

Welcome to the first Open House for the Paseo del Norte High Capacity Transit Study.

Thank you for participating in the first open house for the *Paseo del Norte High Capacity Transit Study* (the PDN HCTS).

The purpose of this open house meeting is to **share information** about the project with you and to **obtain feedback** from stakeholders. Information about the project is provided at 6 stations with a project representative available at each station to help explain the materials and to answer your questions. Collectively, the stations explain the **who, why, and what** of the PDN HCTS.

Please start at the beginning and visit every station. The stations and their topics include:

STATION 1 asks for information about your current commute. Your input will help us better understand problems you face today and will help identify travel patterns.

STATION 2 provides information about why this study is important and who is involved. Information about today's problems and how these change in the future is provided.

STATION 3 provides information about transportation improvements included in the long-range plan for the metropolitan area. Information about high capacity transit is also provided.

STATION 4 shows potential routes identified by the agencies and jurisdictions participating in the PDN HCTS.

STATION 5 provides information about the factors and issues that will be evaluated by the project team.

STATION 6 is where you can provide your input. Your suggestions on potential routes (or which of the identified routes you are in favor of), issues to consider, or other thoughts are desired. We also have a brief Comment Form we would like you to complete.



Thank you for participating in this first open house for the PDN HCTS. We will have additional meetings and will keep you informed as to when these will be scheduled. The timeline for the major activities to complete this study include:

- Evaluation and Refinement of Alternatives – *May to October 2012*
- Identification and Selection of a Preferred Alternative – *November/December 2012*
- Implementation Planning – *to be determined after the preferred strategy is identified and funding needs are known.*



What agencies are involved in this initiative?

The PDN HCTS is sponsored and led by the **Mid-Region Council of Governments (MRCOG)**. Several other agencies are involved including:

- Rio Metro Regional Transit District (RMRTD)
- New Mexico Department of Transportation
- City of Albuquerque — ABQ Ride
- City of Rio Rancho
- Bernalillo County

These entities are working together to identify **reasonable, affordable, and sustainable** transportation strategies for the metropolitan area — strategies that can be implemented very soon and that will serve our transportation needs into the future.

What is this study intended to accomplish?

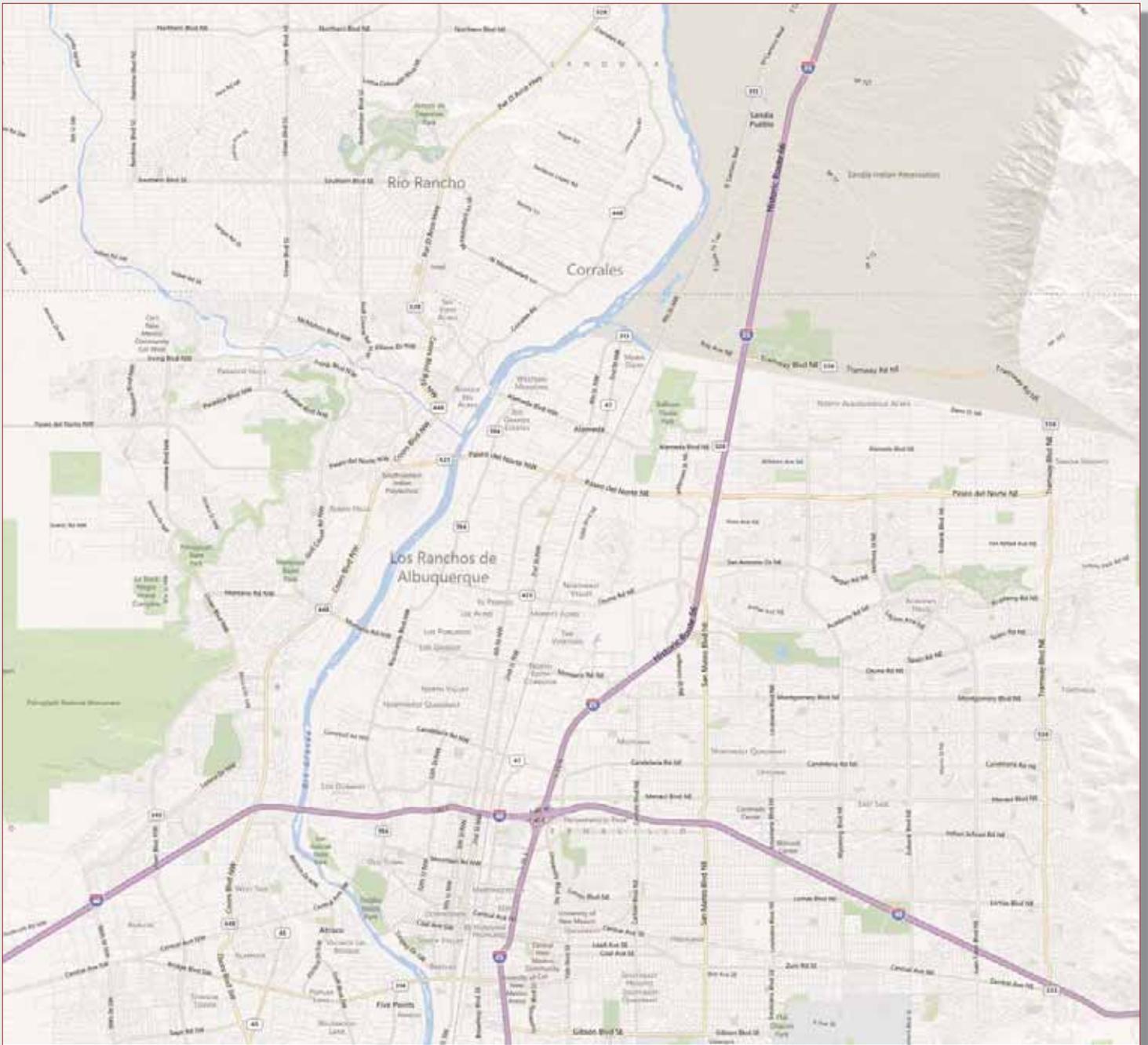
The focus of the PDN HCTS is to improve **mobility** between the Northwest side of the metro area and the Journal Center and other major destinations east of the Rio Grande. **Mobility** is the ability to move efficiently between areas. Travel between the Northwest area and the Journal Center is currently impeded by congestion on Paseo del Norte, Alameda Boulevard, and Montaña Road. This congestion will become much worse in the future, and mobility will further degrade. **Station 2** provides more information about this issue.

The end objective of the PDN HCTS is to identify a preferred route and to begin implementation of high capacity transit service that provides fast and predictable travel between the Northwest side of the metropolitan area and the Journal Center. The transit corridor identified will ultimately be extended to other major activity areas such as UNM, Uptown, Downtown, and other locations.



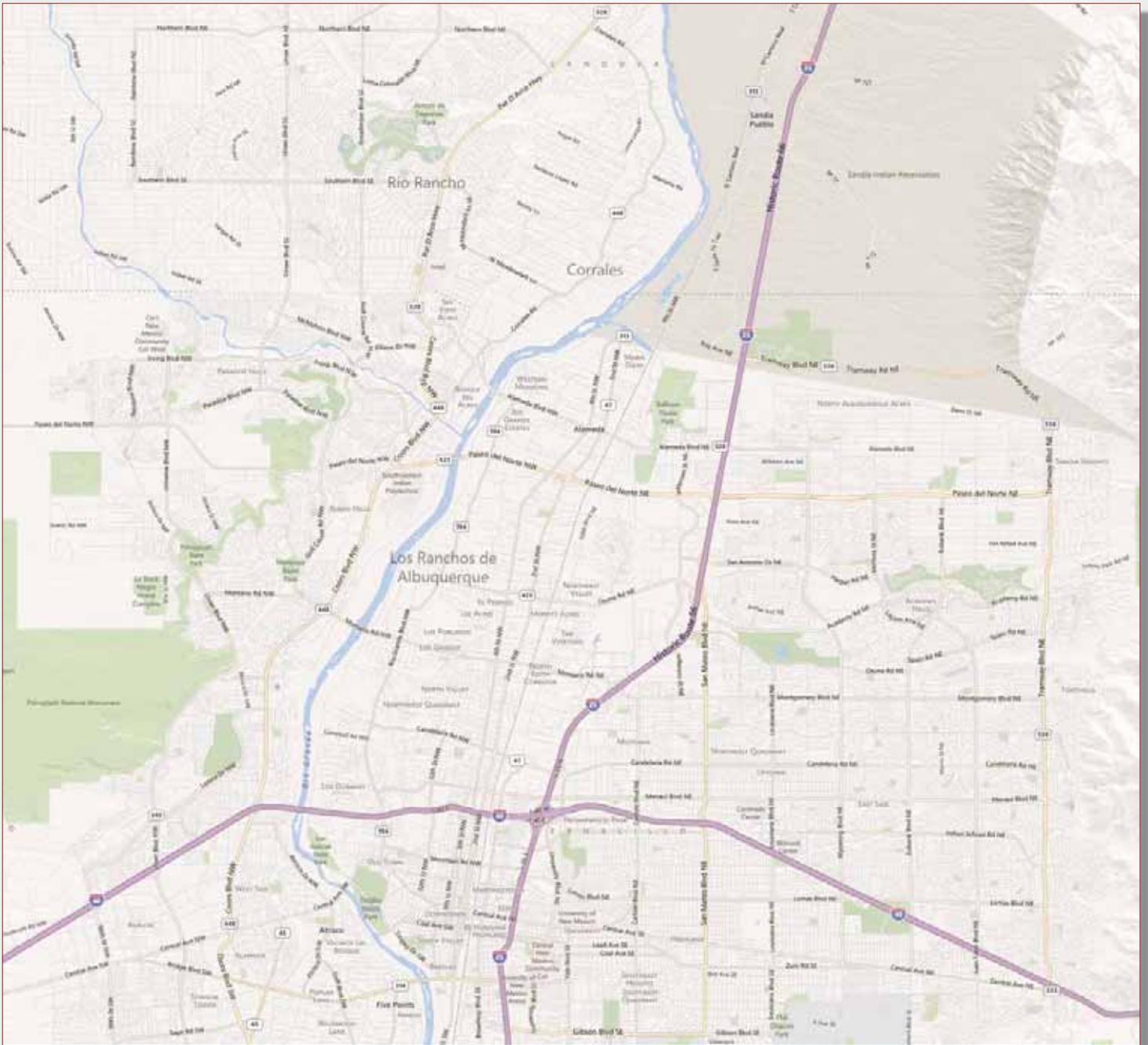
Please tell us about your commute trips.

Please tell us about your commute trip. Place a green dot on the approximate location of where your morning commute begins and a red dot on where it ends. Feel free to provide this input for all members of your household including travel by students destined to locations such as UNM or CNM campuses. This data will help us identify the origins and destinations of existing commuter travel.



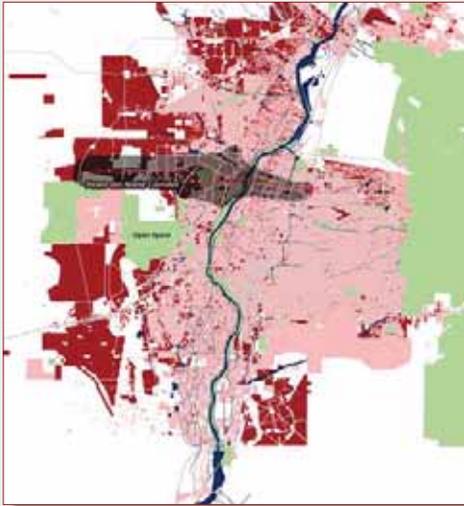
Please tell us about congestion problems you encounter during your commute.

Please show us the approximate areas and locations where you encounter significant delays during your commute. Use yellow dots for congested locations where you consider congestion to be moderate minutes and red dots where you are routinely delayed for extended periods of time.



Why is the PDN HCTS Important?

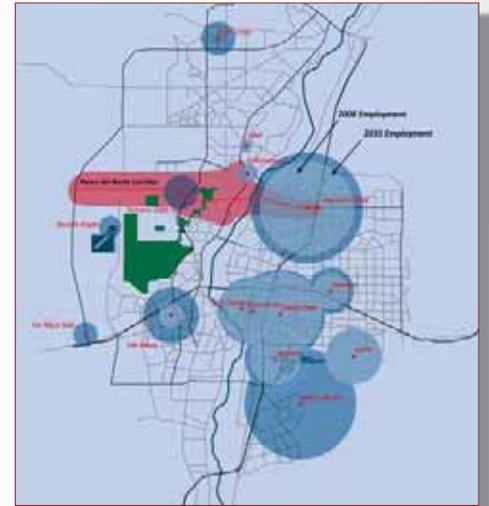
The PDN HCTS is an important step in determining how to best meet our current and future travel needs — especially those that involve travel across the Rio Grande. The number of cars on the road and congestion is a product of where and how the region grows and the quantity of growth that is expected. Information about current population and employment and what is projected within the next 20 years is provided at this station.



Projected Growth Areas by 2035 – areas projected for new development are shown in dark red

The Albuquerque metropolitan area is projected to grow significantly within the next 20 years. By the year 2035, the current population of about 900,000 is projected to grow to **1.5 million**. This population increase will add another **310,000** new households to the metropolitan area.

About **46% of all new development** will be on the Westside. New development will encompass about 36,000 acres (56 square miles), the majority of which will be in the northwest part of Albuquerque and in Rio Rancho.



Major employment Centers in 2035 – light blue represents existing jobs; darker blue represents projected job growth

Employment will also increase with over 200,000 more jobs added to the area. Almost half of the new jobs will be on the Westside. However, job density will still remain low on the Westside, and the majority of jobs within the region will be located in employment districts on the Albuquerque eastside and the Downtown/Central Business District.



Journal Center Employment

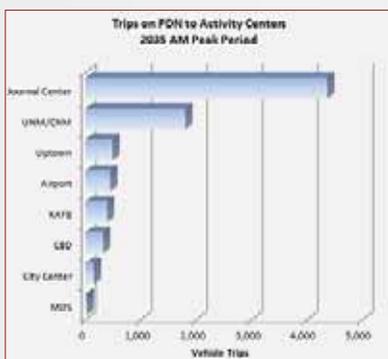
Over **380,000** jobs will be east of the Rio Grande. Of these, about **34,000** will be located within the Journal Center. Paseo del Norte is the primary route used to connect the Westside to the Journal Center.

Residential growth on the Westside, combined with the high number of jobs in the Journal Center and other eastside employment centers, will increase traffic and congestion on Alameda, Paseo del Norte, and Montañ0.

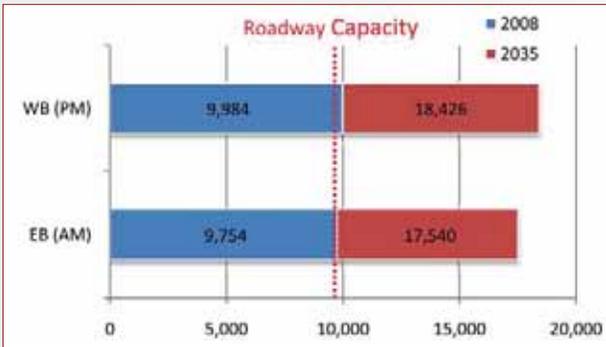
Current travel times between the northwest area and the Journal Center will become much longer.



The Journal Center includes north, central, and south subareas



How will growth affect traffic and your commute time?



This chart compares the capacity of the three river crossings that serve the northwest part of the metropolitan area – Alameda Boulevard, Paseo del Norte, and Montañó Road.

As shown by this chart, existing traffic is already slightly over the capacity of these 3 bridges during the morning and evening commute periods. Capacity is shown by the vertical red dashed line.

By 2035, the projected traffic volume will be almost double the capacity in both the morning and evening periods. The additional traffic will result in severe congestion that may add 30 to 60 minutes or more to your commute time.

Combined capacity and volume of Montañó, Paseo del Norte, and Alameda



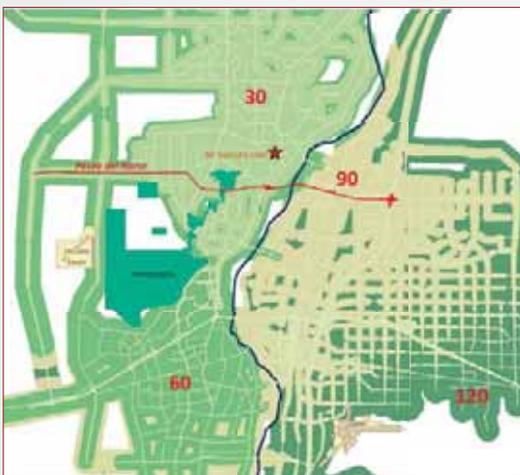
Without additional east-west capacity, the time it takes to cross the Rio Grande will be much greater within the next 20 years.

These figures show the travel time in minutes for cross-valley trips in 2035. According to the regional travel model forecasts, some trips could take an hour or more just to cross the inner valley area.

Approximate time in minutes on river crossings routes (2035 AM period)



Approximate time in minutes on river crossings routes (2035 PM period)



Approximate travel times for trips that originate near the NW Transit Center (2035 AM period)

Overall travel times throughout the metropolitan area will also become much longer. This travel time contour map illustrates the approximate time (in minutes) for trips that originate near the Northwest Transit Center (Coors By-Pass and Ellison) that are destined to other locations within the metropolitan area.

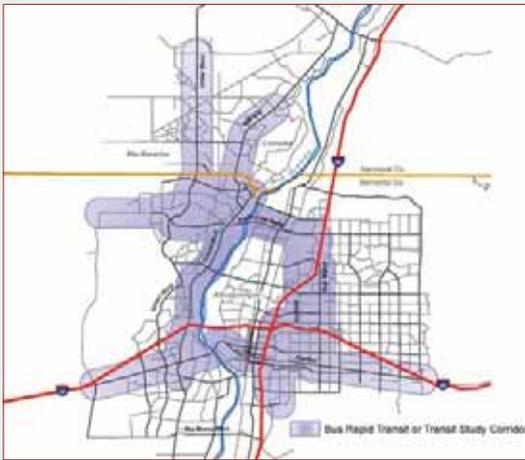
According to our analysis of year 2035 conditions, travel from the northwest area to Downtown or Uptown may take up to 1 ½ hours.



What other actions are underway to serve future travel needs?

The 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (2035 MTP) developed by the MRCOG and its member agencies identifies investments and improvements to the regional highway, street, transit, bikeway, and trail systems. The extent of system improvements is limited to the funding levels anticipated to be available from federal, state, and local sources over the same time period.

The 2035 MTP includes widening many roads and constructing new roads on the Westside. Even with these improvements, travel demand will be much greater than available capacity.

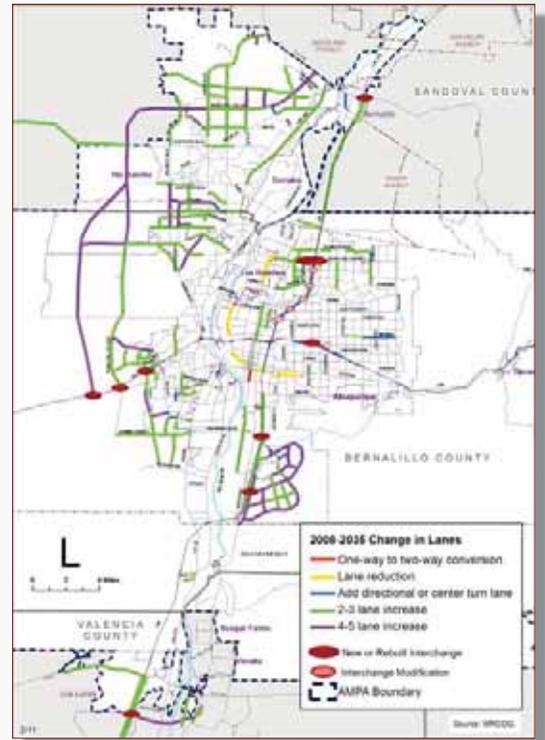


High capacity transit studies underway within the metropolitan area

The MRCOG has also identified a potential high capacity transit system for the region. This system would implement bus rapid transit within various corridors to enhance the capacity of the roadway system.

The PDN HCTS is part of this potential system and is the next step in determining the feasibility, cost, performance benefits, and consequences of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in this corridor.

The City of Albuquerque is starting a similar study for Central Avenue and MRCOG/RMRTD is conducting a study of the UNM to Sunport area to evaluate the applicability of BRT in that corridor.



Roadway expansion projects planned between now and 2035

Many other efforts are underway by county and local governments to improve the local bus system and the pedestrian and bicycle system. In addition, initiatives are underway to enhance the use of Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) technologies to improve our existing traffic signal systems and freeway information systems.



Regional traffic command center



What is High Capacity Transit?

For the purposes of this study, "High Capacity Transit" includes all of the elements of a modern bus-based transit system that operate in dedicated lanes and are supported by park and ride lots and passenger boarding stations.



Dedicated bus lane on a freeway



Dedicated bus lanes



Bus guideway



Bus boarding area



Low floor boarding to ease passenger entry



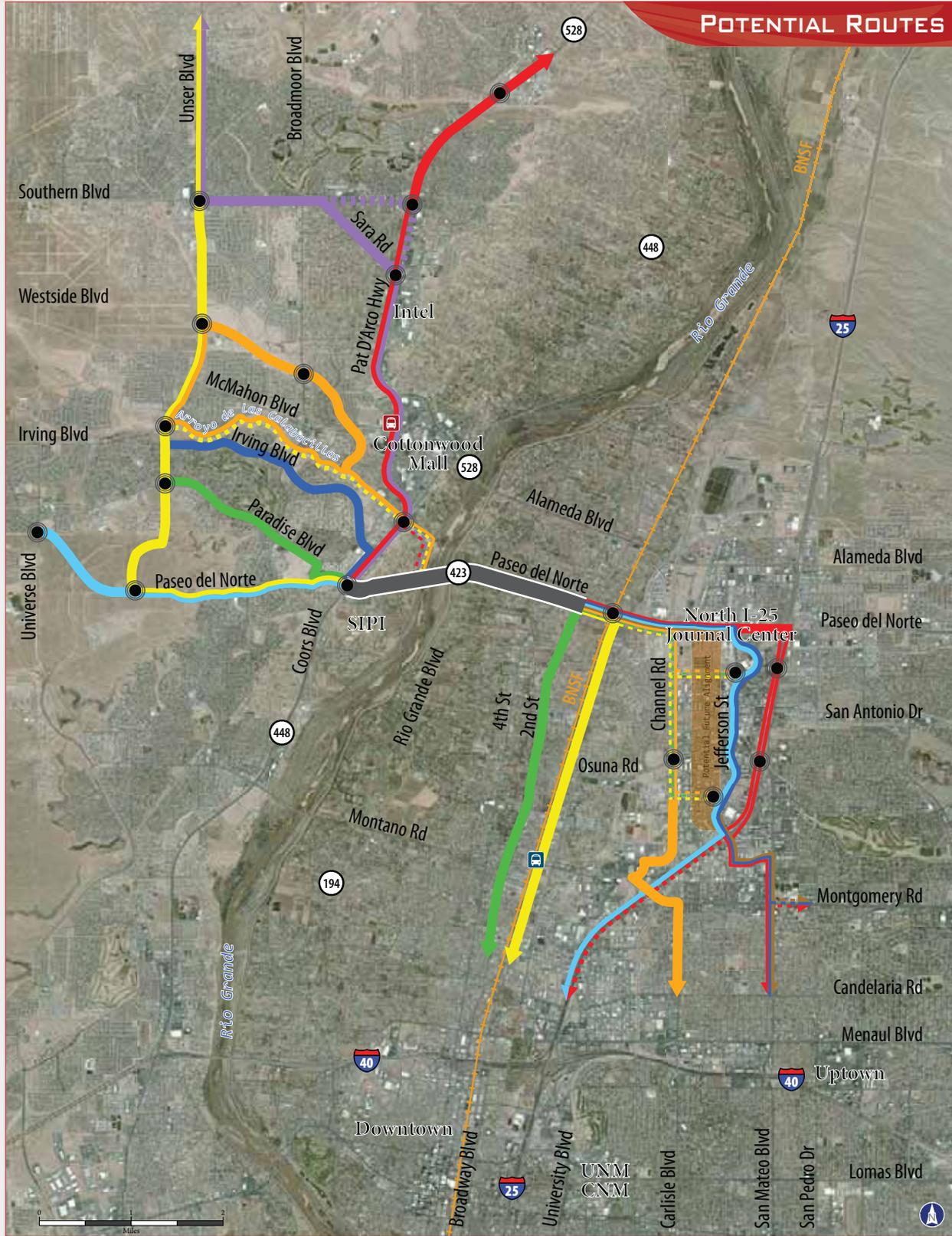
Bus boarding area



Park and ride station



Off-bus ticketing

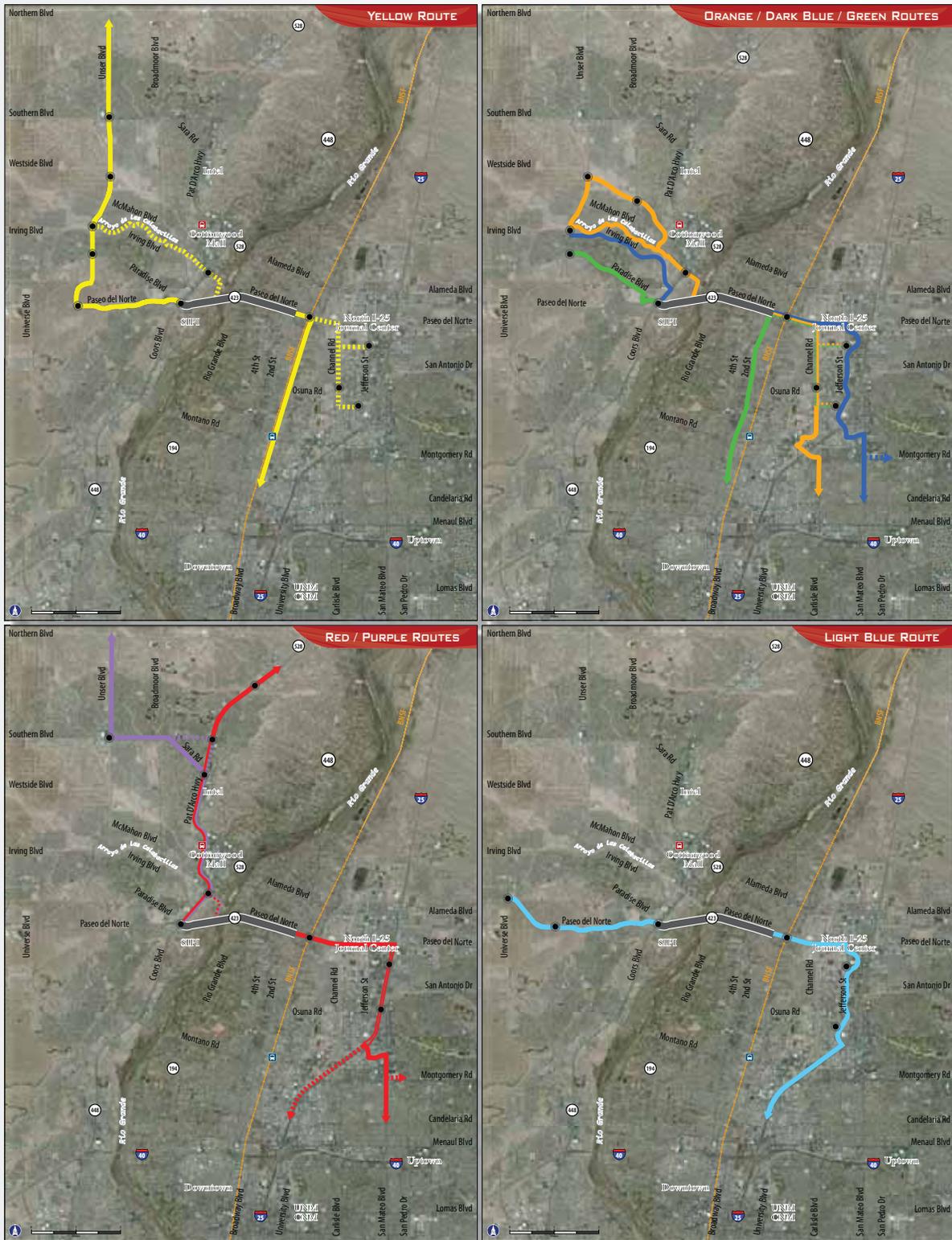


POTENTIAL ROUTES

- Potential Shared HC Corridor
- Potential Route
- Montañito Intermodal Center (Proposed)
- Proposed Park & Ride / Transfer Point
- Potential Extension
- Northwest Transit Center
- Existing Commuter Rail
- Alternative

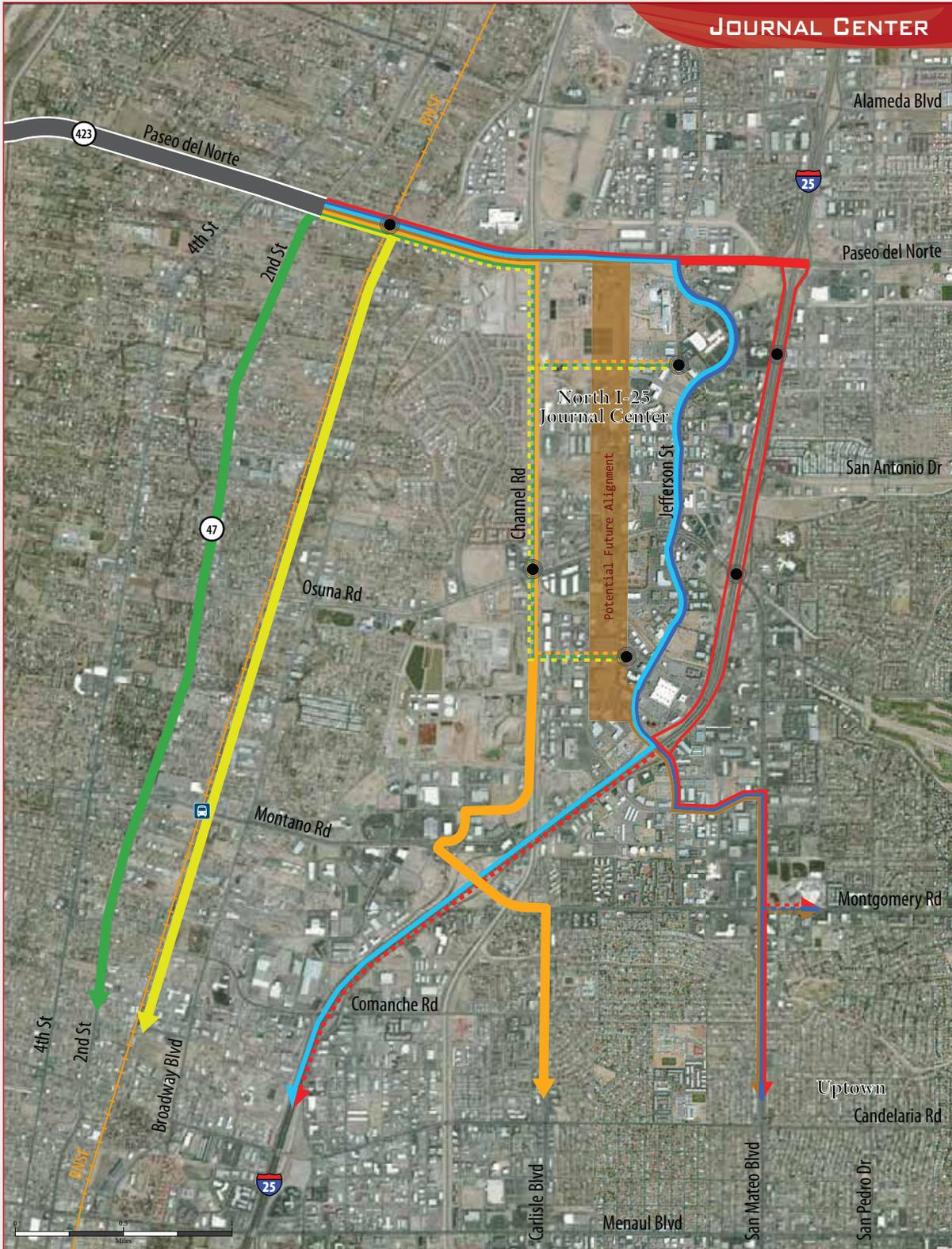


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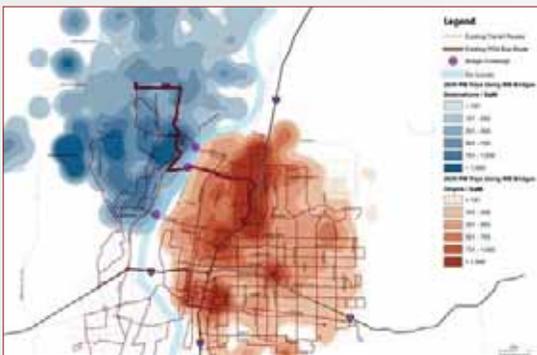


Issues and Factors Evaluated by the PDN HCTS

The evaluation process for the PDN HCTS will consider many factors, some of which include ridership market, trip origins and destinations, user access, availability of right-of-way, engineering considerations, cost, performance, and the effects of the routes and related facilities (e.g. park and ride areas) on nearby neighborhoods and the environment.

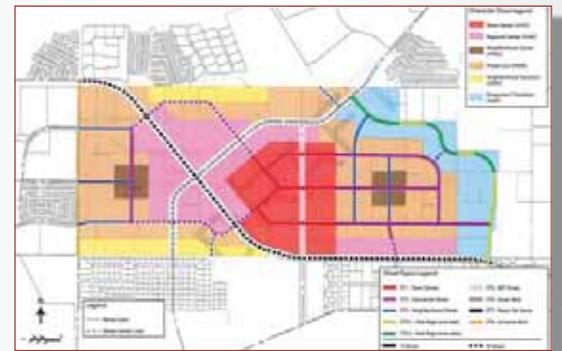


The ability to walk to bus stops is important for users. The figure to the left is an example of the area within 3/8 mile (a 7 to 9 minute walk) of Jefferson through the Journal Center. The figure to the right is the same information for the existing NW Transit Center. This distance is considered the maximum walk distance for most people. This factor will be an important consideration in selecting routes and park and ride locations and in identifying bus stop locations.



One of the early considerations for this study is the potential “travel market.” This includes factors such as the location of trip origins and destinations. This graphic shows the density of trip origins (in brown) and where they are destined (in blue) for the north valley river bridges during the PM peak.

The project team will use this data along with other demographic characteristics including population density, job density, and other population subgroups that are often good candidates for transit use.



Volcano Cliffs Master Plan Area



The study will also consider and evaluate:

- The effects of transit facilities (routes and park and ride lots) on neighborhoods and the natural environment
- Compatibility and consistency with land use plans
- Availability of right-of-way
- Traffic consequences
- Cost
- Other engineering factors



Please provide your input!

Input from potential users of the planned system and from persons who may be affected by its implementation is important to the decision process. We are in the early stages of this study and desire comments from the public.

You can provide input using any or all of these methods:

1. If you have ideas on route alignments you think should be considered, please draw them on the 11x17 maps provided at the table.
2. The flip charts can be used to write your comments, suggestions, and other ideas, if you would like these shared with other meeting participants.
3. Complete the comment form/questionnaire. You can complete this now, or you can finish it later and mail it to the address below. We would appreciate receiving comments by May 25, 2012.

Mid-Region Council of Governments
809 Copper Avenue NW
Albuquerque, NM 87102
Attn: PDN HCTS

If you would like to be included on our mailing list for notification about future meetings, please fill in the name/address/email portion of the comment form.

If you want to speak to a representative of the project team to get more information about the PDN HCTS, or if you would like to have someone speak to your neighborhood association or other group, please contact Tony Sylvester at (505) 247-1750 or at tsylvester@mrcog-nm.gov. More information about this project can be found at www.mrcog-nm.gov. On the Home Page, click on Transportation and then on PDN Transit Study .

Thank you for your participation!

