

Welcome!

Public Open House

March 27, 2013

Thank you for participating in the second open house meeting for the Paseo del Norte High Capacity Transit Study (the PDN HCTS). Your participation is important and will help us develop an implementation plan that serves the needs of users while respecting issues valued by the public.

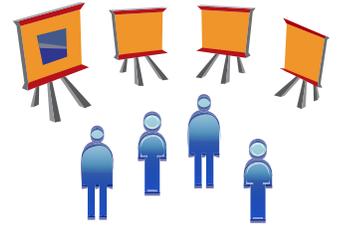


<http://www.mrcog-nm.gov>



Paseo del Norte High Capacity Transit Study

Station 1: Open House Format



The purpose of this open house meeting is to share the latest information about the PDN HCTS project with you and to obtain public feedback. Information about the project is provided at eight stations with a project representative available at each station to help explain the materials and to answer your questions. Collectively, the stations explain why this project is important and what is under consideration. Please start at the beginning and visit every station.



Station 2

provides information about what the project will accomplish and why it has been undertaken by MRCOG.



Station 3

explains what Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is, how it is different than the current transit services available in the Albuquerque area, and several key features of upgraded transit service.



Station 4

identifies the short-listed route alternatives being considered for the Northwest area, the Paseo del Norte corridor, and the Journal Center area.



Station 5

provides details about the Northwest area BRT routes for northwest Albuquerque and southern Rio Rancho.



Station 6

provides details about BRT in the Paseo del Norte corridor.



Station 7

provides details about BRT routes for the Journal Center area.



Station 8

summarizes the evaluation of the short-listed BRT route alternatives and key findings.



Station 9

indicates the methods available to provide feedback to the Study Team.



Thanks for participating in this open house for the PDN HCTS.
We will keep you informed of future public outreach activities as they are scheduled.

Paseo del Norte High Capacity Transit Study

Station 2: What will this Study Accomplish?



The PDN HCTS is sponsored and managed by the Mid-Region Council of Governments (MRCOG). Several other agencies are involved including: Rio Metro Regional Transit District, New Mexico Department of Transportation, City of Albuquerque, City of Rio Rancho, and Bernalillo County.

These entities are working together to identify reasonable, affordable, and sustainable transportation strategies for the metropolitan area – strategies that can be phased in now and that will serve our needs into the future.

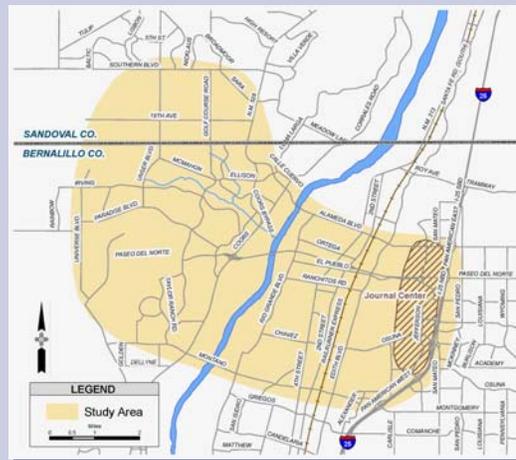
The overall objective of the study is to identify how Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) can be used to make commuter travel faster and more efficient between the Northwest side of the metro area and the Journal Center and other major destinations east of the Rio Grande.

Study Approach

The approach is considering:

- Short-term strategies that can be implemented now with currently available funds and resources. These strategies will be consistent with the long range vision for BRT service in the Paseo del Norte corridor and serve as “starter” projects.
- Long-term strategies that involve high-end transit investments within the Paseo del Norte corridor and that connect to other premium transit systems within the metro area.

Study Area



Coordination Efforts

MRCOG/Rio Metro are coordinating closely with ABQ Ride in the development of the PDN HCTS. The proposed BRT service in the Paseo del Norte corridor will work to enhance transit access in the northwest and across the river by providing faster and more direct options where possible.

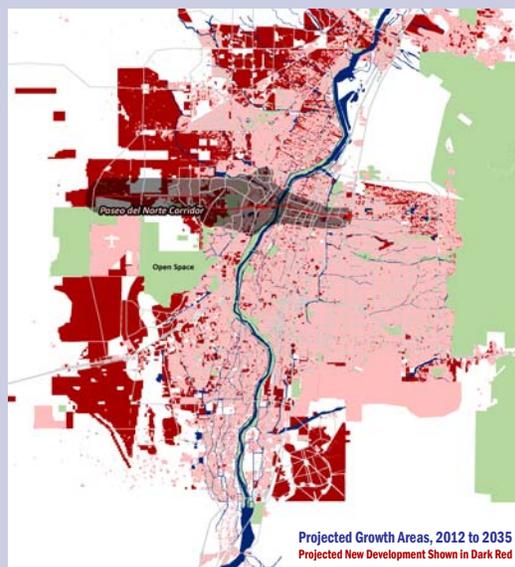
Routes will not be duplicated but may be replaced by a more robust program of improvements and service that are key components of high capacity BRT. Any BRT system changes will be coordinated with existing ABQ Ride routes to ensure access is maintained and the transit needs of the traveling public are well served.

Capacity Needs

The need for higher capacity transportation strategies is important because:

- The Albuquerque metropolitan area is projected to grow from 900,000 to more than 1.5 million by 2035. This will add another 310,000 households and use more than 100,000 acres of undeveloped land.
- Congestion that affects river crossing routes will become worse throughout the metro area. The congestion delays encountered today on Paseo del Norte will be much longer within the next few years.
- The likelihood of additional river crossings or widening the existing bridges is low. This means that strategies to gain capacity must rely, in part, on travel modes that increase the person-carrying capacity of our existing roadways.

Projected Growth



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Station 3: Bus Rapid Transit - What is BRT?



Bus Rapid Transit, or BRT, is a concept being used in numerous locations across the United States. Bus Rapid Transit improves upon the types of transit currently being used by ABQ Ride and Rio Metro.

This station describes some of the upgrades associated with BRT service.

Modern, Safe, Comfortable

BRT buses are modern, safe and comfortable. They are quick and easy to board. Buses could have their own identity specific to the Paseo del Norte corridor.



Stations & Park and Ride Lots

Stations and park and ride lots would be strategically located, comfortable, and safe for use at night.

Real-time information for bus wait times and schedules can be displayed.

Users can purchase their fare at the station in advance of a bus arrival.



Dedicated Bus Lanes

Where feasible, buses could operate in dedicated bus only lanes to make travel fast and efficient.

If fully dedicated lanes are not possible, queue jumps could be used at congested intersections to help maintain schedules.



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Station 3: Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Features

Examples of key features that may be included in the PDN HCTS BRT service are illustrated below.

Exclusive BRT Guideway

An exclusive BRT guideway could be easily accommodated along some areas of the proposed routes, such as Paseo del Norte. An example of a BRT guideway is shown below.



Dedicated BRT Lanes

Dedicated BRT lanes could be located either within the median or along the outsides of a roadway.



BRT Stations

Stations at major activity centers permit walk access and would need to be spaced far enough apart to shorten BRT travel times.



Park and Ride Facilities

Park and Ride facilities could be located in the Northwest area near the beginning of a route and at strategic locations/activity centers. Users could park and use BRT to avoid congestion.



Queue Jump Lanes

Queue jump lanes and traffic signals at congested intersections can give priority to BRT buses even during peak times.



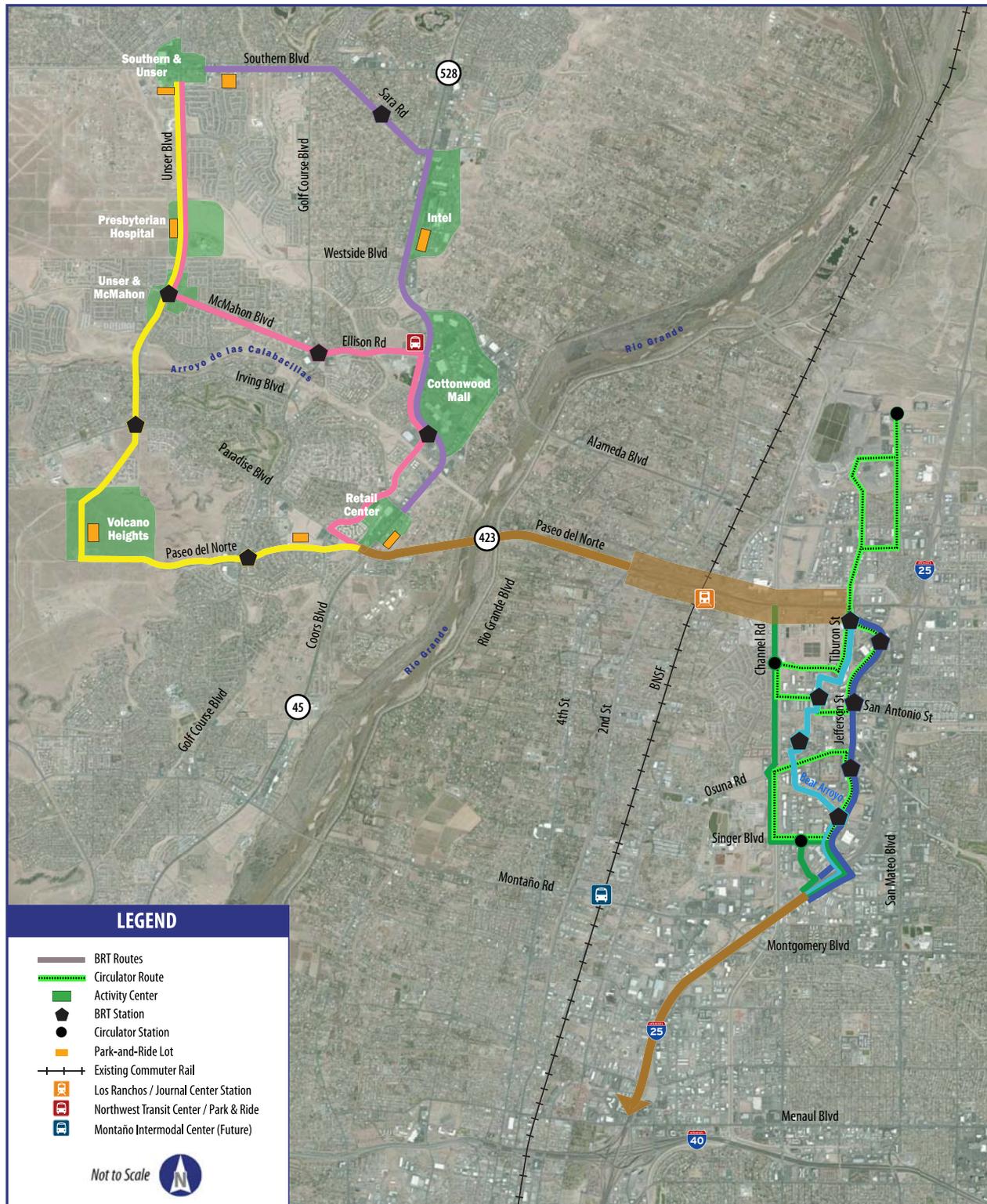
Special Facilities

Special facilities could include new bridges to negotiate congested locations, such as the Coors/Paseo del Norte Interchange.



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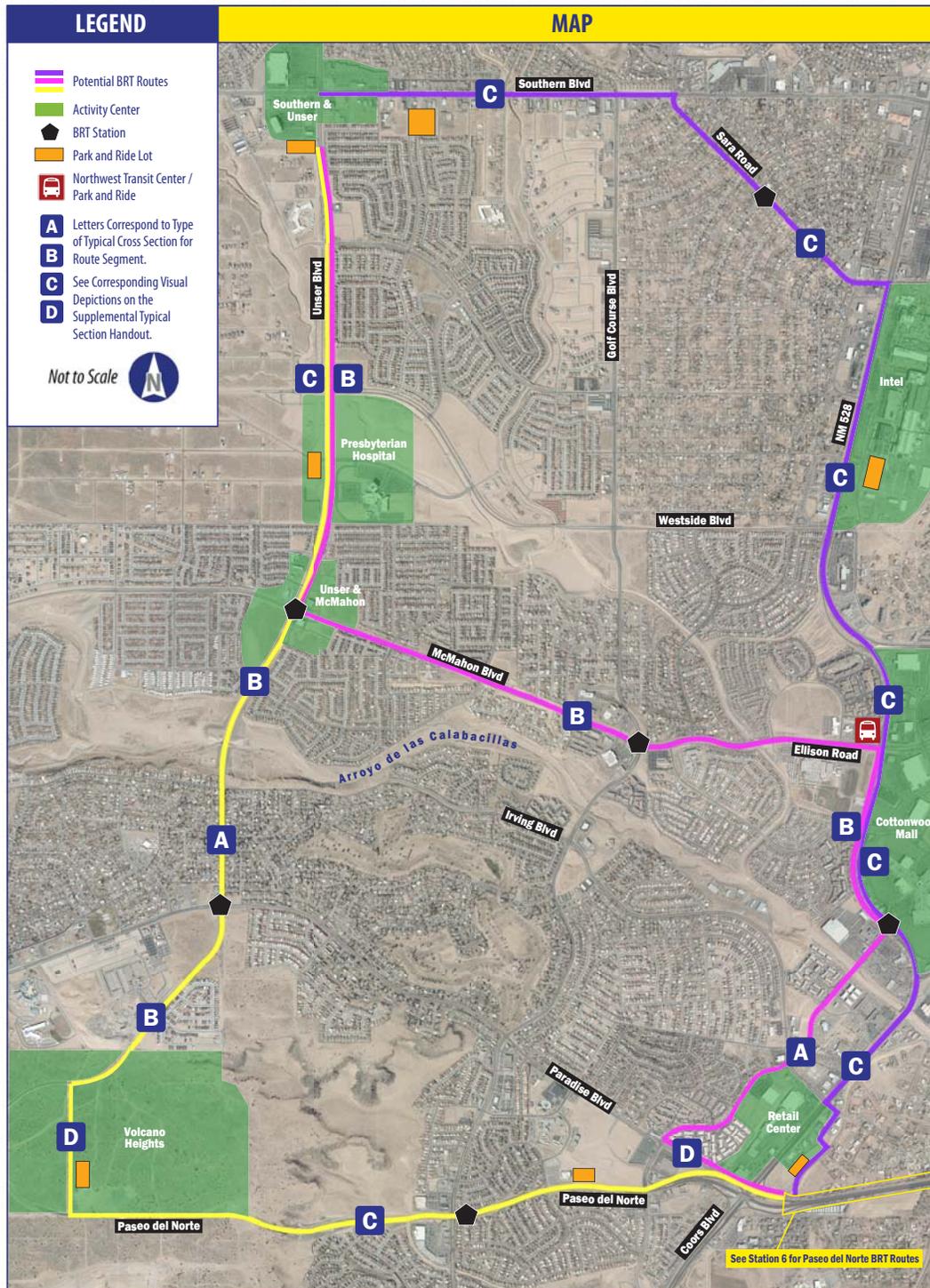
Station 4: Short-Listed Route Alternatives



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Station 5: Northwest BRT Routes

This station shows potential BRT routes in the northwest, along with park and ride lots, stations, and activity centers. Typical cross-sections of each segment of each route are shown on the supplemental typical section handout.



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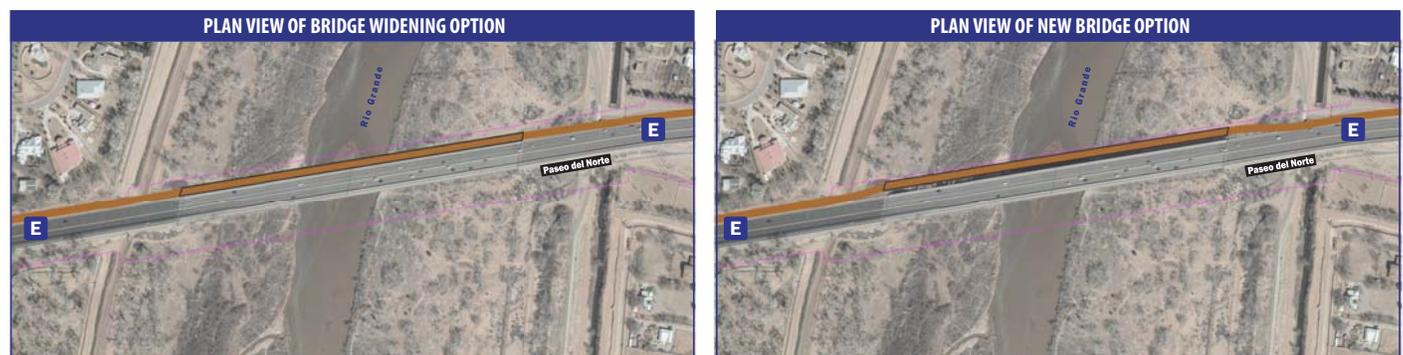
Station 6: Paseo del Norte Routes

This station shows potential BRT routes in and along Paseo del Norte.

Typical cross-sections of each segment of each route are shown on the supplemental typical section handout.



The Plan Views shown below assume a separated busway facility along the north side of Paseo del Norte for illustrative purposes. Further evaluation will be needed to determine the location and type of BRT lanes that will be proposed as part of the preferred alternative.

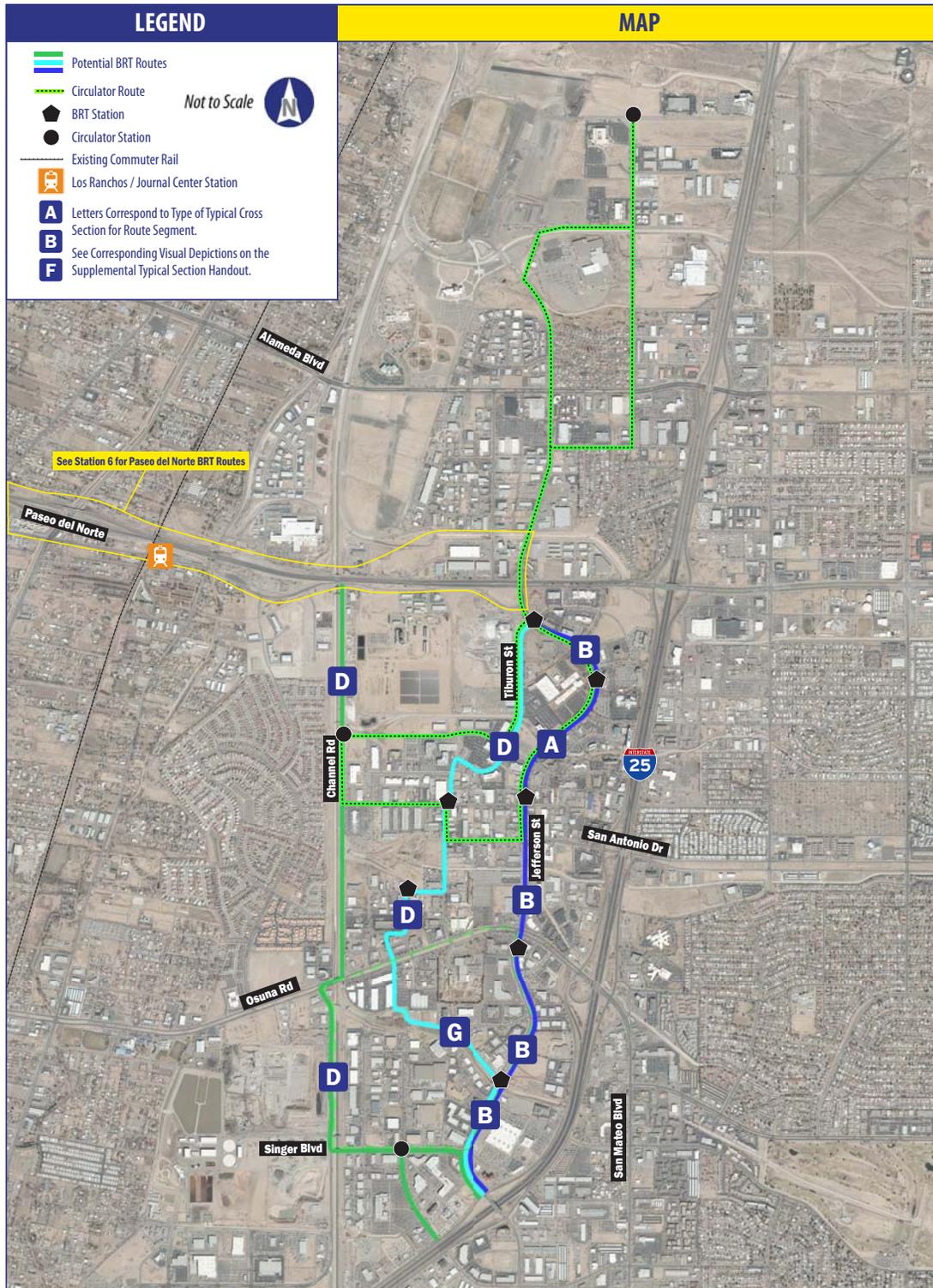


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Station 7: Journal Center BRT Routes

This station shows potential BRT routes and stations in the Journal Center area.

Typical cross-sections of each segment of each route are shown on the supplemental typical section handout.

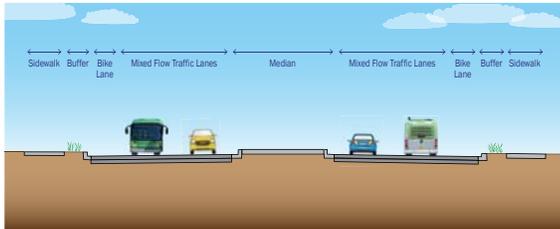


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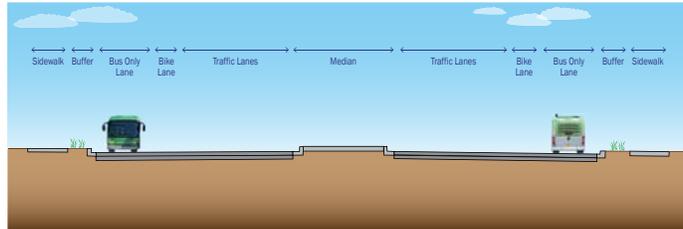
Handout: Typical Section Depictions

TYPICAL SECTION DEPICTIONS

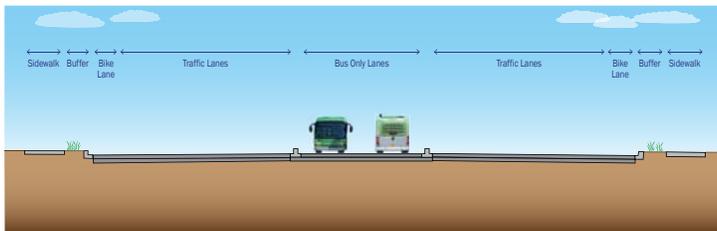
A MIXED FLOW ROADWAY



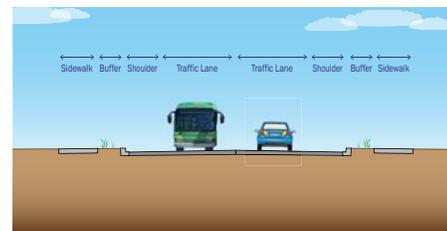
B CURBSIDE RUNNING FACILITY



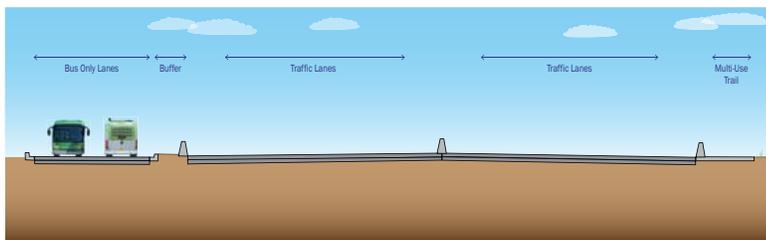
C MEDIAN RUNNING FACILITY



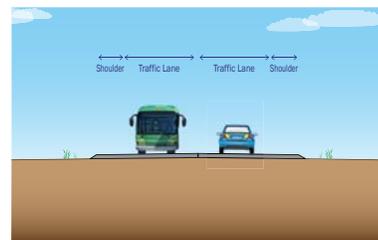
D MIXED FLOW ROADWAY



E SEPARATED BUSWAY FACILITY



F MIXED FLOW ROADWAY



G TRANSIT-ONLY ROADWAY



Paseo del Norte High Capacity Transit Study

Station 8: Evaluation Results

The Project Team has evaluated the short-listed alternatives as shown below. We need your input to help identify the preferred alternative to advance for detailed evaluation.

Evaluation Results

- Route alternatives were defined for each side of river; Northwest area and the Journal Center area.
- Paseo del Norte provides the crossing of the Rio Grande.
- Evaluations of Northwest and Journal Center route alignments were independent of each other.
- All Northwest options connect to all Journal Center options via Paseo del Norte and are interchangeable.

Evaluation Results: Northwest		Route Ratings ● Best ○ Worst		
Measurement Category	Criterion	Yellow	Pink	Purple
Mobility & Access	Improve connectivity between housing & employment in north Albuquerque	●	●	◐
	Integration with long term transit plan	●	◐	◐
	Infrastructure expandability (NW subarea only)	◐	◐	●
	Travel Time	●	◐	○
	Ridership potential (opening day)	◐	●	●
	Ridership potential (future)	●	●	◐
Land Use & Community Development	Serve major activity centers	◐	◐	◐
	Encourage transit supportive land uses along transit corridors	●	◐	○
	Serve future UNM/CNM students	●	◐	◐
Operational Characteristics	Consistency with roadway policies	◐	○	●
	Potential to improve travel time	◐	◐	◐
Financial Feasibility	Comparative cost assessment plan for capital improvements and operations	◐	◐	◐
Environment	Minimize negative effects on surrounding human and physical environments	◐	◐	◐

Evaluation Results: Journal Center		Route Ratings ● Best ○ Worst		
Measurement Category	Criterion	Green	Blue	Light Blue
Mobility & Access	Improve accessibility to Journal Center jobs	◐	●	●
	Integration with long term transit plan	◐	●	◐
	Infrastructure expandability (Journal subarea only)	◐	●	○
	Travel Time	●	◐	○
	Ridership potential	○	●	◐
	Serve major activity centers	●	●	◐
Land Use & Community Development	Encourage transit supportive land uses along transit corridors	●	◐	○
	Serve future UNM/CNM students	●	◐	◐
	Consistency with roadway policies	◐	○	○
Operational Characteristics	Potential to improve travel time	●	○	●
	Comparative cost assessment plan for capital improvements and operations	◐	◐	◐
Financial Feasibility	Comparative cost assessment plan for capital improvements and operations	◐	◐	◐
Environment	Minimize negative effects on surrounding human and physical environments	◐	◐	◐

Important Findings

- Most effective BRT depends on availability of dedicated, exclusive guideway within the Paseo del Norte corridor between Coors Boulevard and Jefferson Street.
- Northwest Alternatives:** Yellow offers best service to future land uses and best ability to fit special roadway treatments within existing rights-of-way. Purple serves existing land uses better.
- Journal Center Alternatives:** Blue offers most direct access to jobs while Green provides shortest route.
- Efficient circulation through Journal Center is key determinant of how competitive BRT will be from Northwest neighborhoods to UNM/CNM and other activity centers east of the Rio Grande.

Paseo del Norte High Capacity Transit Study

Station 9: Please Provide Your Input!

Input from potential users of the planned system and from persons who may be affected by its implementation is important to the decision process. We welcome your ideas, comments, and suggestions. Your feedback will help with the evaluation and decision process and will result in a better outcome

Ways to Provide Input:

- The questions and comments you provided today to the project team representatives at each station.
- Complete the comment form. You can complete this now, or you can finish it later and mail it to the address below. We would appreciate receiving comments by April 15, 2013.

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

- Complete the questionnaire on line at www.mrcog-nm.gov.

Go to the Paseo del Norte Study under “special projects.”

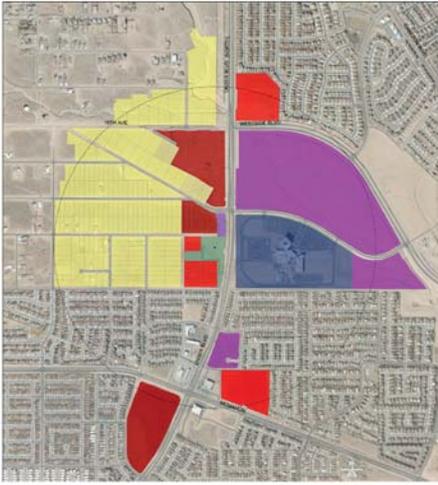
<http://www.mrcog-nm.gov/special-studies-mainmenu-202/pdn-transit-study>



If you want to speak to a representative of the project team to get more information about this project, or if you would like to have someone speak to your neighborhood association or other group, please contact Tony Sylvester at (505) 247-1750 or tsylvester@mrcog-nm.gov.

Thank you for your participation!

STATION X: LAND USE



Example of station study area: Rust Medical Center

STUDY AREAS

The team analyzed existing land uses in an effort to understand where future land use can be tailored to maximize transit infrastructure. The objective is to encourage sustainable land use practices, encourage transit-supportive land uses, and promote economic development. Areas studied included property parcels located within a 1/2 mile radius of a potential transit station.

Areas studied include:

- Southern & Unser
- Volcano Heights
- Journal Center / North I-25
- Rust Medical Center
- Eagle Ranch & Paseo

CHALLENGES

The study reviewed each station area, looking particularly at such things as existing zoning and the existing built environment. Barriers to transit-supportive land uses observed in the various potential station areas included:

- Existing auto-centric development that is unfriendly to pedestrians
- Lack of pedestrian/bike connectivity
- Low development densities
- High parking ratios that further encourage automobile use and consume land
- Proximate single family uses
- Segregated land uses
- Unfavorable zoning (Journal Center, for example, does not currently allow multi-family uses)
- Poor pedestrian infrastructure



OPPORTUNITIES

This project has an unprecedented opportunity to tie transit with land use together and create a viable and high quality transportation infrastructure. The infrastructure can potentially:

- Maximize ridership through supportive land use
- Encourage economic development
- Preserve open space by encouraging compact living in specified areas

