

1 RESOLUTION

2 of the

3 MID-REGION RURAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

4 of the

5 MID-REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS OF NEW MEXICO

6 R-15-01 RTPO

7
8 **APPROVING A REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN (RTP) FOR THE MID-REGION RURAL**
9 **TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AREA**

10
11 WHEREAS, the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) is
12 developing the New Mexico Transportation Plan for the State of New Mexico; and

13
14 WHEREAS, the NMDOT has requested that the Rural Transportation Planning
15 Organization (RTPO) for the Mid-Region Council of Governments (MRCOG) develop a
16 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for the area covered by the RTPO; and

17
18 WHEREAS, the Plan developed by MRRTPO for the MRCOG's rural areas will be
19 incorporated into the NMDOT New Mexico Transportation Planning effort; and

20
21 WHEREAS, the MRRTPO Committee and MRRTPO Regional Working Group has
22 worked with MRCOG staff to develop a goals, objectives, and performance measures to
23 be included in the Regional Transportation Plan; and

24
25 WHEREAS, a draft RTP was released for public review on June 11, 2015; and

26
27 WHEREAS, public meetings were held throughout the rural areas regarding the
28 RTP, and comments were received; and

29
30 WHEREAS, recommendations regarding responses to those comments have been
31 made by MRCOG staff; and

32
33 WHEREAS, development of an RTP for the rural communities provides a basis for
34 planning and programming transportation projects within the MRRTPO area.

35
36
37 NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Mid-Region Rural Transportation
38 Planning Organization Committee of the Mid-Region Council of Governments of New

39 Mexico that the Regional Transportation Plan for the Mid-Region Rural Transportation
40 Planning Area, as shown in Attachment A, is approved and recommended to the New
41 Mexico Department of Transportation for inclusion in the New Mexico Transportation
42 Plan for the State of New Mexico.

43

44 PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED this 13th day of August, 2015, by the Mid-
45 Region Rural Transportation Planning Organization Committee of the Mid-Region
46 Council of Governments of New Mexico.

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Daniel White, Chair or
Gilbert Dominguez, Vice-Chair
MRRTPO Committee

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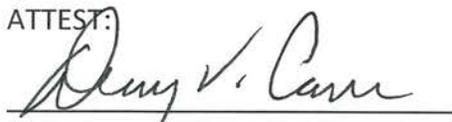
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57

ATTEST:



Dewey V. Cave, Executive Director
MRCOG



New Mexico Transportation Plan

Mid-Region Regional Transportation Plan



Acknowledgements

MRRTPO would like to thank its Regional Working Group Members:

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Figure 1: Jemez Springs, NM



View of NM 4.



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Introduction

What is a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)?

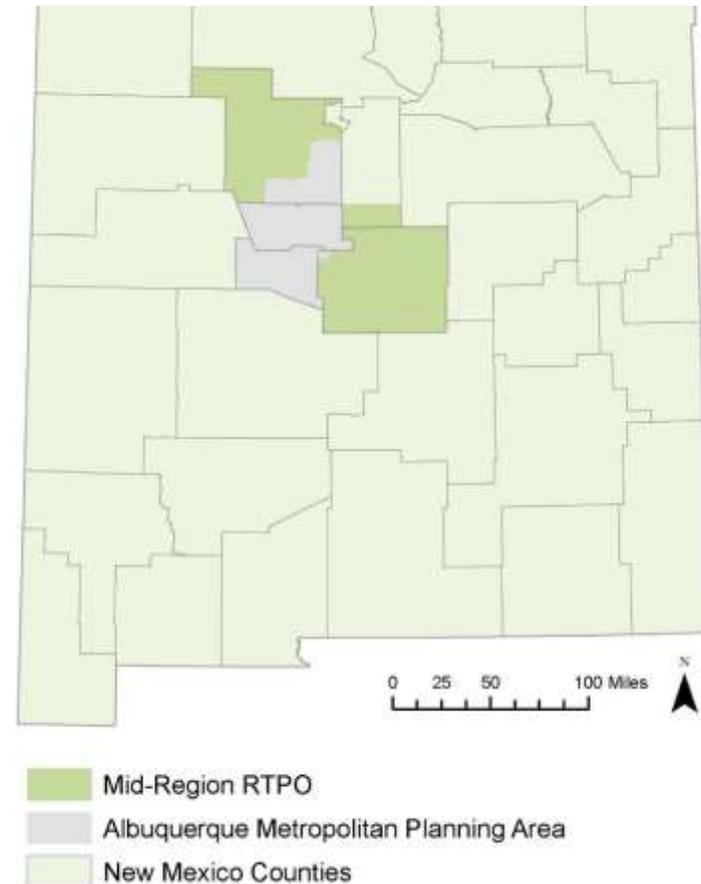
The development of a long range transportation plan provides an opportunity for local elected officials and citizens to discuss and make decisions about the kind of transportation network that would be most effective for their area. Typically, a long range plan covers a minimum of a 20 year period, but the RTP as part of the New Mexico Transportation Plan (NMTP), addresses a 25 year period. The purpose of this RTP is to bring together the citizens and officials from rural Sandoval, Torrance and southern Santa Fe counties to identify the transportation needs in the region between now and 2040.

About the Mid-Region RTPO

The Mid-Region Council of Governments (MRCOG) is a multi-county government agency that is helping the region plan responsibly for the future in light of anticipated growth in the MRCOG region. Representing the counties of Bernalillo, Valencia, Torrance, Sandoval and southern Santa Fe counties, MRCOG provides planning services in the areas of transportation, agriculture, workforce development, employment growth, land-use, water and economic development.

Transportation planning support is provided by MRCOG to its communities through the Mid-Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MRMPO) and the Mid-Region Rural Transportation Planning Organization (MRRTPO). MRMPO provides support to the Albuquerque Metropolitan Planning Area (AMPA), while MRRTPO provides support to the outlying areas of the region not within the AMPA. *See Map 1.*

Map 1: Mid-Region Council of Governments Planning Areas



The MRRTPO planning area includes rural Sandoval, Torrance and southern Santa Fe Counties. MRRTPO is a voluntary association of local governments and the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) that provides a forum for members to meet, plan and work together on issues related to transportation in the middle Rio Grande region. It is comprised of municipalities, counties and pueblos in the rural portion of the region and acts as the state-required Regional Planning Organization for the area. Its membership consists of elected officials and their designated alternates. Federal and state agencies with a responsibility for transportation planning and programs in the region are also represented in an advisory, non-voting capacity on the MRRTPO Committee.

MRRTPO staff provide technical transportation planning assistance for its local government members and assists with the development of local and regional projects. While MRRTPO does not have land use authority, its staff coordinates regional transportation planning with land use. MRRTPO also serves as a liaison between local governments and NMDOT and helps to facilitate applications for federal funds from its local members.

Title VI

The Mid-Region Council of Governments fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. For more information or to obtain a Title VI Complaint Form, please contact the MRCOG Title VI Coordinator, Thaddeus Lucero at 505-247-1750, 505-247-1753-fax or email tlucero@mrcog-nm.gov or visit our website at www.mrcog-nm.gov for additional information.

Figure 2: City of Moriarty, NM



One of five murals for a local public art project.



Existing and Future Conditions

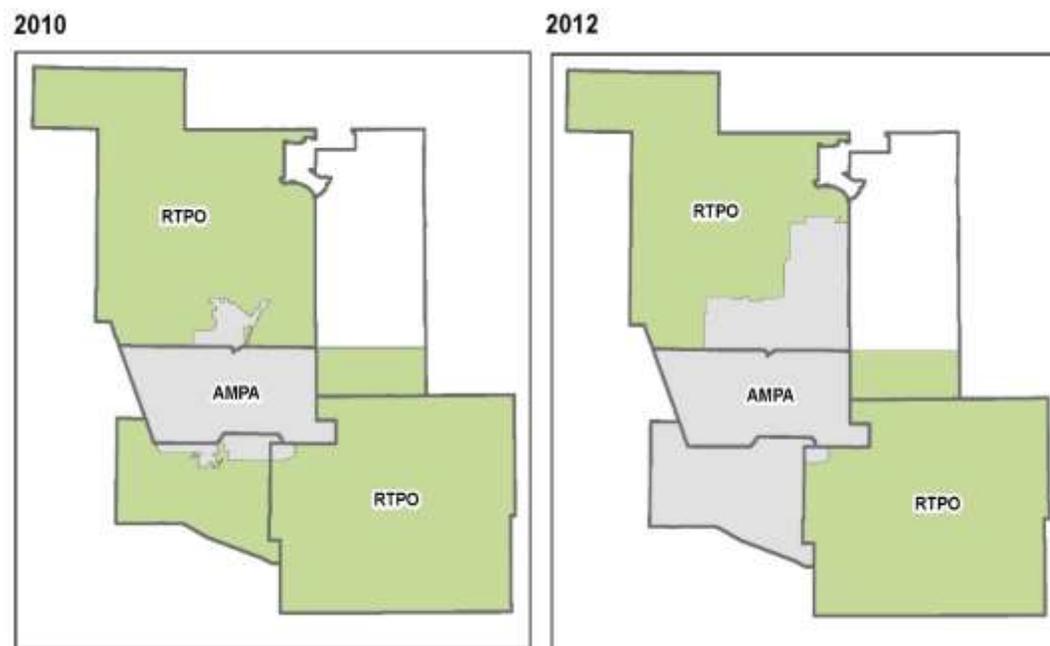
Existing and Future Conditions

MRRTPO Area

The Mid-Region Council of Governments (MRCOG) planning area consists of five counties: Bernalillo, Sandoval, Torrance, Valencia and southern Santa Fe (Town of Edgewood). The Albuquerque Metropolitan Planning Area (AMPA) is at the center of this region and transportation planning for this area is accomplished by the Mid-Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MRMPO), while the areas that lie outside of the metro area are completed by the Mid-Region Rural Transportation Planning Organization (MRRTPO). Both organizations are housed under MRCOG and coordinate closely when planning for the entire region. Employment opportunities in the metro core **continue to draw commuters from the rural communities in the MRRTPO and so the rural area acts as a “commuter shed” for the AMPA**, which reinforces the need for coordination between MRMPO and MRRTPO. Map 3 demonstrates the commuting patterns of residents in the MRCOG region.

The MRRTPO planning area changed since the last Regional Transportation Plan in 2007. The 2010 US Census designated all of Valencia County as part of the Los Lunas Urbanized Area (UZA) and expanded the Albuquerque UZA. The boundaries of the “census-defined” UZAs zigzag making it difficult to determine roadway eligibility of urban versus rural roadways and other planning tasks. Federal regulations allow for a “smoothing” of UZA boundaries for the purposes of determining program eligibility. In 2012, the Mid-Region Council of Governments and local jurisdictions coordinated to smooth the Urbanized Area boundaries and make changes to our transportation planning areas. This resulted in Valencia County joining MRMPO and so, the AMPA increased in size, while the MRRTPO area decreased in size. As a practical matter, the new boundaries resulted in portions of the MRCOG region that had been part of the RTPO planning area now falling under the jurisdiction of the MRMPO. Map 2 shows previous and current RTPO areas.

Map 2: Previous and Current MRRTPO Area





Demographics

Table 1: 2010 RTPO Population Distribution

	2010 Population	Population Distribution
MRCOG Region	897,186	100.0%
■ Incorporated Portions of MRRTPO	9,737	1.1%
■ Unincorporated Portions of MRRTPO	26,084	2.9%
■ Metropolitan Area	861,365	96.0%

^a US Census Bureau, 2010 Decennial Census. The RTPO population was determined using the following method:

1. 2010 Metropolitan Statistical Area population was established using 2010 decennial census counts by county.
2. 2010 Southern Santa Fe population was established by summing the census block data to the DASZs that represent southern Santa Fe county.
3. The MSA population plus southern Santa Fe totals the MRCOG region population.
4. 2010 MPO population was established by summing the 2010 census blocks within the Albuquerque Metropolitan Planning Area and performing a manual analysis in some Sandoval County blocks that straddled the AMPA boundary to remove some population outside of the AMPA using aerial photography.
5. The 2010 RTPO population was then calculated by subtracting the MPO population from the MRCOG region population.

Table 1 shows the population distribution within the MRCOG region. While a small percentage of the population exists in the MRRTPO area (1.1% incorporated area and 2.9% unincorporated area), often these communities lack local resources and staff for technical and transportation planning expertise. This need is often filled by MRRTPO staff, who help local communities plan more efficiently and **effectively to leverage limited resources. Targeted land use and transportation planning in MRRTPO’s region will be critical** as population increases in the coming years. MRRTPO can serve as the technical staff to help communities plan for this growth more efficiently.

Population Profile

Census population counts show that the population in the Middle Rio Grande region more than doubled, from 359,007 to 897,186 persons between 1970 and 2010. Table 2 displays the distribution of population between the MRMPO area and the MRRTPO area in the MRCOG region comparing the years 2000 and 2010. There was no new population growth within the MRRTPO area between 2000 and 2010, which is likely due to the Metropolitan Area boundary changing in 2012 (Map 2).



Table 2: Regional Growth

Area	2000	2010	Growth
MRCOG Region	738,714	897,186	21%
■ MRRTPO	35,988	35,821	0%
■ Metropolitan Area	702,726	861,365	23%

Note: The Metropolitan Area boundary changed in 2012 to take in additional portions of Sandoval County and all of Valencia County. The 2000 and 2010 figures were developed using the 2012 Metropolitan Area boundary.

2040 Population Forecast

Based on growth trends and development plans within the MRRTPO area, MRCOG developed population forecasts for 2040. While there was no new growth within the MRRTPO area between 2000 and 2010 (Table 2: Regional Growth), the population of the MRRTPO area is projected to increase 49.9% by 2040 (Table 3: Forecast Growth in MRCOG Region, 2010 to 2040). Implementing efficient and informed planning now will prepare these communities for growth and ensure they are well-connected to Albuquerque. A particular concern may be the need to ensure a stable population through the provision of transportation infrastructure that allows rural residents to maintain their lifestyles, while enjoying access to services in Albuquerque.

Table 3 serves to further break down project population growth among the five counties within the MRCOG region. This data supports utilizing livability principles and improved land use and transportation planning in rural communities. Most growth is occurring in Sandoval and Southern Santa Fe County. Table 3 does not break down Sandoval county population growth between rural and urban areas. According to data from MRMPO, much of the growth in this area will occur within urban Sandoval County. Southern Santa Fe County (Town of Edgewood) is anticipated to grow 74.7%, which is the largest growing community **out of MRRTPO’s planning area. It will be largely critical to plan efficiently for this area in anticipation of this growth.**



Table 3: Forecast Growth in MRCOG Region, 2010 to 2040

Area/Region	2010	2040	Absolute Growth	Percent Growth
Bernalillo	662,564	986,688	324,124	48.9%
Sandoval	131,561	217,757	86,196	65.5%
Torrance	16,383	21,788	5,405	33.0%
Valencia	76,569	127,715	51,146	66.8%
Southern Santa Fe	10,109	17,661	7,552	74.7%
MRRTPO	35,821	53,686	17,865	49.9%
Metropolitan Area	861,365	1,317,923	456,558	53.0%
MRCOG Region	897,186	1,371,609	474,423	52.9%

Source: US Census Bureau, UNM-Geospatial Population Studies, MRCOG

According to recent data^{1,2} living preferences of millennial and boomer populations is shifting. Portions of these populations prefer to live in places where there are transportation choices and people are not required to drive. These preferences are often labeled as community livability and places where a person can live, work and play without having to drive or a community in which a person can age in place, while having access to amenities. While these preferences tend to paint an image of an urban landscape, these types of places can exist within rural communities too. Understanding these preferences and anticipating a 49.9% growth in the MRRTPO area can enable communities to grow in coordination with the wants and needs of their residents and target growth in specific locations to accommodate preferences among the population. For example, employing land use and transportation planning strategies within rural communities can enable the towns and villages within the MRRTPO area to create places for residents to live, work and play with access to different transportation options. Placing new amenities, like a community center or a school, near existing infrastructure and communities, can support better access for all people.

¹ Flint, Anthony. (2014). What millennials want – and why cities are right to pay them so much attention: <http://www.citylab.com/housing/2014/05/what-millennials-wantand-why-cities-are-right-pay-them-so-much-attention/9032/>

² Speck, Jeff. (2012). Walkable City. <http://www.infinetired.com/uploads/1/2/9/6/12963437/conversionresult.pdf>



The Village of Cuba, the Town of Estancia and the City of Moriarty are already investing in this type of planning by creating networks of trails, sidewalks and/or paths to connect community amenities and services from housing to schools, city hall, parks and other places. Planning transportation in coordination with land use also helps support local economies, protect the environment, preserve and enhance natural and cultural resources and promote public health. In addition, planning with and around the federal level livability principles as outlined by the Partnership for Sustainable Communities, which includes US Department of Transportation (DOT), US Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) can help to incorporate and leverage transportation, water, housing and other infrastructure investments and policies. The Partnership for Sustainable Communities developed the following livability principles to guide community livability planning³:

- Provide more transportation choices
- Promote equitable, affordable housing
- Enhance economic competitiveness
- Support existing communities
- Coordinate policies and leverage investment
- Value communities and neighborhoods

Figure 3: Town of Estancia, NM



Arthur Park is located within walking/biking distance to link schools, the library, housing and other community amenities.

While MRRTPO does not have land use and transportation planning authority, MRRTPO can provide expertise, technical assistance and recommendations to help guide local planning efforts to meet these livability principles. Using the livability principles to guide that technical assistance can help to better leverage already limited resources.

³ <http://www.sustainablecommunities.gov/>



Industries and Economy

Table 4: Employment Distribution, MRRTPO and Albuquerque Metropolitan Planning Area

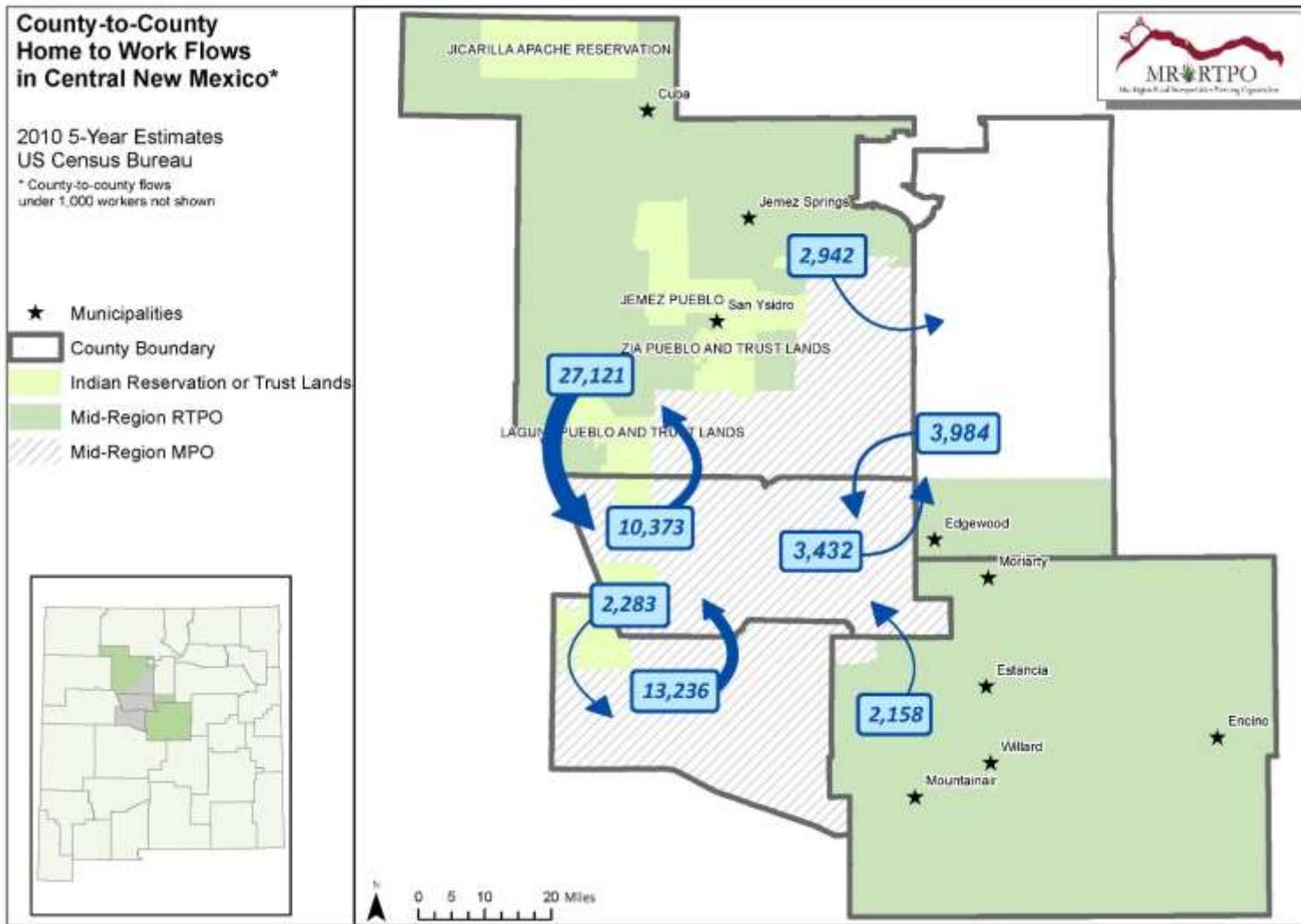
	2010 Employment	Employment Distribution
MRRTPO Area	7,738	1.9%
Albuquerque Metropolitan Planning Area (AMPA)	392,449	98.1%
Total	400,187	100.0%

Source: MRCOG, NM Department of Workforce Solutions, InfoUSA.

Table 4 shows the employment distribution for the MRCOG region and compares the MRRTPO area with the AMPA. The distribution of employment is at 98.1 percent in the AMPA with about 1.9 percent in the MRRTPO area. Since most of the employment distribution is within the AMPA, this means that residents of the MRRTPO area commute to the urban core for work. Map 3 and Table 5 serve to further demonstrate that a majority of residents in the MRRTPO planning area commute to Bernalillo County for work because a majority of the jobs in the region are located within AMPA. Additionally, many of the services that rural residents need are located in Albuquerque. Subsequently, communities within MRRTPO boundaries are economically linked to areas within the AMPA. This also further supports the need for coordination between MRMPO and MRRTPO to ensure the corridors to/from the MRRTPO areas are well-planned to accommodate commuter and commercial travel. The proximity of the MRRTPO communities to the Albuquerque urban area impacts traffic and land use patterns and therefore transportation projects in rural communities. Additionally, based on these commuting patterns, it is important to look at jobs in the entire region rather than exclusively within the rural areas when analyzing employment.

While a majority of the MRRTPO area residents commute to Bernalillo County for work, there are also a few other high employment centers where rural residents commute. For example, the largest sector in the portion of the AMPA within Sandoval County is manufacturing, which is driven primarily by Intel Corporation in Rio Rancho. Additionally, retail and services and government are the other main employment categories within Sandoval County. **Santa Fe County's largest employment categories include retail and services and government. Torrance County's employment largely centers on services, government and retail.**

Map 3: County-to-County Home to Work Flows in Central New Mexico



Map 3 demonstrates that a majority of residents within MRRTPO boundaries commute to the AMPA for employment. While it is not shown graphically in the map, there are commuters from Bernalillo County to the MRRTPO area as well.

- 450 people commute to Torrance County from Bernalillo County
- 3,432 people commute to Santa Fe County from Bernalillo County
- 443 people commute from Torrance County to Santa Fe County
- 2,942 people commute from Sandoval County to Santa Fe County



Even though commuter flows to the rural areas and in between the rural areas of the MRCOG region are smaller than commuter flows to Bernalillo County, it further supports the importance of coordination among entities and stakeholders within the MRCOG region.

Table 5: Flows by Place of Residence

County of Residence	Total Workers	County of Work							Total
		Bernalillo County	Sandoval County	Santa Fe County ^a	Torrance County	Valencia County	In State	Out of State	
Bernalillo	309,059	93%	3%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	100%
Sandoval	55,566	49%	42%	5%	0%	1%	2%	1%	100%
Santa Fe	69,911	6%	0%	84%	1%	0%	1%	8%	100%
Torrance	5,547	39%	3%	8%	48%	1%	1%	1%	100%
Valencia	28,968	46%	1%	1%	0%	49%	1%	3%	100%
Total	469,051	71%	7%	14%	1%	4%	1%	2%	100%

Source: Census Transportation Planning Package, 2006 – 2010.

^a Commute data in these tables represents entire county flows. As such, Santa Fe County is included in its entirety for informational purposes.

Table 5 also provides further insight into commuting patterns. This clearly shows that the metropolitan area dominates the region in **term of jobs. Since a majority of the region’s jobs are in the AMPA, the profile of employment for this RTP focuses on the entire region, rather than just the RTP area.**

As mentioned previously, the commuting patterns for residents in the MRRTPo area also point out the importance of looking at jobs in the entire region, rather than exclusively within the MRRTPo area.



Table 6: Employment by Industry Sector in 2010

	Bernalillo	Sandoval	Santa Fe	Torrance	Valencia	MRCOG Region	Share
Agriculture	413	107	22	80	187	809	0%
Construction, Mining and Utilities	18,859	1,970	149	331	1,223	22,532	6%
Manufacturing	20,890	4,648	22	126	824	26,510	7%
Retail	83,100	8,678	777	948	5,731	99,234	25%
Transportation and Warehousing	10,130	280	24	94	550	11,078	3%
Information	8,895	1,090	14	33	135	10,167	3%
Finance and Insurance, Real Estate and Leasing	20,312	1,550	88	115	866	22,931	6%
Services and Government	182,552	14,140	478	1,979	7,777	206,926	52%
Total	345,151	32,463	1,574	3,706	17,293	400,187	100%

Source: MRCOG, NM Department of Workforce Solutions, InfoUSA.

Table 6 shows the number of jobs by employment sector in 2010, in the MRCOG region. Services and government are the dominant sectors in the region at 52% of the share followed by retail at 25%. Retail trade is especially important in New Mexico because local governments rely heavily on gross receipts taxes to fund services.



2040 Employment Forecast

Anticipated employment growth in 2040, is shown in Table 7. Sandoval County's employment is anticipated to grow the most out of the counties within the MRCOG region at 136.4%. Overall job growth within the MRRTPO areas is anticipated to grow 37.2% over the next 25 years.

Table 7: Employment Growth, 2010 to 2040

	2010 Employment	2040 Employment	Absolute Growth	Percent Growth
Bernalillo	345,151	473,037	127,886	37.1%
Sandoval	32,463	76,754	44,291	136.4%
Torrance	3,706	4,832	1,126	30.4%
Valencia	17,293	25,563	8,270	47.8%
Southern Santa Fe	1,574	2,486	912	57.9%
MRMPO	400,187	582,672	182,485	45.6%
MRRTPO	7,738	10,613	2,875	37.2%

Source: MRCOG, NM Department of Workforce Solutions, InfoUSA.

Land Use and Communities

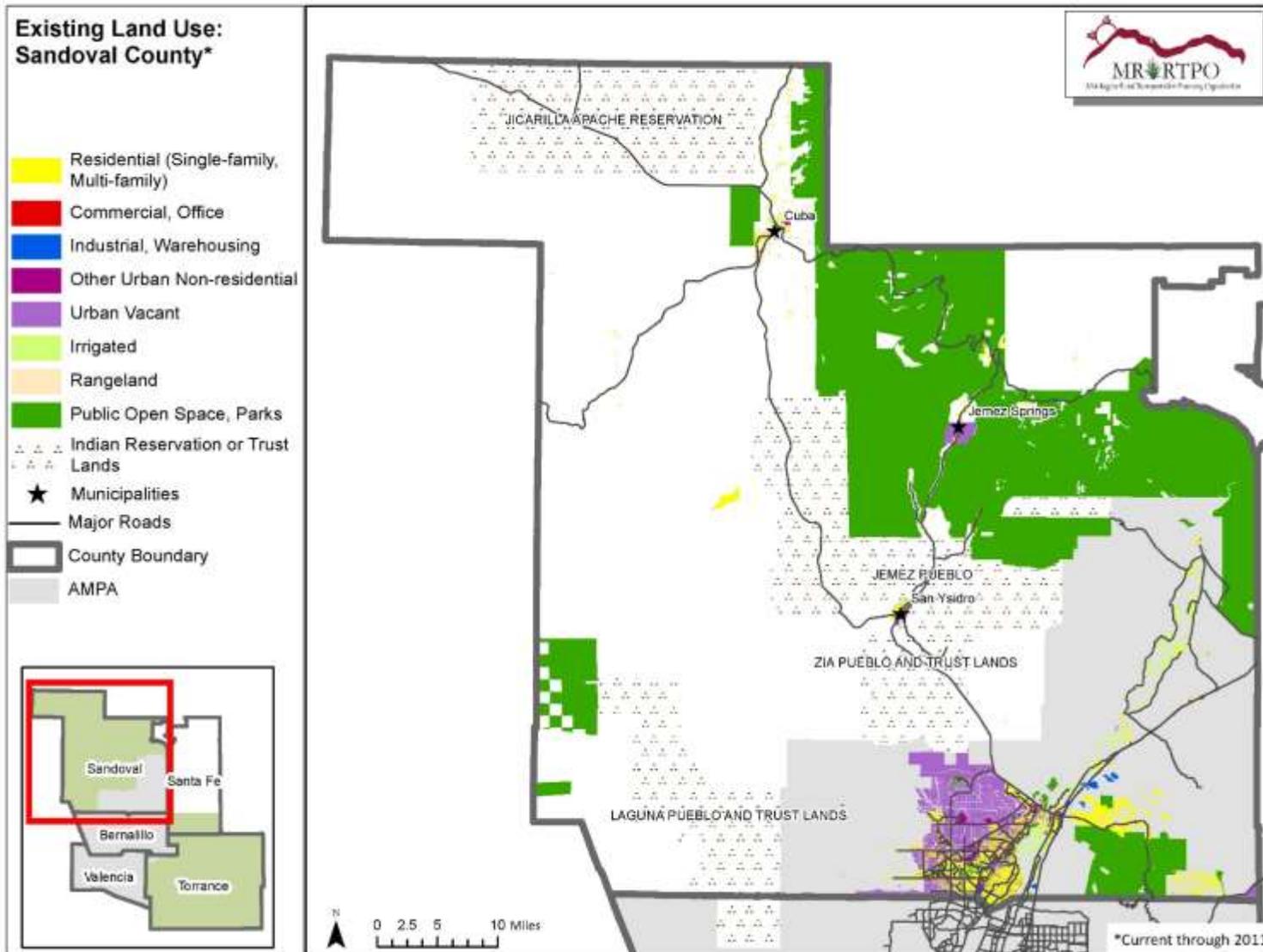
Much of the land within the MRRTPPO area can be characterized as vacant or range land, which are two standard categories within land use designations. However, this is slowly changing as the population in the region continues to grow and expand outside the urban center. For example, Edgewood is a rapidly urbanizing area and as noted in the data cited **previously, southern Santa Fe County's population** (Town of Edgewood) is anticipated to increase 74.7% by 2040.

Figure 4: Town of Edgewood



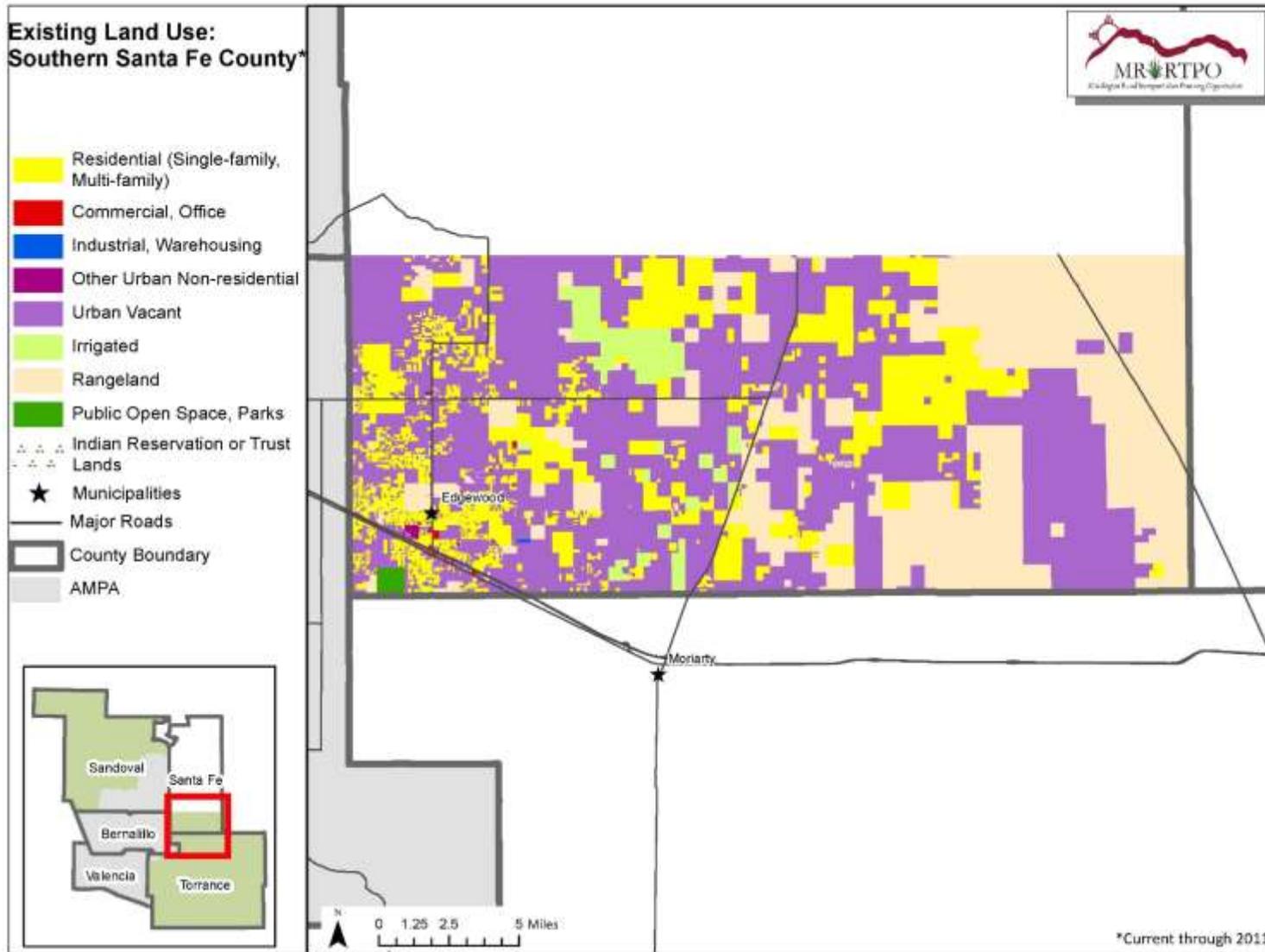
View of multiuse path in the Town of Edgewood.

Map 4: Existing Land Use: Sandoval County



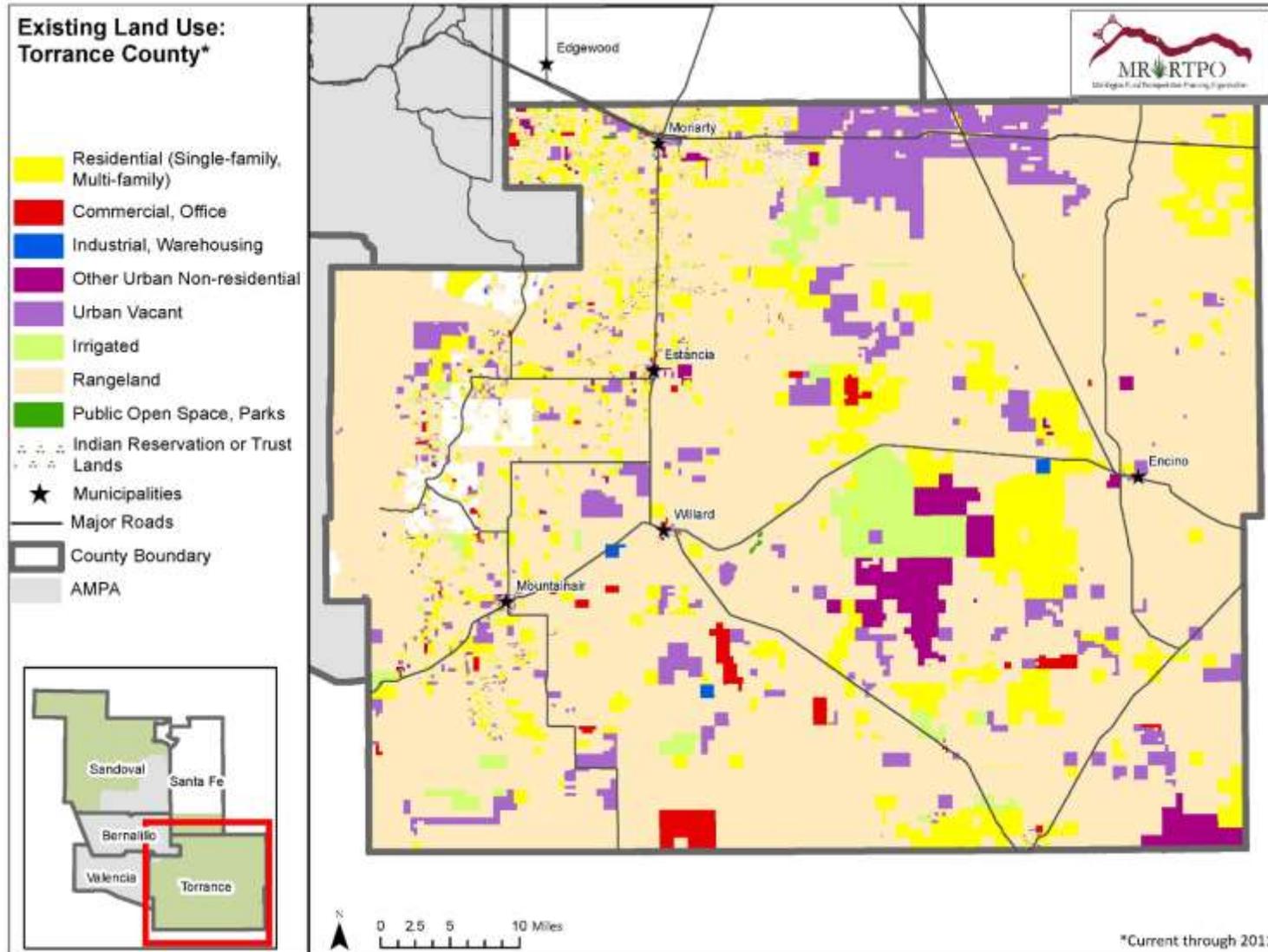
Map 4 shows current land use through 2011. Sandoval County is largely comprised of Tribal land and open space. However, as noted previously, population projections estimate that Sandoval County's population will increase 65.5% by the year 2040. While much of this growth will occur within urban Sandoval County, planning for growth within rural areas and planning for connections to/from the rural areas to the urban core is critical.

Map 5: Existing Land Use: Santa Fe County



Map 5 shows land use for Santa Fe County through 2011. The portion of Santa Fe County within MRRTPO is largely comprised of urban vacant property and Edgewood is a rapidly urbanizing area. In early 2014, the Edgewood Town Council approved a master plan for Edgewood Commons, also known as Section 16. The New Mexico State Land Office worked with the Town of Edgewood to develop the Edgewood Commons master plan, which will include a town center, recreational trails, public buildings, expanded healthcare facility and residential opportunities.

Map 6: Existing Land Use: Torrance County

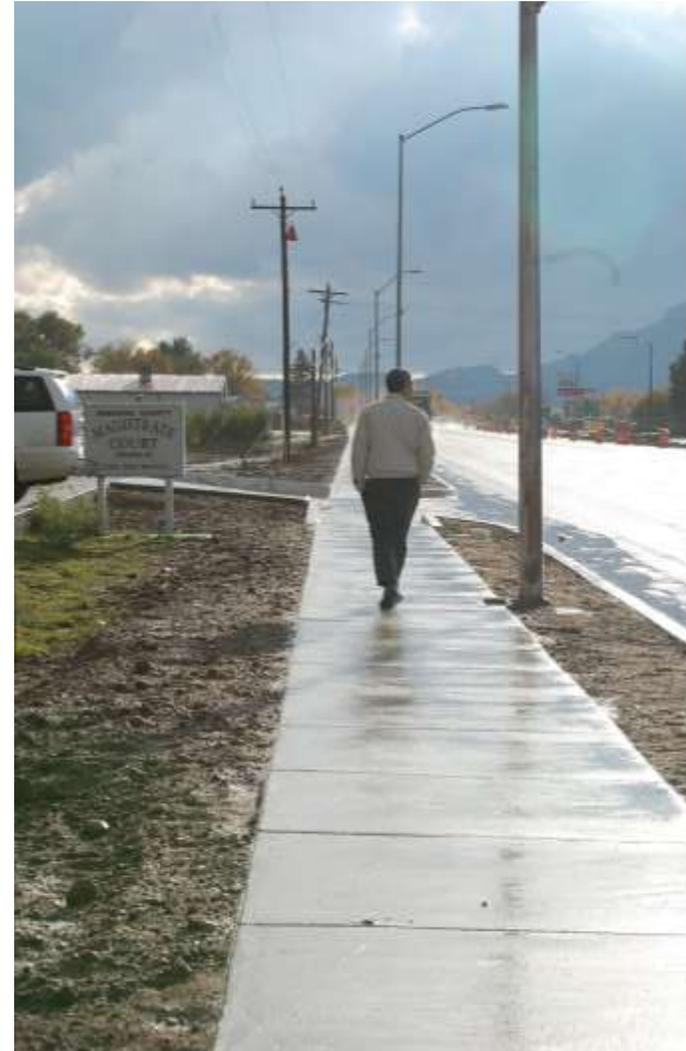


Map 6 shows land use for Torrance County, which is largely range dryland with urban vacant land in and around established communities. Like southern Santa Fe and Sandoval County, Torrance County's population is projected to grow 33% by 2040.

Public Health

Although it has been broadly accepted for some time that physical activity results in numerous health benefits, the link between the built environment and daily physical activity levels is only now becoming part of the conversation in transportation planning. The ability to engage in active modes of transportation such as walking and biking is directly impacted by the built environment and our land uses. The built environment and land use can influence trip length, safety, the quality of a trip experience and how many amenities are within walking or biking distance of the trip origin. In rural areas and small towns where density is usually low and amenities are spread apart, residents are more reliant on single occupancy vehicles than their urban counterparts. Servicing these areas with transit is expensive and logistically challenging, and pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure is rarely a transportation priority. However, there are a few health focused groups within the MRRTPO planning area currently addressing active transportation opportunities in rural areas. Both the health councils for Torrance and Sandoval County identified transportation as a top priority. Public outreach for this plan included these groups, which has already helped to bridge the gap and provide further coordination between these groups and MRRTPO planning efforts with local governments. Also, as outlined later in the document, addressing public health concerns was identified as one of the six goals for this plan.

Figure 5: Village of Cuba



Sidewalks along rural main streets can provide a safe walking facility and connect neighborhoods with amenities.



A sedentary lifestyle has been consistently cited in the literature as a major contributing factor for obesity and related diseases such as heart disease and high blood pressure. Obesity and its related health problems is estimated to rival tobacco in negative health impacts.⁴ One study found that that **"...each additional hour spent in a car per day was associated with a 6 percent increase in the likelihood of obesity,"** and that the inverse is true for public transit users due to the amount of walking transit users regularly engage in to and from transit stops.⁵

Although the major barrier to safe and pleasant active transportation is the built environment, raising the number of active transportation users has been most successful when infrastructure improvements are accompanied by educational campaigns and programming. Federal level funding such as Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), other local walking meet-up groups, and employer incentives to bike to work help to spread awareness and change habits. Step Into Cuba is an excellent local example of a coordinated effort that has measurably increased pedestrian activity. Also, the Pueblo of Laguna developed the Bicycling and Pedestrian Route Plan to not only address health, but also to provide safe walking/biking connectivity among villages. They have been successful in obtaining funding from different sources to implement phases of this plan and serve as a good example of how transportation planning can address health concerns.

MRRTPO is currently working to identify active transportation opportunities within each community and can provide technical assistance from project idea to project implementation as funds become available.

⁴ Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit. (2007). The Impact of the Built Environment on the Health of the Population: A Review of the Review Literature. Barrie, ON: Williams, M., & Wright, M.

⁵ Frank, L. D., & Kavage, S. (2008). Urban planning and public health: a story of separation and reconnection. *Journal Of Public Health Management And Practice*, (3), 214.

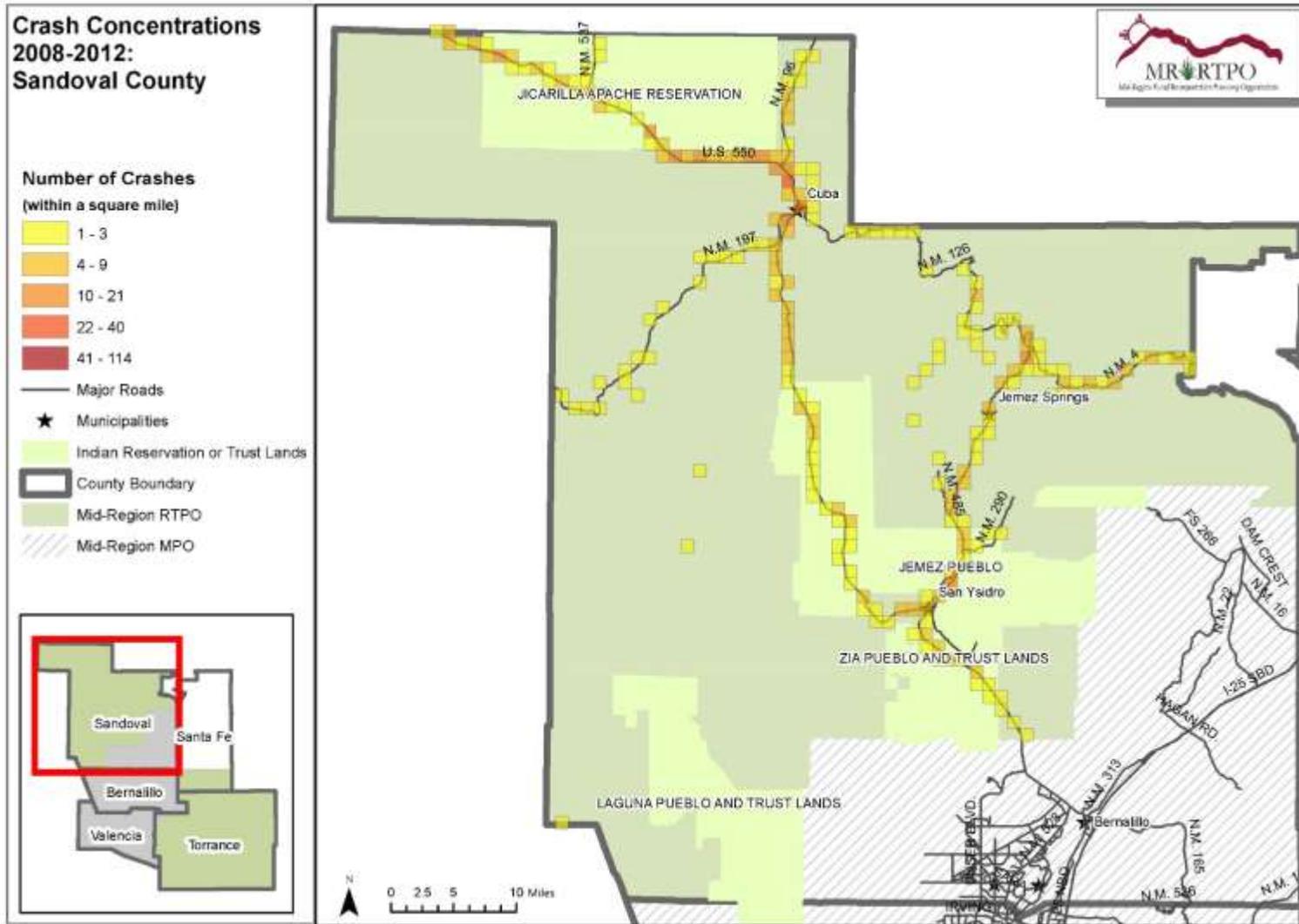


Safety

The MRRTPO area serves a primarily rural area, although it has close connections to the urban area and experiences commuter- shed travel patterns. This results in heavy traffic flows on weekdays on major regional roadways. In addition, travelers on roads in the MRRTPO area are at risk because of the remoteness from municipal areas and associated services. MRRTPO staff compiled five years of crash data (2008-2012) from major roadways in the MRRTPO area to create a series of crash density maps (Maps 7-9). Identifying locations where crashes are concentrated can reveal potential areas for safety interventions. The analysis of these crash maps is not exhaustive, but highlights areas in which multiple crashes occurred. MRRTPO has this data and can assist local communities further investigate the data to identify project areas or develop applications for funding opportunities. Please see crash data on MRCOG website for other identified reasons for these crashes or contact MRCOG staff for assistance.

The Village of Cuba and the local non-profit Step Into Cuba has major concerns about US 550 as a thoroughfare for traffic moving from northern New Mexico toward Albuquerque and the southern part of the state. NMDOT is currently working with the Village to explore potential studies and projects that could improve conditions for not only vehicles, but more importantly pedestrians and cyclists along what serves as the **Village's main street**. In addition, this partnership is investigating potential projects to safely connect active transportation modes from US 550 with neighborhoods, St. Francis of Assisi Park and the schools. In early 2015, this partnership applied for and received funding to expand and pave a trail network within St. Francis of Assisi Park, which is one of the phases within the regional connectivity vision for this area.

Map 7: Crash Concentrations 2008-2012: Sandoval County

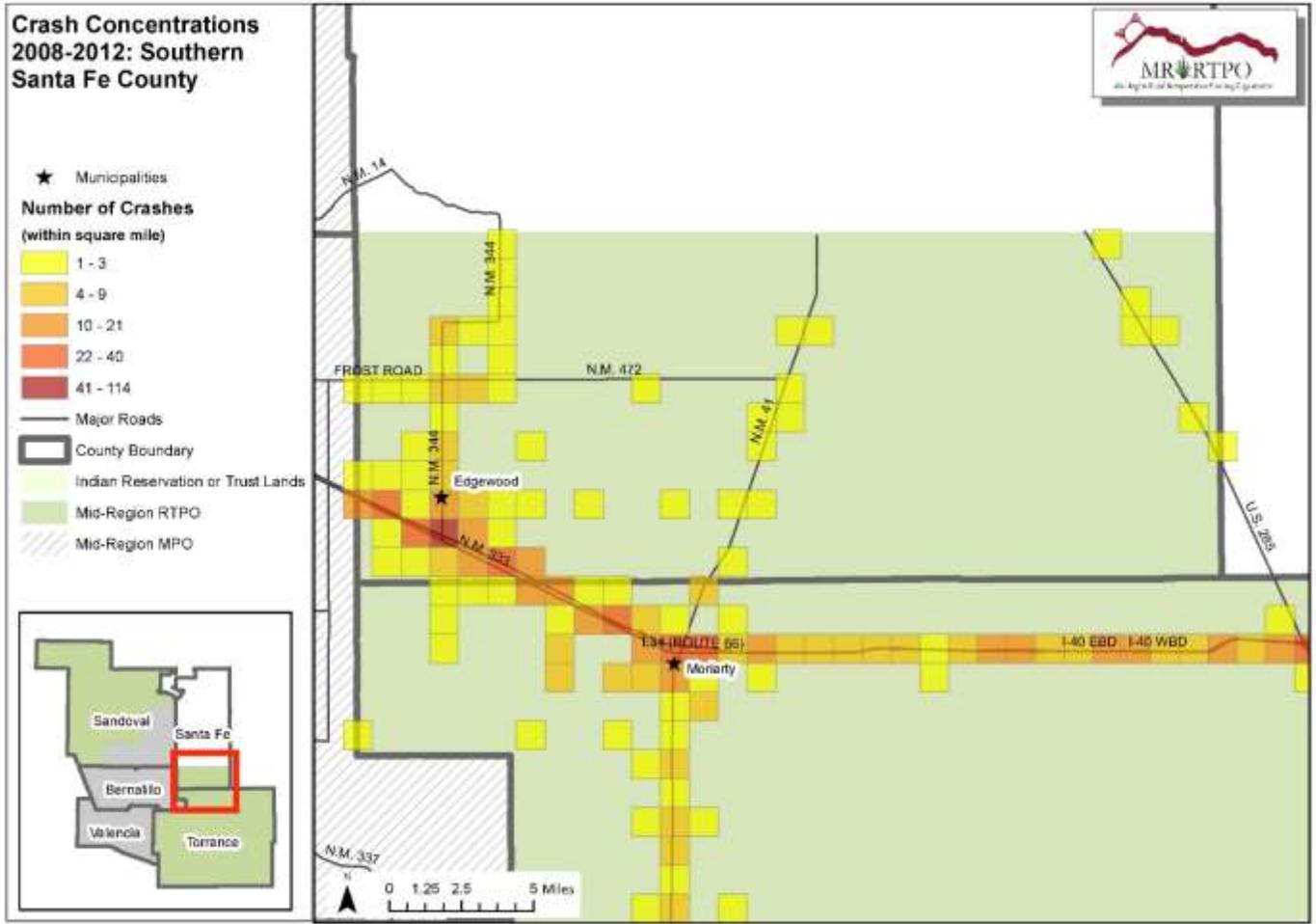


Map 7 shows crash data for NM 4 and also shows clusters of crashes from the Village of San Ysidro to the Village of Jemez Springs and from the Village of Jemez Springs until NM 4 connects with NM 126.

It also shows clusters of crashes along the US 550 corridor from Bernalillo until this roadway exits the MRRTPO area. Just north of the Village of Cuba, there are also a major cluster of crashes along a curving portion of US 550. According to the data, the primary reasons for these crashes were driving too fast, driver inattention or other unknown errors.

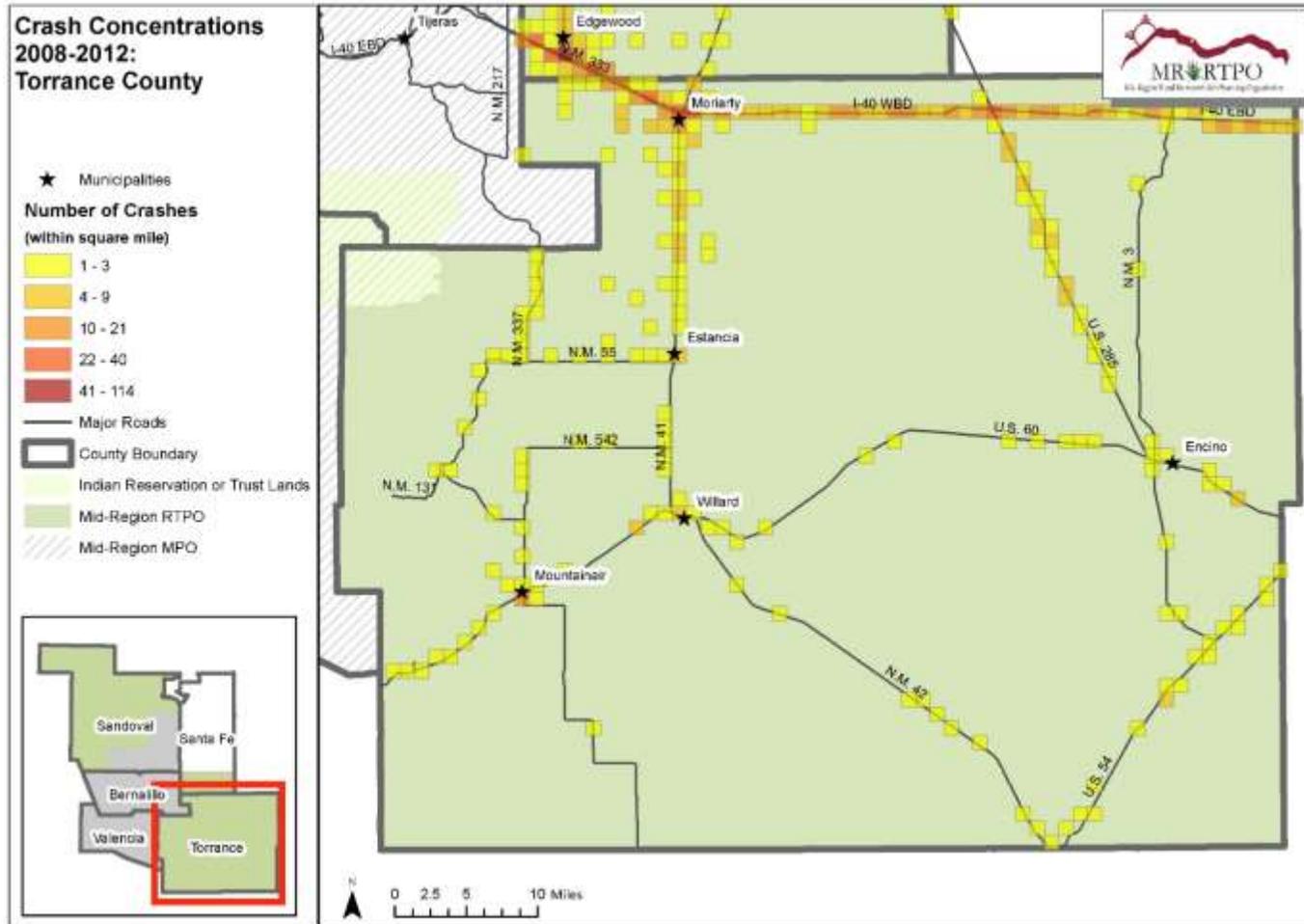
There are a cluster of crashes along US 550 through the Village of Cuba. According to the data, the primary reasons for these crashes were driver inattention, failure to yield and driving too fast.

Map 8: Crash Concentrations 2008-2012: Southern Santa Fe County



The Town of Edgewood lies primarily within southern Santa Fe County. Map 9 shows a concentration of crashes within this area occur along I-40, NM 333 and NM 344. According to the data, driver inattention and driving too fast or too fast for existing conditions (rain/snow) were cited as the primary causes for these crashes along I-40. The primary causes along NM 333 were driver inattention, following too close and failure to yield. For NM 344, the primary causes were failure to yield, driver inattention and improper turns or lane changes.

Map 9: Crash Concentrations 2008-2012: Torrance County



Map 9 shows that a majority of crashes in Torrance County occur along the I-40 corridor between Sedillo Hill and Moriarty with crashes throughout the remainder of the I-40 corridor within the MRRTPO area. Crashes on US 285 occurred from I-40 to Encino. Crash data also reports accidents on NM 41 from Moriarty to Estancia. NMDOT conducted a corridor study published in 2010, which resulted in a study for drainage and safety improvements on NM 41 from US 60 to I-40.



It is also noteworthy that NM 41 is often used for cycling and time trial events for professionals, so cyclists often use this route. In early 2015, the City of Moriarty applied for Recreational Trails Program (RTP) funding to pursue a rails to trails project parallel to NM 41 along an old NMDOT rail line that would connect Moriarty and Estancia. Local residents have concerns about cyclists utilizing this roadway for recreation or commuting. The rail to trail project could potentially mitigate some of these concerns, however, would not deter cyclists conducting time trials along this roadway. Additionally, there are concerns about pedestrian and multimodal transportation

along Moriarty's main street, which receives freight truck traffic from trucks exiting one of three exits from I-40 to access services such as truck stops. These truck stops serve as an economic staple in the community. In early 2015, NMDOT contracted for a pedestrian and multimodal study to be completed for this area, so finding a balance among these varying users will be critical.



Transportation System Overview

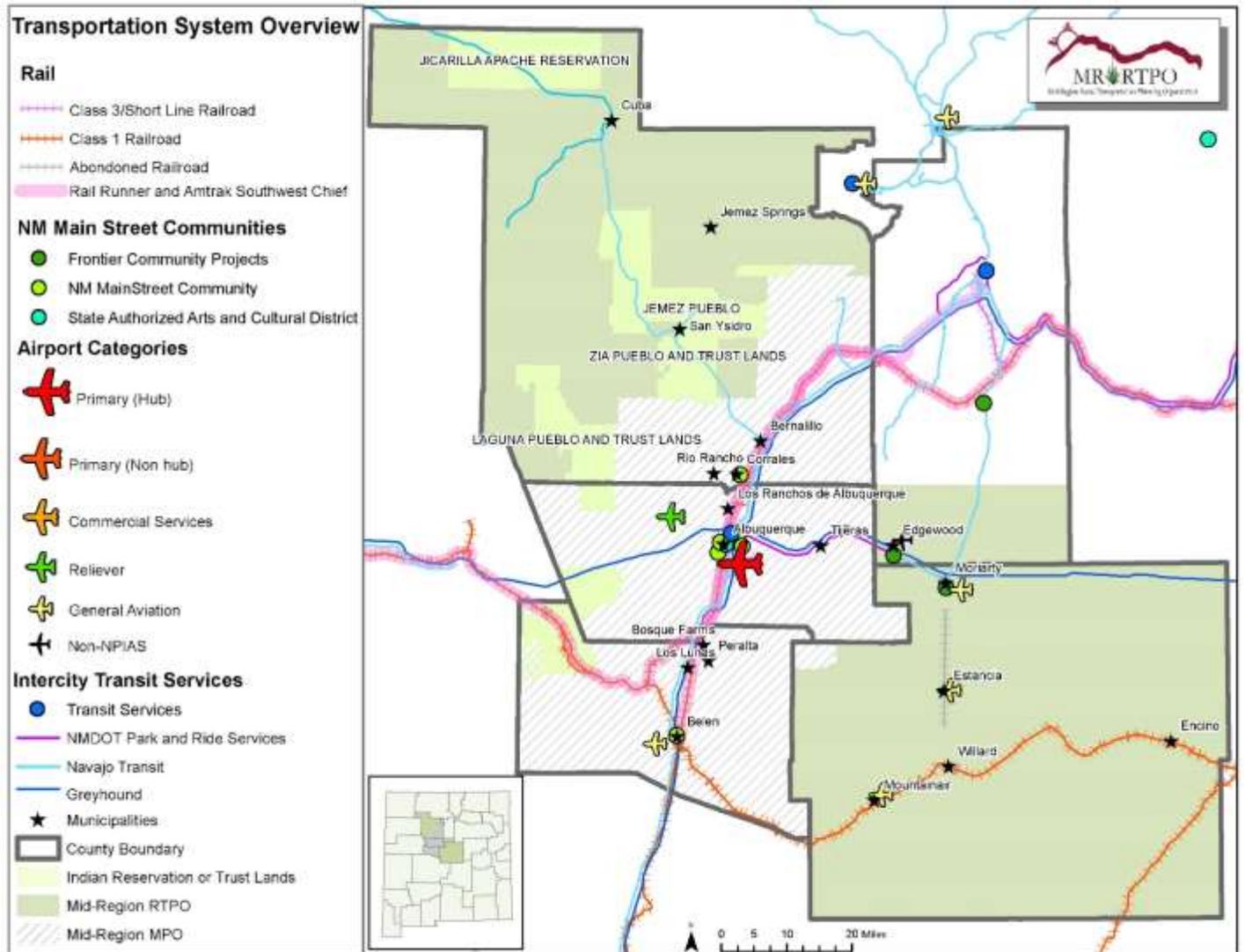
Transportation System Overview

This section provides a system overview of the transportation systems within MRRTPO planning area. It also provides an overview of NMDOT's roadway system by tier, transit, tourism, scenic byways and freight within the MRRTPO planning boundaries.

Roadway System by Tier

Working in coordination with its partners, NMDOT will use a tiered, multimodal prioritization system to establish performance targets and make resource allocation decisions. The table below defines three to four tiers for each mode that reflect the different levels of importance of various types of transportation facilities and services for moving people and goods. Standards for maintenance and operations reflect the tier structure, with higher

Map 10: Transportation System Overview





tiers having higher condition standards than lower tiers. Tiers shaded in 'gold' will have the highest condition targets. Tiers in 'silver' will have lower performance targets, but still require substantial levels of investment. Tiers in 'bronze' will have the lowest performance targets. Tiers in white are for facilities that are not appropriate for investment. Given the higher performance targets, NMDOT will also make the higher tier facilities and services the primary focus of its capital investment. In the case of transit, NMDOT will prioritize investments on the basis of the *New Mexico State Management Plan for the Administration of Federal Transit Grants*.

Table 8: Transportation System Tiers⁶

Tier	 Roads	 Freight	 Bus/Rail	 Pedestrian	 Bicycle	 Aviation
1	Interstates	Interstates Transcontinental Railroads	Demand for >35 scheduled trips per week in each direction	Urban highway routes ... with population concentrations	High demand on- system routes	Primary commercial airports (e.g., Sunport)
2	Cities 20k+ Demand > 10k High tourist demand destinations	Remainder of priority truck network High demand shortline railroads	Demand for 20-34 scheduled trips per week in each direction	... with pedestrian generating land use	Medium demand on- system routes	Non primary commercial airports
3	Cities 10k+ Demand > 5k Rest of NHS Tourist destinations	Remainder of active short line railroads, regionally significant freight network	Demand for 5-19 scheduled trips per week in each direction	... all other segments	Low demand on- system routes	Reliever airports
4	All others	Abandoned railroads	Demand for 1-4 trips per week in each direction	Non-urban highways, no ped accommodation	Routes that appropriately prohibit bicycles	General aviation airports

	"Gold Standard" Highest performance targets		"Silver Standard" Mid-level performance targets		"Bronze Standard" Lowest performance targets		Not appropriate for investment
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⁶ Note: Bus/Rail, Pedestrian and Bicycle tiers are preliminary and will be updated pending guidance from NMDOT.



Figure 6 shows a breakdown of lane miles per tier among all of **New Mexico's RTPOs and MPOs**. Of the seven RTPOs in New Mexico, MRRTPO has the fewest lane miles, but the same challenges exist here as in other regions. For example, there is only a certain amount of funding available and there are tradeoffs. If NMDOT funds are allocated for a new road, this means funding for an existing road would have to be moved. There is very little money available at both state and federal level. As such, NMDOT is focusing on preservation of existing infrastructure instead of building more capacity. The Tier one through four system is meant to work toward prioritizing existing assets within tiers of roadways.

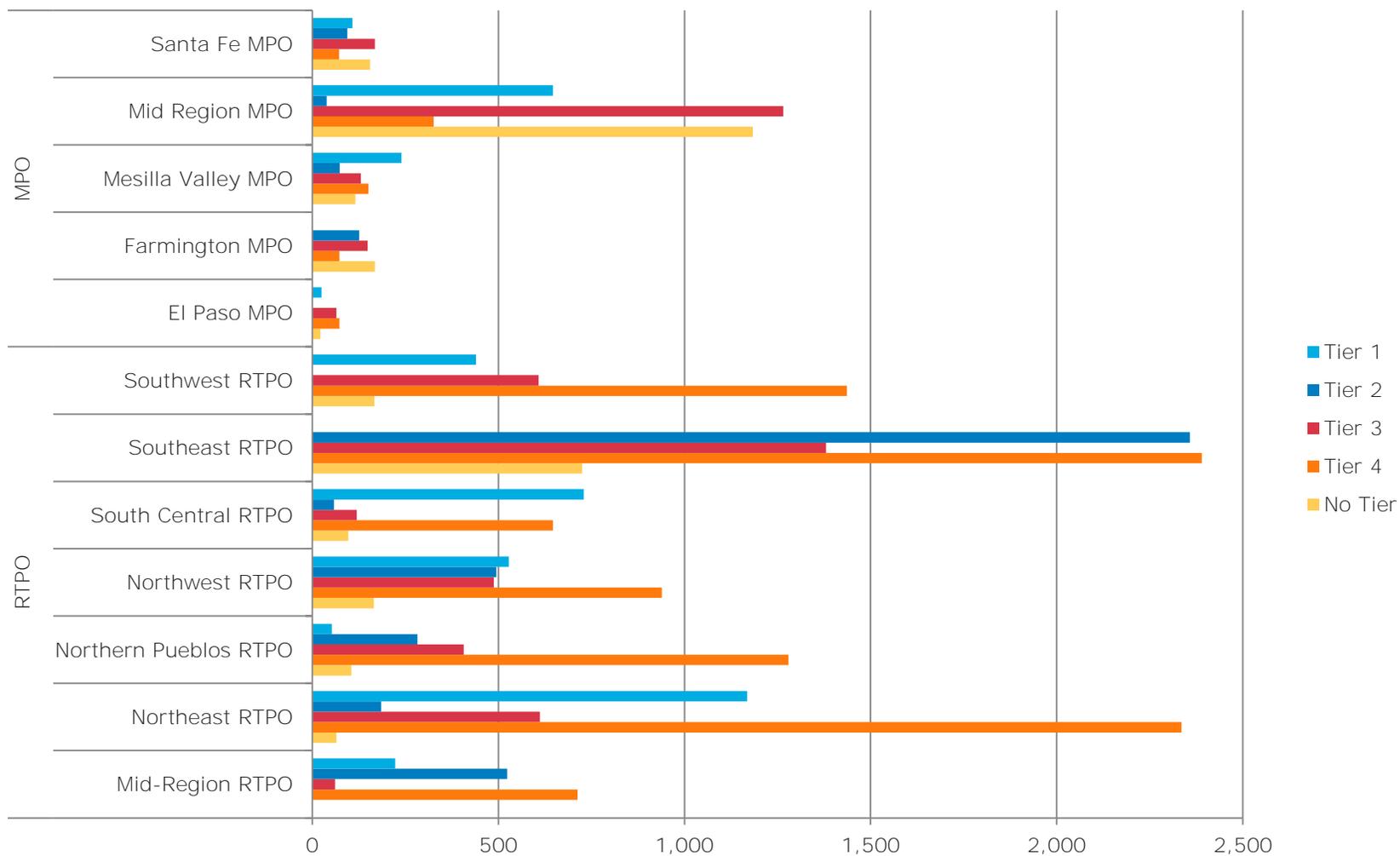
MRRTPO has a total of 1,520.20 roadways miles (not including country roads):

- Tier 1 – 222.60 miles
- Tier 2 – 523.70 miles
- Tier 3 – 712.60 miles
- No tier – 0 miles

Map 11 shows the MRRTPO **portion of Sandoval County's** roads largely consist of Tier three roads like US 550, but NM 4 is a Tier four road. I-40 goes through Southern Santa Fe County (Town of Edgewood), which is considered a Tier one road, while NM 333 is considered a Tier four road. Torrance County largely consists of Tier four roads, but I-40 goes through the northern portion of the county at a Tier one road and US 285 is a Tier two road.

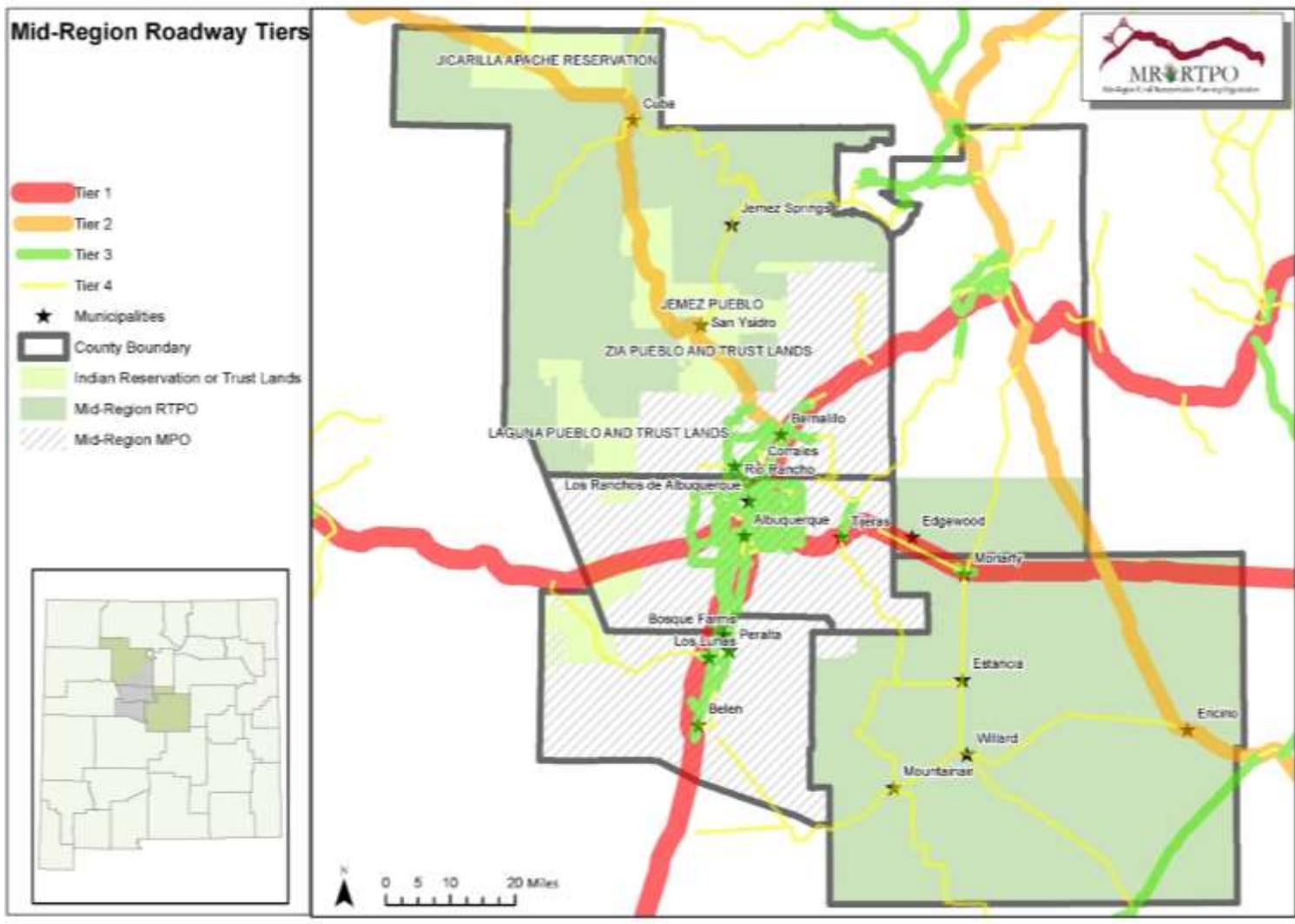


Figure 6: Lane Miles per Tier among New Mexico RTPOs and MPOs (Source: NMDOT)





Map 11: Mid-Region Roadway Tiers





Transit System

Transit is a very common topic of discussion among communities within the MRRTPO area and a recurring theme when developing and obtaining feedback for this RTP. As discussed previously, a majority of residents within MRRTPO boundaries commute to the AMPA for both employment and services. For residents without a private vehicle to make these trips possible, transit services to/from the MRRTPO communities and Albuquerque could be beneficial not only for jobs, but access to healthcare services. MRRTPO can help to facilitate this conversation between local communities, NMDOT and transit providers to improve existing transit and identify areas or gaps in areas that need transit services.

Map 12 shows that some rural communities in Sandoval County currently receive limited transit services and there is a lack of transit services to Torrance County communities. Unfortunately, due to inadequate funding, the Torrance County Rural Public Transportation Program or TCPO TO GO stopped service in 2010. This fixed route, demand response and modified fixed route ran from 2006 to 2010, and served Moriarty, Estancia, Mountainair, Edgewood, Willard, Manzano, Torreon, Tajique and portions of Chilili. The service connected to ABQ Ride at Central and Tramway. For fiscal year 2009, TCPO TO GO completed 14,553 passenger trips with an average of 215 unduplicated passenger trips per month⁷. Without this transit service, a void exists for public transportation options in these rural communities. Rio Metro Transit District provides fixed route service to rural Sandoval

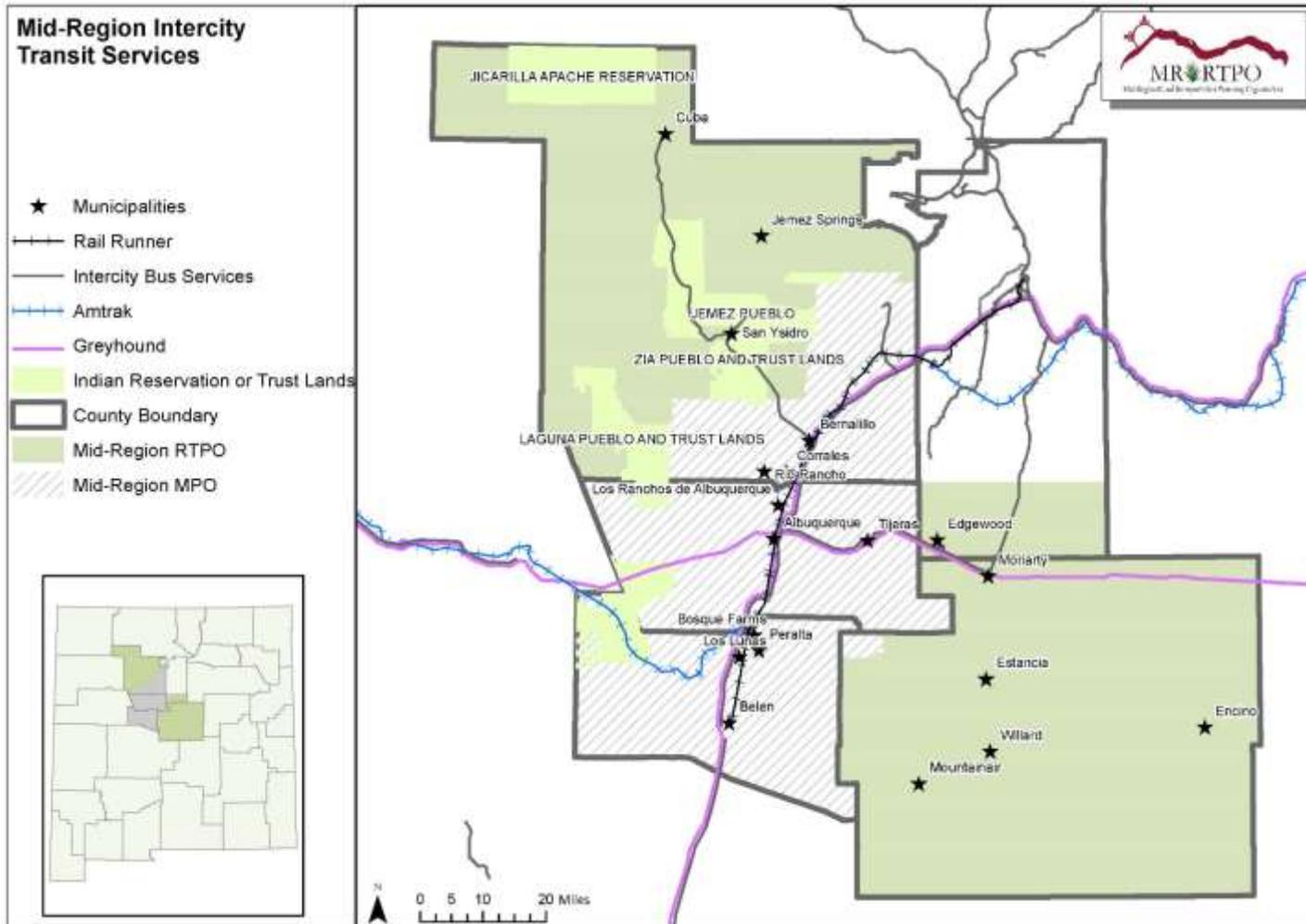
County communities of Zia Pueblo, San Ysidro, Pueblo of Jemez and Jemez Springs.

Map 13 shows existing transit levels of service according to tier for 2015. The green line shows that in the MRRTPO area, most transit consists of 5-19 scheduled trips per week in each direction and this is only within rural Sandoval County.

⁷ <http://www.mvtelegraph.com/2010/07/01/serving-the-county-has-been-a-joy/>.

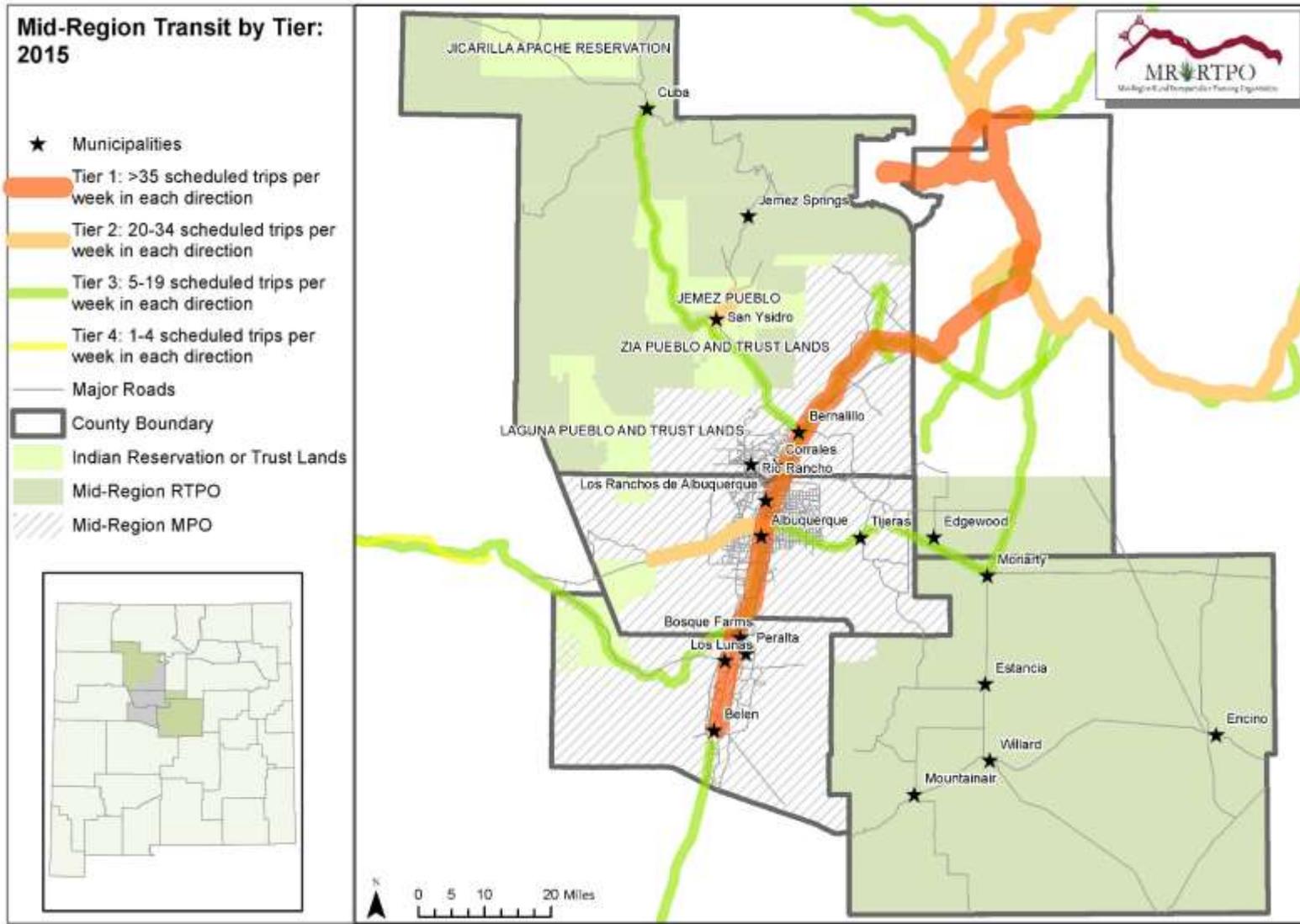


Map 12: Existing Intercity Transit Services

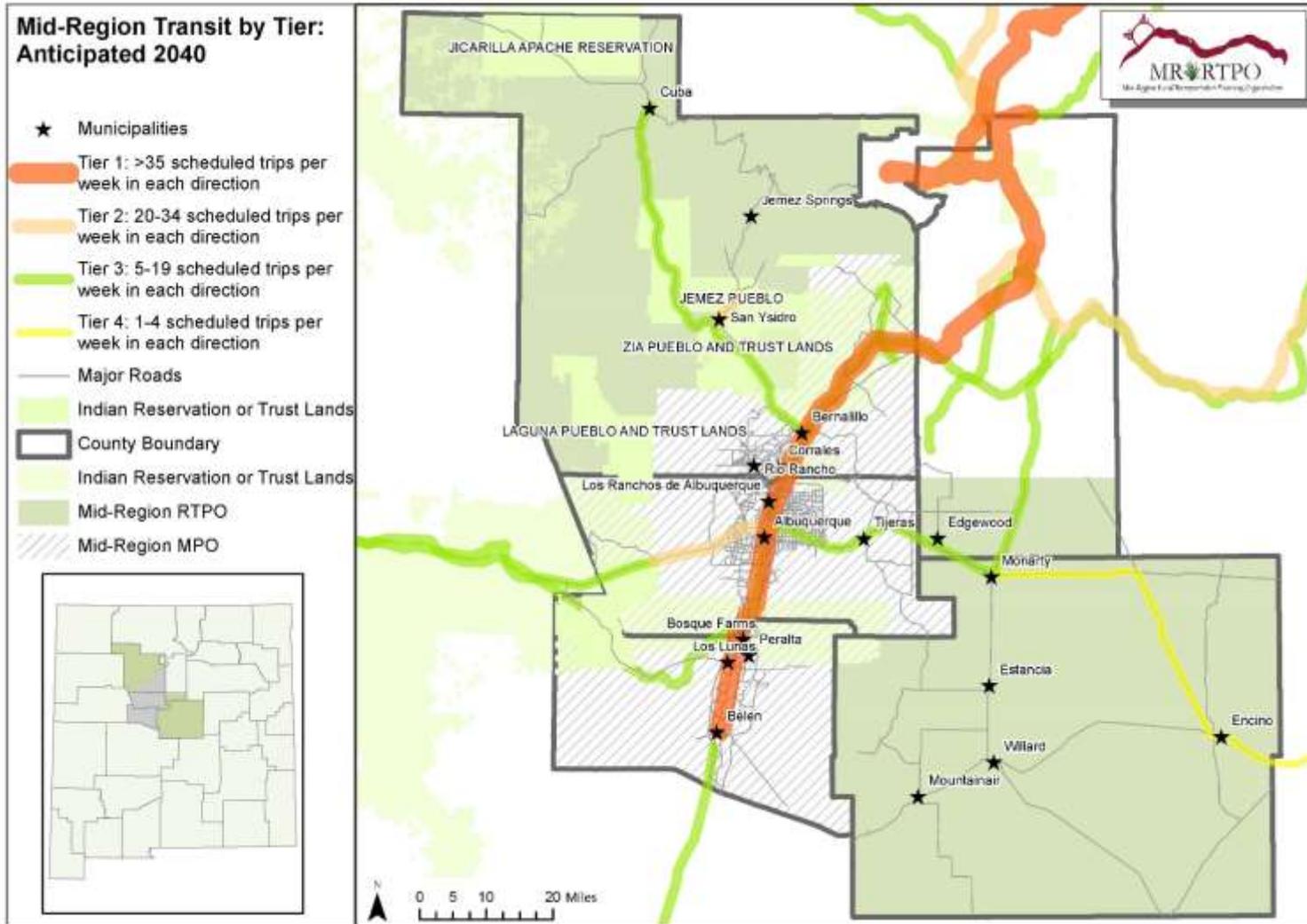




Map 13: Existing Transit Level of Service



Map 14: Transit Level of Service 2040





Freight System

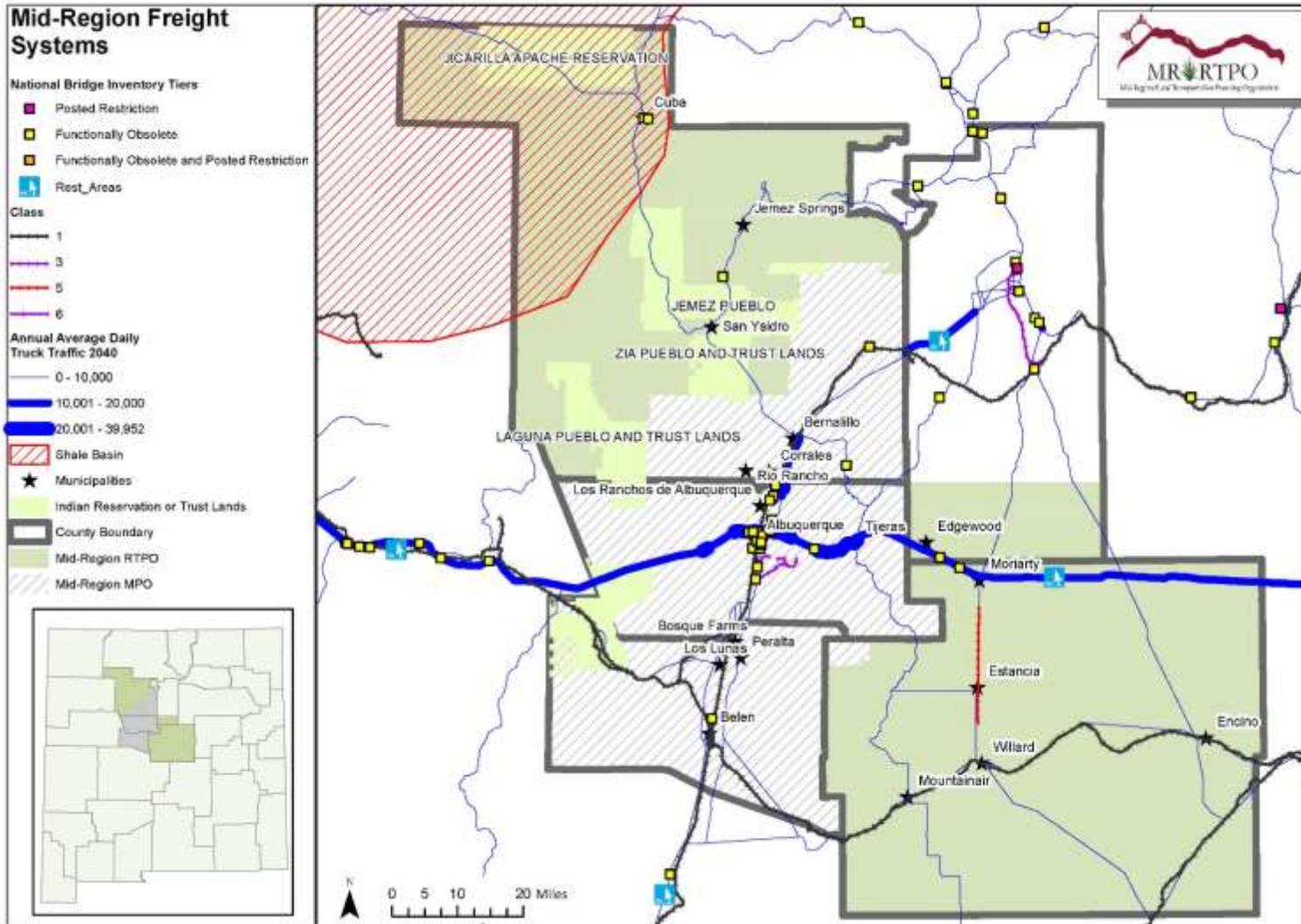
The movement of freight within the MRRTPO area is an important consideration because there are significant economic implications related to freight movement. Ensuring that major freight corridors within the MRRTPO area are reliable can ensure a competitive edge and provide efficient freight movement. I-40 serves as a major cross-country freight route because it connects the Port of Long Beach, CA, to eastern markets. Hours of service regulations require trucks to drive no more than 11 hours per day and work no more than 14 hours, which makes New Mexico a logical stop for trucks driving east from California. MRCOG is about 12 to 14 hours from Houston, TX, which is another major freight port of entry. I-40 runs through the northern portion of Torrance County and through southern Santa Fe County within the MRRTPO area. According to data from MRMPO, I-40 is a critical corridor for freight movement and ensuring this corridor is as efficient as possible is critical.

Additionally, US 550 in Sandoval County serves as another corridor for freight movement within the MRRTPO region to communities in northwest New Mexico. According to data from MRMPO, freight volume along this corridor is anticipated to increase by 2040. Along the portion of US 55- within the MRRTPO area, the total highest daily freight truck volume reached 24,765 in 2012. **MRMPO's 2040** Trend scenario projects 44,119 and the 2040 Preferred Scenario projects 42,166. Regardless of the trend, freight truck volume is projected to increase by 2040⁸. Ensuring this and other freight corridors are well-planned for and maintained are critical for current and future movement of goods and services to communities. In addition, understanding the projected increase in freight volume for this area can help to target locations for future freight providers that could potentially benefit residents and businesses within the MRRTPO boundaries. For example, identifying areas for the development of multimodal freight facilities can help synchronize freight movement in these areas, which makes it easier for goods and services to reach rural areas.

In May 2015, the International Trade Alliance started work investigating the greater Albuquerque area as an inland port of entry. This inland port of entry and transportation hub would position the Albuquerque region as a strategic location for a regional headquarter operations for manufacturers and distributors. The feasibility study to position Albuquerque for this role currently has support from the City of Albuquerque and the Mid-Region counties including the counties within the MRRTPO boundary. An inland port of entry would have an economic impact not only on the entire state, but also specifically the MRCOG region and in Torrance County. Currently, the closest inland port of entry for freight facilities for Torrance County is Amarillo, TX, so providing a closer facility could have major implications **for both Torrance County and the MRCOG region's freight.**

⁸ Mid-Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MRMPO) *Futures 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan* (2015).

Map 15: Freight Systems



Map 15 provides an overview of the different freight systems throughout the Mid-Region. According to MRCOG data, most freight truck traffic in the region occurs on the I-25 and I-40 corridors. However, as mentioned previously, US 550 between Albuquerque and Cuba and north of Cuba, is a critical corridor to note. As seen on the map, a major shale basin exists in and around Cuba, so ensuring seamless movement of goods along this corridor is critical. This map also identifies the National Bridge Inventory Tiers. Insufficient bridges could impede freight movement and have implications on local communities in need of goods and services. Bridges in Cuba, the Jemez Springs area along NM 4, and outside of Edgewood and Moriarty along I-40 were identified as functionally obsolete.



Recreation and Tourism

Tourism to rural communities can help spur rural economies. There is a rich abundance of unique cultural diversity and outdoor opportunities in the area. Additionally, local communities provide local programming and recurring events that can help drive both residents of New Mexico and tourists to these rural communities. According to a report about visitor spending effects in New Mexico, National Park Service (NPS) visitors spent an estimated \$88.8 million. This supported a total of 1,400 jobs, \$36.9 million in labor income, \$59.4 million in value added and \$107.7 million in economic output in the local economy⁹. NPS lands can serve as a gateway to communities within the MRRTPPO area and these local communities can identify strategies to leverage this type of spending and draw visitors to linger and stay longer for other events or programming.

For recreational opportunities within the MRRTPPO planning area, please visit the websites of the United States Forest Service (USFS), National Park Service (NPS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and other land management agencies. Additionally, visiting the websites of local communities can provide other opportunities within these areas.

⁹ <http://www.nature.nps.gov/socialscience/vse.cfm>.

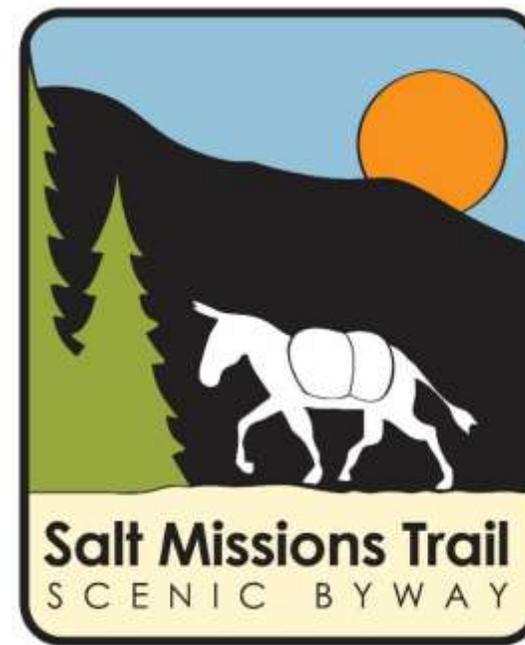
Scenic and Historic Byways

Scenic and Historic Byways can also serve as a driver of tourism to rural communities. Four roadways that pass through the MRRTPO area have been designated as a Scenic or Historic Byway. These routes include byways along ancient Native American trading routes (Abo Pass Trail) and facilities that form part of a more recent national history (Route 66) or the Salt Missions Trail (SMT) Scenic Byway. The SMT Byway has been building momentum with the creation of an ad hoc SMT Committee comprised of local elected officials and residents from the communities along the Byway. This group is led by MRRTPO and has had recent success in obtaining funds from the communities along the Byway to purchase 51 signs (Figure 7) to be placed throughout the 150-mile loop (Map 16). The SMT Byway and the installation of the signs can be a great economic development tool for the region and help to drive more tourism to the area. Other Scenic Byways or Historic Trails not within the MRRTPO area, but within the MRMPO area are El Camino Real, Sandia Crest Scenic Byway and the Turquoise Trail.

Map 16: Salt Missions Trail Illustrative Map

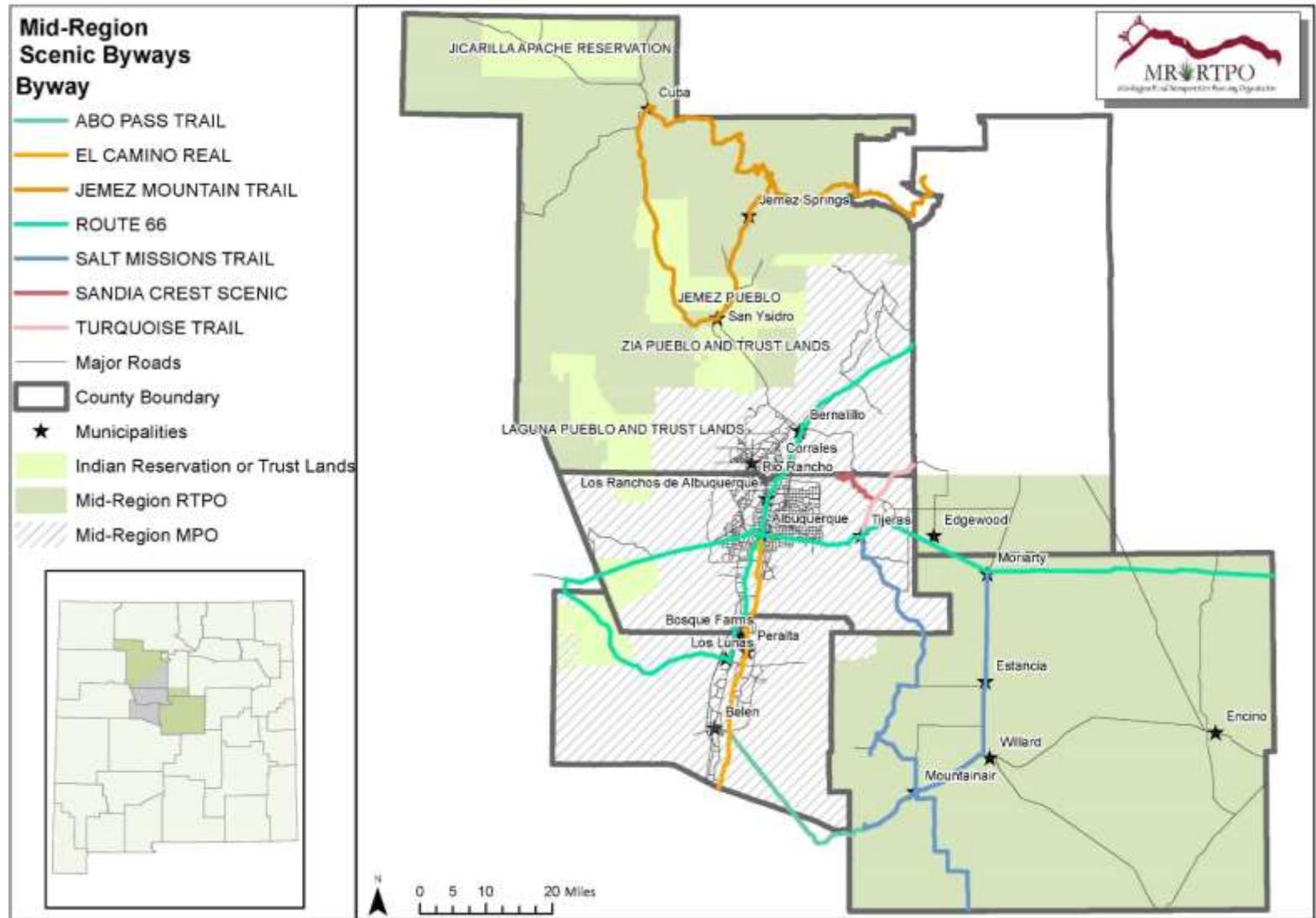


Figure 7: Salt Missions Trail Sign





Map 17: Mid-Region Scenic Byways





Goals and Strategies

Our Vision for the Future

The New Mexico Transportation Plan and this Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) are organized by five goals that lead to a vision for the future of transportation in the state. All goals are supported by a process that prioritizes transparency and accountability in all decision making. This section explains the specific strategies developed for each goal and how they will be applied. The goals and strategies for the plan were developed collaboratively, based on input from a broad range of public and private stakeholders from across New Mexico. Over 165 partner agencies, 1,150 public and stakeholder participants, and 660 survey respondents supported the development of the plan and strategies. **NMDOT's 2040 New Mexico**

Transportation Plan (NMTP) provides the foundation for seven Regional Transportation Plans (RTP) in New Mexico. The RTPs share **NMDOT's goals** and strategies; however, since each region has its own unique identity and set of challenges, the statewide framework has been adapted to each region and will be carried out on a regional basis.

NMDOT cooperated closely with the state's seven Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPO) and five Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) to develop the NMTP. It also established a robust public and stakeholder engagement process to help **ensure that the plan's vision, goals, strategies and actions** would reflect a broad cross-section of statewide and regional perspectives.

Figure 8: NMTP Goals and Vision





To facilitate input at the regional (rural) level, the RTPOs provided opportunities for the public and agencies to learn about and comment on the plan through the regular RTPO Policy Committee meeting process and through a variety of other venues (See Appendix A). Each RTPO also formed an interdisciplinary Regional Working Group (RWG) to facilitate stakeholder involvement in a more-structured and systematic fashion. RWG members included NMDOT planning liaisons, RTPO staff, NMDOT District staff, staff from other public agencies, employees of private organizations and private citizens. The MRRTPO RWG included 18 members who participated in the process, meeting at each milestone of the plan Phases I, II and III. For additional information about each phase, please refer to Appendix A. These members also participated in various Statewide Working Groups (SWG) and Coordinating Committees, which also met throughout the planning phases. Figure 7 provides a sense of the level of engagement that generated the core vision, goals and objectives of the plan.

The feedback and information collected from this high level of coordination among varying stakeholders helped to shape the NMTP as well as each of the seven RTPs. Since each region has its own unique set of challenges, each RWG enabled a closer look respectively at their region and how it should develop from now until 2040.

MRRTPO's RWG identified key regional issues, how to address and achieve goals and guide the planning process. While MRRTPO will utilize the five goals outlined within the NMTP, the RWG identified a sixth goal of addressing public health that is included in this plan.

Key Issues Raised in Mid-Region RWG

- Transparent and collaborative transportation planning with an easy and clear process for providing public input.
- Improve the process; project implementation is too long and this is a challenge.
- Authentic and clear process for public participation.
- Improve and enhance active transportation modes (bicycle/pedestrians) to address health concerns
- Improve and enhance multimodal services (transit, bicycle, pedestrian).
- Safety of multimodal users.
- Context sensitive plans/policies that are flexible for communities.
- Improve rural transportation choices to access to health services.
- Improve transit connectivity between Albuquerque and the rural areas.
- Rural and Urban equity; rural communities need more representation in the process as well as resources and capacity to support projects.
- Expanding public/private partnerships.
- Improve roadway connectivity.
- Remove barriers or increase flexibility with match requirements for funding opportunities. Providing large local matches can be very difficult for rural communities.
- Support small projects in communities. Since identifying matching funds in small communities is difficult, sometimes projects need to be smaller in cost.

The top three issues identified at the RWG meetings are:

1. Improving active transportation and alternative mode options, including walking, bicycling and transit;
2. Increasing safety; and
3. Accessing transit.

The following sections reviews the six overarching goals and applies strategies to reach the goals. Also, each section works to tie back into these three major issues and themes that came from the RWG and identifies how MRRTPo can work to reach and measure meeting the six goals.

Figure 9: Plenary Coordinating Committee, December 2, 2014





Goal 1: Operate with Transparency and Accountability

There are concerns about transparency and accountability within processes for obtaining, planning and implementing transportation projects using federal dollars. NMDOT processes have changed, but not been well-communicated with local governments and this has created barriers to project implementation and understanding of the project implementation process. Additionally, the rural communities often feel left out of the planning process and better coordination with rural communities will be critical in future planning efforts. The rural region relies on NMDOT for implementation and funding support of many projects. Acting upon this goal requires leadership from NMDOT in better coordination with MRRTPO. MRRTPO can help to further serve as a liaison and facilitator with local governments to ensure this goal is met.

Key Priorities Raised in Regional Working Group

The MRRTPO RWG identified the goal of operating with transparency and accountability as a regional concern as well, based on confusion and lack of communication during previous NMDOT projects.

- Transparent and collaborative transportation planning with an easy and clear process for providing public input
- Improve the process; project implementation is too long and this is a challenge
- Provide an authentic and clear process for public participation
- Remove barriers or increase flexibility with match requirements for funding opportunities. Providing large local matches can be very difficult for rural communities
- Support small projects in communities. Identifying matching funds in small communities can be difficult, therefore projects need to be smaller in cost



Strategy 1: Transparent and collaborative transportation planning with an easy and clear process for providing public input

Actions

NMDOT and MRRTPO

- Coordinate among stakeholders such as Federal, state, regional, Tribal, local, and other agencies to plan, fund and implement projects and programs
- Participate with NMDOT's MPO/RTPO Coordination Committee (MRCC), which provides a venue for addressing coordination needs during plan implementation and preparing for future coordination of plan updates
- Participate with NMDOT's Freight Advisory Committee (FAC) to meet on a regular (semi-annual) basis to review freight strategies, **continue to gather information about freight users' needs** and challenges and review products of ongoing studies (e.g., border plans, corridor studies, etc.)
- Coordinate with county health councils as appropriate or related to regional projects and plans

Strategy 2: Authentic and clear process for public participation

Actions

NMDOT

- Conduct annual customer satisfaction surveys
- Provide advance notification and timely updates to local agencies and the public regarding scheduled roadway maintenance activities

MRRTPO

- Ensure participation of transit agencies and relevant stakeholders in regional planning process
- Share with its local government members NMDOT's annual stakeholder satisfaction survey



Strategy 3: Access to high-quality data and information. Enhance internal and external (stakeholder and public) access to spatial and non-spatial data to improve data quality and enhance the ability of MRRTPO employees and stakeholders to evaluate the effectiveness of projects and programs

Actions

NMDOT

- Establish key data items and standards, roles for NMDOT and partners (including the Department of Information Technology), and governing principles for collection, management and sharing that can be used by all agencies
- Develop portal to allow easy access for the public to use NMDOT data

MRRTPO

- Provide technical assistance, trainings and/or workshops for its local government members on how to use data resources for project development
- Share with local government members NMDOT's self-service data portal for NMDOT employees and the public to ease access to and management of NMDOT data

Strategy 4: Public Outreach Efforts

Actions

NMDOT

- Provide a transparent clear process for providing public input and public participation

MRRTPO

- Continue to ensure participation of relevant stakeholders in regional planning process
- Follow its public participation process - See Appendix B for MRRTPO's Public Participation Process (PPP)

Local Communities

- Provide a transparent clear process for providing public input and public participation



Performance Measures

- Frequency and attendance of MRRTPO Committee meetings and other trainings or presentations MRRTPO hosts
- Frequency and attendance of training sessions about project development process to receive federal funding



Goal 2: Improve Safety for All System Users

Safety is a serious concern on New Mexico's roadways. It is critical to work toward making travel as safe as possible for all users of the state's transportation system.

Key Issues Raised in Working Group

- Improve safety of multimodal users
- Utilize context sensitive plans/policies that are flexible for communities

Strategy 1: Data driven process. Reduce fatalities and serious injuries through data-driven, innovative, and proactive processes that include examination of safety hot spots and systemic safety concerns

Actions

NMDOT

- Provide technical assistance to local communities working on local plans to emphasize safety for the most vulnerable system users (e.g., older citizens, children, pedestrians and bicyclists)
- Improve safety data quality (e.g., working with law enforcement to collect accurate location information) and provide in a timely manner, so that MRRTPo and/or local government have access to this data

MRRTPo

- Create on-line data resource for local communities to allow for more usability and understanding of data
- Assist local government members in utilizing safety data in project development
- Provide technical assistance to local communities working on local plans to emphasize safety for the most vulnerable system users (e.g., older citizens, children, pedestrians and bicyclists)

Local Communities

- Create projects utilizing safety data
- Integrate safety planning for all users into project planning



Performance Measures

- Total number of traffic fatalities
- Total traffic fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (statewide, rural and urban)
- Total number of serious injuries resulting from traffic incidents
- Serious injuries and serious injuries per 100 million VMT (statewide, rural and urban)
- Pedestrian fatalities and serious injuries per 100,000 population (statewide, rural and urban)¹⁰
- Bicyclist fatalities per 100,000 population (statewide, rural and urban)

^{10, 12} From NMDOT NMTP * Note: Pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities include those typically considered in the FARS reporting process (i.e., those involving motor vehicles on public roadways). NMDOT will also strive to reduce and measure fatalities (and injuries) that either do not involve motor vehicles (e.g., bicycle / pedestrian collisions) and/or do not occur in the motorized space of roadways (e.g., pedestrian injuries or fatalities on sidewalks or multi-use trails).



Goal 3: Preserve and Maintain our Transportation Assets for the Long Term

With limited funding available, maintaining existing infrastructure and services is crucial to a successful transportation system. While the regional working group did not identify key issues related to this goal, it will still be a critical component to future planning efforts. The strategies and actions outlined with goal three are intended to be consistent with the NMTP.

Key Priorities Raised in Regional Working Group

- Maintain existing infrastructure

Strategy 1: Asset management. MRRTPO and local governments will work with NMDOT to identify data needed to develop and implement a data-driven, asset management strategy to ensure that NMDOT can efficiently maintain all existing and future elements of the state’s multimodal transportation system (pavements, bridges, transit vehicles, railroad track, sidewalks, etc.) in a state of good repair

Actions

NMDOT

- Develop Transportation Asset Management Plan (TAMP) that identifies appropriate treatments (maintenance, preservation, rehabilitation, reconstruction) to ensure that all NMDOT assets are brought to and remain in a state of good repair
- Adapt information from TAMP for use by communities and RTPOs/MPOs
- Prioritize maintenance and operations before adding new capacity

MRRTPO

- Assist in adapting information from TAMP for MRRTPO region

Local Communities

- Adapt findings of asset management plan for local community
- Prioritize maintenance and operations before adding new capacity
- Prioritize projects based on findings of TAMP



Strategy 2: Support investment decisions based on life-cycle cost: Apply life-cycle cost analysis techniques (consistent with national best practices) as the primary basis for evaluation and prioritizing capacity expansion activities (e.g., new lanes, new highways, transit, pedestrian or bicycle facilities)

Actions

NMDOT

- Utilize life-cycle cost analysis in project development
- Identify data needs and evaluation tools to accurately estimate life-cycle costs of all project types (preservation, rehabilitation, reconstruction, capacity expansion)

MRRTP0

- Build capacity needed to conduct life-cycle cost analyses
- Utilize life-cycle cost analysis in project development
- Provide assistance to local governments in project development through data acquisition and evaluation

Local Communities

- Build capacity needed to conduct life-cycle cost analyses
- Utilize life-cycle cost analysis in project development

Performance Measures

- Percent of pavement in good/fair/poor condition by tier
- Percent of bridges in good/fair/poor condition by tier
- Percent of transit assets in state of good repair by mode (bus, rail)
- Number of pavement miles preserved by tier
- Percent of airport runways rated "good"



Goal 4: Provide Multimodal Access & Connectivity for Community Prosperity

Providing people with viable transportation options that extend beyond single-occupancy vehicle travel can help create healthier communities and increase equitable access to the transportation system. Access to transit including the Rail Runner can provide alternative transportation options for residents, especially for medical appointments in Albuquerque.

Key Priorities Raised in Regional Working Group

- Context sensitive plans/policies that are flexible for communities
- Improve roadway connectivity
- Improve and enhance active and multimodal transportation modes (transit/bicycle/pedestrians) to address health and safety
- Improve access to health services through additional transportation options
- Improve transit connectivity between Albuquerque and the rural areas
- Support small projects in communities - Since identifying matching funds in small communities is difficult, sometimes projects need to be smaller in cost



Strategy 1: Land use – transportation coordination. Develop transportation projects in coordination with surrounding land uses and with the intent to facilitate access to jobs, reduce the need for travel, lower travel costs, reduce travel distances, provide for greater travel mode choice or otherwise reduce the need to drive alone

Actions

NMDOT

- Encourage planning at or near existing infrastructure and community amenities to avoid having to build new infrastructure
- Prioritize projects that incorporate land use and transportation planning (For example, utilize Smart Growth principles)
- Provide technical assistance, guidance and recommendations to local governments conducting local planning efforts and/or projects to locate community facilities (like schools) in locations that utilize existing infrastructure
- Educate local governments about land use and transportation planning
- Develop a project prioritization process that incentivizes projects that incorporate land use and transportation planning practices

MRTPO

- Provide technical assistance, guidance and recommendations to local governments conducting local planning efforts and/or projects to locate community facilities (like schools) in locations that utilize existing infrastructure
- Educate local governments about land use and transportation planning
- Develop a project prioritization process that incentivizes projects that incorporate land use and transportation planning
- Encourage planning at or near existing infrastructure and community amenities to avoid having to build new infrastructure

Local Communities

- Prioritize projects that incorporate land use and transportation planning (For example, utilize existing infrastructure and review Smart Growth principles)



Strategy 2: Aging population. Provide technical assistance that aligns the transportation system more closely to serve the needs of New Mexico’s aging population

Actions

NMDOT

- Update Coordinated Transit Service Plan to reflect needs of senior citizens across the state
- Identify funding opportunities for transit between rural communities and Albuquerque

MRRTPPO

- Identify funding opportunities for transit between rural communities and Albuquerque and also between rural communities
- Identify gaps in transit service, especially focused on access to healthcare and services

Local Communities

- Identify community needs, desired services and transportation connections

Strategy 3: Context sensitive plans/policies that are flexible for communities

Actions

NMDOT

- Employ Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) in project development

MRRTPPO

- Develop indicators of connectivity
- Develop definition of connectivity in rural contexts

Local Communities

- Identify local priorities and sensitive issues during project development

Performance Measures

- Transit ridership
- Commuting mode share



Goal 5: Respect New Mexico's Cultures, Environment, History and Quality of Life

New Mexico has a myriad of cultures, environments and rich history. However, New Mexico is a large state and each RTPPO has its own distinct flavor and sets of challenges and concerns. This goal is intended to reflect this awareness and enable local planning to **respect our region's** unique character and to preserve and enhance the existing quality of life.

Key Priorities Raised in Regional Working Group

- Rural and urban equity: rural communities need more representation in the process as well as resources and capacity to support projects
- Expanding public/private partnerships
- Context sensitive plans/policies that are flexible for communities

Strategy 1: Context sensitive solutions (CSS). When developing a project or a program, find a “best fit” transportation solution for the context that meets the expectations of both NMDOT and community stakeholders

Actions

NMDOT

- Develop criteria and checklists to ensure successful implementation of CSS principles
- Provide training for NMDOT, regional and local staff on CSS
- Identify opportunities to implement road diets where appropriate and desired by local communities and where local plans exist to support their function
- Identify process improvements to ensure that Tribal entities participate at the beginning of any project that takes place on Tribal lands

MRRTPPO

- Collaborate with NMDOT and local governments and other agencies to develop criteria and checklists for NMDOT project types to ensure successful implementation of CSS principles
- Follow criteria and checklists developed by NMDOT that will help to ensure successful implementation of CSS principles
- Attend CSS training



- Assist local communities to integrate CSS in planning processes

Local Communities

- Collaborate with NMDOT and MRRTPO and other agencies to develop criteria and checklists for NMDOT project types to ensure successful implementation of CSS principles
- Follow criteria and checklists developed by NMDOT that will help to ensure successful implementation of CSS principles
- Attend CSS training
- Identify local opportunities to implement road diets where appropriate and/or desired and where local plans exist to support their function
- Participate from the beginning of any project that takes place on Tribal lands

Strategy 2: Require and respect local plans. Target funds to support communities that develop local transportation plans or elements within a plan that are consistent with the NMTP and that demonstrate the financial and administrative capacity to implement them successfully

Actions

NMDOT

- Target funds to support communities that develop local transportation plans that are consistent with the NMTP and that demonstrate the financial and administrative capacity to implement them successfully
- Provide guidance to local communities to develop performance-based transportation plans that are both consistent with the NMTP and feasible to implement
- Work with MRRTPO to develop procedures for NMDOT to assist local governments to develop performance-based transportation plans and successfully fund and implement projects that are compatible with the cultural landscape
- Develop and adopt design standards for local communities that respond to context; provide high-quality, but cost-efficient options; and comply with all relevant design guidelines

MRRTPO

- Work with NMDOT to develop procedures for NMDOT that will assist local governments to develop performance-based transportation plans and successfully fund and implement projects that are compatible with the cultural landscape



Local Communities

- Provide feedback to NMDOT about its developed list of procedures that is meant to assist local governments to develop performance-based transportation plans and successfully fund and implement projects that are compatible with the cultural landscape

Strategy 3: Recreation and tourism. Coordinate with public and private-sector partners where appropriate to advance state and regional tourism

Actions

NMDOT

- Work proactively with public and private-sector partners to advance state, regional, and Tribal tourism and recreational goals while minimizing adverse impacts to cultural resources
- Work with MRRTPO and local governments to define 'cultural corridors,' collect more data on tourist visitation patterns, improve travel routes to public lands destinations and promote other transportation-oriented tourism opportunities to improve the quality of the visitor travel experience in New Mexico

MRRTPO

- Work with NMDOT and local governments to define 'cultural corridors,' collect more data on tourist visitation patterns, improve travel routes to public lands destinations and promote other transportation-oriented tourism opportunities to improve the quality of the visitor travel experience in New Mexico

Local Communities

- Work with MRRTPO and NMDOT to define 'cultural corridors,' collect more data on tourist visitation patterns, improve travel routes to public lands destinations and promote other transportation-oriented tourism opportunities to improve the quality of the visitor travel experience in New Mexico

Performance Measures

- Tourism/Visitor numbers
- Number of communities with recently updated comprehensive plans or other local plans



Goal 6: Public Health for All System Users

While the NMTP identified five primary goals, the MRRTPO RWG also identified a sixth goal of addressing public health for all system users.

Key Issues Raised in Working Group

- Improve and enhance active and multimodal transportation modes (transit/bicycle/pedestrians) to address health and safety
- Address access to health services through additional transportation options
- Improve transit connectivity between Albuquerque and the rural areas
- Utilize context sensitive plans/policies that are flexible for communities
- Prioritize active transportation in project design that address health concerns

Strategy 1. Proactively address transportation-related public health concerns to support planning partners and improve and enhance safety for active and multimodal transportation (bicycle/pedestrian/transit)

Actions

NMDOT

- Prioritize active transportation in design and planning to help address health concerns
- Incorporate Complete Streets elements within project design and planning
- Prioritize complete streets projects to receive funding

MRRTPO

- Emphasize active transportation components within the project development
- Prioritize active transportation in design and planning to help address health concerns
- Incorporate Complete Streets elements within project design and planning
- Prioritize complete streets projects to receive funding
- Coordinate with county health councils to identify opportunities to implement active transportation strategies to support public health and wellness



Local Communities

- Incorporate Complete Streets elements within project design and planning
- Coordinate with county health councils to identify opportunities to implement active transportation strategies to support public health and wellness

Strategy 2. Improve rural transit opportunities to address rural access to health services

Actions

NMDOT

- Identify funding opportunities for local governments to pursue rural transit

MRRTP

- Identify funding opportunities for local governments to pursue rural transit projects
- Improve coordination among rural and transit stakeholders to address rural transit needs

Local Communities

- Pursue funding to improve rural transit opportunities
- Include objectives and language in local plans to improve rural transit opportunities

Performance Measures

- Number/extent of transit services available
- Number of miles of bike lanes
- County level obesity rates



**Next Steps:
Action Items and Accountability**

Implementing the Mid-Region RTP

In order to translate goals into actionable objectives, this section identifies action items under each goal as well as who is responsible for the action. This will help MRRTPO measure the progress of this plan and increase transparency. MRRTPO plays an important role in working with the NMDOT to implement the overall NMTP and this RTP. Specific roles are described here of who will implement the action items.

Summary of Action Items

Action Item	Owner
Goal 1: Operate with Transparency and Accountability	
Strategy 1: Transparent and collaborative transportation planning with an easy and clear process for providing public input	
Coordinate among stakeholders such as Federal, state, regional, Tribal, local, and other agencies to plan, fund and implement projects and programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NMDOT • MRRTPO
Participate with NMDOT’s MPO/RTPO Coordination Committee (MRCC), which provides a venue for addressing coordination needs during plan implementation and preparing for future coordination of plan updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NMDOT • MRRTPO
Participate with NMDOT’s Freight Advisory Committee (FAC) to meet on a regular (semi-annual) basis to review freight strategies, continue to gather information about freight users’ needs and challenges and review products of ongoing studies (e.g., border plans, corridor studies, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NMDOT • MRRTPO
Coordinate with county health councils as appropriate or related to regional projects and plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NMDOT • MRRTPO
Strategy 2: Authentic and clear process for public participation	
Conduct annual customer satisfaction surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NMDOT
Provide advance notification and timely updates to local agencies and the public regarding scheduled roadway maintenance activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NMDOT
Ensure participation of transit agencies and relevant stakeholders in regional planning process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRRTPO
Share with its local government members NMDOT’s annual stakeholder satisfaction survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRRTPO



Action Item	Owner
Strategy 3: Access to high-quality data and information. Enhance internal and external (stakeholder and public) access to non-spatial data to improve data quality and enhance the ability of MRRTPO employees and stakeholders to evaluate the effectiveness of projects and programs	
Establish key data items and standards, roles for NMDOT and partners (including the Department of Information Technology), and governing principles for collection, management and sharing that can be used by all agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NMDOT
Develop portal to allow easy access for the public to use NMDOT data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NMDOT
Provide technical assistance, trainings and/or workshops for its local government members on how to use data resources for project development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MRRTPO
Share with local government members NMDOT’s self-service data portal for NMDOT employees and the public to ease access to and management of NMDOT data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MRRTPO
Strategy 4: Public Outreach Efforts	
Provide a transparent clear process for providing public input and public participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NMDOT
Continue to ensure participation of relevant stakeholders in regional planning process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MRRTPO
Follow its public participation process - See Appendix B for MRRTPO’s Public Participation Process (PPP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MRRTPO
Provide a transparent clear process for providing public input and public participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Communities
Goal 2: Improve Safety and Public Health for All System Users	
Strategy 1: Data driven process. Reduce fatalities and serious injuries through data-driven, innovative, and proactive process that include examination of safety hot spots and systemic safety concerns	
Provide technical assistance to local communities working on local plans to emphasize safety for the most vulnerable system users (e.g., older citizens, children, pedestrians and bicyclists)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NMDOT
Improve safety data quality (e.g., working with law enforcement to collect accurate location information) and provide in a timely manner, so that MRRTPO and/or local government have access to this data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NMDOT
Create on-line data resource for local communities to allow for more usability and understanding of data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MRRTPO



Action Item	Owner
Assist local government members in utilizing safety data in project development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRRTPO
Provide technical assistance to local communities working on local plans to emphasize safety for the most vulnerable system users (e.g., older citizens, children, pedestrians and bicyclists)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRRTPO
Create projects utilizing safety data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Communities
Integrate safety planning for all users into project planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Communities
Goal 3: Preserve and Maintain for the Long Term	
Strategy 1: Asset management. MRRTPO and local governments will work with NMDOT to identify data needed to develop and implement a data-driven, asset management strategy to ensure that NMDOT can efficiently maintain all existing and future elements of the state’s multimodal transportation system (pavements, bridges, transit vehicles, railroad track, sidewalks, etc.) in a state of good repair.	
Develop Transportation Asset Management Plan (TAMP) that identifies appropriate treatments (maintenance, preservation, rehabilitation, reconstruction) to ensure that all NMDOT assets are brought to and remain in a state of good repair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NMDOT
Adapt information from TAMP for use by communities and RTPOs/MPOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NMDOT
Prioritize maintenance and operations before adding new capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NMDOT
Assist in adapting information from TAMP for MRRTPO region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRRTPO
Adapt findings of asset management plan for local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Communities
Prioritize maintenance and operations before adding new capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Communities
Prioritize projects based on findings of TAMP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Communities
Strategy 2: Support investment decisions based on life-cycle cost: Apply life-cycle cost analysis techniques (consistent with national best practices) as the primary basis for evaluation and prioritizing capacity expansion activities (e.g., new lanes, new highways, transit, pedestrian or bicycle facilities)	
Utilize life-cycle cost analysis in project development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NMDOT
Identify data needs and evaluation tools to accurately estimate life-cycle costs of all project types (preservation, rehabilitation, reconstruction, capacity expansion)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NMDOT
Build capacity needed to conduct life-cycle cost analyses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRRTPO



Action Item	Owner
Utilize life-cycle cost analysis in project development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRRTPO
Provide assistance to local governments in project development through data acquisition and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRRTPO
Build capacity needed to conduct life-cycle cost analyses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Communities
Utilize life-cycle cost analysis in project development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Communities
Goal 4: Provide Multimodal Access and Connectivity for Community Prosperity	
Strategy 1: Land use – transportation coordination. Develop transportation projects in coordination with surrounding land uses and with the intent to facilitate access to jobs, reduce the need for travel, lower travel costs, reduce travel distances, provide for greater travel mode choice or otherwise reduce the need to drive alone	
Encourage planning at or near existing infrastructure and community amenities to avoid having to build new infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NMDOT
Prioritize projects that incorporate land use and transportation planning (For example, utilize Smart Growth principles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NMDOT
Provide technical assistance, guidance and recommendations to local governments conducting local planning efforts and/or projects to locate community facilities (like schools) in locations that utilize existing infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NMDOT
Educate local governments about land use and transportation planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NMDOT
Develop a project prioritization process that incentivizes projects that incorporate land use and transportation planning practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NMDOT
Provide technical assistance, guidance and recommendations to local governments conducting local planning efforts and/or projects to locate community facilities (like schools) in locations that utilize existing infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRRTPO
Educate local governments about land use and transportation planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRRTPO
Develop a project prioritization process that incentivizes projects that incorporate land use and transportation planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRRTPO
Encourage planning at or near existing infrastructure and community amenities to avoid having to build new infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRRTPO
Prioritize projects that incorporate land use and transportation planning (For example, utilize existing infrastructure and review Smart Growth principles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Communities
Strategy 2: Aging population. Provide technical assistance that aligns the transportation system more closely to serve the needs of New Mexico’s aging population	



Action Item	Owner
Update Coordinated Transit Service Plan to reflect needs of senior citizens across the state	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NMDOT
Identify funding opportunities for transit between rural communities and Albuquerque	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NMDOT
Identify funding opportunities for transit between rural communities and Albuquerque and also between rural communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MRRTPO
Identify gaps in transit service, especially focused on access to healthcare and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MRRTPO
Identify community needs, desired services and transportation connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Communities
Strategy 3: Context sensitive plans/policies that are flexible for communities	
Employ Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) in project development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NMDOT
Develop indicators of connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MRRTPO
Develop definition of connectivity in rural contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MRRTPO
Identify local priorities and sensitive issues during project development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Communities
Goal 5: Respect New Mexico's Cultures, Environment, History and Quality of Life	
Strategy 1: Context sensitive solutions (CSS). When developing a project or a program, find a "best fit" transportation solution for the context that meets the expectations of both NMDOT and community stakeholders	
Develop criteria and checklists to ensure successful implementation of CSS principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NMDOT
Provide training for NMDOT, regional and local staff on CSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NMDOT
Identify opportunities to implement road diets where appropriate and desired by local communities and where local plans exist to support their function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NMDOT
Identify process improvements to ensure that Tribal entities participate at the beginning of any project that takes place on Tribal lands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NMDOT
Collaborate with NMDOT and local governments and other agencies to develop criteria and checklists for NMDOT project types to ensure successful implementation of CSS principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MRRTPO
Follow criteria and checklists developed by NMDOT that will help to ensure successful implementation of CSS principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MRRTPO
Attend CSS training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MRRTPO



Action Item	Owner
Assist local communities to integrate CSS in planning processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRRTPO
Collaborate with NMDOT and MRRTPO and other agencies to develop criteria and checklists for NMDOT project types to ensure successful implementation of CSS principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Communities
Follow criteria and checklists developed by NMDOT that will help to ensure successful implementation of CSS principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Communities
Attend CSS training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Communities
Identify local opportunities to implement road diets where appropriate and/or desired and where local plans exist to support their function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Communities
Participate from the beginning of any project that takes place on Tribal lands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Communities
Strategy 2: Require and respect local plans. Target funds to support communities that develop local transportation plans or elements within a plan that are consistent with the NMTP and that demonstrate the financial and administrative capacity to implement them successfully	
Target funds to support communities that develop local transportation plans that are consistent with the NMTP and that demonstrate the financial and administrative capacity to implement them successfully	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NMDOT
Provide guidance to local communities to develop performance-based transportation plans that are both consistent with the NMTP and feasible to implement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NMDOT
Work with MRRTPO to develop procedures for NMDOT to assist local governments to develop performance-based transportation plans and successfully fund and implement projects that are compatible with the cultural landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NMDOT
Develop and adopt design standards for local communities that respond to context; provide high-quality, but cost-efficient options; and comply with all relevant design guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NMDOT
Work with NMDOT to develop procedures for NMDOT that will assist local governments to develop performance-based transportation plans and successfully fund and implement projects that are compatible with the cultural landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRRTPO



Action Item	Owner
Provide feedback to NMDOT about its developed list of procedures that is meant to assist local governments to develop performance-based transportation plans and successfully fund and implement projects that are compatible with the cultural landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Communities
Strategy 3: Recreation and tourism. Coordinate with public and private-sector partners where appropriate to advance state and regional tourism	
Work proactively with public and private-sector partners to advance state, regional, and Tribal tourism and recreational goals while minimizing adverse impacts to cultural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NMDOT
Work with MRRTPO and local governments to define 'cultural corridors,' collect more data on tourist visitation patterns, improve travel routes to public lands destinations and promote other transportation-oriented tourism opportunities to improve the quality of the visitor travel experience in New Mexico	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NMDOT
Work with NMDOT and local governments to define 'cultural corridors,' collect more data on tourist visitation patterns, improve travel routes to public lands destinations and promote other transportation-oriented tourism opportunities to improve the quality of the visitor travel experience in New Mexico	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MRRTPO
Work with MRRTPO and NMDOT to define 'cultural corridors,' collect more data on tourist visitation patterns, improve travel routes to public lands destinations and promote other transportation-oriented tourism opportunities to improve the quality of the visitor travel experience in New Mexico	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Communities
Goal 6: Public Health for All System Users	
Strategy 1. Proactively address transportation-related public health concerns to support planning partners and improve and enhance safety for active and multimodal transportation (bicycle/pedestrian/transit)	
Prioritize active transportation in design and planning to help address health concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NMDOT
Incorporate Complete Streets elements within project design and planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NMDOT
Prioritize complete streets projects to receive funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NMDOT
Emphasize active transportation components within the project development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MRRTPO
Prioritize active transportation in design and planning to help address health concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MRRTPO
Incorporate Complete Streets elements within project design and planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MRRTPO



Action Item	Owner
Prioritize complete streets projects to receive funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRRTPO
Coordinate with county health councils to identify opportunities to implement active transportation strategies to support public health and wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRRTPO
Incorporate Complete Streets elements within project design and planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Communities
Coordinate with county health councils to identify opportunities to implement active transportation strategies to support public health and wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Communities
Strategy 2. Improve rural transit opportunities to address rural access to health services	
Identify funding opportunities for local governments to pursue rural transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NMDOT
Identify funding opportunities for local governments to pursue rural transit projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRRTPO
Improve coordination among rural and transit stakeholders to address rural transit needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRRTPO
Pursue funding to improve rural transit opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Communities
Include objectives and language in local plans to improve rural transit opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Communities

RTPO Involvement in STIP Development

There are a few avenues by which local government members of MRRTPO can have projects moved onto the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). All projects must be consistent with the New Mexico Transportation Plan (NMTP) and this Regional Transportation Plan to be eligible to receive funding. When projects go through both the project feasibility phase and project identification phase, they will be prioritized based on consistency with the NMTP and RTP and weighted based on how well the project meets the goals and strategies within these plans. Additionally, it is important to note that it is highly encouraged that any local plans include specific local project priorities.

Rural Transportation Improvement Program (RTIPR)

Historically, MRRTPO conducted an annual Rural Transportation Improvement Program (RTIPR) call for projects. However, with limited funding available, in 2013, the MRRTPO Committee decided not to do a call for projects. Instead MRRTPO staff reevaluated how best to utilize this program in the future, so that the RTIPR is not simply a long wish list of projects that may not be feasible or have adequate funding dedicated,

Since processes for RTPO project development changed in 2014, with the mandatory inclusion of the Project Feasibility Form (PFF), MRRTPO restructured its RTIPR process to ensure that current local community project priorities were identified and ranked within its RTIPR. By coordinating the RTIPR this way, **MRRTPO's goal** is to ensure that feasible and local priority projects exist on the RTIPR. If a project is not deemed feasible in the PFF meeting, MRRTPO staff in coordination with NMDOT can help the community re-review the project to resubmit.

Figure 10: Simplified RTIPR Project Development Process

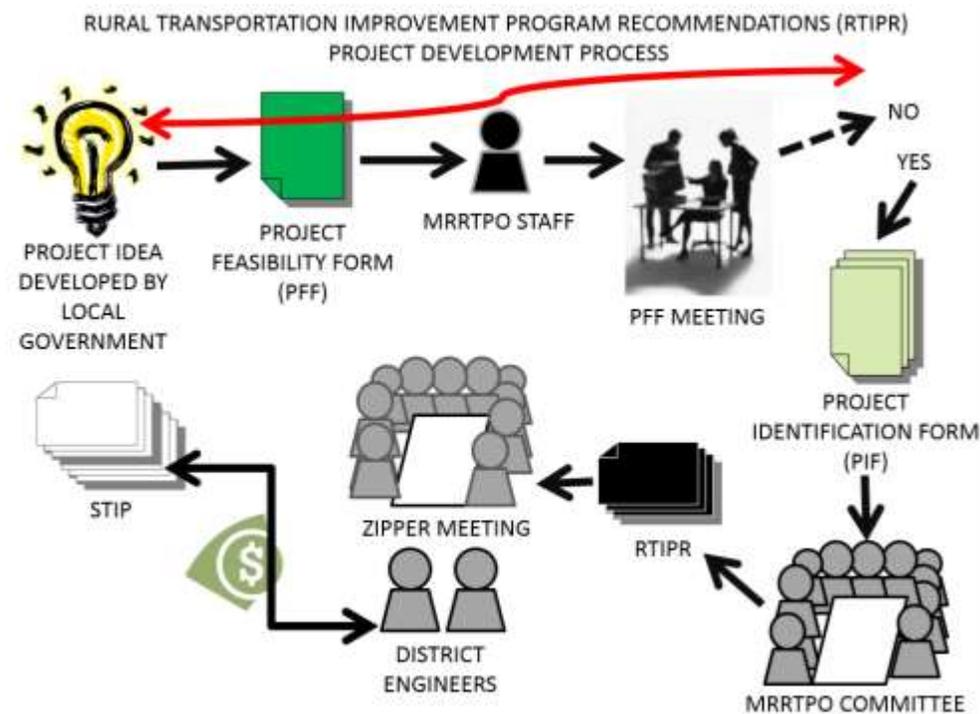
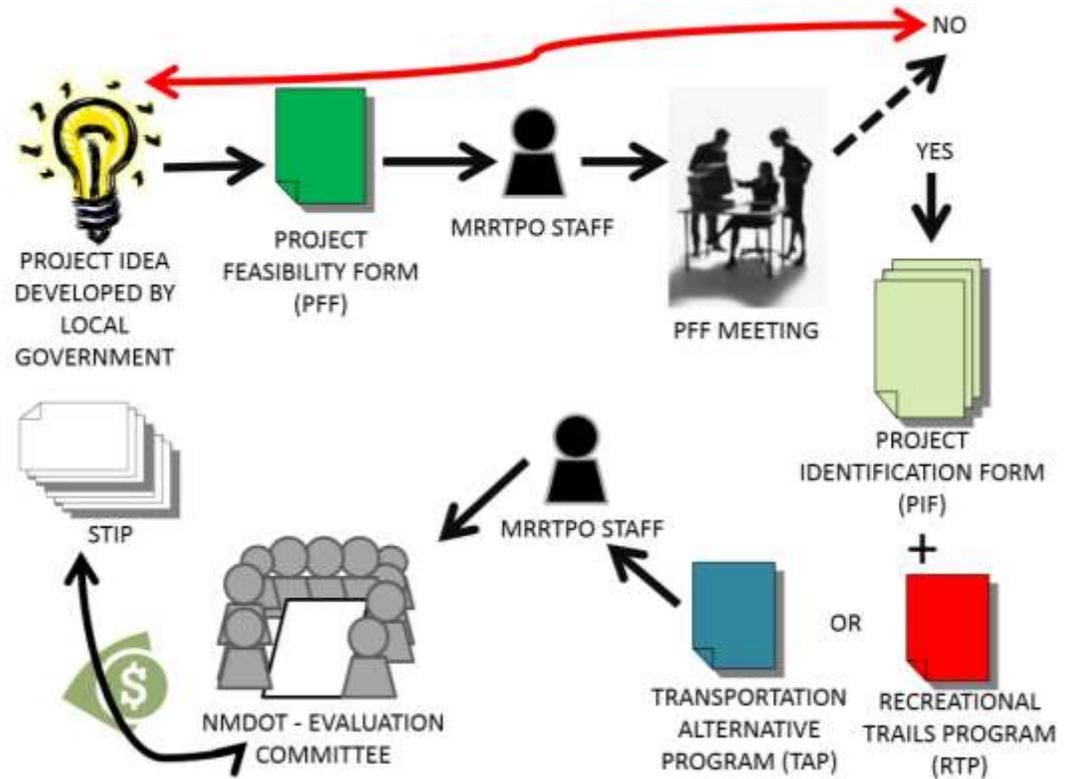


Figure 11 demonstrates a simplified version of the process to have RTIPR projects move to the STIP.

The local government develops a project idea and completes the Project Feasibility Form (PFF). The PFF is sent to MRRTPO who coordinates a meeting among the local government, MRRTPO, NMDOT liaison and NMDOT district engineering staff. The PFF meeting is meant to vet the project idea. If NMDOT district engineering staff finds the project feasible, then the PFF is approved and the local government can complete the project identification form (PIF). The MRRTPO Committee ranks the projects based on criteria that is consistent with goals in MAP-21, the NMTP and the RTP. The final set of rankings serves as the final RTIPR. For NMDOT districts in which there are multiple RTPOs, **there is a "Zipper" meeting in March. At this meeting, each RTPO's RTIPR are combined and reprioritized to create the final Zipper.** NMDOT district engineers determine whether there is district funding to fund Zipper projects. If so, then these projects are moved into the STIP. If not, the RTIPR serves as a pool of vetted projects for each RTPO and when funding is available, there are viable potential projects.

For projects outside of the RTIPR, the PFF process is the same except when NMDOT district engineers approve a project, the local government will also complete any correlating application such as Transportation Alternative Program (TAP), Recreational Trails Program (RTP), Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). Figure 11 demonstrates a simplified process for projects outside of the RTIPR to be placed in the STIP.

Figure 11: Simplified Project Development Process





Appendix A. Public Involvement Process

Overview of Public Outreach Process

Regional Working Groups (RWG) were organized individually by each RTPO with NMDOT assistance. Each RWG was comprised of NMDOT Divisions, NMDOT Districts and other public agencies, private organizations and the RTPO itself. These working groups met at each Phase of the NMTP development and provided key input into the plan:

- In Phase I, the MRRTPO RWG provided input on the vision and goals for 2040, and identified the key challenges and opportunities to achieve that vision as well as identifying the data and information needed to address these questions.
- In Phase II, the RWG provided input on the strategies, actions, investments, policies and performance standards to address regional transportation needs.
- During Phase III, the group was asked to evaluate three distinct plan alternatives on their ability to meet the NMTP goals and objectives. The RWG provided input on the plan framework, investment priorities, management practices, performance standards and other policies included in these alternatives which helped to define the NMTP strategies for achieving the goals as defined for the 2040 plan horizon.

The MRRTPO RTP was developed in coordination with the NMTP project team, RTPO planners and NMDOT liaisons. The MRRTPO Committee internally reviewed the Mid-Region RTP.

RTPOs were actively involved in the plan approval and implementation phase, Phase IV, of the process by facilitating draft presentations of the RTP, gathering internal stakeholder

Figure 12: MRRTPO RWG Members

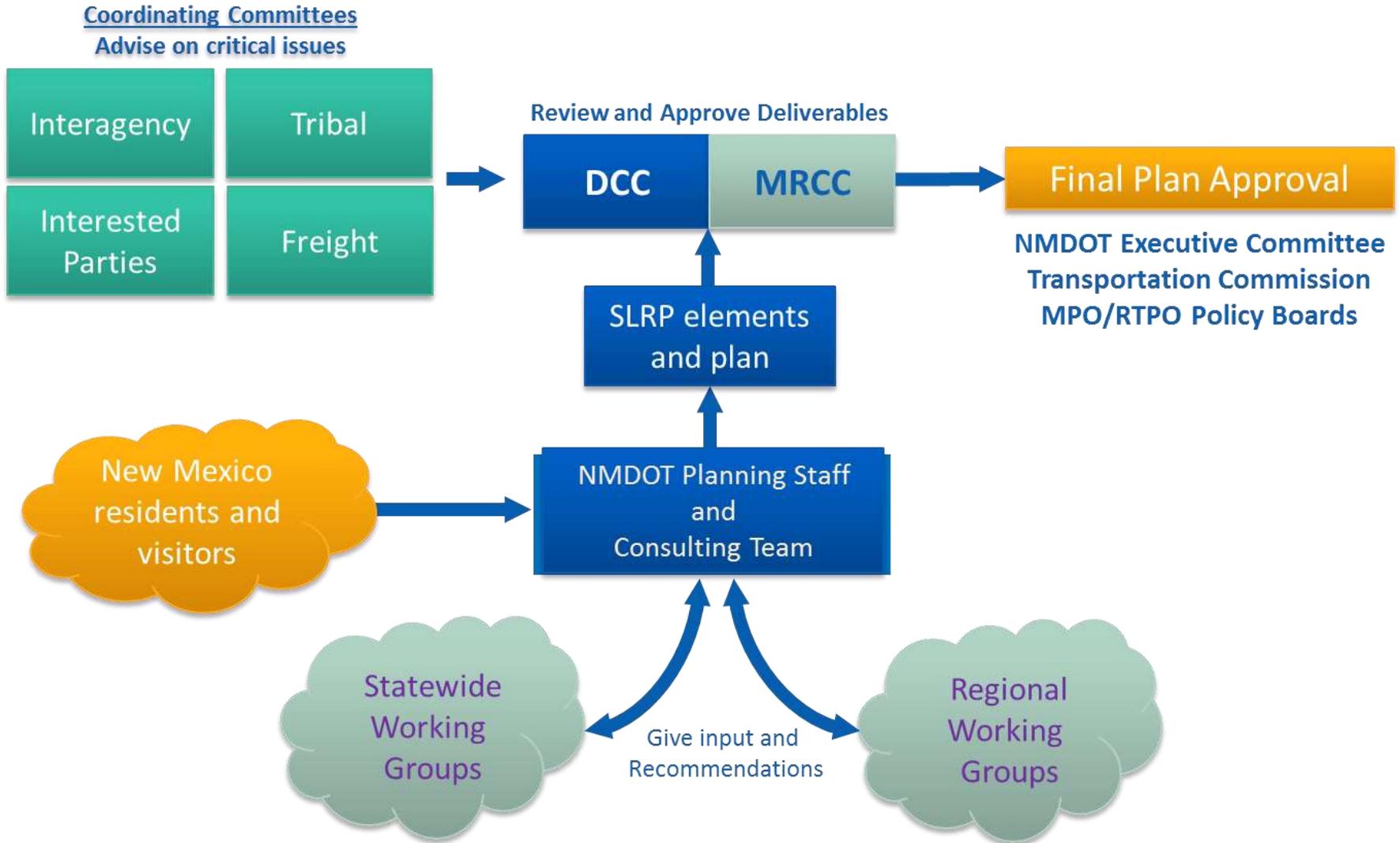


input and finalizing the draft plan for approval by the New Mexico State Transportation Commission.

Throughout the plan phases, RTPO planners worked to engage the public through a variety of methods including information stations at public events such as health fairs, conference presentations and public surveys. MRRTPO participated in a total of five events. Two public meetings, which engaged about 40 people. Two conferences, which engaged hundreds of conference participants and the Torrance County Fair, which engaged hundreds of people. The overall organization of the stakeholder involvement process is diagramed in Figure 12.



Figure 13: NMTP Stakeholder Process Overview



Phase I: Existing Conditions

Phase I of the NMTP process asked the question, “Where are we now?” The objective of the meeting was to gather information on regional conditions, trends, issues and opportunities and solicit input on the statewide plan goals and objectives.

The Mid-Region RWG first met on March 6, 2014, at the Mid-Region Council of Governments Boardroom at 809 Copper Avenue NW, in Albuquerque. A total of 11 members participated including representatives from NMDOT, Mid-Region Council of Governments, MRRTPO planners, Rio Metro Regional Transit, the Department of Health as well as representatives of Cuba, Edgewood and Moriarty communities. The purpose of the meeting was to:

- Introduce the consulting team and the Regional Working Group-1 (RWG-1) members
- Review objectives of the plan, schedule and NMTP development process
- Review working group charter and Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) action planning outline
- Discuss 2040 vision, key issues, challenges and needs to be addressed throughout the planning process
- Identify the data and existing plans available to support RTP/NMTP development

During the working session, participants were asked to discuss and identify the following:

- What are the vision and goals for 2040?
- What are the challenges and opportunities to achieve that vision?

- What data and information do we need to answer these questions?

Below are the key discussion points made in the breakout working groups and plenary discussions.

Synthesis of 2040 Vision Discussion

- Long Range Plan should be focused on changing processes not just concrete projects.
- Infrastructure should support local businesses and not be focused on ‘moving through’.
- The human element is the most important. Transportation should support people and families not the other way around.

Figure 14: MRRTPO RWG Meeting





- There needs to be more of a focus on local community needs such as the ability to safely cross the street over **transportation 'passing through'**. **Right-of-way** width does not necessarily accommodate quality of life in small communities.
- People should be able to move around a small town without having to get back into their car.
- Transportation should be multi-modal, not exclusively focused on car movement.
- Integration, collaboration, communication, expanding public/private partnerships and finding ways to accommodate barriers are all important.

Synthesis of Key Challenges Discussion

- Small towns do not have a voice.
- Many rural areas in New Mexico do not have resources/capacity to staff projects.
- Projects take a long time, so it is a challenge to maintain staff and relationships between the agencies and the community.
- Public participation needs to be authentic.
- The planning process needs to start early, be interactive and ongoing.
- Communities are changing over time, so plans need to be more nimble and flexible.

Synthesis of Data Needs Discussion

- Evaluation of successes and failures.
- Local assessments and data.

Phase II: Strategic Direction

Phase II of the NMTP process asked the question, “Where do we want to go?” The objective of the meeting was to discuss the scenario analysis framework and to solicit input on the strategies, actions, investments, policies and performance standards to address regional transportation needs.

The Mid-Region RWG met on June 24, 2014, at the Mid-Region Council of Governments Boardroom at 809 Copper Avenue NW, in Albuquerque. A total of 13 members participated including representatives from NMDOT, Mid-Region Council of Governments, MRRTP, Rio Metro Regional Transit, the Department of Health, Department of Tourism, as well as representatives of Cuba, Edgewood and Moriarty communities. The purpose of the meeting was to:

- Provide overview of plan activities completed since the Phase I meeting
- Present and solicit reactions to the scenario analysis framework
- Brainstorm strategies, actions, investments, policies and performance standards to address regional transportation needs for consideration in the NMTP alternatives analysis

In a large plenary discussion session, participants were asked to discuss the following:

- What key themes needing emphasis and/or themes were missing from the Phase I RWG summary?
- What key issues, factors or trends will need to be addressed by NMDOT in the next 10 to 25 years?

Participants were then asked to break into small groups to brainstorm policies, programs and projects to address regional

transportation needs at three geographic scales: interregional, intercommunity and within community.

Synthesis of Common Themes

- Regional transit connectivity
- Complete streets
- Active transportation
- Roadway design
- Not ignoring rural communities

Figure 15: NMTP Stakeholder Process



Phase III: Resource Allocation

Phase III of the NMTP process asked the question, “How are we going to get there?” The objective of the Phase III meeting was to introduce the draft plan alternatives and solicit input on the plan framework, investment priorities, management practices, performance standards and other policies included in these alternatives.

The MRRTPO RWG met on November 4, 2014, at Parsons Brinckerhoff at 6100 Uptown Boulevard NE, in Albuquerque. A total of eight members participated including representatives from NMDOT, MRRTPO planners, Rio Metro Regional Transit, the Department of Health, Department of Health Promotion Department of Tourism as well as representatives of Laguna Pueblo, Edgewood and Moriarty communities. The purpose of the meeting was to:

- Provide a summary of work to date
- Provide an overview of the Plan Alternatives
- Perform the Alternatives Rating Exercise
- Plenary discussion to obtain feedback on the pros and cons of each Plan Alternative

A series of three Plan Alternatives were presented to the members. Alternatives A and B assumed that there would be **no change from NMDOT’s current budget trajectory (i.e., steadily diminishing revenue in inflation-adjusted terms)**, while Alternative C assumed that one or more new sources of revenue might become available at some point in the future.

The team asked the participants to review the alternatives carefully, note comments and assign scores to them based on how well each addressed the four plan goals as well as the practicality of implementation. The team then reviewed all of the comments and scores to identify overall themes (see Table 10).

Table 10: Alternative Scenarios Comparison

ALTERNATIVE A Trend based on current practices	ALTERNATIVE B Management + focused investment	ALTERNATIVE C Aspirational vision + new revenues
Least responsive to goals – reactive, not proactive	More proactive and responsive to goals than Alt A, but less than Alt C	Most responsive to goals – a proactive approach
Status quo – assumes current investment and management practices are the best for future challenges	Invests NMDOT’s funds more strategically and emphasizes strong policies (e.g., life-cycle costing) to support sustainable management of assets.	Additional funds and expanded priorities create opportunities to address long-term needs in a strategic fashion
Recognizes: (a) good things that NMDOT is already doing (e.g., improving safety) and (b) change can be disruptive	Prioritization framework may favor urban areas and high volume corridors	Implementation depends on new revenue. Focus on revenue may draw attention away from the need to be more cost-effective



Phase IV: RTP Approval and Implementation

RTPOs were actively involved in the plan approval and implementation phase by presenting the draft RTP to the RWG, the MRMPO TCC and MRMPO TRB, as well as the MRCC, then gathering internal stakeholder input to revise and finalize the plan for approval by the New Mexico State Transportation Commission. RTPO and RWG members also vetted the NMTP at the MPO/RPO Coordinating Committee Meeting.

The MPO/RPO Coordinating Committee meeting was held on April 14, 2015, at the Mid-Region Council of Governments Boardroom at 809 Copper Avenue NW, in Albuquerque. A total of 28 members participated including representatives from NMDOT. The purpose of the meeting was to:

- Provide an overview of the "Coordinating Committee Review Draft" of the New Mexico Transportation Plan (NMTP)
- Identify areas of strong alignment between state and regional/metropolitan plans
- Discuss region-specific actions and implementation activities

Synthesis of Discussion

The following is an overview of the plenary discussion.

Table 1: Mid-Region MPO, Santa Fe MPO

- Coordination with NMDOT liaison, RTPO and MPO to make sure this plan happens.
- NMDOT must approach solutions from "transportation" perspective, not the Highway Department focus.
- Aspects of Complete Streets should be included throughout, not just under one goal/strategy.

Table 2: Northern Pueblos RTPO, Mid-Region RTPO, Northwest RTPO, Farmington MPO

- When you don't implement scenario planning into modeling, it burdens the planning process. Travel-demand, smaller capacity and financial modeling should be built into MPO plan.
- Continue interagency coordination, expanding beyond transportation (e.g., groups focused on economic vitality).

Table 3: Southeast RTPO, Northeast RTPO

- Association and support for RTPOs is missing in the plan; acknowledge them and use them as partners ("we are NMDOT's arm"). RTPO role could be more explicit.
- Work with local entities to do asset management, valuation of assets and more funding for preservation and maintenance.

Table 4: South Central RTPO, Southwest RTPO

- Partnerships, training and education, communication, asset management
- Not mentioned in the plan is collaboration with Environmental Protection Agency, recreation and tourism collaboration with Economic Development Department and no mention of the Councils of Government (they are designated by the Federal Government as economic development districts).

Takeaways for your own MTP or RTP

- Do local asset management
- Mid-Region has begun implementation of asset management
- NMTP focus on travel demand and O & M instead of capacity is a benefit to the MPOs. It substantiates the preservation



and maintenance of existing infrastructure. Coming from the NMDOT gives it more weight.

- Can the actions be accomplished with the existing budget? Is additional budget needed or allocated?
- Do performance measures need to be evaluated every year? From the MPO perspective, it would not be recommended. Not much changes within the annual time frame.
- Think more about funding coordination and transparency. Who is at the table for this?

Mid-Region Regional Working Group Review

The Mid-Region RWG met on April 10, 2015, at the Mid-Region Council of Governments Boardroom at 809 Copper Avenue NW, in Albuquerque. A total of seven members participated including representatives from NMDOT, MRRTPO planners, Rio Metro Regional Transit as well as representatives of Laguna Pueblo and the Village of Cuba communities. The purpose of the meeting was to:

- Present the draft goals and strategies of the RTP
- Solicit feedback

Debrief: Overall, members present this meeting were pleased to find public health components addressed within the plan. It was recommended that the action items be further refined and clarified. Also, it was recommended that the RTP not solely **reflect what "MRRTPO will do," but rather what each stakeholder can do to implement this plan.**

RTPO Public Outreach

The NMTP public participation framework included opportunities for various public outreach methods across the state including surveys, interviews, public events and meetings as well as information stations. Throughout the plan phases, RTPO planners worked to engage the public through a variety of methods. The MRRTPO outreach efforts included:

- Sandoval County Health Council Meeting
- Torrance County Health Council Meeting
- Torrance County Fair
- New Mexico Municipal League Conference
- New Mexico Infrastructure Finance Conference

Summarize: MRRTPO participated in a total of five events that engaged hundreds of people from throughout New Mexico and within the MRRTPO planning area.



Appendix B. Public Participation Plan



Public Participation Plan (PPP)

The Mid-Region Rural Transportation Planning Organization (MRRTPO) Public Participation Plan (PPP) describes how MRRTPO communicates and distributes information to the public as well as how the public can interact and provide comments to MRRTPO. The needs of those traditionally underserved by the existing system will be sought and considered by MRRTPO.

Through its public involvement efforts, MRRTPO will strive to achieve the following Title VI:

- To avoid, minimize or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority populations and low-income populations.
- To ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process.

Title VI states that no person shall, on the ground of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, denied benefits of or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. MRRTPO will ensure that the input and feedback from all people will be considered in the development of RTPO planning documents and activities.

The following actions relating to Title VI are meant to reduce the barriers for participation in the decision-making process by low income, minority or disabled individuals.

1. When possible, public meetings will be held in locations that are accessible to disabled populations. Such locations include local government offices, community centers, senior centers and schools. Where possible, MRRTPO staff will meet at the locations of businesses, neighborhood groups, stakeholders and other agencies.
2. Upon request, all MRRTPO work products and documents will be made available in alternative formats, including Braille, large type and languages other than English.
3. The following statement will be included in appropriate documents:
4. The Mid-Region Council of Governments fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. For more information or to obtain a Title VI Complaint Form, please contact the MRCOG Title VI Coordinator, Thaddeus Lucero at (505) 247-1750-tel., (505) 247-1753-fax or email mrcog@mrcog-nm.gov or visit our website at www.mrcog-nm.gov.

Section VI of this plan describes the procedures on how members of the public can request additional information regarding the **MRRTPO** Title VI obligation. This section also identifies the procedures to be followed by members of the public to file a discrimination complaint against the **MRRTPO**.

5. The following statement will be included in all meeting announcements:

Anyone requiring special accommodations is requested to please notify the MRCOG office at 247-1750 at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting.



Communication and Notification to the Public

MRRTPO informs the public about its meetings and opportunities for comment as well as milestones and outcomes of the meetings. The MRRTPO website hosts working drafts of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and other documents as appropriate and solicits comments from the public and stakeholders on the website via RTPComments@mrcog-nm.gov.

Public Meetings provide formal public input on issues and business of regional interest. In accordance with state law, MRRTPO publishes notices advertising public meetings in the local newspaper and on its website. MRRTPO may also issue news releases and highlight events on its website to promote participation at public meetings. Public meeting notices are published a minimum of 72 hours in advance, with the agenda items or topics for discussion. Public meeting notices include statements that MRRTPO will reasonably accommodate people with disabilities or limited English proficiency.

MRRTPO receives comment from stakeholders and the general public in multiple formats, including testimony, postal mail, email, voice mail, fax and on forms provided for written or website comments. Guidelines for the content of accessible notices soliciting **formal public comment are included under "Public Notices."**

The MRRTPO will disseminate agenda and public meeting information to members of the public via accessible printed and electronic media, including postings on the MRRTPO website and in the Albuquerque Journal. Documents and agendas will be available at the MRCOG office at 809 Copper NW Albuquerque, NM 87102.

MRRTPO Committee Meetings are always open to the public and encourage stakeholders to provide public comments and observe the way it conducts its business. Committee meetings are listed on the MRCOG website and advertised in the Albuquerque Journal. They are held at the MRCOG building located at 809 Copper Avenue NW, Albuquerque, NM, 87102. The building is ADA compliant and is accessible via several major transit routes.

Organization and Staff Responsibilities

The Mid-Region Council of Governments (MRCOG) is an organization with several different departments and is governed by the MRCOG Board of Directors. The New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) contracts with MRCOG to provide transportation planning services to the non-metropolitan portion of the MRCOG region. The nonmetropolitan portion of the region is known as the Mid-Region Rural Transportation Planning Organization (MRRTPO). MRRTPO is a voluntary association of local governments and the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) that provides a forum for members to meet, plan and work together on issues related to transportation in the middle Rio Grande region. It is made up of municipalities, counties and pueblos in the non-metropolitan portion of the region and acts as the state-required Regional Planning Organization for the area (Torrance, northwest Sandoval and southern Santa Fe Counties). Its membership consists of elected officials and their designated alternates. Federal and state agencies with a responsibility for transportation planning and programs in the region are also represented on this committee in an advisory, non-voting capacity.



MRRTPO Staff

- Provide easily accessible information
- Identify parties likely to be affected by or interested in a MRRTPO decision
- Informing affected or interested parties about ways that they may participate
- Identifying opportunities to increase public participation
- Implementing public participation strategies
- Responding to public comment
- Informing the MRRTPO of public sentiment.

Education and Outreach Meetings

MRRTPO implements a variety of face-to-face and interactive opportunities to ensure meaningful public participation and promote full understanding of MRRTPO initiatives. Education and outreach meetings provide information and may solicit input.

MRRTPO records public responses or additional questions/concerns for later use by staff or the MRRTPO Committee.

- Civic and Community Meetings – MRRTPO provides updates to city councils and other elected bodies and speakers on topics of interest to groups hosting meetings in the region. MRRTPO representatives establish relationships with host organizations and may attend the **organization's meetings and events**.
- Social Media – MRRTPO staff uses social media to engage the public in its planning products.



Regional Long Range Transportation Plan (RTP) Public Involvement Plan

Formats and Methodology

The goal of the public involvement program for this Regional Long Range Transportation Plan is to provide clear information to the public in a timely manner about the Plan and the planning process. In addition, public input will be responded to respectfully and the plan contents will be modified as appropriate to reflect public comment.

The process for public involvement program is as follows:

- Provide information to local media about the RTP and the points at which the public will be invited to comment
- Distribute public review information to MRRTPO Committee members and local governments for on-site review by citizens
- **Provide a link to public review material on MRCOG's website.** Identify the site in all materials pertaining to public review opportunities
- Provide formal public review opportunities at the following points in plan development
 - RTP Recommendation
 - Approximately 30 day review period
- Formal announcement that RTP has been completed and distribution of copies of completed RTP to local governments throughout the region

Comments

Comments received during the public review process for the draft plan were summarized and recommendations for addressing them were presented to the MRRTPO Committee at their August 13, 2015, meeting. Below includes feedback received and the changes that were made in response.



The public comment period was open from June 1, 2015, to July 13, 2015. One comment was received. The comment is as follows:

“I would like more improvements in bicycle transportation safety. Commuting to work provides health benefits and savings, and many people are take advantage of the bicycling infrastructure. More and more people will ride when transportation features such as bike lanes, bike turning signals, and over and under passes are provided over busy streets.”

This email comment was addressed via email to state the plan does understand bicycling safety concerns and especially along rural roads. MRRTPO encourage the use of context sensitive solutions for all projects, so that bike facilities and infrastructure are incorporated where appropriate to ensure safety for all users of the road. MRRTPO is also working very closely with its communities to plan for multiuse trails to connect community amenities and to promote active transportation in rural areas.

Access to Information

MRRTPO distributes policy documents and data sets that provide stakeholders and the general public with pertinent information about the planning and decision making process. Copies of its draft and adopted policy and plan documents are typically provided free of charge upon request. Updates and revisions to draft documents and comments made about them are posted on the MRCOG website.

Visualization Techniques

MRRTPO provides a variety of information to help participants understand competing proposals, impacts and possible outcomes related to complex regional transportation projects and plans. MRMPO staff will typically use one or more of the following techniques to help the public and shareholders understand issues:

- Aerial photographs, alone and with mapping overlays
- Photo simulations of proposed projects
- Photographs of existing projects comparable to those proposed
- **“Before and After” photos, simulations, maps, diagrams or drawings**
- Graphs, tables and charts that show various types of information including socioeconomic and demographic data; safety; usage statistics; and financial information

Materials are made available for review at public meetings and stakeholder sessions and provided upon request.



Explicit Consideration of and Response to Comments

All comments are responded to in the manner in which they were received (i.e., comments received by mail are provided a mailed response, emailed comments an email response and so forth). In addition, printouts or photocopies of all comments and staff response to them is included as part of the final RTP.