



2nd Quarter FY2014 Newsletter October-December 2013

MPO 2014 COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE

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Farmington City Hall	Bloomfield City Hall	Aztec City Hall	San Juan County
Executive Conference Rm 800 Municipal Drive Farmington, NM	Council Chambers 915 N. First Street Bloomfield, NM	Commission Chambers 201 W. Chaco St. Aztec, NM	Commission Chambers 100 S. Oliver St. Aztec, NM
Technical Committee 10:00 AM		Policy Committee 1:30 PM	
January 23, 2014	Farmington	January 16, 2014	San Juan County
February 27, 2014	Aztec		
March 27, 2014	Bloomfield	March 20, 2014	Bloomfield
April 24, 2014	Farmington	April 17, 2014	Farmington
May 22, 2014	San Juan County		
June 26, 2014	Bloomfield	June 19, 2014	Aztec
July 24, 2014	Farmington		
August 28, 2014	Aztec	August 21, 2014	Farmington
September 25, 2014	Bloomfield	September 18, 2014	Bloomfield
October 23, 2014	Farmington		
November 20, 2014	San Juan County	November 13, 2014	Farmington
December 18, 2014	Bloomfield		

COMMUNITY & REGIONAL CONCERNS WORKSHOP

Before scheduling a meeting with NMDOT to discuss the regional and community concerns identified by the Technical Committee, the members decided to speak with their respective local governments to gauge their understanding and support of the issues.

Following those discussions held in October 2013 and executive recommendations, it was decided to hold a staff level workshop with the MPO, the local entities, and NMDOT representatives from District 5 and the Local Government Agreement Unit to develop solutions relating to regional priorities, improving communications, project management, maintenance, and inter-governmental agreements. This workshop is scheduled for Thursday, February 20 from 9am to 4pm at the MPO office (100 W Broadway).

The 2040 MTP Guiding Our Transportation Future



The 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is the long-range transportation plan and vision for the urbanized region that includes the cities of Aztec, Bloomfield, and Farmington, and the surrounding areas of San Juan County. The MTP, which is required by federal law, is updated every five years and is the framework for transportation decisions. The MTP identifies transportation projects and priorities, policies and actions for roads, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, freight, and aviation. The MTP also outlines strategies for addressing safety, accessibility, mobility, and connectivity for all modes.

Development of the 2040 MTP, which addresses transportation needs for the next 25 years, began in November and adoption is targeted for April 2015. It is a cooperative effort among the MPO, its entities of the City of Aztec, Bloomfield, and Farmington, and San Juan County, NMDOT, Red Apple Transit, interested parties, and the public.



Public participation is a major part of the MTP update process and it is important to have the community's voice in this planning process. Along with a Stakeholder Workshop to be held on February 5, the MPO will be having several information open houses throughout February and will be giving presentations to each of the

local Councils and Commissions. MPO Staff will also be coordinating with clubs and organizations to see if MTP presentations can be provided during their monthly meetings.

To assist with early development of the plan, the MPO is encouraging public involvement and feedback on issues such as:

- ◆ What road improvements do we need?
- ◆ Where should transit go?
- ◆ What types of walking and biking projects should be built?
- ◆ What transportation ideas do you have for this area?

For more information on these public meetings or to have a presentation given to your group, visit the MPO website (www.farmingtonmpo.org) or contact the MPO Office.



STATE RAIL PLAN

On November 14, Bill Craven and Jessica Cessieux from NMDOT's Rail Bureau gave presentations on the draft State Rail Plan at the MPO Policy Committee meeting and also at a public meeting held that evening at the Farmington Civic Center. From these presentations, subsequent discussions, and public input, the MPO provided the following list of comments to the Rail Bureau:

- To further show the need for rail, the MPO prepared maps using Census data that showed revenues generated from all of the counties in New Mexico and their relationship to rail service.
- In receipts from all sectors by county, San Juan County is fifth in the state.
- In receipts from mining, quarrying, and oil-gas, San Juan County is third in the state.
- In receipts from transportation and warehousing, San Juan County is fourth in the state.

The maps illustrated that San Juan County is one of the top significant contributors to revenues in the state but is the only county in this group without rail service.

The export of coal also provides a need for a rail line to the Farmington area:

- The data in the Rail Plan suggests that coal is the top commodity for New Mexico's rail flows by weight and value. With coal mines being located in San Juan County, a spur line to Farmington would add benefit to the highest valued commodity in the state.

The MPO pointed out that economic development and the geo-spatial distribution/equity of rail coverage are critical components of a state-wide rail system, yet these elements have a minimal reference in the evaluation categories in the decision matrix. It was recommended that additional categories relating to social equity and economic development be added to the decision matrix and that San Juan County should score highly in these factors as well.

The MPO also requested that reconsideration be given to the scoring and prioritization placement for the Farmington to Thoreau rail line. It was highly recommended that the proposed project receive a medium to high score for both the 'Statewide' and 'Community' categories. Four Corners Economic Development (4CED) has also collected information relating to local and regional benefits that rail would have for industries in the Farmington area.

Rail service from Farmington to Thoreau would benefit many highways in this region (US 550, US 491, and NM 371) by reducing wear and tear because truck traffic that brings goods in and out of this area would be handled by rail.

The MPO also commented that potential for passenger rail to Farmington should not be overlooked. According to the US Census Bureau, over 3,400 workers commute to Sandoval and Bernalillo County alone from the Farmington area. In addition, 3,280 workers commute into San Juan County from McKinley, Bernalillo, Cibola, Sandoval and Montezuma counties. These commuters could stand to benefit from passenger rail service to and from San Juan County.

It was the intent of the MPO comments to show that San Juan County and the Farmington area have a strong case that they are valuable contributors to state tax revenue generation and economic development, yet the County is unable to participate in the distribution of goods and services and the opening of new markets due to lack of rail service.

The NMDOT Rail Bureau is currently reviewing comments received from around the state. In the coming months they will be preparing the final State Rail Plan document.

We are planning for tomorrow today!

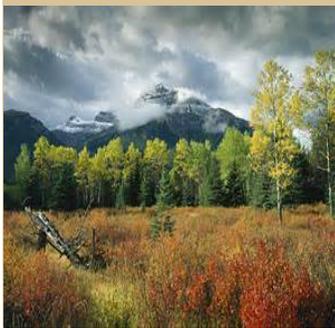


800 Municipal Drive, Farmington, NM 87401

Our greatest weakness lies in giving up.

The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.

Thomas A. Edison



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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 your name, mailing address or e-mail, and whether you want meeting notifications, the newsletter, or both. Here's how to reach us:

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