Monitoring the Progress of the 2035 MTP

2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Monitoring Report

Mid-Region Metropolitan Planning Organization

June 2013

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Introduction

The *2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)* is the Albuquerque Metropolitan Planning Area's long-range transportation plan. Adopted by the Metropolitan Transportation Board (MTB) in April 2011 and approved by the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in June 2011, the *2035 MTP* included an objective to measure progress being made toward achieving regional transportation goals. To assess progress toward the plan's three goals—quality of life, mobility of goods and people, and economic activity and growth—performance-related data has been analyzed against baseline measures and work completed toward meeting goals and objectives has been reviewed and assessed. Results are presented in this report, the first round of monitoring the progress of the MTP.

Monitoring the plan on a regular basis allows for a continuous evaluation and for changes in approach to be made if the plan is not achieving its desired outcomes. The *2035 MTP* set out specific performance targets and action items to assess and monitor the progress of the plan and determine whether or not the plan is meeting its three primary goals and related plan objectives.

MRMPO will continue its work on the implementation of the *2035 MTP*. Because much of the data and information used to monitor the progress of the *2035 MTP* does not significantly change in the course of a single year, MRMPO will monitor the plan on a cycle of every other year. This is the first monitoring report, and the next report will be published as an appendix to the 2040 MTP in 2015. Through the exercise of completing this first report, MPO staff has learned that certain performance measurements and action items may need to be altered to better understand the type or degree of change occurring in the next round of reporting. This may be due to changing data sources or the discovery of more accurate methodologies, etc. In addition, it has become clear that certain monitoring items include those over which MRMPO has no control. Nevertheless, those items are still reported to give readers a sense of how the region is doing toward meeting goals of the *2035 MTP*.

Results of the *2035 MTP* Monitoring Report

Progress toward meeting the quality of life, mobility, and economic activity and growth performance targets and action plans to date has been mixed although mostly positive. Out of 34 indicators, only six were assessed as having no progress or negative progress made toward the goals. Ten indicators were assessed as neutral, meaning any progress toward the goal is unable to be determined. The remaining 18 indicators showed progress being made toward the goals. Results are summarized in the matrix below.

In looking at the results, it should be emphasized that it is not the responsibility of MRMPO alone to implement the *2035 MTP*. Rather, it is the collective task of the agencies and jurisdictions that comprise the Albuquerque Metropolitan Planning Area. This document summarizes the efforts that have been made around the region toward reaching the MTP's goals and highlights MRMPO's role in those efforts. Ultimately, achieving the desired outcomes identified in the *2035 MTP* will require ongoing coordination and commitment from a range of parties. As this document describes, a number of important first steps have been made.

Figure E-1: Performance Summary Matrix

Performance Targets	**Progress**	**Quality of Life Action Items**	**Progress**	**Mobility of People and Goods Action Items**	**Progress**	**Economic Activity and Growth Action Items**	**Progress**
Quality of Life Performance Targets		Support plans for implementation of alternative fuels and infrastructure	↓↓	Encourage increased transit services on Primary Transit Improvement Corridors	↑↑	Coordinate regional growth strategies with the transportation network	↑↑
Air Quality-Maintain VMT per capita rates at or below 2008 levels	↑↑	Develop strategies/plans for prioritizing safety improvements	↑↑	Complete Bus Rapid Transit study for the Northwest Metro Area	↑↑	Assess economic impacts of transportation projects & TOD	=
Increase accessibility to transit for environmental justice areas	=	Develop livable/sustainable community measures	=	Analyze levels of people movement (peds, transit riders, motorists & passengers) rather than vehicle traffic alone	↑↑	Support development of Transportation Demand Management activities	=
Reduce fatal and injury crashes by 2.3% per year	↓↓	Pursue the use of built environment health impact assessments	↑↑	Increase involvement in Safe Routes to School programs and school siting	↑↑	Assess economic impacts of various land use scenarios	=
Improve bridge and pavement conditions compared to 2008 levels	↑↑	Identify locations for improved pedestrian facilities using the PCI	↑↑	Assess & improve connectivity of thoroughfare system & local streets to improve walkability & better distribute vehicle traffic	=	Work on measuring and evaluating the combined housing and transportation costs for the region	=
Mobility of People and Goods Performance Targets		Support incorporation of complete streets principles into plans & policies; develop roadway design document	↑↑	Close gaps in the regional bicycle network	↑↑	Identify transportation projects to be constructed through arrangements with private sector parties	↓↓
Increase transit mode share along river crossings	=	Support the convenience and safety of non-motorized modes of travel	↑↑	Support the expansion of park and ride facilities	↑↑	Support incorporation of TOD principles into local development plans, policies	↑↑
Increase non-single occupancy vehicle trips	↓↓	Investigate regional strategies for mitigating/adapting to climate change	=	Identify locations for dedicated transit facilities, ROW acquisition & signal improvements	=	Assist local gov'ts in reviewing truck restrictions, policies for efficient movement of goods	↓↓
Implement high priority CMP strategies	↑↑						
Economic Activity & Growth Performance Targets							
Target transportation investments that improve connectivity and mobility in high activity density areas	=						
Increase transit services and thoroughfare connections to locally-designated activity centers and rail station areas	↑↑						
Reduce average household combined cost of housing and transportation compared to costs in 2010	=						

Key: = ↑↑ Progress being made; ↓↓ = Decline in progress; = = No progress being made/unable to determine progress

Monitoring the Progress of the *2035 MTP*

The *2035 MTP* introduced a performance monitoring element into the region's long range transportation plan to measure progress being made toward achieving regional transportation goals. Progress is evaluated by assessing current, performance-related data against baseline measures from 2008 for performance targets and also by reviewing work completed on specific tasks relating to overall MTP goals and identified action items.

Monitoring the plan on a regular basis allows for a continuous evaluation and for changes in approach to be made if the plan is not achieving its desired outcomes. The *2035 MTP* set specific performance targets and action items against which to measure and monitor the progress of the plan and determine whether or not the three primary goals—*preserve and improve quality of life*, *mobility of people and goods* and *support economic activity and growth*—are being met.

Performance Targets and Action Items

Two types of performance measures were developed for the *2035 MTP*: performance targets and action items.

1. **Performance targets** directly link to the goals and objective statements of the *2035 MTP* and consider the transportation system as a whole. The performance targets for the MTP are primarily quantitative.

2. **Action items** are qualitative objectives identified to measure progress made toward MTP goals. They are task-oriented and were derived from commitments made in the MTP.

Following is the assessment of how each of the performance targets and action items for the *2035 MTP* goals are being met. Following the descriptions of the performance targets is a description of progress made toward these performance measures. Action items are listed next and a brief report about work completed on the action item is provided.

This monitoring report will be presented to MRMPO committees and will also be made available to the public. As this monitoring process unfolds, MRMPO will continue to evaluate its usefulness and change measures or methods as needed.

Quality of Life Indicators

Quality of Life Performance Targets

Objective Statement

Enhance the livability, safety, and environmental conditions of the region through proactive, responsible, equitable and sustainable transportation decisions.

Performance Targets

Performance Target	2012 Progress Toward Performance Target
1. Maintain VMT per capita at or below 2008 levels	⇧⇧

Performance Target	2012 Progress Toward Performance Target
2. Increase accessibility to transit for environmental justice areas	=

Performance Target	2012 Progress Toward Performance Target
3. Reduce fatal and injury crashes by 2.3% per year	⇩⇩

Performance Target	2012 Progress Toward Performance Target
4. Improve bridge and pavement conditions compared to 2008 levels	⇧⇧

Key: ⇧⇧ =Progress being made; ⇩⇩ = Decline in progress; = = No progress being made/unable to determine progress

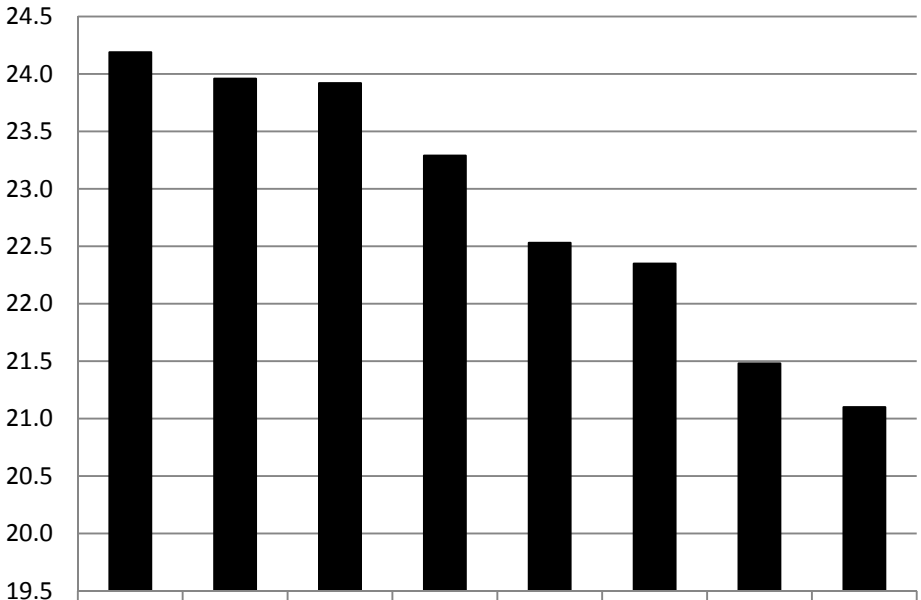
1. Maintain vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita at or below 2008 levels

PROGRESS MADE TOWARD PERFORMANCE TARGET

Since 2008, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) rates in the AMPA have declined from 22.5 to 21.1 vehicle miles traveled per capita, which represents a 6.2 percent decrease. Reducing VMT is a key strategy for maintaining air quality in the region. For the purpose of monitoring the *2035 MTP*, VMT is used as a proxy to gauge progress made toward air quality maintenance and improvement.

Numerous factors contribute to reductions in VMT, including gas prices and the economy. The decline in regional VMT per capita is largely attributed to the economic recession that started in 2007. Although MRMPO and its member governments and partner agencies have no control over economic conditions or gas prices, MRMPO can work on maintaining and even reducing VMT by improving the transportation system for all modes, through transportation demand management (TDM) efforts, and supporting smart growth efforts and policies.

Figure 1-1: AMPA VMT Per Capita Rates, 2004-2011



	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Per capita VMT	24.2	24.0	23.9	23.3	22.5	22.4	21.5	21.1

Source: DGR, MRCOG

2. Increase accessibility to transit for Environmental Justice areas

PROGRESS MADE TOWARD PERFORMANCE TARGET =

This performance target estimates the percentage of the identified environmental justice population in the region that lives within ¼ mile and ½ mile of all transit and high frequency transit, respectively. Measuring this performance target was problematic because the locations of identified environmental justice communities changed between 2008 and 2012 as a result of new data from the 2010 U.S. Census (in 2008, 2000 U.S. Census data was used; in 2012, 2010 U.S. Census data was used). Therefore, the 2008 and 2012 numbers do not offer a completely accurate comparison. Nevertheless, where new communities were identified, environmental justice populations and their proximity to transit (including new transit service) was calculated[1]. Transit networks for 2008 and 2012 were used. Between 2008 and 2012, access to transit service for environmental justice communities improved for all categories except for the percentage of population within a ¼ mile of high frequency transit. Although the explanation for this is uncertain, it may be that the availability of high frequency transit is causing property values and rents to increase, out pricing lower income residents in those areas. This measure should continue to be monitored to ensure transit service is provided equitably and at adequate levels, especially for environmental justice populations.

Figure 1-2: Percent of EJ population with Access to Transit Service, 2008 & 2012

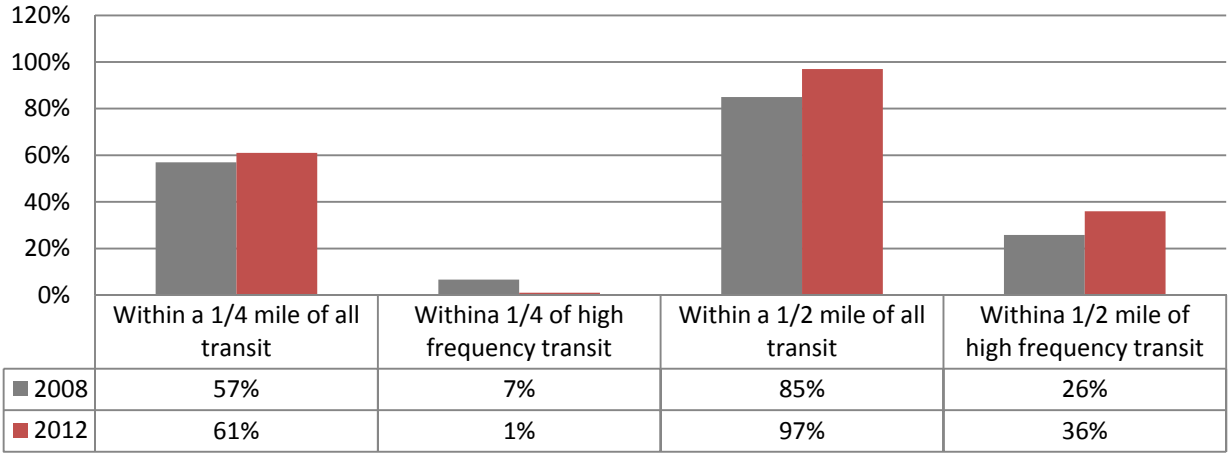


Figure 1-3: Communities served by transit

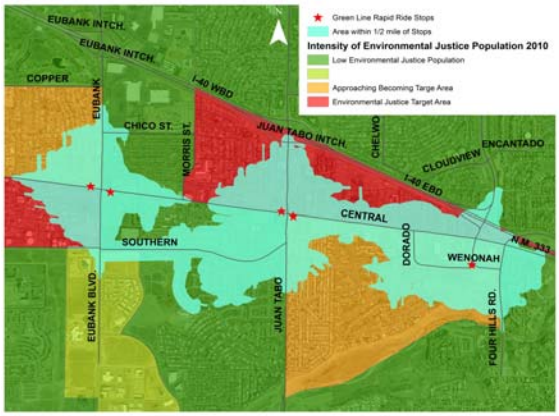


Figure 1.3 shows the impact new transit service—in this case enhanced transit service—can have on a community. The blue area is the newly served area within ½ mile of enhanced transit service. The red and orange areas are areas identified as having higher than average environmental justice populations. New service in an area with higher levels of minorities, low income residents, or both, particularly benefit from transit service since it is an affordable transportation option.

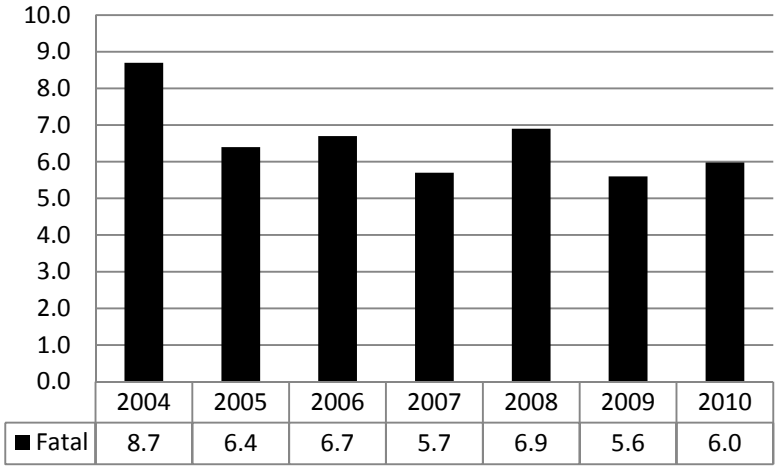
[1] Environmental justice communities were identified using minority status and median income data along with population density to identify where there are concentrations of environmental justice populations.

3. Reduce fatal and injury crashes by 2.3 percent per year

PROGRESS MADE TOWARD PERFORMANCE TARGET

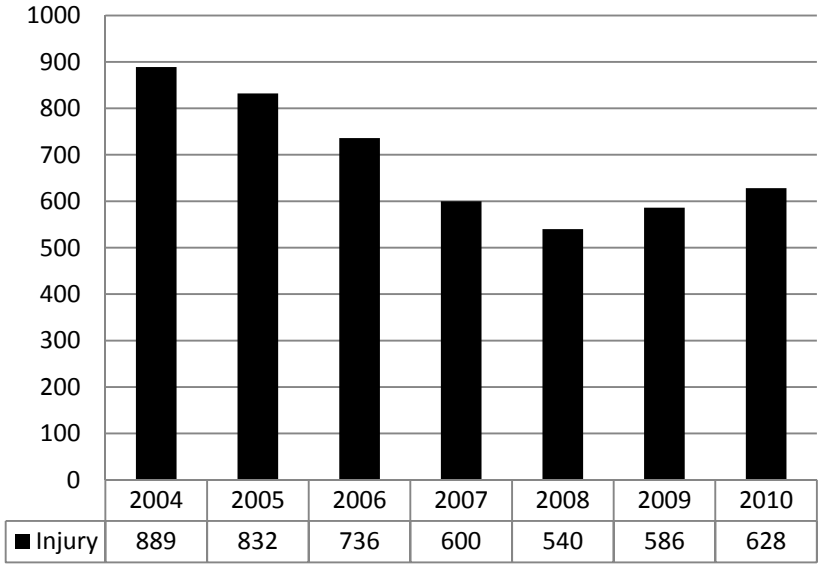
Crash rates have increased in the AMPA since 2008, and therefore the safety performance target of reducing fatal and injury crashes by 2.3 percent per year has not been met. Strategies on how to further improve safety in the region should continue to be pursued.

Figure 1-4: Fatal Crash Rates (per 100,000 population) in the AMPA, 2004-2010



Source: DGR, MRCOG

Figure 1-5: Injury Crash Rates (per 100,000 population), 2004-2010



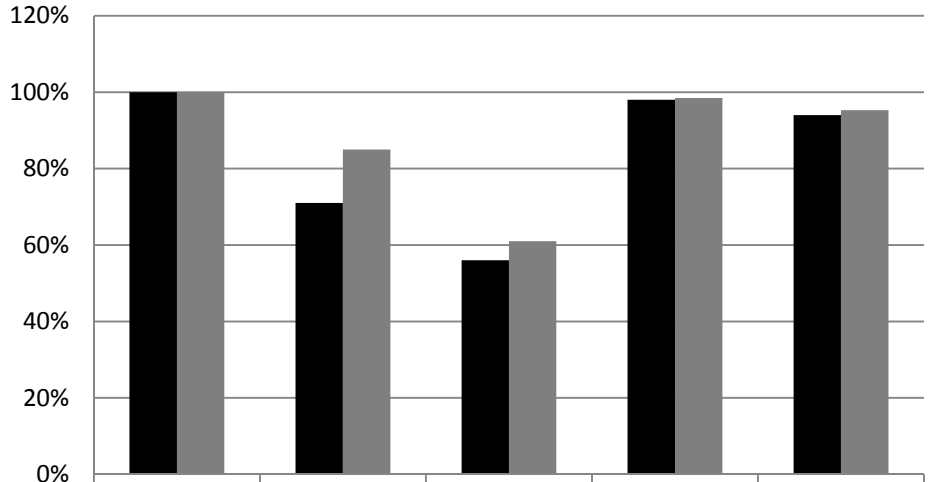
Source: DGR, MRCOG

4. Improve bridge and pavement conditions compared to 2008 levels

PROGRESS MADE TOWARD PERFORMANCE TARGET

According to updated pavement condition data from Bernalillo County, the City of Albuquerque, the City of Rio Rancho and District 3 of the New Mexico Department of Transportation, pavement conditions in the region have for the most part improved, particularly in Albuquerque and Rio Rancho.

Figure 1-6: Pavement Conditions, 2008 and 2012



	Bernalillo County	City of Albuquerque	City of Rio Rancho	District 3 Interstate	District 3 Non-Interstate
% Fair and Above 2008	100%	71%	56%	98%	94%
% Fair and Above 2012	100%	85%	61%	99%	95%

**Note that Bernalillo County ranks all of its roadways as "Fair" or "Good"*

Quality of Life Action Items

Q1) Support plans for implementation of alternative fuels and infrastructure

The City of Albuquerque has installed two electric car charging stations in the City, but other than that there are no plans in the region for developing alternative fuel stations of which MRMPO is aware. MRMPO is conscious of the need to increase awareness on this issue and will make an effort to develop a line of communication on such issues with appropriate parties at the state, county and local levels. At the same time it is recognized that the predominant future alternative energy sources for vehicles is still undetermined at this point, and as such, MRMPO is taking a "wait-and-see" approach before organizing any alternative fuels infrastructure plans.

Q2) Develop strategies/plans for prioritizing safety improvements

The latest MRMPO *2011 Annual Crash and Safety Report* was expanded to not only include relevant safety data in the metropolitan region, but also to highlight key safety issues and cover important planning and programs taking place in the region that support improving safety. The report, among other topics, discusses connectivity and design, alcohol involvement programs, and intelligent transportation systems. This reorganization was done as a first step toward collaborating and developing prioritized strategies in the next rendition.

Albuquerque was designated as a Focus City by the FHWA meaning the FHWA is providing technical assistance to help with safety improvements in the area. The City of Albuquerque and MRMPO are working together with the FHWA to conduct Road Safety Audits (RSA) for areas of the City that have high levels of pedestrian fatalities and injuries. A simple but effective density analysis of pedestrian crashes was done to identify six key "problem" areas. The first area being focused on is along West Central and will coincide with the development of a Sector Plan in the area. The RSA will also bring together a variety of stakeholders to the table in the development of strategies that are not just pedestrian focused, but which will also contribute to developing more multi-modal complete streets. Transit and pedestrian safety will be a key area of emphasis.

Q3) Develop livable/sustainable community measures

In the midst of the development of the *2035 MTP*, the HUD/DOT/EPA Partnership for Sustainable Communities introduced six principles of livability as part of a multi-agency effort geared toward creating more livable and sustainable places. MRMPO will consider the incorporation of these measures (as appropriate) into the goals and objectives of the next MTP. The six principles of livability include:

1. *Provide more transportation choices.*
2. *Promote equitable, affordable housing.*
3. *Enhance economic competitiveness.*
4. *Support existing communities.*
5. *Coordinate policies and leverage investment.*
6. *Value communities and neighborhoods.*

Although not developed in response to the FHWA's livability measures, the *2035 MTP* did include performance targets and action items that address livability/sustainable community measures (i.e., reducing the combined household costs of housing and transportation; increasing non-single occupancy vehicle trips to work; closing gaps in the regional bicycle network; increasing transit to activity centers and rail stations; and increasing transit mode share on river crossings). In addition, the Project Prioritization Process used to help select projects for federal funding includes livability and sustainability-related performance measures, including incentivizing projects that do the following: reduce emissions; include new bicycle or pedestrian facilities; improve transportation options for low-income and minority communities; preserve and enhance existing infrastructure; address congested corridors and corridors with high levels of people movement; serve areas with high population and employment activity; provide connections to transit facilities; and address heavily-used pedestrian areas.

MRMPO is participating in the UNM/CNM/Sunport study which is being developed to include sustainability measures in the process of selecting a preferred transit route. MRMPO is also participating in the Bridge Boulevard Corridor Redevelopment Plan that received TIGER funds and explicitly follows the livability measures to determine a type of corridor redevelopment that balances local and regional needs.

Q4) Pursue the use of built environment health impact assessments

MRMPO staff participated in a health impact assessment (HIA) for Central Avenue that resulted in recommendations to a local sector plan and which have strengthened relationships with local agency staff, particularly on the transportation sections of sector plans. MPO staff has also been involved with ensuring that new sector plans incorporate health and safety data and transit oriented development (TOD) opportunities. The UNM/CNM/Sunport study, which focuses on connecting vital destinations in our region such as the UNM Health Complex, UNM, CNM, and the Sunport, has recently been initiated by the Rio Metro Regional Transit District with staff support from MRMPO and will be brought to a Health Impact Assessment committee for feedback. It will be important for developing future TOD strategies and policies. In addition, MRMPO staff played a role in Bernalillo County's Collaborative Initiative for Neighborhood and Community Health (CINCH) and in integrating health measures into the analysis for the City of Albuquerque's 50-Mile Bike Loop Master Plan.

Q5) Identify locations for improved pedestrian facilities using the Pedestrian Composite Index

The Pedestrian Composite Index (PCI) is a tool that helps communities evaluate pedestrian needs on a regional scale. The Index evaluates factors that attract pedestrians and factors that make walking difficult in a given area. The PCI is also used to show the factors that push local areas into the "high regional priority" classification for pedestrian improvements.

Since the adoption of the *2035 MTP*, local agencies have used the PCI to evaluate pedestrian issues in local areas. The following areas have been evaluated using the PCI:

1. Zuni Road (*Zuni Corridor Study*, 2010)
2. Rio Grande Corridor (*Rio Grande Corridor Master Plan Update*, 2011)
3. West Central Ave (*West Central Sector Development Plan Update*, 2011)
4. International District (*International District Sector Plan Update*, 2011)
5. San Pedro Dr (*San Pedro Concept Plan* - UNM Community & Regional Planning Studio, 2011)
6. Journal Center (2012)
7. Girard Blvd (*Girard Complete Street Study*, 2012)
8. UNM/ CNM (*UNM/CNM/Sunport Transit Study Phase I* (2011) and *Phase II - Yale & University* (2012))

The PCI only provides a broad view of pedestrian conflicts. It helps identify the need, but it does not provide recommendations on how to improve the roadside or intersections for pedestrians. Some multiagency efforts are being undertaken to bridge this gap, such as the Road Safety Audit on West Central Avenue. Road safety audits are formal safety performance examinations of existing or future roads or intersections by an independent, multidisciplinary team. By increasing staff capacity to conduct Road Safety Audits, MRMPO also hopes to be able to provide recommendations on pedestrian improvements.

Q6) Support the incorporation of complete streets principles into MPO and local plans and policies and develop a regional roadway design document based on complete streets and context sensitive design elements

In July 2011, the Metropolitan Transportation Board adopted a resolution directing the update of the Future Albuquerque Area Bikeways and Streets (FAABS) document to incorporate complete streets principles. Since then, MRMPO staff and representatives from member agencies have begun the development of a new document named the *Long Range Transportation System Guide*. Unlike the FAABS document, the *Long Range Transportation System Guide* will become an appendix to the MTP and will be updated as part of the MTP. This guide will incorporate complete streets principles, provide a rationale for making decisions on right-of-way size based on current and future land use, and will provide recommendations on roadway connectivity. Conceptual roadway design guidelines will also be part of this document. MRMPO staff hopes to provide a draft for committee and public review in 2014.

Q7) Support the convenience and safety of non-motorized modes of travel as commuting alternatives

This action item is being addressed through a variety of efforts described below.

1. MRMPO's *Long Range Transportation System Guide* will include complete streets guidance which will support the convenience of non-motorized travel as commuting alternatives. A committee is working on not

only multi-modal strategies, but also linking land use context to transportation, and providing connectivity analyses of the metropolitan region. These analyses show the importance of connectivity on relieving congestion and improving walkability. The benefits of connectivity were also discussed in MRMPO's *2011 Annual Safety Report*.

2. A Complete Streets Leadership Team in which the MPO participates has been formed by the New Mexico Healthier Weight Council. This effort has led to numerous educational presentations to professional groups and boards, collaboration among agencies, and support for events related to the development of complete streets.

3. The use of the Pedestrian Composite Index (PCI) is another way non-motorized modes are being supported. The roadways for which the City of Albuquerque has requested a focused PCI study have come up as 'high regional priority' areas for pedestrian improvements. The Index demonstrates that these areas are important on a regional level and are in need of improvement.

4. MRMPO's pursuit of building internal staff capacity to conduct Road Safety Audits. Road safety audits are formal safety performance examinations of existing or future roads or intersections by an independent, multidisciplinary team.

5. MRMPO is partnering with Bernalillo County's Collaborative Initiative for Neighborhood and Community Health (CINCH) and the New Mexico Healthier Weight Council in response to health professionals recognizing the effects that convenient and safe walking and bicycling conditions have on public health. These two health organizations are leading efforts to identify and pursue policies to support active living by making communities more friendly places in which to walk and bicycle.

6. MRMPO staff members participate in local-level efforts to improve walking and bicycling by participating in committees and the development of local plans. A few examples are the *Bridge Boulevard Corridor Redevelopment Plan*, the *Girard Complete Street Study*, and the Greater Albuquerque Bicycle Advisory Committee.

Q8) Investigate regional strategies for mitigating/adapting to climate change

Staff members continue to monitor these strategies as well as how climate change is affecting the region.

Mobility of People and Goods Indicators

Mobility of People and Goods Performance Targets

Objective Statement

Enable the efficient movement of people and goods within and through the region and provide residents with a range of viable transportation options.

Performance Targets

Performance Target	2012 Progress Toward Performance Target
1. Increase transit mode share along river crossings to 10% by 2025 and 20% by 2035	=

Performance Target	2012 Progress Toward Performance Target
2. Increase non-single occupancy vehicle trips to 25% by 2025 and 30% by 2035	↓↓

Performance Target	2012 Progress Toward Performance Target
3. Implement high priority congestion management process strategies from the CMP toolkit	↑↑

Key: ↑↑ =Progress being made; ↓↓ = Decline in progress; = = No progress being made/unable to determine progress

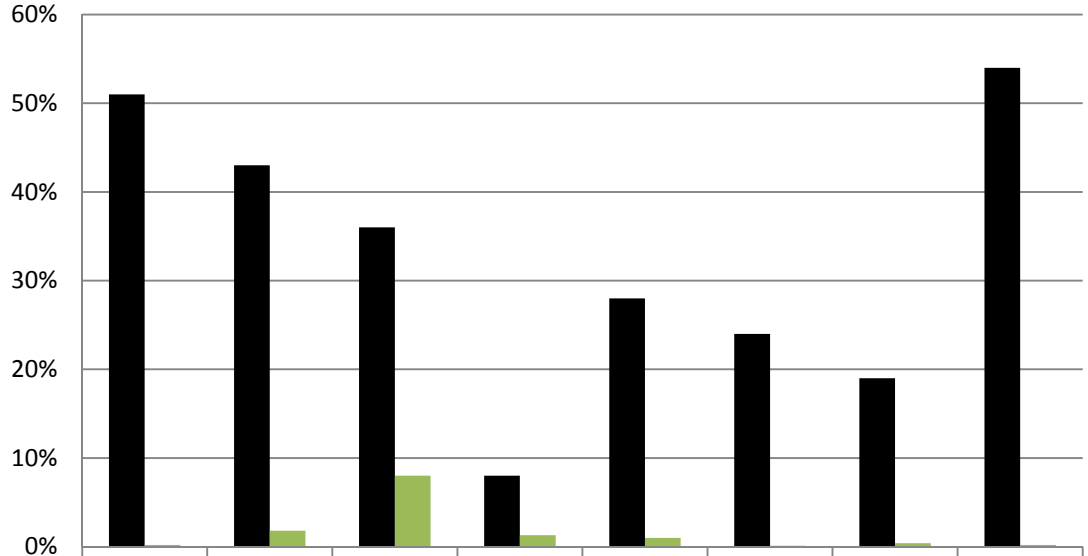
1. Increase transit mode share along river crossings to 10 percent by 2025 and to 20 percent by 2035

PROGRESS MADE TOWARD PERFORMANCE TARGET

The overall transit mode share along the region's river crossings is 1.21 percent (approximately 6,500 transit river crossing trips out of almost 533,000 person trips). While the overall mode share is low, one bright spot is that eight percent of all river crossing trips along Central Avenue are made via transit. The second highest corridor by percentage is Bridge Boulevard (1.8 percent), but the second highest corridor in terms of number of transit users is Interstate 40 which carries more than 2,100 riders per day, mostly on the Rapid Ride Blue Line.

Data was compiled for the first time at a regional level in 2011 (which is now the baseline year), so it is difficult to make any assessments on changes or improvements over time. On an anecdotal level, transit mode share on Central Avenue has improved. An initial survey in 2008 found a six percent mode share in 2008 while the 2011 regional survey found an eight percent mode share in 2011.

Figure 1-7: Transit Mode Share: Future Need and 2011



	Alameda Blvd	Bridge Blvd	Central	I-40	Montano Blvd	Paseo Del Norte	Rio Bravo	US 550
Future Need	51%	43%	36%	8%	28%	24%	19%	54%
2011 Share	0.2%	1.8%	8.0%	1.3%	1.0%	0.1%	0.4%	0.2%

2. Increase non single-occupancy vehicle trips to work to 20 percent by 2025 and 30 percent by 2035

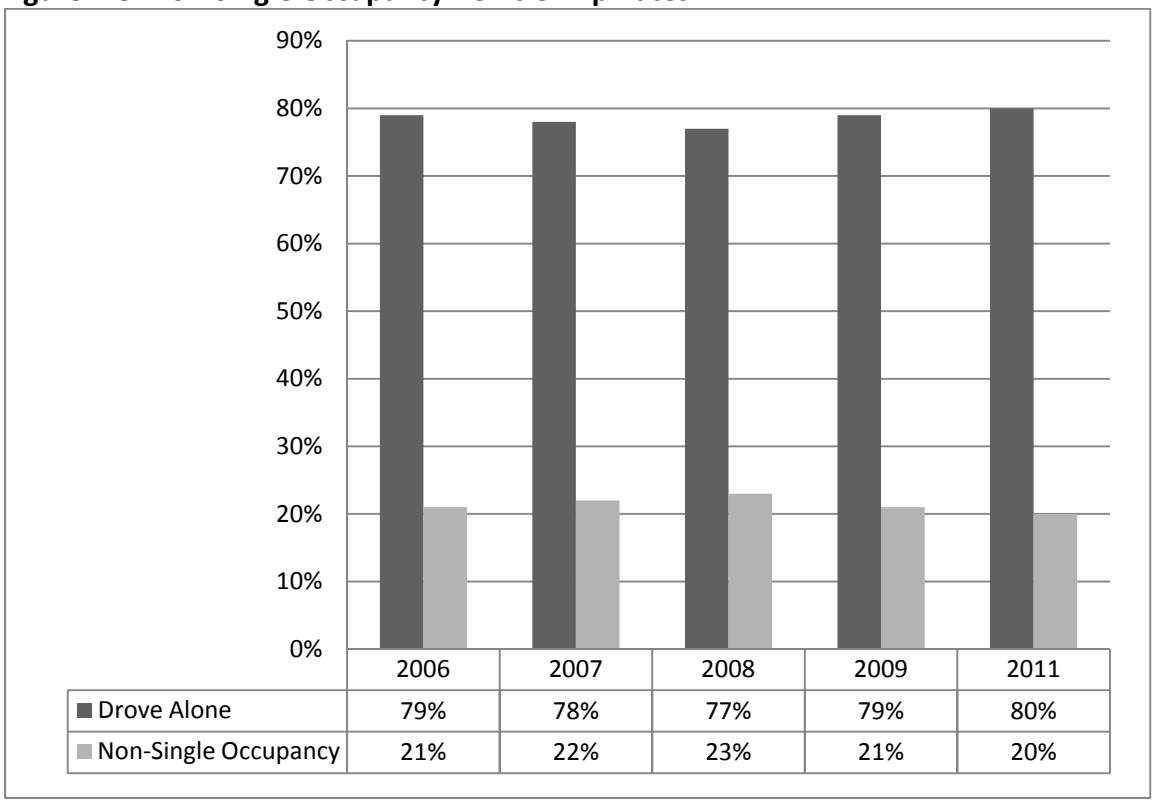
PROGRESS MADE TOWARD PERFORMANCE TARGET

In 2011, slightly more commute trips in the region were single occupancy vehicle trips compared to recent years according to data from the American Community Survey. That means workers in the region are still primarily continuing to travel to work in their own personal vehicles rather than carpooling, walking, riding bicycles or telecommuting (non-single occupancy trips), and are doing so at a slightly higher rate.

Although this measure represents personal decisions and can be difficult to change, improving transit service and coverage, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and supporting Transportation Demand Management (TDM) in the region can promote higher rates of non-single occupancy vehicle trips to work. Progress made in this regard would indicate a higher number of transportation choices in the region.

Of note is that single occupancy vehicle trip and transit rates are increasing while carpooling rates are decreasing. With this in mind, it may be effective to increase efforts on promoting and improving carpool programs in the region. With new releases by American Community Survey on commuter data at the Census block group level (rather than just at a regional level), it will now be possible to look at commute patterns at a more fine-grained level, which should presumably help shed more light on commute mode choices.

Figure 1-8: Non-Single Occupancy Vehicle Trip Rates



	2006	2007	2008	2009	2011
Drove Alone	79%	78%	77%	79%	80%
Non-Single Occupancy	21%	22%	23%	21%	20%

Source: American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates (Note: 2004-2006 data = '2006', etc.)

3. Implement high priority Congestion Management Process strategies from the Congestion Management Process Toolkit

PROGRESS MADE TOWARD PERFORMANCE TARGET

The Congestion Strategies Performance Target can be measured by the percentage of projects proposed for the 2016-2017 years of TIP—the first years for which the Project Prioritization Process was implemented—that include performance strategies outlined in the Congestion Management Process (*CMP) Toolkit*. Of eligible proposed projects, 68 percent included one or more high priority CMP strategies. The criterion was modified for the 2014-2019 TIP, and as a result the criterion is less inclusive than in the first version of the PPP. In future years, the percentage of projects incorporating high priority CMP strategies is therefore likely to drop. Of projects selected for federal discretionary funds in 2016-2017, 79 percent included high priority CMP strategies, indicating that projects containing CMP strategies were more likely to be funded than those without. The performance target of implementing high priority CMP strategies is therefore being met.

Mobility of People & Goods Action Items

M1) Encourage increased transit services on Primary Transit Improvement Corridors (key corridors for transit)

ABQ Ride has increased the frequency of service for Route 157, which provides service from the Northwest Transit Center to Uptown via Montaño Road and Louisiana Boulevard, both of which are considered priority transit improvement corridors in the *2035 MTP*. MRMPO is participating in the ongoing UNM/CNM/Sunport, Central Avenue, and Paseo del Norte transit studies. Each of the studies would provide enhanced service on corridors designated for transit improvements. Additionally, the MRMPO Project Prioritization Process continues to award points to projects that are located along a primary transit corridor, which is an incentive for increasing transit service in these locations.

M2) Complete Bus Rapid Transit study for the Northwest Metro Area

The Rio Metro Regional Transit District and MRMPO are midway through the completion of the Paseo del Norte High Capacity Transit Study (HCTS). As of this writing, a shortlist of route alternatives has been developed and additional public input is being solicited. The project team is reviewing service costs and requirements; identifying potential station locations, station types, and the amenities that will be offered at each stop; and considering how to best integrate proposed services into the existing Albuquerque area transit network. The Paseo del Norte HCTS will ultimately produce a locally preferred alternative identifying service type and design, routes and destinations, along with a service plan to understand the financial investment necessary for implementation. The study is expected to be completed by summer 2013.

M3) Analyze levels of people movement (pedestrians, transit passengers, vehicle drivers and passengers) rather than vehicle traffic alone to better understand how people are traveling along a corridor

In addition to the MRCOG Traffic Counts program, which collects roadway volume data on the federal-aid network for the four-county central New Mexico region, MRMPO is actively involved in the collection of bicycle, pedestrian, and transit data to determine multi-modal user assessments, or “people movement.”

In 2011 and 2012 MRMPO conducted boarding and alighting surveys on ABQ Ride and Rio Metro transit services to determine important origin and destination points and understand usage levels along different parts of each route. MRMPO was able to use this data to determine transit mode shares across the region. MRMPO and Bernalillo County are also involved in a bicycle counts program. To date, eight permanent counters have been installed to determine the number of bicyclists and pedestrians using some of the most important trails in the metropolitan area (the Bosque Trail, Alameda Trail, and Tramway Trail). The counters will also provide data on river crossing trips at Alameda, the I-40 bridge, and Rio Bravo Boulevard.

M4) Increase involvement in Safe Routes to School programs and school siting

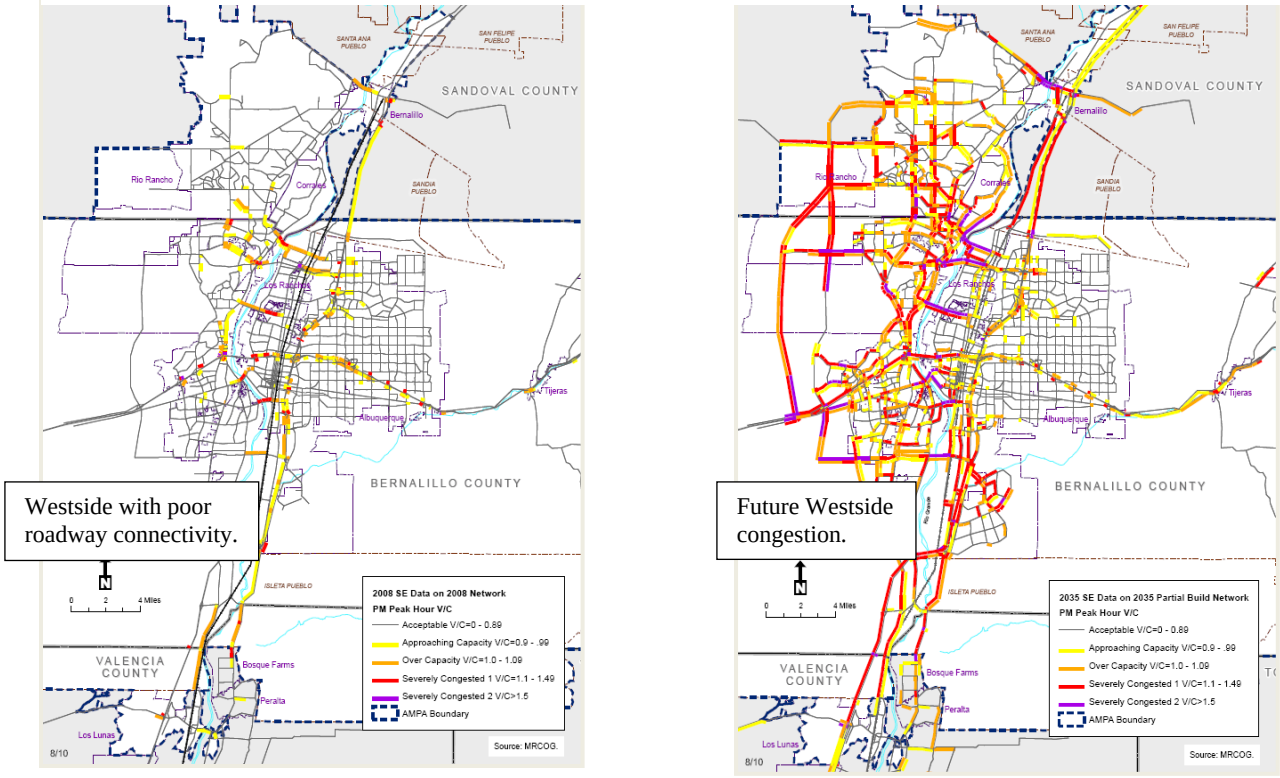
MRMPO is working with Albuquerque Public Schools as part of Bernalillo County's Collaborative Impact on Neighborhood and Community Health (CINCH) program to address Safe Routes to School and school siting. This is part of a larger effort to improve active living in Bernalillo County. Bernalillo County's Chronic Disease Prevention Policy Scan identified Safe Routes to School as a policy gap in the effort to improve healthy and safe physical environments.

In January 2012, MRMPO staff completed training to organize and conduct a Walking School Bus Program (an associated program that supports Safe Routes to Schools by encouraging children to walk to school in groups). MRMPO has the expertise and resources from this training to assist in the creation of a Walking School Bus Program when this opportunity occurs.

M5) Assess and improve connectivity of thoroughfare system and local streets to improve walkability and better distribute vehicle traffic

The major effort to improve connectivity is through the *Long Range Transportation System* (LRTS) *Guide*. The *LRTS Guide* will contain recommendations on roadway connectivity based on land use as well as recommendations for non-motorized connections. Connectivity measures and their relationship with transportation network efficiency are being investigated as this guide is developed. The most striking local example is the 2035 travel demand model network showing Albuquerque's poorly connected Westside as highly congested in 2035 and Albuquerque's grid-like, highly-connected Eastside virtually unaffected.

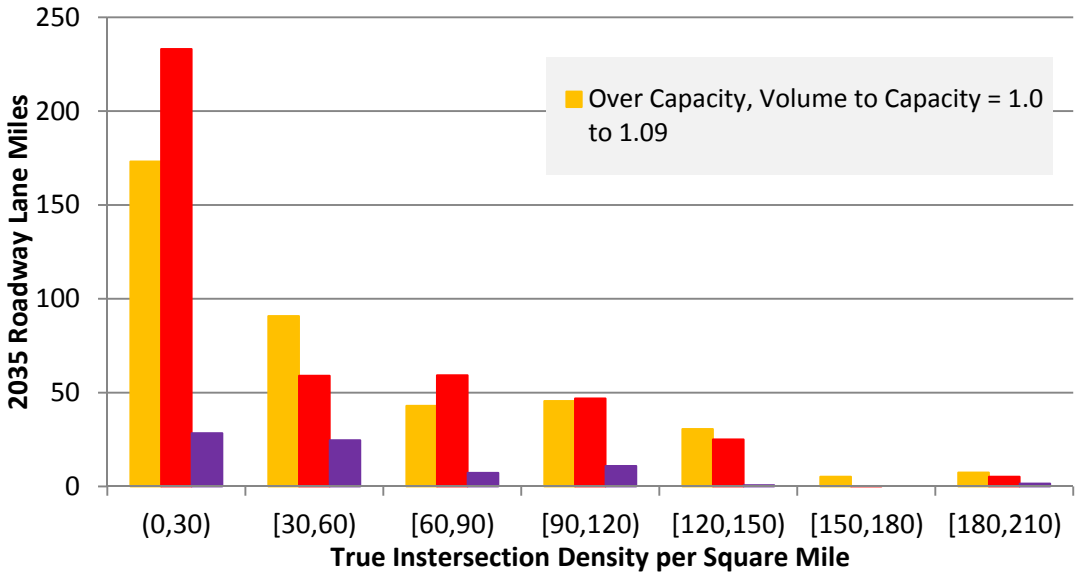
Figure 1-9: Roadway network in 2008 & 2035, showing relationship of connectivity & congestion



Note: Orange, red and purple colors denote increasing levels of congestion.

Currently MRMPO uses intersections per square mile as a measure of roadway connectivity. For each Census tract the number of true intersections and the miles of congested roadway were calculated. The following chart shows the relationship between this measure of roadway connectivity and 2035 PM Peak Hour Congestion. Areas with more intersections per square mile have much less forecasted roadway congestion, as represented by the yellow, purple and red bar graphs.

Figure 1-10: Relationship between Street Connectivity and 2035 PM Peak Hour Congestion



The benefits of connectivity were also discussed in the *2011 MRMPO Annual Safety Report*. In addition, a project was selected for federal funding that improves Channel Road in Albuquerque's Northeast Heights. The project creates a more well-connected street system and alleviates congestion on Jefferson Street.

M6) Close gaps in the regional bicycle network ⇧⇧

The major incentive MRMPO provides to connect gaps in the regional bicycle network is through the Project Prioritization Process. Prioritization points are awarded to projects if they close a regional bicycle gap. Oftentimes a trail segment is proposed, but a small, critical point gap at an intersection is not included in the project. These critical gaps are often very problematic and pose large barriers to walking or bicycling. In such cases, the project would not be awarded prioritization points. This process provides an incentive to address not only large gaps, but critical and difficult small ones as well.

Thus far, incentivizing federal funding has been very effective in helping close large gaps in the regional network, however, MRMPO staff works with local groups and advisory committees to keep track of the variety of problematic gaps in the regional network and seek opportunities to address these areas. Hopefully, as the region develops a more complete multi-modal system, transportation professionals and the public alike will become more aware of and adept at addressing lingering point problem areas in the regional bikeway network.

Since the adoption of the *2035 MTP* several major grade-separated crossing projects have been constructed on trails in the region. The most notable project is the pedestrian-bicycle crossing over I-25 connecting the east and west legs of the Bear Canyon Arroyo Trail. This bridge, funded by the City of Albuquerque and the TIP, connects

people living west of the river to jobs in Journal Center and creates a vital link to the North Diversion Channel Trail which provides direct access to the University of New Mexico, Journal Center and Balloon Fiesta Park. This bridge is estimated to affect 29,000 people living and working within a four mile radius. In the *2035 MTP* this gap closure project ranked the highest of all the proposed grade-separated crossings in terms of people affected.

Several other recently completed grade separated crossings have also highly impacted the region's major north-south route, the North Diversion Channel Trail. These are the under crossings at Osuna Road, Comanche Road, Candelaria Road and Menaul Boulevard.

Another notable connection in the region is the Lead/Coal/Zuni corridor. The one-way pairs Lead Avenue and Coal Avenue were a combined complete street and stormwater project. The Zuni Corridor Study recommends using a lane to transform the eastern portion of the roadway into a complete street. When Zuni Road is reconfigured the entire Lead/Coal/Zuni corridor will provide a direct connection between the underserved International District, the University of New Mexico and Downtown Albuquerque, closing a major system gap in the regional network.

M7) Support the expansion of park and ride facilities

In early 2012 MRMPO and the Rio Metro Regional Transit District conducted a survey at three park and ride facilities (the Northwest Transit Center, Central and Unser Transit Center, and Uptown Transit Center) to determine user points of origin and destination, average distance traveled to reach the station, and the mode by which users arrive at the facilities. The resulting report is being utilized in area transit studies—in particular the Paseo del Norte High Capacity Transit Study—to determine potential park and ride sites and commuter-sheds.

The development of new park and ride facilities is supported through the Project Prioritization Process as prioritization points are awarded to new park and ride facilities because they support intermodal connectivity.

M8) Identify specific locations for dedicated transit facilities, right-of-way acquisition and signal improvements

The identification of specific locations for dedicated transit infrastructure is a consideration in each of the ongoing transit studies described previously (i.e., the Paseo del Norte High Capacity Transit Study, the Central Avenue BRT Study and UNM/CNM/Sunport transit study). Final decisions and recommendations have not yet been made.

Economic Activity and Growth Indicators

Economic Activity and Growth Performance Targets

Objective Statement

Develop a transportation system that promotes economic activity in the region achieved through decisions that provide an affordable, efficient, and accessible multimodal transportation network.

Performance Targets

Performance Target	2012 Progress Toward Performance Target
1. Target transportation investments that improve connectivity and mobility for all modes within high Activity Density Areas	=

Performance Target	2012 Progress Toward Performance Target
2. Increase transit services and appropriate thoroughfare connections to locally-designated Activity Centers and rail station areas	↑↑

Performance Target	2012 Progress Toward Performance Target
3. Reduce the average household combined cost of housing and transportation compared to costs in 2010	=

Key: ↑↑ =Progress being made; ↓↓ = Decline in progress; = = No progress being made/unable to determine progress

1. Target transportation investments that improve connectivity and mobility for all modes within 2008 Activity Density Areas

PROGRESS MADE TOWARD PERFORMANCE TARGET

One way in which transportation investments are encouraged in activity areas is through the Project Prioritization Process, which awards prioritization points to projects proposed in these areas. The Investment Areas Performance Target can be measured by the percentage of projects proposed for the 2016-2017 years of TIP—the first years for which the Project Prioritization Process was implemented—that targeted zones or locations with a combined average of more than 10 persons and employees per acre. Of eligible proposed projects, 35 percent were located in high activity density areas. Of projects selected for federal discretionary funds in 2016-2017, 29 percent were located in high activity density areas, meaning that projects in high activity areas were actually less likely to be chosen for federal funding.

The Project Prioritization Process was used again in early 2013 for the development of the 2018-2019 years of the TIP. MRMPO will continue to monitor the factors that contributed to project selection to determine if the PPP is helping select projects that are most beneficial to the region and that best meet the region's goals. MRMPO can also investigate other ways of encouraging transportation investments in activity density areas.

2. Increase transit services and appropriate thoroughfare connections to locally-designated activity centers and rail station areas

PROGRESS MADE TOWARD PERFORMANCE TARGET

Longer-term efforts to increase transit service to activity centers include three ongoing bus rapid transit studies, two of which are headed by the Rio Metro Regional Transit District and include direct participation by MRMPO. Each of the BRT studies considers connections to the most important activity centers in the region. The primary focus of the Paseo del Norte High Capacity Transit Study (HCTS) is to consider connections to the Journal Center/Jefferson Street corridor, a series of business park and office complexes with more than 30,000 employees in 2008. The Paseo HCTS also considers connections from the Northwest portion of the metropolitan area to UNM. The Paseo HCTS is set to receive an injection of almost $12 million in federal discretionary funds in 2016 and 2017. These funds were subject to the transit "set aside" established by the Metropolitan Transportation Board in 2010 and were specifically targeted for capital costs associated with BRT service along Paseo del Norte and through the northwest portion of the metropolitan area.

The Central Avenue and UNM/CNM/Sunport BRT Studies also consider direct service along or through UNM. Central Avenue BRT would expand upon the existing Rapid Ride lines that connect to Downtown and Old Town, while a UNM/CNM/Sunport line could provide expanded service to the CNM Community College and the Sunport International Airport while linking to UNM and Central Avenue service.

ABQ Ride has increased the frequency of service for Route 157, which provides service to Uptown, a high activity employment and shopping center. ABQ Ride extended the Taylor Ranch Express (Route 92) to UNM and CNM. Route 92, which offers peak period service for Westside commuters, previously terminated in Downtown.

The Rio Metro Regional Transit District has increased transit service to activity centers and/or rail stations as well. This has included the development of new bus routes: Route 206 in Belen and Route 207 in Los Lunas, both of which connect to Rail Runner stations. Additionally, Rio Metro funds, partially or fully, select bus routes operated by ABQ Ride that serve activity centers across the region (Routes 96, 155, 222, 250, 251, 551, 790).

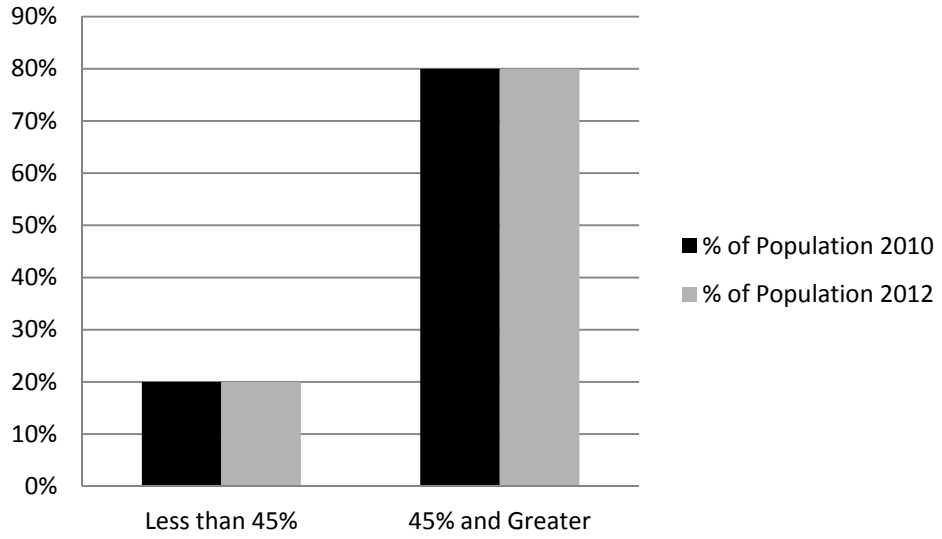
3. Reduce the average household combined cost of housing and transportation compared to costs in 2010

PROGRESS MADE TOWARD PERFORMANCE TARGET

The Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) has brought attention to the concept of combining transportation and housing costs to paint a true picture of housing affordability since transportation costs are the second highest household expense and are related to housing location. When combined housing and transportation costs are less than 45 percent of household income, they are defined as affordable by the CNT. Between 2010 and 2012 the number of households in the region with affordable housing and transportation (less than 45 percent of household income) has remained the same at 20 percent of the population according to the CNT.

Regional progress on this measure can be made by smarter and more compact land use development, improvements to transit, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and coordinated land use and transportation planning. Although MRMPO lacks land use authority, the organization can work with partners with land use jurisdiction on coordinating land use and transportation planning. In addition, a clearer understanding of this measure will be possible in future analyses because household income data can now be looked at a finer geographic level.

Figure 1-11: Affordable Housing and Transportation Costs, 2010 and 2012



Source: Center for Neighborhood Technology

Economic Activity & Growth Action Items

E1) Work with member agencies on coordinating regional growth strategies with the transportation network

MRMPO has formed a committee among local agencies to discuss ideas for growth in the region. This committee currently focuses on sharing information about land use and transportation issues and includes presentations about growth that are of interest to the participants. The group has discussed scenario planning with an interest in pursuing this in the future as well as transit oriented development, zoning and density. This committee has slowly been expanding and will reach out to other stakeholders in the region to expand the discussion. Contacts have been established with both the FHWA and ULI New Mexico who offer training and mentoring in the areas of scenario development and regional visioning. The ultimate goal of this committee is to develop strong relationships among agencies so that in the future a vision for growth and transportation can be developed and agreed upon.

As a result of this initiative, MRMPO staff has become more involved with local sector planning (particularly on the transportation sections of sector plans) and has strengthened relationships with agency staff. Local studies and 2040 MTP development will be brought to this committee for feedback, particularly on developing future strategies and policies.

Lastly, Appendix C of the *2035 MTP*, which depicts a compact development scenario, has been presented to member agencies an example of the impact that changes in land use can have on transportation.

E2) Assess economic impacts of transportation projects and transit-oriented development

These objectives rely on the use of MRCOG's TranSight model, a recently acquired tool that will allow MRMPO to evaluate the economic impacts of changes in transportation and land use patterns. Utilizing the model requires the integration between TranSight, the travel demand model (Cube), and the MRMPO land use model as well as the conversion of CUBE data into an appropriate format that can be read in TranSight.

In the near future, MRMPO will develop a methodology highlighting key indicators from TransSight that should be reviewed to evaluate projects and which will ultimately utilize the model to measure the economic impacts of projects proposed for the TIP as part of the Project Prioritization Process. In addition, the MTP "what-if" Compact Development Scenario will be evaluated in comparison to the MTP "build" scenario in order to quantify the economic impacts of changes in land use.

E3) Support development of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) activities

Projects with transportation demand management (TDM) components are prioritized and awarded points in the Project Prioritization Process as they are considered beneficial for supporting system wide pedestrian/bicycle network improvements under the mobility goal.

The 2012-2017 TIP includes funds for City of Albuquerque-ABQ Ride and Rio Metro TDM programs for fiscal years 2012-2015 and 2012-2017, respectively. Funds programmed for these programs total over $7.5 million dollars, reflecting support of TDM activities in the region.

In addition, the UNM-CNM Area Transportation and Land Use Coordination project in the 2012-2017 TIP includes a TDM element in its scope. TDM strategies are being investigated in that project as a means of promoting alternative modes of transportation in the area. MRCOG is the lead agency for the $936,671 project.

MRMPO will investigate whether it can pursue development of its own TDM program or possibly coordinate with other agencies on existing TDM activities as TDM is seen as an effective way of reducing single occupancy vehicle trips and supports many core MTP strategies and objectives.

E4) Assess economic impacts of various land use scenarios

This objective relies on the use of the TranSight model, a recently acquired tool that will allow MRMPO to evaluate the economic impacts of changes in transportation and land use. Early efforts focused on several capacity building activities necessary prior to full implementation of TranSight.

In the near future, the regional Compact Development Scenario (a conceptual scenario developed as part of the *2035 MTP*) will be evaluated in comparison to the MTP "build" scenario in order to quantify the economic impacts of changes in land use.

E5) Work on measuring and evaluating the combined housing and transportation costs for the region

Work toward this action item has included the purchase of Census block-level data relating to housing and transportation affordability from the Center for Neighborhood Technology, the think tank that developed the housing and transportation affordability tool for neighborhoods in metropolitan areas across the country.

The purchased data will allow MRMPO to provide similar, fine-grained analyses on housing, transportation, and the combined housing and transportation costs for the region and to analyze different concepts of housing and transportation affordability. The overall objective of the work is to integrate housing and transportation index principles into the MPO planning process and to potentially provide a mapping application that allows residents, planners and policy makers to better understand and consider the costs and implications of personal and collective decisions ranging from where to buy a house to where to open up new land for development. Purchase of the data and continued use of the tool will contribute to the index's more substantive integration into the 2040 MTP.

E6) Identify transportation projects to be constructed through financial and project implementation arrangements with private sector parties

This action item refers to what are known as Public Private Partnerships (PPPs), which are beneficial for funding transportation projects since the private party provides the funding and assumes the risks associated with the project (and in return may receive revenue from the project, tax breaks, revenue subsidies, the transfer of assets, etc.). This method of funding projects can be useful when funds for projects are limited, particularly for projects with very high costs.

In the region, very few PPPs have been implemented, let alone identified, to date. The Mesa del Sol Interchange project was one such example of a PPP, however, the project has been postponed. An interchange in north Belen is an upcoming project in the region that will be financed through a PPP.

MRMPO will make an effort to help identify potential candidates for PPP implementation in the future.

E7) Support incorporation of transit-oriented development (TOD) principles into local development plans and policies

As discussed earlier, MRMPO has formed a committee among local agencies to discuss ideas for growth in the region. This committee shares information about land use and transportation issues including TOD, zoning and density. Through this committee, MPO staff has become more involved in ensuring new sector plans incorporate TOD and balance local transportation needs with the regional nature of thoroughfare roadways. The UNM/CNM/Sunport study will be brought to this committee for feedback and will be important for developing future TOD strategies and policies for the corridor.

E8) Assist local governments in reviewing truck restrictions and policies to allow for the more efficient movement of goods

No work has been done on this action item to date.

Conclusion

According to this first look at how the region is doing in terms of reaching the *2035 MTP* goals of *preserve and improve quality of life*, *mobility of people and goods* and *support economic activity and growth*, progress for the most part is being made. Notable bright spots include a decrease in vehicle miles traveled, pursuing the use of health impact assessments, the use of the Pedestrian Composite Index for identifying locations for improved pedestrian facilities, support of complete streets principles into plans and policies, analysis of people movement (rather than just vehicle movement) and coordinating regional growth strategies with the transportation network.

Areas where there has been a decline in progress include reducing fatal and injury crashes, increasing non-single occupancy vehicle trips, supporting plans for implementation of alternative fuels infrastructure, identifying transportation projects for financing through arrangements with private sector parties and reviewing freight policies. These areas, therefore, merit additional thought and consideration as to how the region might address these issues and activities.

From this first iteration of monitoring the progress of the MTP, a few lessons were learned regarding how to improve the monitoring process. First, performance measures should be, as the name implies, measurable. Certain performance measures were actually qualitative rather than quantitative. In this go-around, progress was reported qualitatively, but those performance measures will likely be moved to the action items section (which are qualitative) for the next report. Between this report and next, the existing measures will be reviewed to determine which performance targets and action items need revision.

In addition to refining performance targets and action items for the next round of monitoring, MRMPO will revise its monitoring schedule to occur every other year to better capture any meaningful change.

Appendix A: Performance Targets and Action Items Summary Tables

Quality of Life Performance Targets

Performance Target	2012 Progress Toward Performance Target
Maintain VMT per capita at or below 2008 levels	⇧⇧

Performance Target	2012 Progress Toward Performance Target
Increase accessibility to transit for environmental justice areas	=

Performance Target	2012 Progress Toward Performance Target
Reduce fatal and injury crashes by 2.3% per year	⇩⇩

Performance Target	2012 Progress Toward Performance Target
Improve bridge and pavement conditions compared to 2008 levels	⇧⇧

Quality of Life Action Items

Action Item	2012 Progress Toward Action Item
Support plans for implementation of alternative fuels and infrastructure	⇩⇩

Action Item	2012 Progress Toward Action Item
Develop strategies/plans for prioritizing safety improvements	⇧⇧

Action Item	2012 Progress Toward Action Item
Develop livable/sustainable community measures	=

Key: ⇧⇧ =Progress being made; ⇩⇩ = Decline in progress; = = No progress being made/unable to determine progress

Action Item	2012 Progress Toward Action Item
Pursue the use of built environment health impact assessments	⇧⇧

Action Item	2012 Progress Toward Action Item
Identify locations for improved pedestrian facilities using the Pedestrian Composite Index	⇧⇧

Action Item	2012 Progress Toward Action Item
Support the incorporation of complete streets principles into MPO and local plans and policies and develop a regional roadway design document based on complete streets and context sensitive design elements	⇧⇧

Action Item	2012 Progress Toward Action Item
Support the convenience and safety of non-motorized modes of travel as commuting alternatives	⇧⇧

Action Item	2012 Progress Toward Action Item
Investigate regional strategies for mitigating/adapting to climate change	=

Mobility of People and Goods Performance Targets

Performance Target	2012 Progress Toward Performance Target
Increase transit mode share along river crossings to 10% by 2025 and 20% by 2035	=

Key: ⇧⇧ =Progress being made; ⇩⇩ = Decline in progress; = = No progress being made/unable to determine progress

Performance Target	2012 Progress Toward Performance Target
Increase non-single occupancy vehicle trips to 25% by 2025 and 30% by 2035	⬇⬇

Performance Target	2012 Progress Toward Performance Target
Implement high priority congestion management process strategies from the CMP toolkit	⬆⬆

Mobility of People and Goods Action Items

Action Item	2012 Progress Toward Action Item
Encourage increased transit services on Primary Transit Improvement Corridors (key corridors for transit)	⬆⬆

Action Item	2012 Progress Toward Action Item
Complete Bus Rapid Transit study for the Northwest Metro Area	⬆⬆

Action Item	2012 Progress Toward Action Item
Analyze levels of people movement (pedestrians, transit passengers, vehicle drivers and passengers) rather than vehicle traffic alone to better understand how people are traveling along a corridor	⬆⬆

Action Item	2012 Progress Toward Action Item
Increase involvement in Safe Routes to School programs and school siting	⬆⬆

Key: ⬆⬆ =Progress being made; ⬇⬇ = Decline in progress; 〓 = No progress being made/unable to determine progress

Action Item	2012 Progress Toward Action Item
Assess and improve connectivity of thoroughfare system and local streets to improve walkability and better distribute vehicle traffic	=

Action Item	2012 Progress Toward Action Item
Close gaps in the regional bicycle network	↑↑

Action Item	2012 Progress Toward Action Item
Support the expansion of park and ride facilities	↑↑

Action Item	2012 Progress Toward Action Item
Identify specific locations for dedicated transit facilities, right-of-way acquisition and signal improvements	=

Economic Activity and Growth Performance Targets

Performance Target: Investment Areas	2012 Progress Toward Performance Target
Target transportation investments that improve connectivity and mobility for all modes within high Activity Density Areas	=

Performance Target: Local Priorities and Land Use	2012 Progress Toward Performance Target
Increase transit services and appropriate thoroughfare connections to locally-designated Activity Centers and rail station areas	↑↑

Key: ↑↑ =Progress being made; ↓↓ = Decline in progress; = = No progress being made/unable to determine progress

Performance Target: Housing and Transportation Affordability	2012 Progress Toward Performance Target
Reduce the average household combined cost of housing and transportation compared to costs in 2010	=

Economic Activity and Growth Action Items

Action Item	2012 Progress Toward Action Item
Work with member agencies on coordinating regional growth strategies with the transportation network	↑↑

Action Item	2012 Progress Toward Action Item
Assess economic impacts of transportation projects and transit-oriented development	=

Action Item	2012 Progress Toward Action Item
Support development of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) activities	=

Action Item	2012 Progress Toward Action Item
Assess economic impacts of various land use scenarios	=

Action Item	2012 Progress Toward Action Item
Work on measuring and evaluating the combined housing and transportation costs for the region	=

Key: ↑↑ =Progress being made; ↓↓ = Decline in progress; = No progress being made/unable to determine progress

Action Item	2012 Progress Toward Action Item
Identify transportation projects to be constructed through financial and project implementation arrangements with private sector parties	⬇⬇

Action Item	2012 Progress Toward Action Item
Support incorporation of transit-oriented development principles into local development plans and policies	⬆⬆

Action Item	2012 Progress Toward Action Item
Assist local governments in reviewing truck restrictions and policies to allow for the more efficient movement of goods	⬇⬇

Key: ⬆⬆ =Progress being made; ⬇⬇ = Decline in progress; 〓 = No progress being made/unable to determine progress