



NORTHWEST NEW MEXICO REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Annual Report & Highlights

Prepared and Submitted by:

NORTHWEST NEW MEXICO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

NOVEMBER 2017

NWRTPO APER Narrative Summary – FFY2017

Function 1: Long-Range Planning and Implementation

- **Regional Transportation Plan:** completed our annual Plan Update (adopted on June 14th), including new infrastructure resiliency section and implemented an RTP evaluation tracker.
- **Other Planning Contributions:** facilitated in the following planning products, in terms of development and implementation: the 4CITE Master Plan, Super Truck Stop Study, City of Gallup Coal Avenue Event Street, NMDOT State Rail Plan Update, and ZMTP Master Plan Update.

Function 2: Technical Support and Data Management

- **McKinley County Road Forum:** provided year-round support and development of the Road Forum that brings together tribal and rural communities into a comprehensive transportation 101 session with presenters from NMDOT, McKinley County, and the BIA. Over 150 citizens participated in the Road Forum.
- **GIS Mapping and Data Integration:** continued to incorporate data sets and develop our GIS database and mapping capabilities, including across tribal lands.

Function 3: Project Development and Monitoring

- **RTIPR and Transit Applications:** staff successfully completed its annual and biennial transportation processes for identification, prioritization, and funding of projects and transit programs.
- **Johnson Road:** one highlight was the groundbreaking of the Johnson Road project in McKinley County and Twin Lakes Chapter, which through the RTPO we have been involved in its planning, financing, and now implementation for over 6 years.

Function 4: Other Activities and Projects

- **Zuni Mountains Trail Partnership:** Staff continued to support this partnership and each counties Recreation Trails Grant projects, as well as other initiatives through the Mt. Taylor/Zuni Mountains Collaborative. This year included major milestones, such as, completion of environmental assessment, USFS decision notice, RTP awards, and implementation work on McGaffey Area trails, including groundtruthing and mapping.
- **Counties of the Four Corners Collaborative:** This collaborative was spearheaded by McKinley County with the goal of better coordinating right-of-way clearances and transportation investments on roads across Navajo Nation. Meetings took place every 2-3 months around the region, including BIA, NDOT, and representatives from all counties in UT, AZ, NM that contain Navajo lands. Several meetings included Leroy Gishi, BIA Transportation Director from Washington DC.

Function 5: General RTPO Support

- **PPM Compliance:** Staff maintained and periodically updated RTPO in accordance with the Planning Procedures Manual (PPM) and our Corrective Action Plan, including a major push this year to orient all RTPO governmental entities.
- **Training:** Staff attended RTPO Roundtable meetings and trainings, including achieving certification through the FHWA/NHI #151052 “Basics of Transportation Planning” Webinar.

Function 6: RTPO Administration

- **Reporting:** As per PPM guidance, RTPO staff submitted all reimbursement packets, audit, Public Participation Plan, Regional Work Program, and held Quality Assurance Review this year.

FFY2017 NWRTPO APER SUMMARY

NWRTPO Northwest Regional Transportation Planning Organization

In the past year, the RTPO continued its leadership work at the local, regional, state and national levels – pushing for administrative and policy reforms to protect and expand funding investments in rural and small town New Mexico. Our labors have begun to show fruit, even as federal and state budgets have continued to evaporate.

RTPO members include member cities and counties, as well as Native American tribal nations within the region, excluding the metropolitan planning area encompassed by Farmington, Aztec and Bloomfield in San Juan County, which is served by an MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) managed by the City of Farmington.

The Northwest RTPO Committee is chaired by Jeff Irving from the McKinley County.

RTPO LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE Under the RTPO Bylaws, the governing group is considered a Joint Policy and Technical Committee, with members appointed by the respective RTPO entities. The group's primary oversight is to guide the Regional Transportation Plan, for the biennial preparation of the "Regional Transportation Improvement Plan Recommendations" (RTIPR), as well as review and recommendation of special projects, such as in public transit and transportation alternatives program. Policy issues are referred back to the local entities for review before votes are taken within the RTPO Committee process.

Regional - Long Range Planning

- Contributions to local and regional multimodal plans incl. 4CITE*, ZMTP recreational trails, and other local plans.
- Real time, transparent project development representation through our Panoramic Website.
- Updated our NWRTPO Regional Transportation Plan.

General Support

- Coordinated and announced training & professional development opportunities for staff & RTPO members.
- Sought and announced alternative funding and technical assistance resources to RTPO members.
- Worked with DOT staff to advise RTPO members of various deadlines and resolve project issues.
- Updated a variety of annual governing documents incl. RTPO bylaws, open meetings act resolution, public participation plan, Title VI & ADA Compliance plans, Regional Transportation Plan, member roster, and published a new annual meeting schedule in area newspapers.
- Provided RTPO orientations to 8 of our 11 member governments' elected and department leaders.
- Support Road Safety Audits for NM118, NM53 & NM602
- Ongoing facilitation of RTPO membership, meetings, and maintenance of the COG RTPO website. Quarterly and annual reporting. Participation in statewide Quarterly Roundtables.

Project Development

- Developed a new biennial RTIP(Regional Transportation Improvement Program Recommendations) that reduced 99 projects at \$350 million to a fiscally constrained and prioritized list of 36 projects at \$65 million, all of which qualify for federal funding through the NM DOT.
- Prioritized Public Transportation funding requests for our regional 5310 (elderly/ handicapped) and 5311(transit) providers, and prioritized regional safety projects.
- Between the RTP and Farmington MPO brought in a total of \$3,726,639.00 for multimodal and recreational trails development in our region!
- Provided leadership for a Road Forum in McKinley County which trained local and Chapter leaders and staff on transportation financing and project development.
- Assisted McKinley County in leading the “4-Corners Counties Collaborative” meetings, engaging all the counties from Utah, Arizona, and N.M. that include Navajo Nation lands to consider standardizing a process through IGA’s or MOU’s that enables cross-jurisdictional transportation maintenance or development to become more cost and time efficient and effective.

Zuni Mountains Trail Project and Partnership

REGIONAL INITIATIVES

ZUNI MOUNTAINS TRAIL PARTNERSHIP



Accomplishments:

- Finalization of the Environmental Assessment (NEPA).
- Approval of the Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact.
- Hosted a Celebratory Signing Ceremony with Senator Heinrich and Partners.
- Development of two grant applications for the State's Recreational Trails Grant program.
- Secured almost \$1.7M to design and construct the Milk Ranch and Quartz Hill trail segments.

The Zuni Mountains Trail System is planned to be a 200+singletrack, multi-use, and non-motorized trail system spanning from McGaffey to Milan. This trail system will become the crown jewel of Southwest and act as economic driver catalyzing jobs and business opportunities. The COG staff working with members of the Zuni Mountains Trail Partnership (ZMTP) completed the second revision of the Zuni Mountains Trail & Conservation Master Plan. The Zuni Mountains Trail & Conservatio Master Plan is a living document, which will guide the sustainable development of trails, conservation, and recreation opportunities in the Zuni Mountains for the social and economic benefit of local communities and visiting public.




Planning for the Future of Northwest New Mexico

Throughout the 2017 fiscal year, the COG has developed, co-developed and participated in various plan development initiatives throughout the region. From comprehensive planning to technical studies, the COG has been a key partner in planning for the future of Northwest New Mexico. With decades of valuable expertise, the COG is more than prepared to move the region forward. With requests from various local governments, affiliated members and outside organizations the COG was able to contribute to or obtain funding for the development of the following plans:

Comprehensive Plan

- McKinley County Comprehensive Plan Update
- City of Grants Comprehensive Plan Update
- Village of Milan Comprehensive Plan Update

Transportation Plans

- Northwest New Mexico Long Range Transportation Plan Update
- Four Corners Intermodal Transportation Equinox

Economic Development Plans

- Northwest Ristra: The Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
- POWER – Regional Economic Assessment
- Thoreau Economic Feasibility & Community Complex Master Plan

Environmental Plans

- McKinley County Wildfire Protection Plan
- McKinley County Drainage Management Plan

Mirabal Park Multi-Purpose Flood Control Facility

For years, the Village of Milan and the Council of Governments have been searching and applying for funding to implement one of the more innovative projects in the Northwest region of New Mexico. After failed attempts at obtaining New Mexico Finance Authority's Water Trust Board Funds, both parties agreed to utilize the highly competitive Community Development Block Grant Program. The Mirabal Park Multi-Purpose Flood Control Facility project is an innovative project that incorporates flood prevention and recreation into one seamless design. After months of consultation and deliberation, the trustees approved to move forward with the grant. The COG assisted the Village in hosting and facilitating public hearings, and developing, assembling and submitting the application. The application requested \$681,800 to complete phase I: the construction of the retention pond component. Phase II will incorporate the recreational components including a baseball field, basketball courts, walking paths, and a playground. The Village of Milan is waiting notification of award which is scheduled for September 2018.

