

## 4th Quarter - April 2011 - June 2011

### Transportation Reauthorization

In May, the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) informed the MPOs across the nation that a potential transportation authorization bill with significant impacts to small MPOs was made public. In this draft authorization, it speaks to the creation of a tier system for MPOs, where the first tier would consist of MPOs over 1,000,000 population and the second tier would include the MPOs with a population between 200,000 and 1,000,000. Any MPOs under 200,000 would either be dissolved and metropolitan planning requirements transferred to the state DOT or be required to demonstrate technical capacity to remain an MPO.

The impact of this proposal to the FMPO would be severe. The FMPO Policy Committee has sent a letter to our US Representatives and Senators detailing our opposition to this proposed bill and urging them to keep all small MPOs in place. Other MPOs have taken similar action.

In early July, authorization proposals began to be issued by Congress. The FMPO will stay informed about the progress of the authorization drafts.

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### MPO Projects To Receive Federal Funding

NMDOT is updating its Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), which programs projects for federal funding through FY2012-2016. Using priority lists from the MPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the following projects have now been programmed into the STIP and will be shown as Regionally Significant Projects in the TIP:

- ◆ **US 64 Phase IV**— \$4,625,000 in FY2014 and \$3,700,000 in FY2015 to widen US 64 to six lanes between mileposts 58 and 60.
- ◆ **East Pinon Hills Blvd**— \$3,000,000 in FY2015 for this phase to improve the intersection of Pinon Hills Blvd and East Main and extend the road to Hubbard.
- ◆ **North Animas River Pedestrian Bridge**—\$600,000 in FY2014 for this bridge from Ruins Rd to the North Main Ave extension.
- ◆ **20th Street**—\$491,000 in FY2015 for installing sidewalks where they are missing from Santiago to East Main.
- ◆ **Bergin Lane**—\$1,000,000 in FY2015 for pedestrian facilities from US 64 to West Blanco in Bloomfield.



## Maintenance of State Highways in the MPO

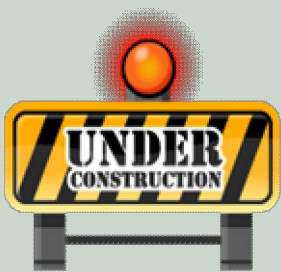
Potholes and crumbling streets on state highways have led the MPO, Aztec, Bloomfield, and San Juan County to pass resolutions requesting that NMDOT take action on repairing these roads. The road conditions pose a safety concern to the traveling public.

During the May 26 Technical Committee meeting, NMDOT District 5 staff explained that they are identifying sections of state highways for road maintenance projects. US 64 and NM 516 are the top priorities. Other highways on the District 5 list include US 550 and NM 173.



The member entities expressed their ideas of developing maintenance strategies and creating partnerships with District 5 to address road maintenance. These strategies will be further discussed during a Joint Policy/Technical Committee meeting on July 27.

## MPO Major Thoroughfare Plan



The MPO began work on the MPO Major Thoroughfare Plan to establish a regional planning tool for the local entities. The purpose of the MPO Major T-Plan is to coordinate and establish a regional plan for the acquisition, preservation, and protection of existing and future rights-of-way from development and to ensure that roads function as intended. In this way, a transportation system is established that is adequate to serve local and regional transportation needs.

The MPO held a series of public meetings in March and April to gather public input on proposed alternatives for regional connections into the northeast Farmington area. The alternatives are found on the MPO website.

The MPO Policy Committee approved the Major T-Plan last year. Approval of the MPO Major T-Plan by the local entities is expected to occur throughout the summer.



## MPO Policy Committee Actions



On April 21, the Policy Committee took the following actions:

- Amended the 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) to include the recommendations from the Red Apple Transit Study Final Report
- Adopted the FY2012-2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- Approved the FY2012 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
- Adopted a resolution approving the annual MPO Self-Certification document

## Welcome New Members

### Technical Committee

The MPO welcomes Brad Ellsworth to the MPO Technical Committee as the new representative from Bloomfield.

### Policy Committee

We also welcome back Sherri Sipe from the City of Aztec, who will resume her role on the MPO Policy Committee.

## RED APPLE TRANSIT DATA COLLECTION



The MPO and Red Apple Transit worked with LSC Consultants to determine future transit needs and make recommendations for expansion options. In January 2011, LSC Consultants finished a Transit Study Report and developed recommended options for both the regional and Farmington routes for modifying and expanding the existing system. Development of the transit study illustrated the need for transit data collection. The information gathered will be used to further support the recommendations made in the Red Apple Transit Study.

The data will be collected throughout the summer months by two interns who will administer surveys and take passenger counts at various bus stops. The interns will also be riding the bus to collect origin/destination data of the passengers. The survey will help determine:

- The frequency of usage - when are peaks periods of ridership
- The need for the transit system - how and why are passengers using the system
- An estimate of "unique riders" - how many individuals are using the system

If you are interested in taking the survey, please contact the MPO staff.





800 Municipal Drive, Farmington, NM 87401

When you reach the end of your rope, tie a knot in it and hang on.

Thomas Jefferson

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To add your name to our mailing list, just send us an e-mail, write us a letter, or stop by our office. We'll need to know your name, address (either electronic or U.S. mail), and whether you want meeting notifications, the newsletter, or both. Here's how to reach us:

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