



March 19, 2012

Paseo del Norte High Capacity Transit Study

Mid-Region Council of Governments | 809 Copper NW | Albuquerque, NM 87102 | (505) 247-1750 | www.mrcog-nm.gov

Background

The Paseo del Norte High Capacity Transit Study will identify how public transit can provide an alternative to private vehicle travel and meet some of the demand for trips across the Rio Grande to employment sites and other activity centers. Identifying transit's role in meeting these travel needs is essential since no new river crossing facilities (bridges or lanes) are currently planned and Westside growth and the distribution of jobs will create further travel demand across the river.

PDN HCTS Goal

The PDN HCTS will identify a high capacity transit system that uses the Paseo del Norte river crossing to link the northwestern portion of the metropolitan area with the Journal Center and potentially other activity centers east of the Rio Grande. The study seeks to identify near and long-term transportation options in the area to improve mobility for residents of the region's growing Westside.

Why Paseo del Norte and the Journal Center?

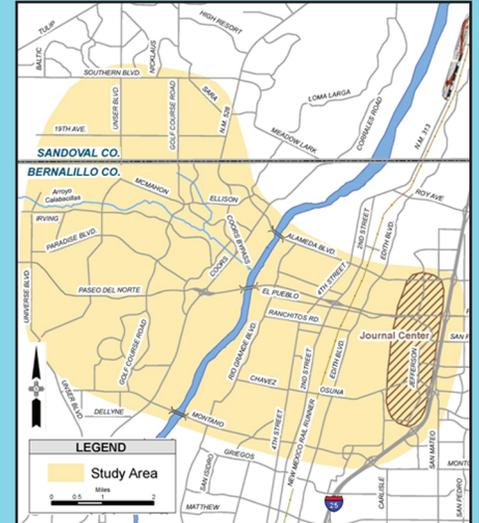
The Paseo del Norte corridor is currently subject to regular severe congestion during the peak periods. Crashes and incidents on the facility make travel times very unpredictable for private automobiles and transit services that use the facility. Paseo del Norte is also one of the most heavily utilized river crossings in the Albuquerque metropolitan area. In 2010, Paseo del Norte carried 81,800 vehicles per day and 7,500 vehicles during the peak hour. MRCOG projects that demand on this route will increase over the next 20 years as more than 250,000 new residents occupy the Westside. As a result, the Paseo del Norte river crossing is projected to carry over 180,000 vehicles per day and 15,000 evening peak-hour trips by year 2035.

The Journal Center and Jefferson St corridor form a major employment center with over 30,000 employees in 2010, many of whom live in western Albuquerque or southern Rio Rancho. However, relatively few workers in the area commute by public transit, and service from the region's Westside is in need of improvement. There is an opportunity to meet the region's growing demand for river crossing trips and serve the large number of commuters from the Westside to the Journal Center and other destinations.

What will the transit study do?

The study is an Alternatives Analysis to determine the appropriate mode (i.e. type of transit service), routes and destinations, along with a service plan to understand the financial investment necessary to implement new service. The study will include current and anticipated road and traffic conditions; land use patterns; the costs, benefits, and impacts of a range of transportation options; and ridership projections. Input from the public will be critical in understanding how to meet local needs and identifying what it will take for transit service to be successful in the study area.

Ultimately the AA will identify a "locally preferred alternative" that will be considered by local transit providers for funding and implementation.



Project Goal Statement

To identify a high capacity transit system incorporating the Paseo del Norte river crossing to link the northwestern portion of the metropolitan area with the Journal Center and other activity centers east of the Rio Grande.

Project Objectives

The study aims to identify a transit system that will:

- Improve mobility within the region
- Integrate with the existing transit system
- Provide an attractive alternative to the single occupancy vehicle
- Enhance transportation capacity over the Rio Grande
- Connect employment and residential uses
- Provide economic development opportunities
- Encourage transit-supportive land uses
- Is cost effective

Project Timeline

12 – 18 months to complete

More Information

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