

Appendix C Projects of Regional Interest

Connections 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

Status of Major Regional Projects of Special Interest

The following provides the status of various projects throughout the metro area, which over the years, have been of interest to the community and the subject of various studies and proposals.

Projects are Listed Alphabetically

Atrisco Vista Blvd. Extension & Connection to Paseo del Volcan and Southern Blvd.

Please refer to *Appendix B Illustrative Listing of Projects* for cost estimates and implementation schedule of this corridor.

Belen North I-25 Interchange Expansion

The northern Belen interchange (exit #195) currently only provides access along NM 109 east of I-25. The developers of Rancho Cielo are in the process of working with Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railroad (BNSF) to construct a railyard and transfer facility on the west side of I-25 next to the interchange. The project would modify the existing interchange ramps to provide full access east and west of I-25. This project is part of this MTP as a privately funded project.

Gibson Blvd. Extension Between Louisiana Blvd. and Juan Tabo Blvd.

Please refer to *Appendix B Illustrative Listing of Projects* for information on this corridor.

I-25 Frontage Roads in Valencia County

The *2006 Valencia County Mobility Study* recommended future construction of a two-way frontage roads on the east and west sides of I-25 between the north Belen interchange and NM 6 (exits 195 and 203). These frontage roads would provide access for economic development adjacent to I-25. The pace of the development of Rancho Cielo, a master planned community in Belen just west of I-25 is a major factor in the timing for the need of these frontage roads. NMDOT is planning on conducting a feasibility study regarding frontage roads along I-25 in Valencia County. Any future projects will be determine based on the study.

Los Lunas New River Crossing Arterial

This project has been of interest to the region for many years. In 2012, the Mid-Region Council of Governments in collaboration with the Village of Los Lunas and the New Mexico Department of Transportation concluded the *Alternatives Analysis Report for the Los Lunas Corridor Study*. The report evaluated the need for an east-west roadway that would connect to existing north-south highways (I-25, NM 314 and NM 47). In Valencia County only three bridges span the Rio Grande: NM 6 in Los Lunas, NM 309 in Belen, and NM 346 south of Belen; only NM 6 provides a direct east-west connection to I-25. The NM 6 and NM 309 bridges are 10.5 miles apart limiting cross-river connectivity. The study recommended the Morris B Alignment as the locally preferred alternative. This alignment proposes the construction of a new interchange at I-25, a new bridge over the Rio Grande connecting to NM 47. Funds for right-of-way acquisition have been programmed for several years and is acquisition is underway. The Village of Los Lunas and Valencia County appropriated funding for the project and in

2019 the New Mexico State Legislature appropriated funds for design and construction, enough for a two-lane roadway and 4-lane bridge. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2022 or 2023. Efforts continue to secure additional funds for construction of a four-lane roadway. Also, refer to *Appendix B Illustrative Listing of Projects* for further information on this corridor.

Manzano Expressway Expansion

The Manzano Expressway in Valencia County is currently a 2 lane roadway from the junction of NM 47 and NM 309 to Meadowlake Road. The *2006 Valencia County Mobility Study* recommended future expansion to four lanes. Resurfacing and rehabilitation of the existing 2 lane roadway is necessary for the preservation of the existing infrastructure and is included in this MTP. Expansion of the expressway to four lanes is not anticipated to be necessary at current levels of development, therefore expansion of this corridor is beyond the 2040 horizon of this metropolitan transportation plan. However, it remains part of the long-range transportation system for the metro area.

Mesa del Sol Area Interchanges

Mesa del Sol is a master-planned community that has begun development. Current access to Mesa del Sol is provided primarily via University Boulevard with secondary access from NM 47 via Bobby Foster Road. The master plan includes a new interchange on I-25 (vicinity of milepoints 216-217) to provide access to the future extension of Mesa del Sol Boulevard; a second new I-25 interchange proposes the conversion of the Bobby Foster Road overpass to a full interchange. Federal money was used to partially design the Mesa del Sol Boulevard & I-25 interchange. The timing of the construction of these interchanges is dependent upon the developer's schedule of further construction. The Mesa del Sol Boulevard interchange will be necessary once traffic on University Boulevard reaches approximately 30,000 AWDT (Average Weekday Daily Traffic). Both interchanges are part of this MTP as privately funded projects although future grants may provide some additional public funding.

NM 109, Jarales Road New Overpass over BNSF

This project would construct a viaduct over the Burlington Northern & Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad tracks in Belen, eliminating a dangerous rail crossing and eliminating traffic delays caused by trains blocking the roadway. Projected cost is \$30,000,000. BNSF is providing \$14.5 million for the project with the remainder of the funds coming from additional private funds, grants, or state funding, this project is consistent with the MTP goals and is within the fiscally constrained MTP project list.

NM 347 Paseo del Volcan (PdV) Corridor

Please refer to *Appendix B Illustrative Listing of Projects* for cost estimates and implementation schedule of this corridor.

Northwest Loop Corridor

The Northwest Loop is proposed as part of the long-range transportation system of the metro area. The 77 mile roadway would provide a third outer loop connecting I-40 at a new interchange near existing Exit #140 to US 550 at the Unser Blvd intersection. Environmental documentation was undertaken in the 1980's. In 2009 and 2010, some federal, state and local funds under project CN 3100060, were used to update the environmental document, conduct a cultural resources investigation and design and construct a short segment in the vicinity of the desalination plant site in Sandoval County. Currently, the Northwest Loop exists only as a gravel roadway from Alice King Way to a point south of the desalination site, and a very short section between Unser Blvd and US 550 (the connection of Unser Blvd to US 550). The completed roadway would serve the proposed Rio West planned community, the long-range proposed Sandoval County general aviation airport, the proposed Sandoval County landfill, and the

western edge of the potential Rio West and Estrella developments. However, these areas can be accessed in the interim via extensions and improvements to other roadways such as Northern Boulevard, Southern Boulevard, and Encino Road (pipeline road). Given the long-range implementation time frame for construction of these developments and facilities, further implementation of this corridor is beyond the 2040 horizon of this metropolitan transportation plan. However, public and/or private funds used to build or improve short segments of the Northwest Loop in order to serve the proposed landfill, airport, desalination plant, etc., are considered consistent with this metropolitan transportation plan in order to support economic vitality of the region. The Northwest Loop Corridor remains part of the long-range transportation system for the metro area.

Paseo del Norte (PdN) Extension & Improvements

Paseo del Norte is currently a multi-lane arterial highway between the Petroglyphs and Tramway Boulevard and a two-lane highway between Atrisco Vista Boulevard and the Petroglyphs with intersections at most north-south arterial roadways serving the Albuquerque and Rio Rancho areas. Final build-out envisions the widening of the current two-lane segments and extensions westerly to future Paseo del Volcan (PdV) and the future Northwest Loop as a multi-lane arterial expressway. Full implementation of this corridor should include provisions for a future dedicated transit guideway. Given the uncertainties of federal, state and local funding availability along with the long-range implementation time frame for growth in this area, much of the implementation of this corridor is beyond the 2040 horizon of this metropolitan transportation plan. Full build-out of Paseo del Norte remains part of the long-range transportation system of the metro area.

Status of Various Sections of the Route

Widening Between Rainbow Blvd. to Current End of 4-Lane Roadway – this is included in this MTP.

Reconstruction/Rehabilitate Existing 2-Lane Roadway Between Atrisco Vista Blvd. and Rainbow Blvd. – this is included in this MTP.

Widening PdN to 4-Lanes Between Atrisco Vista Blvd and Rainbow Blvd. – this is included in this MTP as a private developer funded project.

Construction of PdN Between Future NM 347 (PdV) and Atrisco Vista Blvd. – this future roadway is included in this MTP as a private developer funded project.

River Crossing Corridor

Please refer to *Chapter 2 of Connections 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan* regarding additional river crossings.

Unser Blvd. Widening at Paseo del Norte

This project will widen the Unser Boulevard "gap" from two to four lanes in the section both north and south of Paseo del Norte providing lane continuity and eliminating the current bottleneck. This project has funding for design, right-of-way acquisition and a phase of construction in the FFY 2020-2025 TIP. Funding to complete the construction phase is part of the fiscally constrained MTP and will be added to this TIP or the subsequent TIP.