is looking at changing this law.
- 2.You can modify your route to take side streets to reach your destination. It will take more time and it will be less convenient, but it will be far more comfortable.
- 3.Sometimes people change where they work and live to be able to bicycle to work comfortably. It is a huge change, but it is not uncommon. Some developers work to make areas where people can reach their daily needs by walk, bicycle or public transit knowing that there is an active market for this kind of lifestyle.

Finally, there are many good options for goatheads: thorn proof tubes, sealant, tire liners, and thorn proof tires. If you use at least two of these options then goatheads are not a problem. If you use three them your bicycle is “bomb proof.” Goatheads are a natural nuisance to this area just as rain is a natural nuisance in the Portland area.

Thank you very much for participating and providing input.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

4/15/2010

Any plans on putting in a traffic light at Hwy 14 and Frost Rd Intersection?

Response:

Response Date:

3/28/2011

We are not aware of any such plans, however NM 14 is a NMDOT owned facility and Frost Road is a Bernalillo County facility. Any signal improvement would be championed by both of those entities and they would be most appropriate to respond.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

4/8/2010

- A member of the group articulated the need to include aesthetics into the quality of life goal. Also, the member stated the need to add aesthetics to the construction phase of projects rather than a few years down the line when materials and cost of labor increase.
 - The group expressed that the current bus system to link Rio Rancho to Albuquerque is insufficient and that commuting by automobile is more convenient.
 - Who has authority to dictate a bus route for a particular area?
 - Does the City of Rio Rancho receive money from a gas tax for new projects?
 - How was the most current transportation survey disseminated? Did the survey heavily emphasize on alternative modes of transportation? Lastly, was the survey more focused on issues east of the river?
 - Speaking in terms of air quality, what does non-attainment mean for federal funding
-

Response:

Response Date:

These comments were provided at a public meeting, responses were provided at the meeting and there was no contact information provided for a written response.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

4/1/2010

- A member of the group was concerned on whether the Quality of Life goal was physically health related and if not, could healthy lifestyle choices be incorporated into the goal's objective.
 - A member of the group expressed environmental justice concerns in respect to senior citizens having different needs with mass transit and potentially being underserved and forgotten.
 - The group conveyed the need for greater intermodal connectivity with sustainable land uses with more transit oriented development along significant corridors.
 - What is the MRMPO's roll in land use?
 - What is the MRMPO's relationship with the DOT?
 - Will new healthcare legislation provide more funding for bicycle and pedestrian facilities?
 - Is the process for project prioritization in place for the upcoming TIP
-

Response:

Response Date:

These comments were provided at a public meeting, responses were provided at the meeting and there was no contact information provided for a written response.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

3/30/2010

Long wait between buses
Not all stops have benches or covers to protect [one] from the elements
Stops / run times not clearly legible

User-friendly schedules posted on all stops
Timing between buses -- shorten wait time

Response:

Response Date:

3/30/2011

Thank you for your interest in the 2035 MTP. We will pass your specific concerns about benches and shelters on to the City of Albuquerque. The MTP calls for expanded Park and Ride, expanded Rapid Ride and a BRT network that would service in the areas you have expressed concern about. Please take a look at Chapter 3 Public Transportation and Passenger Facilities and the BRT Scenario provided in Appendix B of the 2035 MTP. In addition, MRCOG supports later service hours and increased frequency.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

3/25/2010

- Members of the group expressed the need for transit services to the new South Valley Multi-generation Community Center.
- There was an interest for intermodal connectivity from the City's Westside (bike to transit).
- The 2008 transit and intermodal facilities map along with the 2008 bicycle network map served as valuable resources for members of the neighborhood association.
- The group mentioned the need for an additional river crossing in the general region. (Gibson Blvd was suggested)

City of Albuquerque sidewalks obstructed by utility poles, despite ADA rules.

Response:

Response Date:

These comments were provided at a public meeting, responses were provided at the meeting and there was no contact information provided for a written response.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

3/23/2010

- Is the Village of Los Lunas situated in the AMPA?
 - Are there any public and private partnerships within the transportation system?
 - The group articulated the need to address traffic congestion along NM 6 during peak hours.
 - A member of the group expressed that congestion was hindering growth.
 - The group also conveyed the need for alternative modes and intermodal connectivity. They also stated that additional alternatives may help resist SOV use.
 - Overall, the assembly had a profound interest in the MPO's long range planning efforts, especially with the issue of air quality and foreseeable congestion for the interim and horizon years.
-

Response:

Response Date:

These comments were provided at a public meeting, responses were provided at the meeting and there was no contact information provided for a written response.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

3/19/2010

In the section of new homes west of Coors, north of Dennis Chavez, east of Paseo del Volcan, & south of Blake, there is no public transportation to 1) connect w/ RailRunner; 2) Sunport; 3) New Unser and Central Metro Bus Station; 4) or the closest transportation on Coors. Residents need private transportation to get around this area because we have no public transportation in our area there is no reason for people not [to] use their cars, etc.

But transportation is needed to connect w/ major medical facilities in town. Also, city and county government offices.

Buses don't run late enough in the South Valley

Needs:

Smaller buses, more routes, later hour, shorter cycle times between buses. NO fixed rail systems.

Response:

Response Date:

3/30/2011

Thank you for your interest in the 2035 MTP. The MTP calls for expanded Park and Ride, Rapid Ride and a BRT network that would service in the areas you have expressed concern about. Please take a look at Chapter 3 Public Transportation and Passenger Facilities and the BRT Scenario provided in Appendix B of the 2035 MTP. In addition, MRCOG supports expanded bus service hours and increased frequency.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

3/15/2010

I am an East Mountain Resident living in Sandia Park and received your email regarding federal funding. I work at Souder, Miller, and Assoc as a professional civil engineer and have years of experience within the transportation field. I support providing a safer intersection at N14 and Frost road. I drive through the intersection daily and have noticed cars entering N-14 from Frost road have difficulty due to inadequate sight distance and the relatively high speed of vehicles on N-14. I heard rumors of a round-about being considered for the intersection or signalization of the intersection. Please let me know if I can be of any assistance.

On a side note, I have a concern for Harms Road, located two roads north of Frost road on N-14. When N-14 was widened and reconstructed within this stretch last summer, the intersection of Harms Road and N-14 was left in terrible shape, posing a traffic hazard. Harms road entrance was lowered and a steep and unfinished entrance was created.

Water now pools near the edge of N-14 at the base of Harms road, and the steep slope during winter does not allow cars to stop properly. I have personally experienced and witness cars on Harms Road sliding into N-14 during snow events. I am surprised a major accident has not occurred. The slope of Harms Road was left steeper than what I believe is allowed by New Mexico Department of Transportation standard of 10%.

Fixing the problem would be easily accomplished by providing a drainage culvert at the entrance(which is required by county and state standards), regrading the road entrance to reduce the grade and resurfacing with gravel or ideally pavement to the edge of the N-14 right-of-way.

Do you have any recommendations as to what I should do to have this problem taken care of?

Response:

Response Date:

3/28/2011

We are not aware of any such plans, however NM 14 is a NMDOT owned facility and Frost Road is a Bernalillo County facility. Any signal improvement would be championed by both of those entities and they would be most appropriate to respond.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

3/15/2010

Need more buses and routes. Need for routes to connect all major streets for Rio Rancho and some streets in Albuquerque on the West Side. Have a system that allows students to get to school using public transportation. Outlying areas would bus students. This would free up so many students that drive to school.

Open forums in each district of RR and Albuquerque West Side. Media, social network. Residents need to know that you are serious about the transportation system. Tax incentive for a transportation company to want to come here and put a system in as a partner with the city and county.

Response:

Response Date:

3/30/2011

Thank you for your interest in the 2035 MTP. The City of Rio Rancho currently provides no bus service, though Rio Metro does provide some service within the City. Information about these routes can be found at www.riometro.org or by calling 247-1750. The MTP calls for expanded Park and Ride, Rapid Ride and a BRT network that would service in the areas you have expressed concern about. Please take a look at Chapter 3 Public Transportation and Passenger Facilities and the BRT Scenario provided in Appendix B of the 2035 MTP. MRMPO will pass on your concerns to Rio Metro and the City of Albuquerque with regards to public transportation being coordinated with school drop off and pick up times. Thank you for the additional comments on public private partnerships and public participation techniques. MRMPO is always looking for innovate financing and participation techniques and will work on forwarding some of these ideas. For more information about transit in the 2035 MTP please take a look at Chapter 3 Public Transportation and Passenger Facilities and the BRT Scenario provided in Appendix B of the 2035 MTP.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

3/15/2010

I live west of downtown, 14th, SW and Central Avenue. Suggestions from this specific vantage point:

Important to maintain graphic similarity, color identity for buses - even if make/models et al different. Comments from riders or potential riders expressing confusion as to what is public transportation and what is "gambling casino bus??" or inter-city bus? or inner-city bus? etc. Have to laugh that logo for Rapid Ride created with font and style that seems more for "curvy mountain road travel" rather than RAPID TRAVEL. Revenue important but wierd to ride bus completely encased in huge gambling ads, etc. Makes for a negative statement, hinting at a negative experience. Love the RailRunner graphics and logo - makes one just want to hop on and take a ride - anywhere!

Priority for QUIET buses especially on heavily scheduled routes such as Central. Rapid Ride and some of older buses exceed noise code limits - especially when exceeding posted speed limits which is frequent. Stressful for riders, pedestrians, commercial and residential venues!!

Consider monitoring actual ridership numbers throughout the day - while easy to say "bus every ten minutes"

observe times/schedules where bus every 15 or twenty minutes would be wise - especially when so many

other routes are so underserved both in terms of bus schedules and bus stop benches, shelters.

Spread the

service and funds a bit more evenly throughout the city and region.

Response:

Response Date:

3/30/2011

Thank you for your interest in the 2035 MTP. MRMPO will pass on your concerns to Rio Metro and the City of Albuquerque with regards to graphics on buses, benches and shelters, and noise issues. MRMPO is not involved in the day to day operations. Ridership numbers are accounted for on a daily basis and frequency is decided based in part on these numbers. As the service expands it is the intention to provide better geographic coverage, however a certain population density is often the most important factor when developing schedules. For more information about transit in the 2035 MTP please take a look at Chapter 3 Public Transportation and Passenger Facilities and the BRT Scenario provided in Appendix B of the 2035 MTP.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

3/15/2010

1) We clearly will need something at Frost & N14 in the near future. A roundabout seems the most fitting for the area and the nature of the road. Studies should proceed quickly to get this project defined and on the books before the land around the intersection is committed to other uses.

2) Project 836 - The hard surface trail and bike lane from Frost to Valle Hermosa is listed as complete but the hard surface trail only goes to the entrance to Sandia Knolls. Valle Hermosa is another mile east of the Knolls so it would appear that this project is not yet complete. The bike lane along the edge of the traffic lane does extend beyond Sandia Knolls, but not the walking trail. I understand there are also plans to box in the culverts where walkers and bicyclists on the hard surface trail must go out onto the bike lanes next to traffic to proceed.

3) As discussed in the Sector Plan meetings, some way to calm traffic around the commercial nodes would be appropriate and enhance safety.

Response:

Response Date:

3/25/2011

We are not aware of any such plans, however NM 14 is a NMDOT owned facility and Frost Road is a Bernalillo County facility. Any signal improvement would be championed by both of those entities and they would be most appropriate to respond

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

3/12/2010

Minimal public transit
Congestion is an increasing problem
Poor lighting and signage = dangerous for drivers, bikers, and pedestrians
Unreliable / inconsistent paratransit service

Expand public transit systems
Improve lighting and signs
Create highway along westside to avoid I-25 (I-25 Bypass) possibly near / along Paseo del Volcan
More bike paths and sidewalks to protect pedestrians and bikes
Check effective paratransit programs in other states and implement in NM!

Response:

Response Date:

3/16/2011

Roadway and sign design standards are established by the local agency that owns and maintains the facility, consistent with American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). Both of these guidance documents are national standards developed to ensure the safe and efficient application and operation of any device located on or within the roadway. The agency that owns the facility is responsible for the maintenance of all device installations within their right of way, and these responsibilities are conducted through their respective Street Maintenance Programs. Although these programs are designed to fully maintain the adequacy and condition of the roadway, further opportunity exists for public input to assist and identify additional needs that may be creating a hazard or that may need particular attention based on local conditions. Often times these duties are included as part of local roadway bonding programs which present additional opportunities for public input.

The need for additional North/South capacity has been a significant issue in this as well as historic MTPs. Past and current MTPs have included such facilities in the program. In particular to the 2035 MTP, the completion of Unser Blvd as a minimum 4 lane facility from Senator Dennis Chavez Blvd and US 550 has been a priority, with the majority of completion programmed by 2015 and the northernmost portion of Unser Blvd north of Progress Blvd to US550 in Rio Rancho programmed to be widened to 4 lanes occurring by 2025. The current configuration of the proposed Paseo del Volcan as a limited access facility is anticipated to serve North/South capacity needs for development on the western boundary of the region.

This plan includes a list of projects that are targeted to be completed by 2035. These are projects that municipalities such as City of Albuquerque, Bernalillo County and City of Rio Rancho anticipate pursuing federal money to fund the project. This list includes 106 miles of trails and 61 miles of sidewalks. Please keep in mind that municipalities often plan and build sidewalks with local funds. Locally funded sidewalk projects would not be included in this plan since there would be no federal money involved. The list helps to see where different projects are planned; in addition, this plan includes new analysis of trails and sidewalks as well as setting forth Complete Streets policy. The gap analysis and the Pedestrian Composite Index examines how new trails and sidewalks would help people reach destinations. These are tools to help prioritize projects and show their importance. Complete Streets policy sets a framework to include sidewalks, bicycle lanes or trails in roadway projects where there is evidence that people walk or ride in the area or there will be future walkers or bicyclists that would need access. The analysis shows where people need to reach destinations and Complete Streets

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

requires roadway projects to include facilities such as sidewalks, trails and bicycle lanes. Hopefully this will help people who already walk and bicycle, and also enable other people that want to walk and bicycle but are concerned about safety.

Comment:

Date:

3/4/2010

Montano needs premium bus service, as it is a primary E-W connection
Journal Center has poor access to Rail Runner
Signs on Rte 151 buses all say "Rio Rancho" even when headed to Journal Center
Montano terribly congested; traffic often stopped at Drain
Support for Park & Ride facility at Montano Station

Response:

Response Date:

3/30/2011

Thank you for your interest in the 2035 MTP. As we work on the BRT scenario with Rio Metro we will consider Montano. Please contact City of Albuquerque in regards to the sign on Route 151. It is the intention of this plan to support Park and Ride at the Montano station and improve transit access to the Journal Center. Please take a look at Chapter 3 Public Transportation and Passenger Facilities and the BRT Scenario provided in Appendix B of the 2035 MTP for more information. Thank you for your comments.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

2/25/2010

Questions and Comments

1. Loop roads foster economic development
 2. Paseo del Norte and I-25 reconstruction should be a regional priority
 3. Rio Rancho needs increased transit service
 4. What is MRCOG looking for from the public in the series of upcoming public meetings?
-

Response:

Response Date:

4/5/2011

Regarding the four points. 1. Loop roads do foster economic development at the interchanges of the loop roadway. This contributes to urban sprawl if the interchanges are not in areas served by transit and/or the development is "car oriented" instead of utilizing car with transit design elements. Building loop roadways in the Albuquerque area will require building additional river crossings which (at this time) no local jurisdiction is willing to agree to have one built in their area. 2. Paseo del Norte and I-25 interchange is a high regional priority as addressed in the 2035 MTP. 3. The 2035 MTP proposed additional transit in NW Albuquerque and Rio Rancho. Currently there is a BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) study underway that would provide a BRT route from NW ABQ/southern Rio Rancho to Journal Center and the I-25 corridor connecting with the Rail Runner. Other BRT routes are proposed for the NM 528 corridor and the Unser/Paseo del Volcan/US 550 corridor in the future. 4. The 3 public meeting were held and MRCOG recieved several comments on the final draft of the 2035 MTP. There has been several public outreach meetings throughout the process. The last 3 meetings were specifically held to receive comment on the final draft of the plan.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

2/22/2010

In general, the group emphasized that the southwest region of the metropolitan area was highly underserved.

The group expressed a concern in poor transit service for non-peak hours and weekend hours for the region.

The development group was unclear on the Role of an MPO/MRCOG.

The group articulated the need for an additional river crossing in the general region. (Gibson Blvd)

The assembly expressed interest in the BRT study and wanted Rio Bravo Blvd to be considered as a possible facility for the southwest region.

Response:

Response Date:

3/30/2011

The 2035 MTP plan calls for better transit service in the SW part of the region, particularly through the BRT plan. MPO will be working with City of Albuquerque on some of the issues related to the needed expansion of service hours. Please take a look at Chapter 3 Public Transportation and Passenger Facilities and the BRT Scenario provided in Appendix B of the 2035 MTP for more information.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

1/26/2010

I am an employee at the new HP Rio Rancho Campus and I heard you were the person to speak to regarding public transportation options in the City Center.

I would be very interested in some sort of transit option to get me from the Bernalillo RailRunner station to City Center. If you have any updates or a pointer to information on this, please let me know.

If there is any kind of input you need from me or would like to talk about it further, I would be happy to meet with you. Just let me know.

Response:

Response Date:

1/26/2010

Thanks for the email, I am forwarding it on to Chris Blewett with the Rio Metro Transit District for response to you. I will also include your comments as public input to 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (Currently Under Development). The following link will provide more information on Rio Metro, please follow the links to Sandoval Easy Express for information on their service from US550, and provide comments to them as well <http://www.mrcog-nm.gov/content/view/76/146/> . Also, I encourage you to take our 2035 MTP Survey, please navigate to the following link and select the public transportation survey <http://www.mrcog-nm.gov>

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

1/25/2010

I think it's time for those surveyed and you folks to acknowledge that Rail Runner-particularly the \$300+ million extension to Santa Fe was a con job-a scam on us taxpayers and we ought to now cut our losses-do more than just eliminate Saturday service.

I had read years ago the MR-COG/NM DOT environmental impact assessment of that proposed extension that was filled with far too many unsupportable bogus projections of ridership and significant population increases in Santa Fe- ignoring the fact that the population in this "City different" was going down. The study claimed the extension would cut the trip time between ABQ and Santa Fe to 50 minutes something we know isn't even close to that now. The federal government's rejection of a \$50 million MR-COG requested grant for that extension showed that somebody in D.C. had enough common sense to point out our low density just doesn't justify it. Yet the NM legislators and Governor Bill still stuck it to us taxpayers anyway and helped create the over \$500 million deficit we now have. It's an expensive toy that our Governor just wanted to leave as a legacy of his wasteful 8 years and we now need step back and get a reality check. I have ridden trains throughout the US and in Europe-where I lived for seven years and they work where the density justifies them. The recent press release to/article in the Journal attempts to portray the 13% that RR fares now pay of the annual O&M costs as somehow justified. The spoiled riders to and from Santa Fe like this high taxpayer subsidy. Time to end the honeymoon and get fiscally-responsible.

You also still have millions in the Plan to engineer the extension of the even more tax wasting \$30-40 million/mile streetcar from the downtown to the airport that should be immediately deleted. It was wasteful to spend \$32 million of our tax dollars merely to dress up Lead and Coal and to waste another \$38 million more for an interchange to nowhere at I-40 and Paseo de Volcan. Was this just job creation to do stupid wasteful things? We need to get the I-25/Paseo interchange built ASAP.

We let the anti-automobile New Urbanists (NU) dictate our transportation needs here for far too long and it's time to debunk their bogus agenda-not perpetuate it. ABQ is not Washington DC, NYC or San Francisco. New Mexico is not a high density populated state where public transit may make some sense. We don't have money to waste on NU toys.

I'll check out the survey and get other suggestions back to you

Thanks and good luck with the survey.

Response:

Response Date:

3/30/2011

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Thank you for taking the time to comment on the 2035 MTP. We will pass your comments along to the City of Albuquerque regarding the details of Lead and Coal and to NMDOT regarding the details of I-40 and Paseo de Volcan interchange. I-25/Paseo interchange is part of the 2035 MTP plan. There are no plans in this 2035 MTP with regards to a street car system.

The 2005 Alternatives Analysis for the Rail Runner report analyzed the cost of adding a new lane on Interstate-25 between Tramway Blvd. in Albuquerque and St. Francis Drive in Santa Fe. The cost was estimated at \$320 million at this time. (Note that the Rail Runner actually runs between Belen and Santa Fe, over twice this distance.) The Alternatives Analysis and other subsequent studies pointed out that the drive between Albuquerque and Santa Fe is projected to take over 2 hours in the year 2025 but I-25 isn't the only problem. The more severe congestion problems are associated with the roadway systems in the central areas of Santa Fe and Albuquerque. Building new multilane facilities into these areas (if even feasible) would cost hundreds of millions of additional dollars. In addition, pushing more traffic into the core areas would exacerbate an already serious problem with parking. The future demand for travel into the core area of Santa Fe, if accommodated all in automobiles, would require an additional 67 acres of parking.

State and Local governments spend hundreds of millions of dollars every year to maintain and re-construct low volume highways. Most of these highways carry between 1000 and 2000 cars a day and only generate 15-25 percent of the gas tax revenues required to keep these roads in a good state of repair. In fact most of the construction projects funded in the State \$1.6 billion GRIP program and \$1.2 billion CHAT program were spent on roadways. These roadways are important and provide a way for people to access services and good, jobs, health care and education. However, it's important to see the larger picture of how transportation dollars are spent. For the Albuquerque and Santa Fe Metropolitan areas public transportation is an important part of the transportation system today, and will become increasingly important in the future as this part of the state continues to grow. Growth is expected to severely diminish residents' ability to move around by auto due to congestion on the roadway system despite the investment of billions of dollars to add lanes to the roadway system and build new roadway facilities. Both Santa Fe and Bernalillo county continue to expand in population and ridership has far exceeded expectations set forth in the Alternative Analysis. Investments in Rail and Bus Rapid Transit (buses that use exclusive lanes to by-pass congestion) will be necessary to maintain some semblance of mobility in these two metro areas. The Rail Runner is the spine of this system and provides a framework for future connections.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

1/25/2010

Thank you for sending me the survey, I will send it onto others.

I read the survey and I am very disappointed. This "Transportation Survey" is a slanted survey that was written with apparent bias toward to mass transit issues. Questions about the current transportation system were simplistic and general.

There was nothing in the survey about expansion of our current network of roadways. Issues about commercial truck traffic were not included. How about bridge issues? Loop roads? How about real regional planning for the area and state?

The survey was not a survey about our current transportation but a survey slanted for mass transit. It would be nice if MRCOG was truthful and forthright with the public.

Response:

Response Date:

4/8/2011

Thank you for your comments on the transportation survey. The survey received over 3600 responses and the results were telling. One of the challenges in the Albuquerque Metropolitan Area is providing transportation options.

Demographically, respondents to the survey approximated the 2008 American Community Survey conducted by the Census Bureau.

What the survey attempted to accomplish was to assess user satisfaction with the various forms of transportation they used. We learned that where people stated that they had options to get to work or school, they reported higher levels of satisfaction with the transportation system in general.

Results from the survey and detailed analysis may be found at the MRCOG website:
<http://tinyurl.com/42u3luw>

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

10/13/2009

We need to run the 66 Central bus, as well as Lomas bus (because of UNM Emergency Room) 24 hours a day. In the cold weather the homeless could keep warm all night.

We need to give single mom's (and their children) free bus service. ALSO - low income riders should be given a much lower bus pass. Please continue to tax gasoline.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Response:

Response Date:

3/30/2011

Thank you for your interest in the 2035 MTP. Riders with low-incomes can be provided with assistance with bus passes through programs funded by the Federal Transit Administration such as Job Access Reverse Commute. Rio Metro facilitates this program. We will pass your comments along. The 2035 MTP recognizes the need for longer bus service hours and will be working with the City of Albuquerque on expanding service. Please take a look at Chapter 3 Public Transportation and Passenger Facilities and the BRT Scenario provided in Appendix B of the 2035 MTP for more information. Thank you for your route suggestions – we will send your comments on to City of Albuquerque as they are in charge of detailed operations.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

9/24/2009

We have a choice of that the MTP is

Pessimistic view: MTP simply ranks projects that are being pushed by the member agencies. The board members' interest is getting the most money for their district.

Optimistic view: MTP is a long range plan expressing the will of the people. The board uses their power to direct billions of dollars towards meeting their campaign promises.

Does the COG charter or federal MPO legislation mandate the pessimistic view? How could the process become more public and more about the issues, and less about the projects?

Need to have JAMP (Justifiable by human needs; Abstract; Measureable; Programmatic (able to be affected by policy)) goals

1.Climate stabilization. Measure = annual transport CO2e emissions. Target value = zero.

2.Safety. Measure = annual traffic deaths + 10% traffic injuries. Target value = zero.

3.Congestion reduction. Measure = annual delay hours per capita. Target value = zero.

Need to develop multiple scenarios

Single scenario planning > Band-aids on the choke points > Only slows the bleeding.

Multi-scenario planning > Creative, comprehensive system changes > Heals the system.

Examples:

Core highway network (25, 40, 2nd St, Montano, Coors) versus Volcan/loop concept?

Advanced transit network or major BRT network > Eliminate need for highway projects?

Which scenario results in the best projected goal measures? Without multiple scenarios we don't know.

Multi-scenario planning is an opportunity to coordinate MTP with land use planning, even though the state/fed doesn't require it.

Letter to the editor

Our cities are largely shaped by long range transportation and land use plans. A "plan" is a set of steps to create a future different from the one that would come about without a plan. Plans are fundamentally about change. Using that definition, many of our long range plans aren't really plans at all, because they call for very minor changes in infrastructure, despite projections of large changes in energy supplies and demographics. I've been studying the 25 year plan for the Albuquerque metro area. This document starts by explaining the problems, such as worsening congestion, and ends with a multi-billion dollar project list, which – you guessed it – will make congestion even worse. It's failed engineering because the solution doesn't meet the stated requirements. It's also failed democracy because the solution doesn't manifest the will of the people. This type of planning is common and it underpins our inability to solve the problems caused by auto-dependent cities.

Response:

Response Date:

3/14/2011

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

The 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan is designed around the regional goals of quality of life, mobility for goods and people, and promoting economic growth and vitality. MRCOG planners sought and received input directly from the public about their perceptions of the transportation system and the various strategies to achieve the Plan's goals. In addition, MRMPO has to satisfy numerous federal planning factors. Chapter 5 of the Final Draft 2035 MTP includes many targets for air quality, safety, congestion, and many other objectives. These are designed with the goals of the Plan in mind.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

9/22/2009

What is not working in the transportation system for the long run is the need to focus developments in TOD districts and near term light rail study focusing on two possible lines below. The LRT studies in the past focused on just getting along major existing car routes and did little to evaluate long term focus on the Comprehensive plans and focus of those plans on major urban centers and employment centers.

Scrapping of streetcar/trolley system for ABQ till densities are redeveloped along the line to at least 35 DU/acre +.

Suggest realistic study of West side from Downtown ABQ electrified light rail with route across Montano up Coors up Calabacitas to min Rio Rancho and looping northward to Bernalillo and consideration of this system to link with Rio Rail in Bernallilo. East side rail from Downtown to UNM north campus, Indian School Road to flyover to Uptown to link to City RAPid Ride at Uptown BLVD thru ABW and Winrock new urbanist center , flyover and mainline I-40 with stops at Wyoming, Juan Tabo, Tramway Tijeras, and out to Edgewood.

Adoption of best practice standards for bike/poedestrian uses above and beyond ASHTO Fed DOT standards including review of worldwide practices to adopt such as lighting, asphalt vs. curb widths in bike lanes (like the fiasco happening on Academy with bikes having to ride the crack between the two to stay in the bike lanes, colorizing bike lanes, widening bike lane striping. Simply put more emphasis on safety thru design and paying for it within the plan.

Still looking for NMDOT to fix little things like the pedestrian connectivity between Spruce Park neighborhood and Albuquerque High.

Would like to see bike boulevards with full signal tripping systems for this mode of travel. Ditto for bike trails in the city crossing major arterials with just a caution light for the drivers. At issue is the utility of this public investment for alternative modes when it's still not user friendly. Let the cyclist/pedestrian have the ability to trip a full traffic signal at these locations TBD thru evaluation of conflicts during peak traffic periods.

Response:

Response Date:

3/30/2011

Thank you for your interest in the 2035 MTP. Transit Oriented Development is a highly recognized need in the 2035 MTP, in addition to developing more integrated land use and transportation planning. In Chapter 6 Future Directions there is a discussion of integrating land use and transportation planning that would include comprehensive plans and major activity centers. Thank you for the light rail suggestions. As the MPO develops the BRT plan these suggestions will be considered keeping in mind that light rail could also be a possibility in the future. Please take a look at Chapter 3 Public Transportation and Passenger Facilities and the BRT Scenario provided in Appendix B of the 2035 MTP for more information.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

9/22/2009

Our Transportation Plan needs to reflect our long-term vision of what type of Cities, Counties, and Region we want to be.

So do our Land Use Policies. And so, in order, we need:

1. A consensus on what type of region - physically and operationally - we want to be. We can define this consensus through a public process like Envision Utah, which was started some 8-10 years ago. MRCOG could lead the process.
2. Land use policies - adopted by all jurisdictions in the region (after all, they will be part of the process) - that will bring about that consensus.
3. Transportation facilities that will serve those land uses, and meet citizens' mobility preferences and choices.

I was recently in Amsterdam, where I saw with my own eyes that of ALL trips, approximately:

- 1/4 are walking
- 1/4 are cycling
- 1/4 are transit
- 1/4 are motor vehicles

This is not the result of ancient or medieval history. This is the result of public policy choices they have been making there for the past 30 years, that have matched transportation facilities with land use policies and the resulting physical structure of their city.

It works very well! Why can't we have that here? It is certainly in the traditions of the urban places in Spain and Mexico, our antecedents.

I am happy to volunteer to participate in any such process. Sincerely, Rob

Response:

Response Date:

3/28/2011

Thank you for your comments. Your thoughts are exactly in line with the future direction of our planning efforts. The Future Directions section of the 2035 MTP outlines some broad areas for future emphasis that include working to align land use strategies and transportation planning in a sustainable and integrated process. You are exactly right that in order for this to be successful, it will need to be a collaborative effort that involves all jurisdictions in the region. The Sustainable Communities Initiative released a grant opportunity that would have supported the funding for an endeavor similar in scope to Envision Utah but unfortunately our application was not selected. We still intend to pursue many of the steps outlined in that grant application as well as future grant opportunities. We believe that there is an opportunity that can be seized from the economic recession that allows planners, politicians, and the public to pause and consider how we want to go forward in terms of growth in the region with an emphasis on sustainability and quality of life.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

9/17/2009

Some roads/streets adversely affect pedestrians and pedalcyclists. Shoulders are not safe for cycling because pavement is lower grade. Drivers are licensed without adequate knowledge of other modes of transportation. They do not know how to operate their vehicles safely around pedalcyclists.

Create alternatives facilities for commuter cyclists and pedestrians. Plan roads with this vehicular mode and pedestrians in mind. All drivers should take bicycling safety class to legitimize the rights of cyclists to be on the road.

Do you keep a baseline of bicycle ridership on trails, bike lanes, or routes and how it has increased? (Bosque Trail, Tramway).

Create a count of bike riders in each quadrant of the city where bikes travel on a regular basis.

Response:

Response Date:

3/16/2011

Complete Streets is an initiative that is included in this plan. Complete Streets policy sets a framework to take into account pedestrian and bicyclist safety and comfort in the planning, design and construction of roadway projects when there is evidence that people walk or ride in the area or there will be future walkers or bicyclists that would need access. This initiative includes building higher quality shoulders.

Education for both motorists and bicyclists is also part of the plan. City of Albuquerque's Parks and Recreation Department gives presentations to driver's education classes for new drivers and also presents to City of Albuquerque employees and Bernalillo County employees that are seeking permits to drive government vehicles. Another, less direct method of motor vehicle training comes through this program's children's classes. Here children learn how to be safe on the road. Although these children are not driving age, they are taught roadway safety and they are encouraged to share what they learn with the people that drive them around. Many adults leaned to "buckle up" in the late 1980's due to nagging children.

Driver's License education is developed at the University of New Mexico Public Law Institute through their Traffic Safety Center. Since Driver's License education is developed state-wide, it is beyond the scope of this regional plan. Here is a link to Driver's Education Curriculum if you are interested in seeing the sections concerning bicyclists and pedestrians
<http://transportation.unm.edu/pubs/DEcurr/DE%20Curriculum-complete.pdf>.

We keep track of various pedestrian and bicyclist counts in the region. For example, the City of Albuquerque recently completed a Master Bicycle Plan that included bicycle counts and pedestrian counts on trails. In cooperation with Bernalillo County a trails count system is being developed to count bicyclists and pedestrians at eight different trail locations. This count program will continuously count trail users. This will be helpful to see trends due to weather and daylight. The MRCOG vehicular count program uses pneumatic tubes to count vehicles driving over the tubes. The MRCOG count program is planning which locations to count bicyclists around the region as well. Unfortunately, this technology does not also count pedestrians. Currently, based on count data alone, there is not enough data to determine if there has been an increase in bicyclists in the region. With more systematic counts we will better be able to tell the other factors related to people getting out by bicycle. With this information we will better be able to determine if more people are getting out by bicycle.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

9/17/2009

I will be unable to attend your meeting on September 17th but wanted to offer these comments on any proposed transportation plan for Albuquerque. I am the President of the Huning Castle Neighborhood Association which has 400 residences within its boundaries and is located in the immediate vicinity of the Albuquerque Country Club in downtown Albuquerque. Our boundary is next to the Central Avenue corridor between the downtown area and Old Town. The City of Albuquerque has been studying Central Avenue for many years and currently is looking at a "Great Streets" program that would slow down traffic on Central by reducing it to three lanes and adding features that would make this street more friendly to pedestrians and cyclists. Our Association fully supports this initiative and believes these steps are necessary to rehabilitate the central core of our city and make it more attractive for visitors and residents. We sincerely hope that whatever plans are adopted by MRCOG, they do not conflict with this goal of ours. Thank you for considering these comments.

Response:

Response Date:

3/28/2011

MRCOG works closely with our member agencies to coordinate all transportation planning efforts; this includes consideration of all local planning efforts and planning documents in the development of the 2035 MTP Plan, as appropriate. All local transportation planning efforts conducted by our member agencies including the City's Great Streets project you mention are done in coordination with us. This project is currently programmed in the 2012-17 Transportation Improvement Program and the 2035 MTP with intent to guide corridor improvements across the metro area.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

9/3/2009

Thank you for the postcard about the MTB 2035 Public Kickoff Meeting.

Representing Bedrock Partners, a group that has owned 250 acres at the proposed crossing of Unser and Paseo Del Norte since the 1980's, I have to submit the attached PDF file for the Board to consider. We have actively tried to nail down a transit plan for this area since 2005. I have had discussions with Wilson & Company, the Albuquerque transit department, the mayor, and Mr. Rael. We had Dekker, Perich, and Sabatini draw up a concept street plan patterned after the Volcano Heights plan.

I know we are waiting for more tax dollars to be collected for roadway construction, but given the development that has happened all around this area, 2035 is much too distant for this traffic point. While I will try to be at the September 17th meeting, I don't believe this issue need be on that agenda--it should be dealt with much sooner than that!

Response:

Response Date:

3/30/2011

Thank you for your interest in the 2035 MTP. MRMPO and Rio Metro are working with the City of Albuquerque on a transit plan for this area, in particular a Bus Rapid Transit plan for the area around Unser and Paseo del Norte. Even though this plan is through the year 2035 this does not mean that the construction of roadway or transit will not occur until 2035. The Metropolitan Transportation Board adopted a resolution to start funding the BRT network in year 2016. As for details on cross-sections – the City of Albuquerque would be better equipped to discuss those details. Please take a look at Chapter 3 Public Transportation and Passenger Facilities and the BRT Scenario provided in Appendix B of the 2035 MTP.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

9/3/2009

I will not be attending this meeting, but I wanted to voice a suggestion I have for Rio Rancho Transportation. One of the questions on the postcard is "What would you like to see in the near term?" My answer is that I would like to see the public bus system expanded to include all of Rio Rancho. My sister is mildly mentally retarded. She does laundry at a Rio Rancho hotel. She does not have a driver's license and does not drive. Therefore, she has to walk to work and shopping from her apartment. We need buses to go all the way to Bernalillo and also further down Southern to Unser with several places to get on and off. Basically, what I'm saying, is that we NEED a transportation system. In my opinion, Rio Rancho's transportation system is ineffective if not absent. We have tried calling Rio Transit, and get no person on the phone. I think they are overwhelmed. This is a huge need in Rio Rancho - reliable, extensive public transportation. Thank you for your time.

Response:

Response Date:

3/30/2011

Thank you for your interest in the 2035 MTP. The City of Rio Rancho currently provides no bus service, though Rio Metro does provide some service within the City. Information about these routes can be found at www.riometro.org or by calling 247-1750. Rio Metro is responsible for the operations of Rio Rancho transit at this time. MRCOG is working on updating a plan for providing transportation for the elderly, disabled and low-income called the Coordinated Transportation Plan. This information will be useful for identifying regional challenges for these specific populations. The MTP also calls for expanded Park and Ride, Rapid Ride and a BRT network that would serve the Rio Rancho area. Please take a look at Chapter 3 Public Transportation and Passenger Facilities and the BRT Scenario provided in Appendix B of the 2035 MTP. City of Albuquerque would be able to answer more specific questions about the expansion of Rapid Ride.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

8/30/2009

I received a postcard announcing this meeting on 9/17 and asking for comments/involvement. I transcribed all the information into my weekly e-mail for the neighborhood.

But now I have looked at your web page and find no mention of the 2035 meeting. Several 2030 entries, but nothing for 2035. Especially on your calendar for September 17.

I will look again before I send the e-mail. If 2035 is still missing, it will be deleted from the e-mail.

Response:

Response Date:

8/31/2009

I'm glad you received our postcard announcing the public kickoff for the 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. The website for the 2035 MTP should be accessible before the day is over, but will not include much information because we are at the very beginning of the process. Please do not eliminate anything from your email notice because we are interested in hearing from as many folks as possible. If there are questions that you or any of your neighborhood association members have, please don't hesitate to call or email me.

We are required by federal law to update our metropolitan plan every four years. The current 2030 MTP is still in effect until such time as we complete the 2035 MTP, which must be done no later than June 30, 2011. The link on our website to the 2030 MTP could be helpful because it provides a sense of the magnitude and complexity of our long range planning efforts. We expect to find that some of the issues that were prevalent for the last plan are still important and that some of them have changed. At any rate, as we progress through our planning process over the next 15-18 months, our 2035 MTP website will change to reflect updated information. We hope to see you and many of your members on September 17th.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

3/24/2009

AARP is delighted to join T4America, the Transportation for America Campaign, an impressive group of organizations, elected officials and businesses with the shared goal of building a modernized infrastructure to support livable communities where people can live, work and play. America is aging rapidly and transportation policy and spending must acknowledge this demographic shift. The upcoming transportation authorization can help the nation prepare both for its graying years and a greener future by making roads safer for drivers of all ages and also offering more user friendly options for pedestrians and transit users.

In 2030 nearly 71 million people will have reached age 65+, doubling the retirement age population since 2000. Seventy-eight million Boomers born between 1946 and 1964 began turning 62 this year and the last of this group will turn 65 in 2029. In order to help them reach their goal of moving about safely into their 70's, 80's, and beyond, federal, state, and local policymakers need to improve the safety of roads, bridges, and sidewalks, but also improve the availability and accessibility of public transportation and paratransit services.

AARP looks forward to working with T4America, Congress and the Obama administration to advance a transportation system that provides mobility for all regardless of age or functional ability.

Response:

Response Date:

3/14/2011

The 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan recognizes that America's population is aging and that better transit services are needed to preserve mobility for all people, including those unable to drive themselves. In addition, MRMPO works with the human services transportation staff at the Regional Transit District to insure that adequate services are provided to seniors.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

7/11/2008

By 2030, more than 71.5 million people will be age 65+ and drivers 65 and older will represent a quarter of all drivers. With less than a generation to spare, we must build consensus around how to keep the roads safe for everyone. We must empower safe drivers to stay on the road for as long as possible, and we must create options for at-risk drivers so they are free to hang up their keys without losing their mobility.

Investment now in research to develop effective ways to identify at-risk drivers will make the roads safer for everyone as our population ages and we applaud the AAA Foundation for affectively addressing part of the challenge of licensing from a variety of perspectives: health, driving fitness, and family and community involvement. Further, AARP supports AAA's recommendation for regular, in-person driver license renewal for all.

The closer engagement of the medical community and the expansion of services helping at-risk drivers transition out of driving will make it easier for those who should hang up their keys.

AARP is optimistic that by focusing on the challenges raised by a growing population of older drivers, we will help make roads safer for everyone and for generations to come. Left turn lanes and signals, improved lighting and better signage will reduce driving mistakes and save lives of all ages. Cars themselves are becoming safer and emerging technology will improve their safety even more.

Finally, we all have a responsibility to monitor our own driving skills and those of our family members, young and old. As today's report states, 'Driving is considered a privilege but mobility is a human right . . . people who cannot drive safely should not be allowed to drive, but there must be good options for them to get around once they stop driving.

Response:

Response Date:

3/30/2011

The 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan recognizes that America's population is aging and that better transit services are needed to preserve mobility for all people, including those unable to drive themselves. In addition, MRMPO works with the human services transportation staff at the Regional Transit District to insure that adequate services are provided to seniors.

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

My initial 1/25 e-mail general comments are again shown below.

After completing the survey, I too was disappointed (as was Steve Wentworth below) with how horribly biased it was toward public transit, bicycles and non-vehicular travel. The manner in which you frame your questions seem intended to lead the trusting and unsuspecting survey takers to your desired outcome-answers. I suspect it may eventually be used to promote rail-the streetcar and an extension to Rail Runner here at the expense of good well-maintained roads and an adequate bus system. Our leaders have already been irresponsible when reducing the traffic handling capacity on far too many of our roads with these bicycle lanes and dangerous traffic constricting bulb-outs-AKA traffic calming measures. We don't need to repeat that mistake and again perpetuate the waste of our tax dollars. We need the I-25/Paseo interchange to be built ASAP not interchanges to nowhere like the one at I-40 and Paseo del Volcan allegedly funded to create jobs and/or to increase the value of nearby land owned by a local former County politician. We need more bridges over the river so our vehicles can come back and forth more quickly and make us a more unified City.

This survey ignores the fact that this City, County and State is very low density yet it appears some politicians may try to use the survey results to waste even more of our tax dollars to promote a high density anti-automobile, public transit dependent lifestyle on our people. If we loved this type of life many of us wouldn't have fled the big cities and their dense suburbs to come here.

The study also looks like the attempted imposition of a flawed and debunked New Urbanists' live, work and play way of life on us. Do you see any big rush to this at Mesa del Sol? The concept just doesn't work! It also has "this is the only way to save the earth" written all over it.

If you really want a good survey, I suggest you rewrite this one completely. The current survey questions doesn't merit anyone's replies. I'm tired of being manipulated by those in MR-COG or elsewhere who only want to further their own personal agendas-impose their own misguided lifestyle preferences on the rest of us. MR-COG and the NM-DOT helped jam that wasteful \$300 million Rail Runner extension to Santa Fe down our throats merely to please our legacy obsessive Governor Bill Richardson and now may want to further aggravate the tax waste problem here with this survey.

This answers to this biased survey should have no credibility whatsoever to any of our political leaders. I assume that you have surveyed more than those shown in the "To" line above. I took the liberty to Cc others. I hope others also weigh in with comments in addition to doing the survey.

Sorry for being so blunt.

Response:

Response Date:

4/8/2011

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Thank you for your comments on the transportation survey. The survey received over 3600 responses and the results were telling. One of the challenges in the Albuquerque Metropolitan Area is providing transportation options.

Demographically, respondents to the survey approximated the 2008 American Community Survey conducted by the Census Bureau.

What the survey attempted to accomplish was to assess user satisfaction with the various forms of transportation they used. We learned that where people stated that they had options to get to work or school, they reported higher levels of satisfaction with the transportation system in general.

Results from the survey and detailed analysis may be found at the MRCOG website:
<http://tinyurl.com/42u3luw>

Public Comment on the 2035 MTP

Comment:

Date:

I can't make it to the "Crossing The River" meeting, but here's my two cents (I lived near Coors & Eagle Ranch for 14 years). Build a fly-over at Montano & Coors with Taylor Ranch becoming a "super road" under a Texas DoT-type configuration. Coors at La Orilla could also become a left turn-only road at the intersection in order to facilitate a quicker flow coming from a Montano-to-Coors exit and on-ramp feature without impacting access to businesses on La Orilla, east of Coors. I think a side benefit to this design would be that the bosque environment would not be directly effected, as no bridge would be required for many years after this improvement...I think. Thanks for your time.

Response:

Response Date:

3/28/2011

The Coors Corridor Plan Update is currently in development by the City of Albuquerque Municipal Development Department with agency participation involving the NMDOT and other affected/interested agencies. This update is considering all modes of travel along the corridor, as well as short and long terms improvement strategies and policy changes necessary for serving the anticipated travel demand all the way out to the year 2035. The planning process has a public involvement component and these comments can be best addressed at the project level and will be made available to the agencies involved.