



UNM / CNM / Sunport Transit Study

Public Involvement Activities, January / February 2013

Meeting Purpose:

The Mid-Region Council of Governments (MRCOG) held the third series of public meeting for the UNM / CNM / Sunport Transit Study. The public meetings were aimed at providing the public, especially specific stakeholder groups, with an update on the project, and soliciting input on the development of route alternatives.

Meeting Format:

Three separate meetings were held

- An evening meeting on January 29th at the ***Central United Methodist Church***.
- A mid-day meeting on January 30th at the ***UNM Student Union Building***.
- A mid-day meeting on February 5th at the ***CNM Student Resource Center***.

The meetings included a 40 minute presentation by MRCOG staff, followed by a Q&A and public comment session. The presentation included the following topics: overview of project and its goals and objectives, features and characteristics of Enhanced Transit, potential route alternatives and the development of these alternatives, and a discussion of measures that are to be used to evaluate these alternatives in the next phase of the study.

The presentation was followed by a structured question and answer period, and an open discussion regarding the potential alternative routes as shown on several posted maps throughout the room. Verbal comments were recorded by a project team member, and a comment form was provided to attendees to allow for written comments to be submitted at their discretion. The comment form was also available on-line along with project information.

Meeting Notification:

Newspaper advertisements were published in the following newspapers:

- ABQ Journal published on Sunday, January 20th in the New Mexico section of the paper
- UNM Daily Lobo published on Tuesday, January 22nd and Monday, January 28th
- ALIBI published on Wednesday, January 23rd weekly issue
- CNM Chronicle published on Tuesday, January 22nd weekly issue, and Tuesday, January 29th weekly issues
- Jan / Feb Neighborhood News (published each month by the City of Albuquerque Office of Neighborhood Coordination) available in print and on their website



Mail:

795 meeting notification postcards were mailed on January 18th, 2013 to business owners that are in the study area identified through the InfoUSA database.

Email:

Meeting notification was emailed to the following groups:

- Project listserv containing approximately 150 people who had either attended a past meeting or were part of an interested local group.
- Technical Advisory Committee (representatives of agencies with a vested interest in the project).
- Emails provided to UNM and CNM for distribution through their internal email systems to faculty and staff.

Internet:

Meeting notification was posted on the following websites:

- CNM online calendar
- MRCOG project website
- Jan / Feb Neighborhood News (published each month by the City of Albuquerque Office of Neighborhood Coordination) available in print and on their website
- project Facebook page posted meeting notification on January 15th, 2013

Press Release:

A press release was issued on January 15th, 2013 to statewide news agencies.

Meeting Materials:

Meeting visuals included a Power Point presentation, three display boards which displayed information about Bus Rapid Transit characteristics, project objectives, and route alternatives. There were also large posters of proposed route alternatives hung on the wall to stimulate open informal discussions with the project team. In addition, meeting attendees received a comment form and a handout with project objectives and metrics to be used to evaluate the route alternatives in the future.

Copies of the above meeting materials are available in Appendix B.

Attendance:

Central United Methodist Church evening community meeting: Approximately 23 people attended, not including project staff.

UNM lunch meeting: Approximately 41 people attended, not including project staff.

CNM lunch meeting: Approximately 18 people attended, not including project staff.



The following information regarding meeting attendance was derived from meeting participants using interactive clickers:

- 45% of the attendees of this round of meetings had never been to one of the UNM/ CNM/ Sunport Transit meetings before, showing success at reaching new stakeholders.
- The largest audiences reached by this series of meetings were residents and UNM employees.
- About 33% of the total attendees were over 60 years old. The UNM meeting provided some younger perspectives, with 33% of those participants under 30.
- Overall, the best method of communication was email, reaching 70% of the participants, and the second-best was word-of-mouth, reaching 27% of the participants. The UNM internal email was the most successful notification method. The CNM Chronicle and business postcards were the least productive.

PUBLIC MEETING NOTES

Central United Methodist Church, Jan. 29

- Make sure to consider bicycle and bus safety together, because it is difficult to envision them together without conflict
- Make sure all points are accessible
- Difficult envisioning how automobiles would be kept off of the bus routes
- Would much prefer smaller buses that are not intrusive / need to consider type of equipment
- Would like buses to have transparent windows
- Would like project scope to include the Veterans Affairs (VA) hospital
- A resident on Santa Clara does not want Santa Clara re-opened to traffic
- Believe that is important to consider high school students as a stakeholder since they may be taking public transportation to school in higher numbers
- Believe that parking will become more remote

UNM Student Union Building, Jan. 30

- Would like project scope to include the Veterans Affairs (VA) hospital
- Would like to include other transit routes and destinations
- Would like to develop or include existing remote park-and-rides with this system, and advertise their use
- The bike / bus combined roadways are effective in low-density neighborhoods
- Would like to have a transit center or bus hub together



- It is currently very difficult to get from Central/Lomas (East-West routes) to University/San Mateo (North-South routes)
- Would like bike rack that is easier to use on transit (roll-on)
- Transit route should consider Mesa del Sol

CNM Student Resource Center, Feb. 5

- Why isn't Presbyterian Hospital included in the Study Area?
- Would existing Rapid Ride stops be moved? Because currently, there is no Rapid Ride station at University Blvd.
- Concern about safety and crime on buses
- Need to educate drivers about race relations
- Would like more bicycle accommodations and recommendations on improving bike facilities
- Bicycles need to be incorporated into plans for transit
- Safety issues – bicyclists do not follow traffic laws
- Transit quality is in frequency, hours, and information, which is key to for people with set schedules using transit
- Need to reduce single occupancy vehicle dependence to deal with future growth
- Must connect new transit with existing transit



SUMMARY OF EMAIL/FACEBOOK COMMENTS

1. The VA Hospital should be included in the study area. Public transportation is especially important in the UNM/UNMH/VA Hospital/CNM “NM Meduplex” area. The VA Hospital is an important classroom and an important component of post-secondary education in New Mexico.
2. Good presentation at CNM.
3. I’m glad you’re looking at public transit options, but re-opening Santa Clara is a terrible idea. The area was very dangerous until the city finally closed the street. Opening it to buses would also provide an enticing shortcut to drivers.
4. The Santa Clara closure only moved traffic from Santa Clara to San Rafael. Hopefully this problem will be dealt with by the city.
5. It’s important to improve walking and transit ridership because this will increase healthy living habits and reduce carbon emissions. The bus system should also be more convenient. The UNM Redondo shuttle could operate in pairs of “figure eights” to maintain the existing stops and add stops on the west side of Main Campus. MRCOG should consider a series of small buses/jitneys that would run every 20-30 minutes during peak periods, connecting residential areas to nearby city bus routes.
6. Santa Clara should not be re-opened. We just bought the house next to the roadblock, and we would not have bought it if the road was still open. Before the roadblock, there was lots of congestion and traffic through the neighborhood. Re-opening Santa Clara would open the floodgates and significantly harm us and the neighborhood.
7. Public input has not made it into the objectives and metrics so far. Most of the objectives reflect the interests of CNM, UNM, etc. and not local neighborhoods. The objectives and metrics should reflect residents’ concerns. Key concerns include pedestrian safety, diverting traffic away from residential areas, and keeping transit and traffic on thoroughfares such as University and Yale rather than residential streets such as Girard.



SURVEY RESPONSES

<p>The goals and objectives for this project were presented at the recent meetings and included in the handouts. They can also be found at the MRCOG website (www.mrcog-nm.gov). As we move forward in this study, have we missed any important goals or objectives?</p>	<p>The metrics and criteria we propose to use to evaluate project alternatives were also presented at the meeting and included in the handouts. Are there additional performance metrics or criteria that should be considered that were not listed?</p>	<p>Potential route alternatives were presented at the meeting. Are there additional routes you think should be included beyond those identified?</p>	<p>Have we missed any other critical information that should be considered as we begin the evaluation process?</p>	<p>In general, what are the best ways for us to communicate project information and updates to you? (e.g., Facebook, MRCOG website, newsletters, articles in the Lobo/Chronicle, etc.)</p>	<p>Do you have any additional comments pertaining to this study?</p>
<p>Let's keep the crime, noise and traffic rate by Santa Clara and Princeton at a safe level. It has been proven over and over that opening Santa Clara will cause accidents and frankly, decrease my quality of life!</p>	<p>I just bought a house near Princeton and Santa Clara BECAUSE it is a nice, quite neighborhood... I remember how bad it was and I will take action if Santa Clara is re-opened.</p>	<p>NOT SANTA CLARA!</p>	<p>We will not stand for the opening of Santa Clara</p>	<p>facebook</p>	<p>Do Not Open Santa Clara.</p>



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<p>Perhaps something about not significantly, negatively affecting existing residential areas (both in general and in terms of study research direction). I see "Minimize the negative impacts of traffic and parking on the surrounding neighborhoods" but not minimizing or at least optimizing the balance of any negative effects of implementation. I see it in Transportation Policies and in public feedback but not in the Goals and Objectives.</p>	<p>In general they looks good and I like the integration of neighborhood development and recreational/bike/walk paths. However, I would again want part of the evaluation and criteria to include study of potential negative impacts. In particular, situations like the proposed re-opening of Santa Clara, which has an impact on traffic, safety, road maintenance, etc. far beyond the addition of bus routes since it involves reinstating flow through to the neighborhood.</p>	<p>This may be under consideration and just not showing on the map, but, perhaps a couple of event routes that are direct for things like Lobo games so people don't need to transfer buses to get there form major student residency areas.</p>	<p>Impact of related activity increases to residential areas. The Santa Clara road closure and traffic calming features were added for a reason and I would find it hard to be convinced that opening it up to the high volume of flow it used to experience from cut-through traffic for the sake of a few buses makes sense.</p>	<p>Facebook and perhaps e-newsletters</p>	<p>As the owner of the house that used to have it's wall knocked down regularly when Santa Clara was open – I honestly fear for the safety of our property, pets, and people if the Santa Clara route is opened. Our benefit from the transit plan will likely be far outweighed by cost. What assurances, use limitations, or traffic design will keep this project from harming the neighborhood? If it were just a matter of adding bus stops and routes to a currently open street I wouldn't be too concerned but this is a whole other ball game.</p>



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<p>We need more north/south public transportation, and easy access to important "sites" in the city--UNM, CNM, Nob Hill, Downtown. Right now, a lot of great work has resulted in good east/west routes, but folks in the North or South sides of the city cannot access routes quicily.</p>	<p>Yes, TIME to destination. Time driving on freeway to get to UNM/CNM from Wyoming/Alameda=15-20 minutes. Time if taken on Mass Transit=90 minutes minimum.</p>	<p>Rethink the whole "routes" issue--think in terms of points across the city to location. Think of neighborhoods that have populations that need transportation.</p>	<p>Yes, think of staggered work days. The commuter line on Wyoming runs back north no later than 4:45 p.m. Who is getting off work at 4:45 p.m.? How about from Nob Hill? Last routes at 9:30 p.m.? Kills bar/restaurant business and increases drunk driving. Also, safety is not a metric. Too many sites along Lomas and Central are dingy, nasty and riders are harassed by vagrants.</p>	<p>Website--the interactive cab.gov bus route is great. So is the Lobo app.</p>	<p>Please take into account more than folks who live in central Albuquerque. Could folks in the North Valley benefit from better mass transit? Also, be transparent. ABQ has been discussing transportation since the 1970s, the car dealerships seem to have undue influence. Mass transit is seen as something for the poor, not working folks, families, the elderly, even professionals.</p>



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<p>As part of the Land Use, Development, and Sustainable Communities objective, the objective of supporting thriving neighborhood-scale commercial development should be included.</p>	<p>Two other feasibility evaluation metrics should be added: Support from neighborhoods and Support from UNM and CNM.</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p>1. It's important to include nearby development/institutions (Presbyterian Hospital) as a major employment and destination center. 2. How the outcomes of this study relate to other relevant activities - Central BRT and Girard studies. 3. How the institutions, especially UNM, will "buy in" and implement outcomes, since that state institution isn't governed by city land use policies.</p>	<p>Email, MRCOG (and neighborhood association) websites.</p>	



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<p>(We) I hope that emphasis will continue to be placed on transportation alternatives other than SOV. I know this was talked about but I am only cautiously optimistic that we will get to the end point of no cars.</p>	<p>At this time I can't think of any, but as any process that will be continuously evolving other criteria (metrics) will make themselves known and can be used.</p>	<p>To maintain the livability of the area we (NCNA) discussed using University Ave. as the main N.S. corridor w/ smaller feeder services connecting to the various end points east. UNMH, UNM, CNM.</p>	<p>NCNA also wants to consider a toll levied on SOV who wish to enter the transit area (modeled on London). This may even raise revenue as well as limit car use in the core area.</p>	<p>Email</p>	
	<p>Limiting traffic on residential streets. Minimize car trips in the area.</p>			<p>Web page with email reminders when new information is posted</p>	
					<p>Take this option out! <u>NO</u> opening of Santa Clara at Yale to Girard. No Girard Alternate options. No cars or buses – bikes are okay but keep road closed!</p>



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<p>Simplicity of use. Multiple bus routes are harder to use and brand. For example: Rapid Riders/downtown bus that circulate are easy to use, you just wait for the next bus and know where it is going.</p>	<p>Simplicity.</p>	<p>No.</p>		<p>Email/TV</p>	<p>I like the idea to enhance the riding experience but eventually this experience will have to transition to ABQ Ride experience. Gradually, for the purpose of all transit use, all ABQ Ride transit will have to improve to the same level or people will continue to degrade the use of public transportation. Idea: have routes to airport – or a higher rate of routes to airport during high travel time. Ex: before/after holidays</p>
		<p>A route that goes from the front of CNM to the front of UNM? University isn't as accessible to residents as Yale or Buena Vista. I like the Yale option best, possibly with a loop to CNM.</p>		<p>Email newsletter, news, articles, Facebook, surveys</p>	<p>The enhancement aspects are <u>really</u> important. Also, time tables and connection times being accurate and accessible. The perception of public transit needs to improve with the general public. Better looking stations + buses would help with that.</p> <p>Great job so far!</p>



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<p>No.</p>	<p>Efficiency of existing bike routes and boulevards</p>	<p>Connecting with problem areas outside of the study area (i.e. I-25, Presbyterian Campus, Nob Hill)</p>	<p>Does this address an increase in the numbers of bicyclist/pedestrian travel?</p>		