



## Metro Area Traffic shows Steady Recovery from Low Pandemic Levels

### Mid-Region Traffic Flow Maps show some areas exceeding pre-pandemic levels

(Albuquerque – August 2022) –The numbers are out, and we now know that the Covid-19 pandemic had a tremendous impact on travel in the central region. The recent release of the [2021 Traffic Flow Maps](#) by the Mid-Region Metropolitan Planning Organization show that while most traffic is still below pre-pandemic levels, there are actually some areas that are exceeding them.

“When we look at the peak hours of travel – especially the PM, we are beginning to see the numbers return”, said Nathan P. Masek, Senior Transportation Planner for the Mid-Region Council of Governments. “For example, 13 of the top 25 busiest intersections in the metro area have exceeded pre-Covid daily volumes -some as much as 20-percent.”

The Total AMPA VMT change for 2021 was up 17.7% over 2020’s drastic decline. Also, Big I approach volumes were up over 2020 with an increase of 4.6%, and correspondingly the river crossing volumes increased by nearly 22% but in both cases, volumes remain below pre-pandemic levels. Another noteworthy statistic is the amount of travel per person, ie, VMT Per Capita, which increased by 17.5% following 2020’s decline of nearly -23%.

The MRCOG’s Traffic Monitoring Program – which is comprised of 3000+ locations counted on a 3-year cycle – has been closely monitoring specific locations since the pandemic began in 2020. Targeted locations include residential areas, job and activity centers, across a range of roadway types.

“These results are extremely important to the region”, said Dewey V. Cave, Executive Director of the Mid-Region Council of Governments. “This information is used by local agencies, the media, and many others to make informed decisions based on actual local traffic data collected under our program.”

More detailed information with static and interactive maps, summary statistic tables, and trend graphics is located on MRCOG’s [Traffic Monitoring web page](#).

Clicking on the 2021 Traffic Flow Maps link (above), will take you directly to the latest traffic information:

- Separate maps for the noted geographic areas of the region
- A series of traffic statistics including 2021 Albuquerque Metropolitan Planning Area (AMPA) roadway mileage, Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), Vehicle Hours Traveled (VHT),
- Top 25 Busiest Intersections with the past years (2020 and 2019) for comparison
- Various graphics of historic traffic statistics and trends on Daily VMT, VMT per capita
- Volumes at select locations of interest such as the Rio Grande River Crossings and the Big I

A separate section of MRCOG’s Traffic Monitoring page is dedicated specifically to the traffic impacts of COVID during 2021, [COVID-19 and Travel](#) and includes a GIS map with sub-area details on daily and peak period growth. Also included is Census information related to work from home statistics.

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### *About the Mid Region Council of Governments*

*The Mid-Region Council of Governments provides metropolitan and rural transportation planning for the entire four-county area in Central New Mexico (Bernalillo, Sandoval, Valencia and Tarrant Counties). The Mid-Region Metropolitan Planning Organization’s transportation planning data and forecasts are used by local and state agencies to develop and complete transportation projects. MRMPO uses the information for the urban area to develop a regional 20-year long-range transportation plan, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), and the short-term Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The MTP and the TIP are the tools for bringing federal transportation funds to the metropolitan area.*