

# Rural Transportation Planning Organization

P-07-01

## Long-Range Transportation Plan



Mid-Region Council of Governments

## **Rural Transportation Planning Organization Technical Advisory Committee**

Julie Baca, Chair, Planning and Zoning Officer, City of Belen  
Karen Mahalik, Vice Chair, Planning and Zoning Officer, Town of Edgewood  
Wayne Ake, Mayor, Village of Bosque Farms  
Andy Quintana, Treasurer, Pueblo of Cochiti  
Richard Velarde, Mayor, Village of Cuba  
A.W. Dolman, Councilor, Village of Encino  
Chris Rhoades, Community Development Coordinator, Town of Estancia  
Simon Shima, Planner, Pueblo of Isleta  
James R. Madalena, Governor, Pueblo of Jemez  
John Garcia, Mayor, Village of Jemez Springs  
David Deutsewa, Transportation Specialist, Pueblo of Laguna  
Adan Encinias, Mayor, city of Moriarty  
Vel Gilley, Mayor, Town of Mountainair  
Michael L. Romero, Tribal Utilities Director, Pueblo of San Felipe  
Steve Lucero, Mayor, Village of San Ysidro  
Charlie Padilla, Community Development Planner, Pueblo of Sandia  
Phil Rios, Director of Public Works, Sandoval County  
Pat Lincoln, Planning and Zoning Commissioner, Torrance County  
Francisco Apodaca, Public Works Director, Valencia County  
Ken Lucero, Assistant Tribal Administrator, Pueblo of Zia

## **Mid-Region Council of Governments of New Mexico**

**Lawrence Rael, Executive Director**

### **Contributing Staff**

Loretta Tollefson, AICP, Special Projects Manager – RTPO  
Randall Falkner, Regional Planner  
Carol Earp, GIS Analyst/Cartographer  
Kendra Watkins, Senior Data Analyst

**LONG RANGE  
TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

**for the**

**RURAL TRANSPORTATION  
PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**of the**

**MID-REGION COUNCIL OF  
GOVERNMENTS**

June 20, 2007

This page intentionally left blank.

**LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN  
MID-REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
RURAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

June 20, 2007

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

INTRODUCTION .....	1
PURPOSE OF THE LONG RANGE PLAN.....	1
DESCRIPTION OF THE REGION.....	1
Socioeconomic Profile .....	3
Population Profile .....	3
2030 Population Forecast.....	5
Employment Profile .....	7
2030 Employment Forecast .....	9
Geography.....	9
Land Use – Current and Projected .....	11
Economic Development Strategies .....	12
Growth Strategies.....	14
Current Transportation System.....	14
Public Transportation.....	14
Rail.....	16
Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities .....	19
Multimodal Facilities.....	19
Roadway Network.....	19
Bridge and Drainage Issues.....	25
Scenic and Historic Byways .....	26
Aviation.....	26
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM.....	29
FORMATS AND METHODOLOGY .....	29
SUMMARY OF RESULTS .....	29
Review of Previous Plan and Interim Input .....	29
Consultation With Local Officials .....	29
Public Meetings.....	30
Comments .....	30
Visioning Process.....	31
MAJOR TRANSPORTATION-RELATED ISSUES .....	33
ECONOMIC VITALITY.....	33
SAFETY .....	33
SECURITY .....	33
ACCESSIBILITY AND MOBILITY FOR PEOPLE AND FREIGHT.....	34
ENVIRONMENT .....	39
INTEGRATION AND CONNECTIVITY OF TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS .....	39
EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM MANAGEMENT .....	40
PRESERVATION OF EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES .....	41

LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION NEEDS .....	42
DATA ANALYSIS .....	42
INVENTORY OF PLANNED PROJECTS .....	46
PROJECTED TRANSPORTATION NEEDS .....	55
MID-REGION RURAL TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES .....	56
VISIONING PROCESS .....	56
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES .....	56
SUMMARY OF NEEDS .....	57
NEEDS PRIORITIES .....	57
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN .....	59
RURAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING VISION .....	59
PROJECTS AND SERVICES .....	59
POLICY RECOMMENDATION PRIORITIES .....	59

APPENDIX A – Current Traffic Flow Maps for Counties in the Mid-Region Rural  
Transportation Planning Organization

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Population in MRCOG Region.....	3
Table 2. Population Distribution in the RTP Area, 2000.....	4
Table 3. Population Growth in RTP Area.....	5
Table 4. Forecast Growth in MRCOG Region, 2000 to 2030 .....	6
Table 5. Employment by Sector and County in MRCOG Region, 2000.....	8
Table 6. Employment in MRCOG Region by Planning Area.....	8
Table 7. Intra-County Work Trips for MRCOG Region .....	8
Table 8. Employment in MRCOG Region, 2000 to 2030 .....	9
Table 9. Land Use in the RTP Area, 2000 and 2030 .....	12
Table 10. Sandoval County: Average Weekday Daily Traffic, 1996-2005.....	23
Table 11. Southern Sandoval County: Average Weekday Daily Traffic, 1996-2005 .....	24
Table 12. Torrance County: Average Weekday Daily Traffic, 1996-2005 .....	24
Table 13. Valencia County: Average Weekday Daily Traffic, 1996-2005 .....	25
Table 14. Summary of Public Comment and Staff Recommendations .....	31
Table 15. Top 29 Intersections With High Crash Rates, 2001-2004 .....	43
Table 16. Inventory of Planned Projects: Public Transportation.....	47
Table 17. Inventory of Planned Projects: Rail.....	47
Table 18. Inventory of Planned Projects: Bicycle and Pedestrian .....	47
Table 19. Inventory of Planned Projects: Multimodal Facilities .....	49
Table 20. Inventory of Planned Projects: Roadway Network.....	49
Table 21. Inventory of Planned Projects: Scenic and Historic Byways.....	53
Table 22. Inventory of Planned Projects: Aviation Facilities .....	53

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Map of Rural Transportation Planning Area .....	2
Figure 2. Population Growth.....	6
Figure 3. Forecast Employment Growth, 2000 to 2030.....	10
Figure 4. Land Use Forecast, 2030 .....	13
Figure 5. Rail Network in the MRCOG Region .....	17
Figure 6. Commuter Rail Stations.....	18
Figure 7. Regional Bikeways Corridor Map.....	20
Figure 8. Bicycle/Pedestrian Map, Valencia County Mobility Plan.....	21
Figure 9. Roadway Network Map for RTP Area.....	22
Figure 10. National Scenic and Historic Byways in RTP Area.....	27
Figure 11. Aviation Facilities in the MRCOG Region .....	28
Figure 12. Vehicle Crash Data, Sandoval County .....	35
Figure 13. Vehicle Crash Data, Southern Santa Fe County.....	36
Figure 14. Vehicle Crash Data, Torrance County.....	37
Figure 15. Vehicle Crash Data, Valencia County.....	38
Figure 16. Most Dangerous Intersections, 2001-2004.....	44
Figure 17. Change in Average Weekday Traffic, RTPO.....	45



**LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN  
MID-REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
RURAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**INTRODUCTION**

**PURPOSE OF THE LONG RANGE PLAN**

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 an approximately 20-year period. The purpose of this Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is to bring together the citizens and officials from Torrance, Valencia, rural Sandoval and southern Santa Fe counties to identify the transportation needs in the region between now and 2030.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE REGION**

The area covered by the Mid-Region Council of Governments consists of five counties: Bernalillo, Sandoval, Torrance, Valencia, and southern Santa Fe (Edgewood). At the center of this region is the Albuquerque Metropolitan Planning Area (AMPA). Transportation planning for the AMPA is accomplished through the metropolitan planning organization (MPO), which is staffed by the MRCOG. The rural transportation planning organization (RTPO) area lies outside the metro area. Both of these areas are shown in Figure 1. The RTPO is also served by MRCOG personnel who have been designated as RTPO staff. The MRCOG RTPO has been designated by the State of New Mexico as the regional planning organization for the rural portions of the MRCOG area.

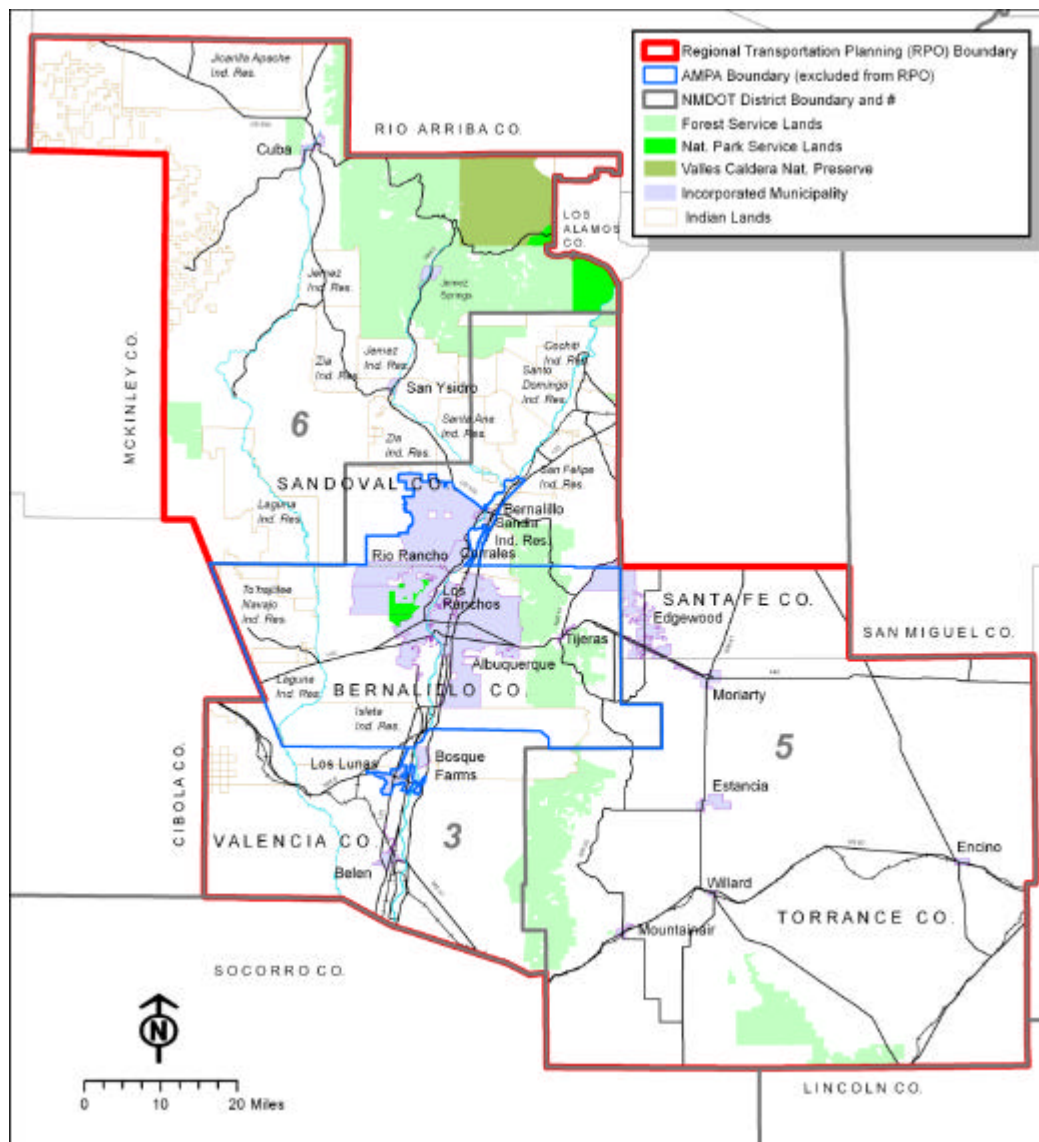
Communities in the MRCOG region range from former railroad towns such as Encino, with less population now than when it was incorporated in 1938, to Albuquerque, which has moved from a farming and trading community when it was incorporated in 1891 to a metropolis that serves as the economic center for the state.

The majority of the population in the Middle Rio Grande region is located geographically in the Rio Grande valley. In 2000, Bernalillo County (including the City of Albuquerque) and southern Sandoval County (including the Town of Bernalillo and City of Rio Rancho) accounted for more than 85 percent of the population in the region. Less than 15 percent of the region's population lived in the rural transportation planning (RTP) area. While this is a high percentage, it is actually lower than the urban/rural proportions that existed in the 1960's and 70's. The percentage of persons living in the urban area has not been over 85% since the 1940's.

In 1960, 12 percent of the region's population was in the rural area. In 2000, the area outside Bernalillo County accounted for 24 percent of the region's population. This reflects the trend toward urban out-migration into rural communities in response to the affordability and increased availability of housing in those areas. This trend is expected to continue. By 2030, it is anticipated that about 32 percent of the region's population will live outside Bernalillo County.

Valencia County is forecast to have some of the most significant population growth in the rural communities.

However, employment opportunities in the metro core continue to draw commuters from the rural communities into the urban center, with the rural area essentially acting as a “commuter shed” for the AMPA. In 2000, more than 90 percent of the jobs in the region were located in Bernalillo County and southern Sandoval County. As a result, a significant proportion of Valencia and Torrance county residents are commuting to the AMPA for work. Similar patterns can be seen in Sandoval County, with commuters traveling from the rural portions of the County to the urbanized portion in the south (the Town of Bernalillo and the City of Rio Rancho) for jobs. This trend is not expected to decrease significantly.



**Figure 1. Map of Rural Transportation Planning Area**

A number of Native American Indian Reservations are also located within the MRCOG region (see Figure 1). Sandoval County includes the tribal lands of Cochiti, Jemez, Laguna, Sandia, San Felipe, Santa Ana, Santa Domingo, and Zia reservations as well as a portion of the Jicarilla Apache Reservation. Bernalillo County contains some portions of the tribal lands of the Isleta, Laguna, and Sandia pueblos along with the To'hajillee Chapter of the Navajo Nation. Valencia County contains reservation and trust lands of the Isleta and Laguna pueblos. Many residents of the Native American communities have acquired employment and/or business relationships in the urban areas of the region. These needs, along with governance and cultural preservation issues, make it critical that the transportation planning process include these sovereign nations at every level.

## **Socioeconomic Profile**

Population and employment growth in the rural areas, along with the impacts of an expanding urban community, will have a significant impact on decisions about transportation for the time period covered by this plan. In addition, there are geographic challenges that must be addressed as part of the discussion about transportation choices for the region.

MRCOG projections are based on County projections developed by the Bureau of Business and Economic Research at the University of New Mexico (BBER). This is done in order to maintain a single, consistent future population forecast for the region. BBER's projections rely primarily on the application of a widely accepted demographic method that emphasizes birth rates, death rates, and migration. MRCOG takes BBER's County projections and allocates population to small areas based on land availability and adopted land use policies.

This methodology does not attempt to project future water availability and the limits of resources in the region. Conservation efforts, desalinization opportunities, climate change and other factors are uncertain variables that will influence future water supplies. It is certain that water availability will impact growth, but the extent to which it does is not quantified and incorporated into the regional demographic forecast.

## ***Population Profile***

MRCOG Regional Population. Census population counts show that the population in the Middle Rio Grande region more than doubled, from 359,007 to 738,714 persons, between 1970 and 2000. Table 1 displays the year 2000 distribution of population in the MRCOG region.

**Table 1. Population in MRCOG Region**

	<b>2000 Population</b>	<b>Population Distribution</b>
MRCOG Region	738,714	100.0%
Incorporated Portions of RTPO	18,727	2.5%
Unincorporated Portions of RTPO	86,398	11.7%
Metropolitan Area	633,589	85.8%

Source: US Census Bureau

RTP Area Population Distribution. Population in the RTP area is over 105,000 and is scattered in clusters throughout the region, with the majority in unincorporated areas. Table 2 identifies the 2000 population numbers for the municipalities and Census Designated Places (CDP) in the rural areas in each county.

**Table 2. Population Distribution in the RTP Area, 2000**

**Sandoval County (excludes Town of Bernalillo and City of Rio Rancho) – 2000 Population: 23,031**

<b>Municipality/Census Designated Place</b>	<b>2000 Population</b>	<b>Municipality/Census Designated Place</b>	<b>2000 Population</b>
Algodones	688	Pueblo of Sandia	344
Cochiti	507	Regina	99
Cuba	590	San Felipe Pueblo	2,080
Jemez Pueblo	1,953	Santa Ana Pueblo	479
Jemez Springs	375	Santa Domingo Pueblo	2,550
La Jara	209	San Ysidro	238
Pena Blanca	661	Torreon	297
Placitas	3,452	Zia Pueblo	646
Ponderosa	310	Other Sandoval County	7,553

**Southern Santa Fe County – 2000 Population: 9,065**

<b>Municipality/Census Designated Place</b>	<b>2000 Population</b>	<b>Municipality/Census Designated Place</b>	<b>2000 Population</b>
Cedar Grove	599	Other Santa Fe County	6,573
Edgewood	1,893		

**Torrance County – 2000 Population: 16,911**

<b>Municipality/Census Designated Place</b>	<b>2000 Population</b>	<b>Municipality/Census Designated Place</b>	<b>2000 Population</b>
Encino	94	Tajique	148
Estancia	1,584	Torreon	244
Manzano	54	Willard	240
Moriarty	1,765	Other Torrance County	11,666
Mountainair	1,116		

**Valencia County (excludes Village of Los Lunas) – 2000 Population: 46,084**

<b>Municipality/Census Designated Place</b>	<b>2000 Population</b>	<b>Municipality/Census Designated Place</b>	<b>2000 Population</b>
Belen	6,901	Meadow Lake	4,491
Bosque Farms	3,931	Peralta	3,750
Casa Colorada	56	Rio Communities	4,213
El Cerro-Monterey Park	5,483	Rio Communities North	1,588
Jarales	1,434	Tome-Adelino	2,211
Los Chaves	5,033	Valencia	4,500
Los Trujillos-Gabaldon	2,166	Other Valencia County	327

Source: US Census Bureau

### Population Growth

Population in the RTP area has grown by over 30,000 since 1990, a growth rate that outpaced the MRCOG region as a whole, as well as the metropolitan planning area (Table 3).

In terms of new population within the RTPO boundaries, Meadow Lake, Los Chavez, and Rio Communities have led Valencia County's growth (Los Lunas also saw high growth but it was incorporated into the Metropolitan Planning Area in 2003). Placitas saw rapid growth in Sandoval County with an increase of almost 2,000 residents, and Estancia led Tarrant County's growth by doubling in population over the decade. Significant growth also occurred outside of established place boundaries, as new clusters of housing and manufactured home communities sprouted up throughout the region.

**Table 3. Population Growth in RTP Area**

	<b>1990 Population<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>2000 Population</b>	<b>Growth</b>
MRCOG Region	603,116	738,714	22.5%
RTP Area	72,413	105,125	45.2%
Metropolitan Planning Area	530,703	633,589	19.4%

Source: US Census Bureau and MRCOG

### ***2030 Population Forecast***

Based on growth trends and development plans in the RTP area, MRCOG has developed population forecasts for 2030. The population forecast was developed using data from the 2000 US Census, and the University of New Mexico's Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER), as well as building permit data and zoning and planning data from planners in each jurisdiction and county, and projections from the development community.

Growth is anticipated to continue steadily over the next 30 years, with the region exceeding 1.1 million by 2030. It is projected that the RTP area will grow at a slightly faster rate than the region as a whole. This reflects the trend towards growth in rural and unincorporated areas as people choose to move further from the urban core to less populated and more affordable areas. Table 4 shows anticipated population growth by county for the MRCOG region.

Figure 2 illustrates the projected distribution of population growth that is anticipated to occur between now and 2030 in the RTP area. Valencia County is forecast to gain the most new residents within the RTP area, with an expected increase of over 40,000. Several major subdivisions are now in the planning stages, and the extent to which they are successful will ultimately determine the future outlook for the County. In Sandoval County, the bulk of the rural population increase is anticipated to occur in the Placitas area, northeast of Algodones, and in the master-planned communities of La Madera and Paa-Ko in the far southeast corner of the County. In Tarrant County, the majority of the growth is projected to occur in and around Moriarty. Southern Santa Fe County is expected to see the fastest rate of growth in the RTP area, as

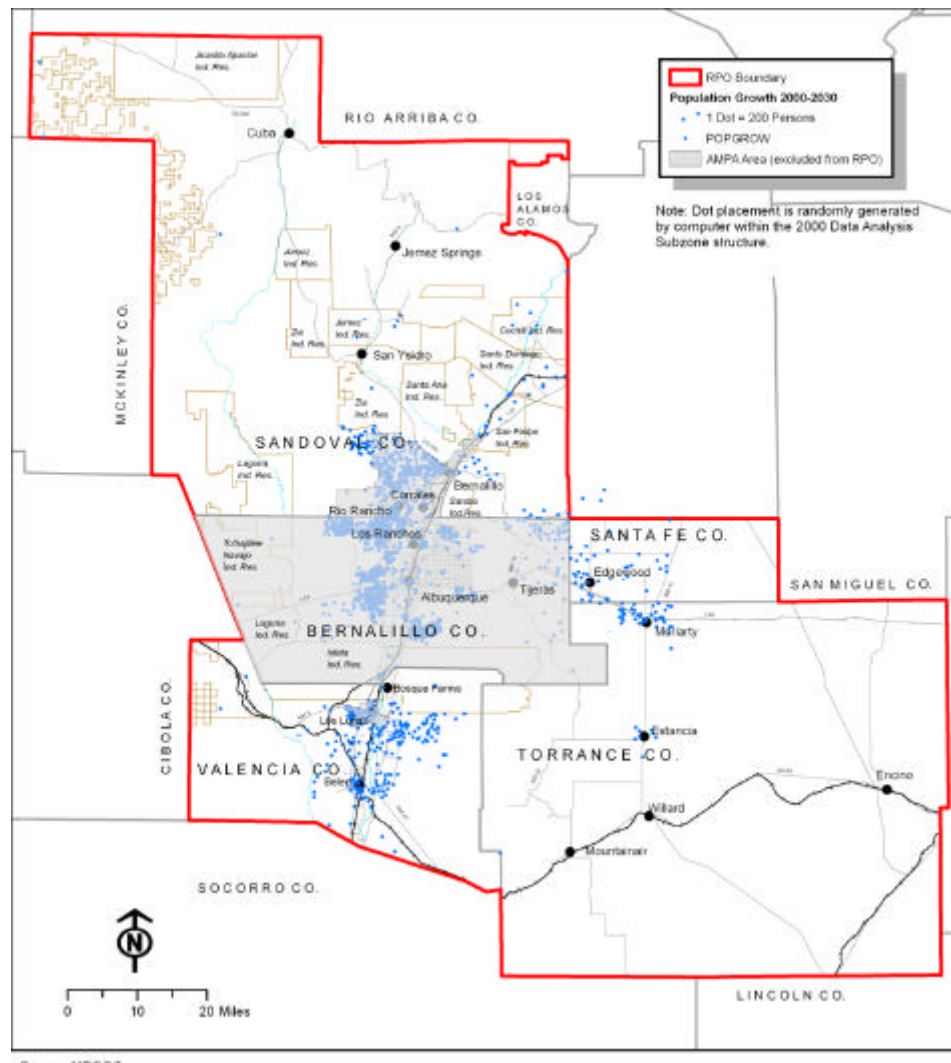
---

<sup>1</sup> The 1990 estimate includes Los Lunas in the Metropolitan area for geographic comparability, although it was in the RTP area at that time.

Edgewood adds several large scale developments and more residents find the East Mountain region an attractive and affordable alternative to urban living.

**Table 4. Forecast Growth in MRCOG Region, 2000 to 2030**

County	2000 Population	2030 Population	Absolute Growth	Percent Growth
Bernalillo	556,678	759,000	202,322	36.3%
Sandoval	89,908	197,182	107,274	119.3%
Torrance	16,911	27,479	10,568	62.5%
Valencia	66,152	128,922	62,770	94.9%
Southern Santa Fe	9,065	16,889	7,824	86.3%
MRCOG Region	738,714	1,129,472	390,758	52.9%
Rural Planning Area	105,125	173,985	68,860	65.5%



**Figure 2. Population Growth**

## ***Employment Profile***

Employment within the MRCOG region increased 33% between 1990 and 2000, outpacing both population and household growth. More recently, while much of the nation has suffered from economic recession, New Mexico and the MRCOG region have continued to enjoy moderate employment growth.

Table 5 shows the number of jobs by employment sector in 2000. Services and trade (retail and wholesale) are the dominant sectors in the region, providing 57.9% of the jobs in Bernalillo County, 44.9% of the jobs in Sandoval County, 49.5% of the jobs in Torrance County, and 44.5% of the jobs in Valencia County. Retail trade is especially important in New Mexico, because local governments rely heavily on gross receipts taxes to fund services. The state and local government sector remains important to the RTP area, accounting for 22.6% of the employment in Torrance County and 22.4% of the employment in Valencia County.

Although Bernalillo County holds the greatest share of jobs in all sectors, there are some noteworthy exceptions. The largest sector in Sandoval County is manufacturing, which is driven primarily by Intel Corporation in Rio Rancho. Government is the largest sector in both Torrance and Valencia Counties. Much of the employment in these two counties could be classified as population-serving. In both counties, public school districts are among the largest employers. Government employment in Valencia County is further increased by the presence of the State corrections facilities. Employment in southern Santa Fe County is also predominantly population-serving, with the largest sector being retail. In recent years, Edgewood has begun to develop as the retail center for the “tri-county” area east of the Sandia Mountains.

As the Albuquerque metropolitan area has continued to urbanize, farming has become a relatively small share of the regional economy, with agricultural employment now accounting for one percent of the region’s total employment. However, farming remains an important source of jobs for Torrance County, accounting for almost 12% of the jobs in that county

Table 6 provides information about where jobs are located in the MRCOG region. This clearly shows that the metropolitan area dominates the region in terms of jobs. Because the majority of the region’s jobs are in the AMPA, the profile of employment for this Plan focuses on the entire region, rather than just the RTP area.

Bernalillo County is mostly urban in character, with the City of Albuquerque acting as the financial, educational, cultural, industrial, trade, medical, and business focal point for the region as well as much of the state. Located to the north and south of Albuquerque respectively, Rio Rancho and Los Lunas are both considered part of the metropolitan area and have a growing presence in terms of regional employment.

The commuting patterns for residents in the RTP area also point up the importance of looking at jobs in the entire region, rather than exclusively within the rural areas, when analyzing employment. Table 7 shows intra-county work trips. 88% of commute trips in the four-county area are headed to Bernalillo County for work. It is estimated that approximately 62% of all workers who live in the RTP area commute into the metropolitan core for work.

**Table 5. Employment by Sector and County in MRCOG Region, 2000**

<b>Employment Sector</b>	<b>Bernalillo</b>	<b>Sandoval</b>	<b>Torrance</b>	<b>Valencia</b>	<b>Southern Santa Fe</b>	<b>MRCOG Region</b>	<b>Regional Share</b>
Agriculture	3,305	92	343	309	139	4,188	1%
Construction & Mining	22,427	1,777	405	954	256	25,819	7%
Manufacturing	21,436	6,691	144	1,434	15	29,720	8%
Transportation, Communication & Utilities	18,691	2,103	424	1,107	159	22,484	6%
Wholesale	16,483	570	115	264	83	17,515	4%
Retail	61,964	4,911	753	3,482	289	71,399	18%
Financial, Insurance, & Real Estate	22,192	1,069	42	474	34	23,811	6%
Services	111,734	5,687	586	2,220	125	120,352	31%
Government	66,679	4,547	1,143	4,585	193	77,147	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>344,911</b>	<b>27,447</b>	<b>3,955</b>	<b>14,829</b>	<b>1,293</b>	<b>392,435</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: New Mexico Department of Labor and MRCOG

**Table 6. Employment in MRCOG Region by Planning Area**

	<b>2000 Employment</b>	<b>Employment Distribution</b>
MRCOG Region	392,435	100.0%
Rural Planning Area	23,316	5.9%
Metropolitan Area	369,119	94.1%

Source: New Mexico Department of Labor, Bureau of Economic Analysis and MRCOG

**Table 7. Intra-County Work Trips for MRCOG Region**

<b>ORIGIN</b>		<b>WORK TRIP DESTINATION</b>					
<b>County of Residence</b>	<b>Total Workers</b>	<b>Bernalillo</b>	<b>Sandoval</b>	<b>Torrance</b>	<b>Valencia</b>	<b>Other NM Counties</b>	<b>Out-of-State</b>
Bernalillo	228,617	95%	2%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Sandoval	26,242	58%	35%	0%	0%	5%	1%
Torrance	3,758	34%	1%	60%	1%	3%	1%
Valencia	17,274	47%	1%	0%	49%	2%	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>275,891</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>1%</b>

Source: Census Transportation Planning Package (CTPP).



## 2030 Employment Forecast

Table 8 summarizes forecast employment growth by County to 2030. The RTP area is anticipated to show faster job growth than the MRCOG region as a whole. However in terms of real numbers, Bernalillo County is still projected to capture the overwhelming share of new jobs.

**Table 8. Employment in MRCOG Region, 2000 to 2030**

County	2000 Employment	2030 Employment	Absolute Growth	Percent Growth
Bernalillo	341,847	454,662	112,815	33.0%
Sandoval	27,447	60,005	32,558	118.6%
Torrance	3,955	6,805	2,850	72.1%
Valencia	14,829	34,058	19,229	129.7%
Southern Santa Fe	1,072	4,280	3,208	299.3%
MRCOG Region	389,150	559,810	170,660	43.9%
Rural Planning Area	23,316	40,529	17,213	73.8%

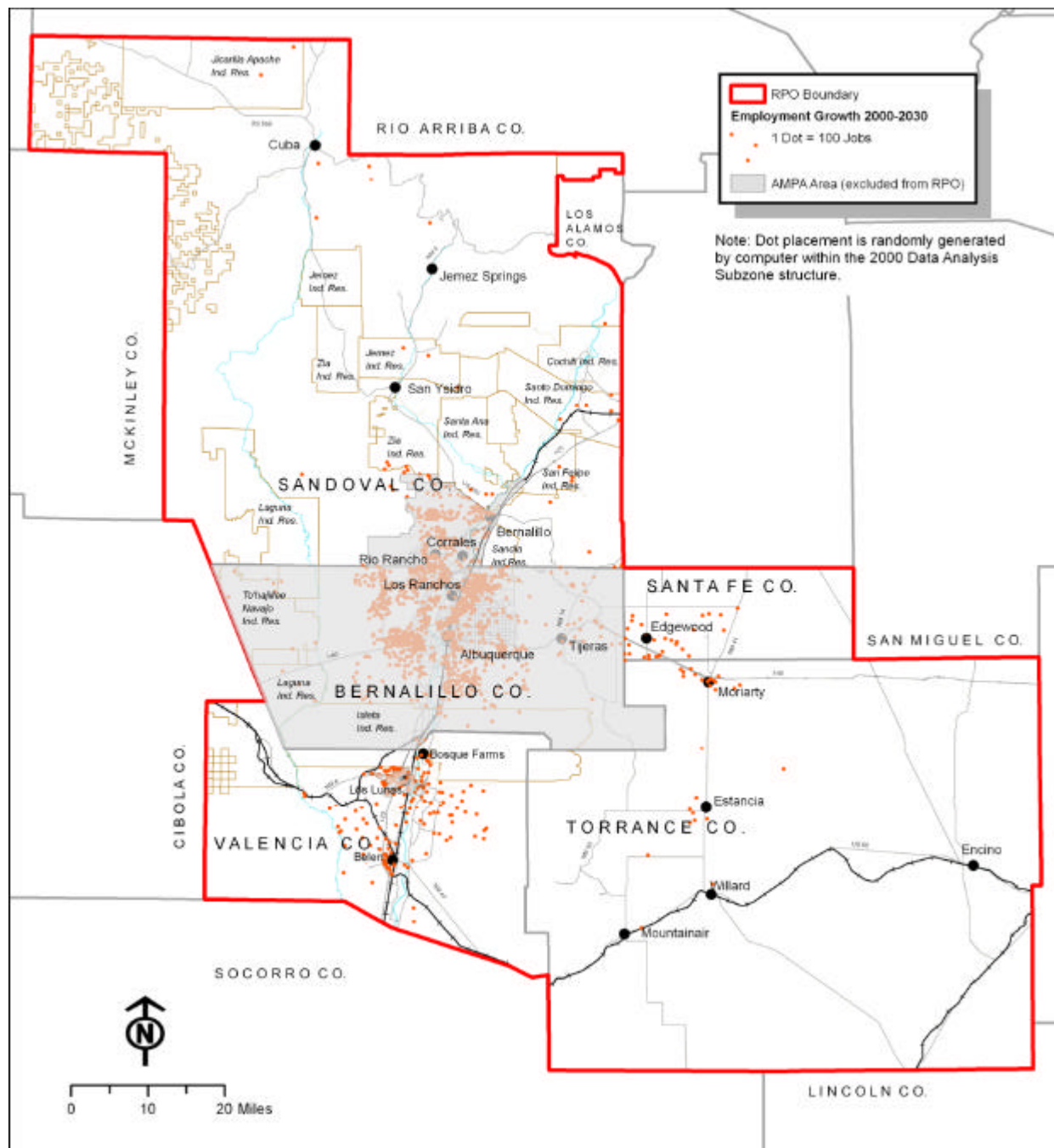
Figure 3 shows the projected distribution of employment growth that is anticipated to occur over the next 25 years in the RTP area. The distribution of employment growth resembles the distribution projected for population growth in the counties. This is reasonable considering that many of the new jobs are expected to be population-serving type employment.

Valencia County is expected to have the greatest employment gain in the RTP area. Much of this will occur in unincorporated areas, unless they are eventually annexed into an existing municipality. An example of this is an employment cluster forecast for Rancho Cielo, a 5300 acre master planned area to the northwest of Belen and recently annexed by the City. When this area is developed, Belen can expect to experience substantial growth in both population and jobs. North of the metropolitan area, Sandoval County is anticipated to see a scattering of new jobs where employment nodes currently exist. Torrance County is projected to experience job growth within Moriarty and Estancia and the surrounding areas. Southern Santa Fe County is projected to see the fastest rate of job growth in the RTP area.

## Geography

A number of geographic challenges must be addressed during all phases of transportation planning. Challenges in the MRCOG region, and particularly for the rural areas, include major rivers, mountain chains, and substantial distances between some locations in the region.

The Rio Grande river runs north and south through the center of the MRCOG region and consequently through the RTP area. The river valley bisects Sandoval, Bernalillo and Valencia counties. The costs and environmental impacts associated with the location and construction of new river crossings necessarily limits the availability of such access points and reduces ease of movement. Traditional land uses and the impacts of new roadways and river crossings must also be taken into consideration. Other prominent water features include the Jemez River (tributary running from northern Sandoval County to the Rio Grande), the Rio Puerco (tributary to the Rio



**Figure 3. Forecast Employment Growth, 2000 to 2030**

Grande flowing through the western portion of Sandoval, Bernalillo, and Valencia counties), and the Salt Lakes in Torrance County, which are located east of Estancia and Willard.

The Sandia and Manzano mountain ranges also restrict movement east and west. Travel is limited to passes through the mountains or to circuitous routes around these two ranges. In the MRCOG area, the Rio Grande valley is bounded on the east by the Sandia Mountains and by a series of extinct volcanoes on the west. The Manzanos form a mountainous barrier between Valencia and Torrance counties, with access limited to Tijeras Canyon in the AMPA and Abo Pass between Belen and Mountainair.

To the north, the Jemez Mountains provide a beautiful setting for the small communities nestled in the river valley. However, they also restrict movement to the passes through the mountains and the roadways that lie along side the river beds.

The sheer distance between locations in the RTP area is also a barrier to transportation and planning. The distances between the outlying communities and the metropolitan area make commuting expensive and arduous. They also reduce the potential for effective public transportation between outlying communities and health services, as well as jobs. For example, the distance from Cuba (in northern Sandoval county) to Encino (in southeastern Torrance County) is 167 miles, which takes almost three hours to drive. While these are the farthest-flung communities in the RPO region, driving time from Dulce to Albuquerque is about three hours, while the trip from Encino to Albuquerque takes approximately one and a half hours.

The presence of a number of Native American Indian reservations in the MRCOG region presents another planning challenge. While the policies of the tribes have preserved open vistas which travelers can enjoy, sovereignty issues have also restricted readily available right-of-way for new facilities. This limits access for rapidly expanding areas such as Valencia County to the metropolitan core and has implications for traffic planning on the interstate system. In addition, when the Native American communities are interested in pursuing a roadway project such as the Jemez Bypass, the required involvement of multiple agencies can significantly lengthen and complicate the planning process.

### **Land Use - Current and Projected**

The RTP area occupies 87% of the land in the MRCOG region. Much of this land, an estimated 4.6 million acres, can be characterized as vacant or range land. However, this is slowly changing, as the population in the region continues to grow and expand outside the urban center. Table 9 shows land use in the RTP area for 2000 and the forecast land use in 2030, along with projected changes in use.

As Table 9 illustrates, between 2000 and 2030 more than 33,000 acres of land are expected to be converted to residential uses, and another 2,400 may be converted to employment uses. Vacant and range land will decrease accordingly. Figure 4 shows the MRCOG 2030 land use forecast for the entire region.

One of the trends that will affect the RTP area is the completion of master plans for several large communities. Spanish Trails and Rancho Cielo in Valencia County, Rio West in Sandoval County, Campbell Ranch in Edgewood, and King Ranch in Torrance are just a few developments that could result in significant population increases in the RTP area over the next 50 years—beyond the time frame of this plan. They will also significantly impact critical regional resources such as water, transportation corridors, and air quality. It is important that these plans be formulated with an understanding of their potential impacts to the region as well as how developers can work cooperatively with local governments to maximize the benefits of growth while mitigating potential problems.

**Table 9. Land Use in the RTP Area, 2000 and 2030**

	<b>2000 Land Use</b>	<b>2030 Land Use</b>	<b>Change in Acreage</b>
Residential	0.86%	1.49%	+33,580
Commercial, Office & Industrial	0.06%	0.10%	+2,402
Vacant or Rangeland	85.85%	85.12%	-38,953
Other	13.22%	13.28%	+2,971
Total Acreage	5,342,178	5,342,178	

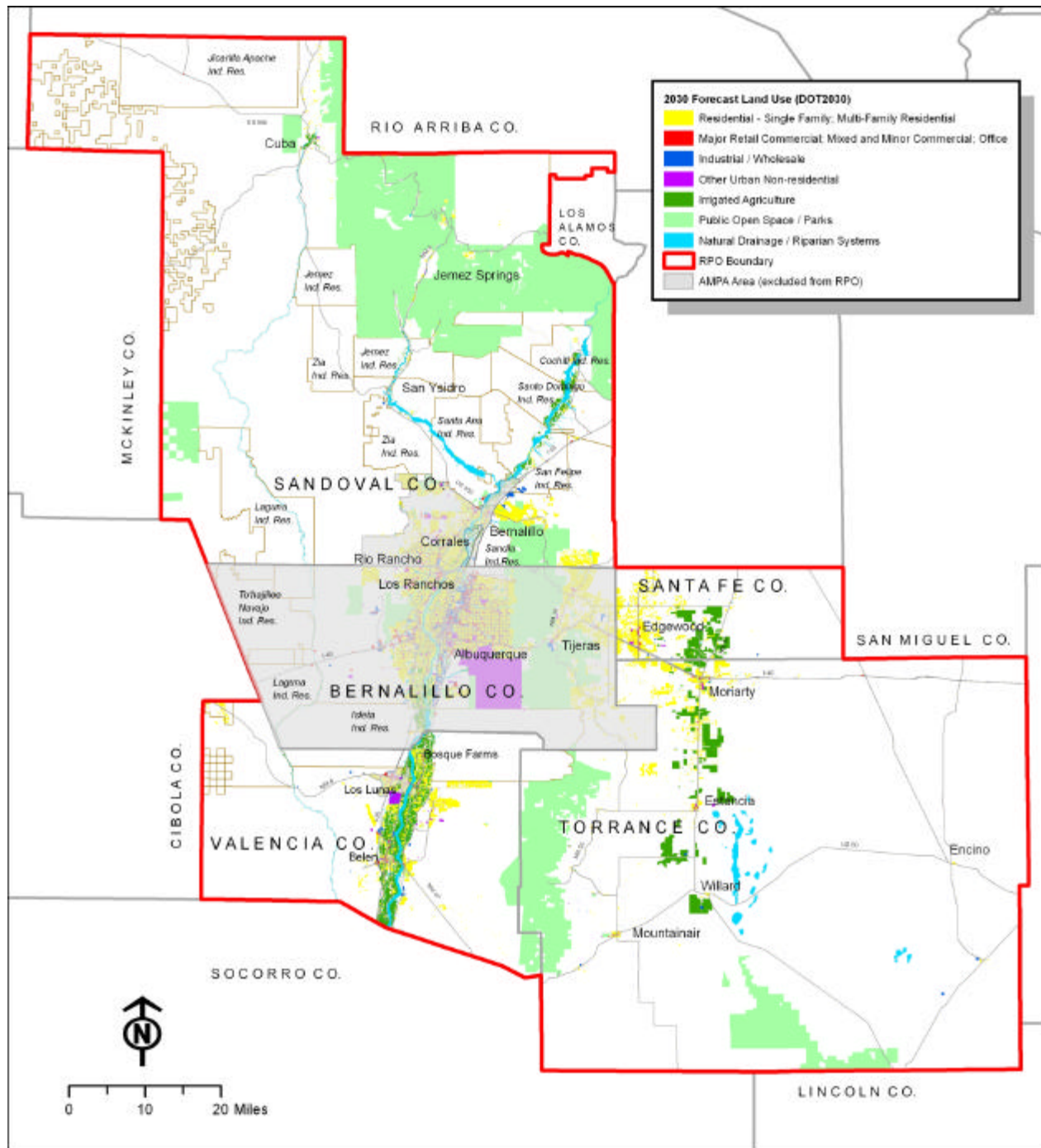
## **Economic Development Strategies**

The economy of the RTP area is fundamentally tied to the economy of the Albuquerque metropolitan area. The metropolitan economy continues to expand and grow steadily, if not rapidly. Population and employment in the region have generally doubled in the past 30 years. While the economic base has been traditionally dependent on the government sector, diversification is continuing, with increased activity in the film, telecommunications, finance, and service sectors.

Economic development strategies have been identified for the region through a strategic planning process<sup>2</sup> for which the MRCOG is responsible. The initiatives identified through this process are as follows:

- Agriculture and Environment (Alternative Energy)
- Aviation and Space Exploration
- Entrepreneurship and Access to Capital
- Film and Artisan Manufacturing
- Infrastructure and Multimodal Transportation Improvements
- Technology and Biosciences
- Workforce and Education Investment

<sup>2</sup> For more information see *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2005*, MRCOG



**Figure 4. Land Use Forecast – 2030**

Activities to carry out these initiatives include state-level tax credits for the film industry, implementation of commuter rail service between Bernalillo and Albuquerque, expanded public transportation in Tarrant County, and expansion of the Belen municipal airport.

## **Growth Strategies**

Close coordination between transportation and economic development planners is critical to assuring adequate transportation infrastructure and services for developing areas and industries. Planning efforts such as the Valencia County Mobility Plan, as well as ongoing discussions with major developers, are critical to assuring that transportation infrastructure can accommodate growth when it occurs.

Strategies for addressing growth in the RTP area include transit oriented development at commuter rail stops (Belen), expanding public transportation (Tarrant and Sandoval counties), providing shuttle buses to points of interest (Jemez Valley), additional river crossings (Valencia County) and new interchange access points (Edgewood).

## **Current Transportation System**

Currently there are a number of immediate concerns related to transportation in the RTP area. These include the scarcity of public transportation and multimodal connections, ongoing aviation needs, lack of adequate funds for addressing the large backlog of maintenance needs, and inadequate access to the interstate system in key growth areas. In addition, there is a need to provide for non-motorized transportation as well as to enhance the travel experience for motorized users.

### ***Public Transportation***

Public transportation<sup>3</sup> is provided in the RTP area through the efforts of several of the local governments. While these efforts are fragmented, work is underway to develop a service plan that will tie portions of the RPO into the Mid-Region Regional Transportation District, which is centered in the metro area.

The State Employees Commuter Association (SECA) provides the majority of van-based public transportation for commuters between the rural and urban areas in the Mid-Region. SECA provides an operating structure for semi-autonomous vanpools under the SECA umbrella. Van members are responsible for collecting fares; maintaining, fueling and cleaning the assigned vehicle; driving the vehicle to and from the appropriate work, school, or home locations; and providing monthly reports and payments to the SECA office. The current daily passenger load of about 500 people is limited by the number of vehicles available at any given time.

---

<sup>3</sup> Public transportation funding programs throughout the State and in the regional planning area are administered by the Public Transportation Programs Bureau of the NMDOT.

Rural public transportation is provided in the RTP area by organizations specific to each county. In Valencia County, the responsibility is shared between the city of Belen's Mid-Rio Grande RSVP program and the Village of Los Lunas. The service provided by the Belen RSVP program is limited to the area within a three mile radius of the City's boundaries. Service is provided to all members of the public on an on-demand door-to-door basis, with a 24-hour notice required except for emergencies.

The service provided by the Village of Los Lunas covers the majority of Valencia County on an on-demand basis. While the Village of Los Lunas is itself within the boundaries of the metropolitan planning area, the public transportation service they provide extends into the remainder of the county, which lies within the rural planning area. The Village has requested funds to move to a fixed-route service to provide connections to the Rail Runner commuter rail station in Los Lunas. In fiscal year 2006-2007 ridership was 28,422 persons. This ridership level is expected to increase substantially with the initiation of the fixed route service. In addition, the Village has begun construction of a multi-modal facility that will provide for connections between buses, vans, and rail and will also house the Village's transportation offices.

The Pueblo of Isleta operates four specialized transportation programs for the elderly, community health, recreation and social services. At this time, there is no general public transportation provided in the Pueblo.

Public transportation service in Sandoval County has been plagued by changes in Federal funding and the loss of Job Access/Reverse Commute funding. Due to the loss of funding, the US550 Express from Cuba to Rio Rancho and Bernalillo was forced to close its doors. In addition, the Rio Rancho Express service also has gone out of business. To fill this gap, the County of Sandoval has stepped forward with an initiative to provide public transportation<sup>4</sup> to Jemez Springs, San Ysidro, Cochiti, and Cuba, as well as other small communities in the County. Connections are also being proposed to the Pueblos of Cochiti, Santo Domingo, San Felipe, Jemez, Zia and Santa Ana.

The new Sandoval County system will implement four fixed routes capable of deviating short distances to pick up riders who cannot reach collection points. The routes will operate 12 hours per day on a two-hour headway. Reservations for deviations from the fixed route will be on a first-come, first-served basis. The purpose of the program is to provide service to special needs populations and the general public who live outside the urban area. The County is also moving forward on construction of a 6,000 square foot transportation center which, though located in the urban area (Rio Rancho) will become the hub for transit service to the rural portions of the County.

Torrance County has also stepped to the forefront to provide public transportation in that county and in portions of southern Santa Fe and eastern Bernalillo Counties. This service is called Torrance County Rural Public Transportation Program, or TCPO TO GO. Begun in 2006, TCPO TO GO provides fixed route, demand response, and modified fixed route service to the

---

<sup>4</sup> This proposal is a result of the Sandoval County Transportation Plan which was completed in 2003 with funding support from the New Mexico Department of Transportation Public Transportation Program Bureau.

communities of Moriarty, Estancia, Mountainair, Edgewood, Willard, Manzano, Torreon, and Tajique, and to portions of Chilili. Connections are provided to ABQ Ride at Tramway and Central. The initial target for the first year of service (2006) of this program was 900 transports. By June of that year, the TCPO had provided 3,759 trips. This clearly shows the need for public transportation in these rural communities.

In addition to the general public transportation programs provided in the RTP area, a number of agencies provide service to specific populations for whom access to or use of public transportation is infeasible. These include Adelante Development Center, ARCA, Go Fors Inc. Too, and Peanut Butter and Jelly Family Services. These agencies provide specialized transportation to persons with disabilities, fragile seniors, and families with at-risk children. The need for specialized transportation services in the region is expected to grow along with forecast population increases and in light of the anticipated expansion of the elderly as a portion of the overall population.

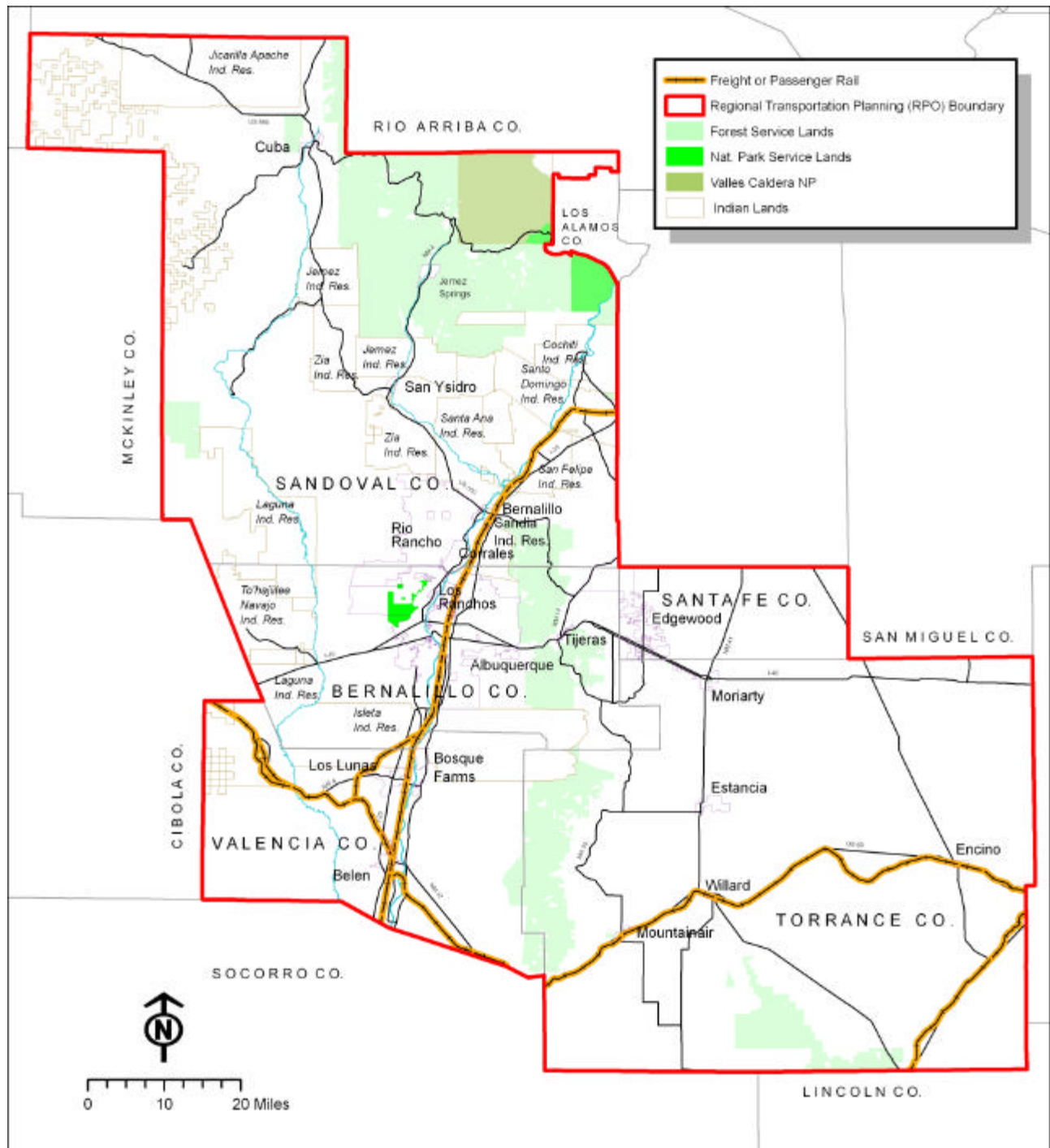
Scheduled intercity bus service is provided throughout the region by TNM&O. Scheduled service in the RTP area is available in the cities of Belen, Cuba, Encino, Estancia, and Moriarty. TNM&O travels throughout the Southwest, serving cities in New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Colorado, and Kansas, and providing connections to Greyhound and other carriers.

### ***Rail***

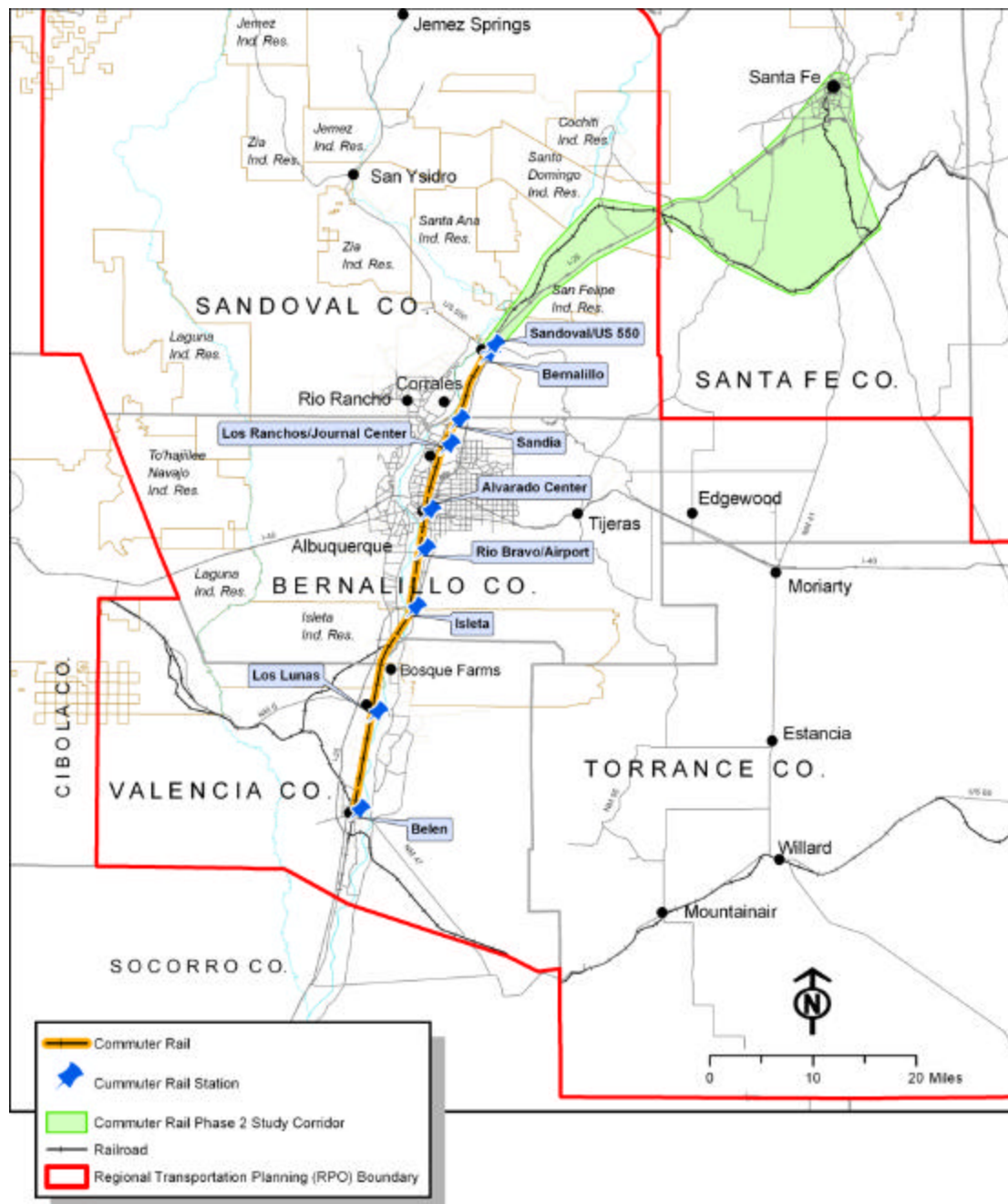
Rail has historically been an important mode of transportation throughout New Mexico and in the MRCOG region. While the majority of rail activity is freight only, some passenger service is provided. Figure 5 shows the rail lines crossing New Mexico. Freight carriers use the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad on north-to-south and east-to-west tracks, while the Southern Pacific Railroad crosses the southeast corner of Torrance County. Cross-country passenger service is provided by Amtrak, which provides daily passenger service between Chicago and Los Angeles with a stop in Albuquerque.

During the past year, a new commuter rail service has begun to serve the Albuquerque and RTP area. The southern portion of this service lies within the RTP area in Valencia County. The northern portion of this service lies at the edge of the northern boundary of the AMPA and provides rail access for citizens in the RTP who wish to park at the NM550 station and use the rail to continue to their destinations in Albuquerque. Rail service is planned to continue north through the RTP area on to Santa Fe by late 2008. The map in Figure 6 shows the communities that will have commuter rail stations in Phase I and the area between Bernalillo and Santa Fe that will be served in Phase II.





**Figure 5. Rail Network in the MRCOG Region**



**Figure 6. Commuter Rail Stations**

### ***Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities***

There are many state highways in the RTP area that are commonly used by bicyclists. In response to the need to identify the most appropriate facilities for cyclists, the RTPPO TAC established the Regional Trails and Bikeways Subcommittee. The subcommittee completed an inventory of current bike facilities and then identified potential bikeway corridors throughout the RTP area. This process resulted in the Regional Bikeway Corridors Map (Figure 7). The map was adopted by the RTPPO TAC in August 2005. Throughout the process there was an emphasis on providing linkages to the long range bicycle map already established through the metropolitan planning organization process. This map is expected to provide guidance to transportation planners as they develop roadway projects in the region. It is also intended as a guide to the New Mexico Bicycle, Pedestrian and Equestrian Advisory Committee as it develops state-wide plans.

In addition to this regional effort, a county-specific bicycle and pedestrian proposal was developed as part of the Valencia County Mobility Plan. This more detailed approach was approved by the local governments in the county in early 2006 as part of their formal actions on the Mobility Plan. This map is provided in Figure 8.

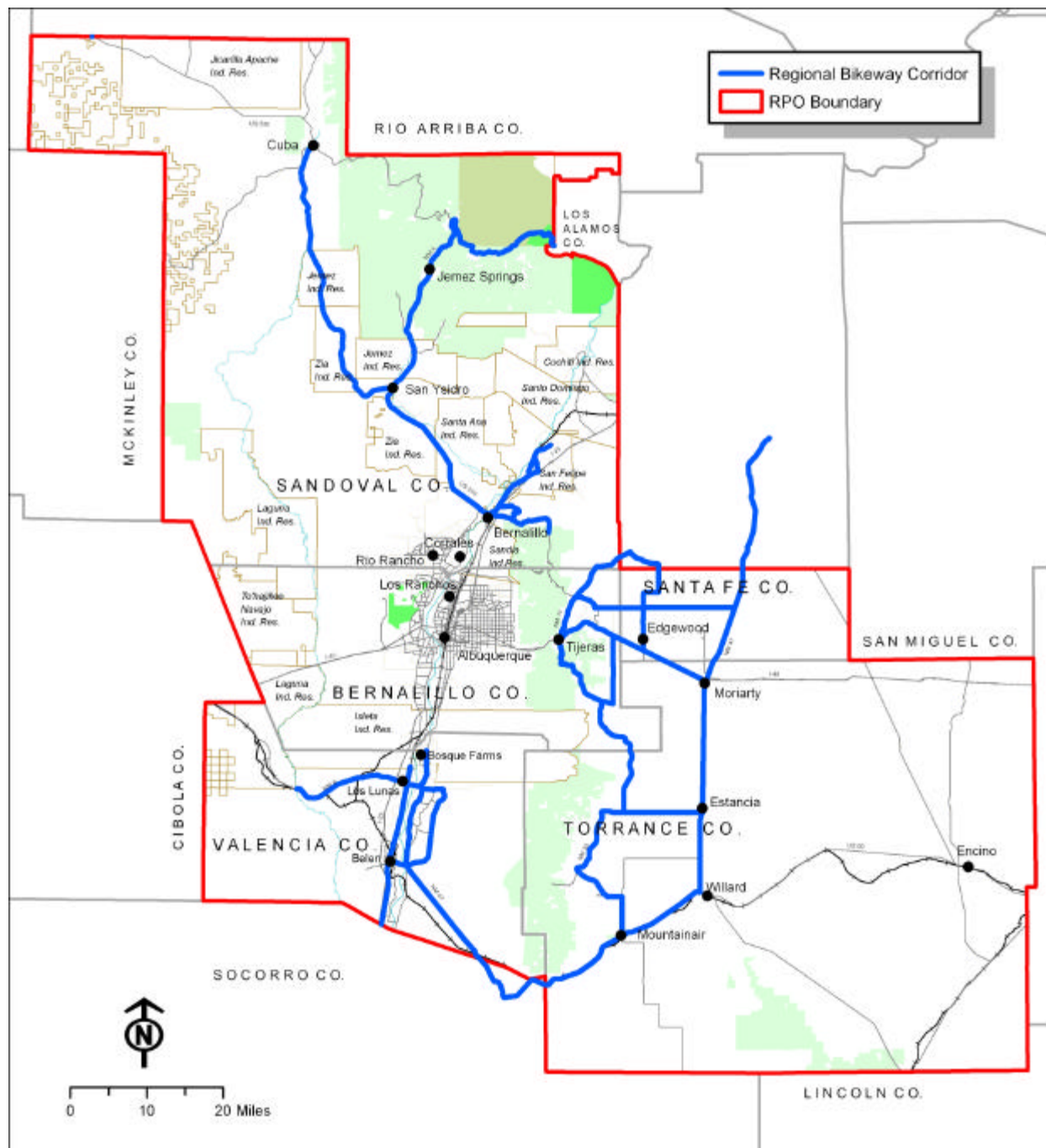
### ***Multimodal Facilities***

The RTP area does not have any multi-modal facilities operating at this time. However, in Valencia County, the Village of Los Lunas has received capital funding for construction of a multi-modal facility that will provide for buses, vans, and rail service. It will also house a visitor's center and transportation offices. This building is being co-located with the Rail Runner station in Los Lunas.

In addition, Sandoval County has begun work on a multimodal center that will be located in the city of Rio Rancho. This Center will serve as the hub for service to the rural portions of the county, providing connections to work and other destinations in the metro area, as well as to the Rail Runner stations in the County. When the commuter rail to Santa Fe is in place, the Sandoval public transportation connections will be an important link for commuters who work in Santa Fe. In the meantime, the park-and-ride lot at the intersection of US550 and South Hill Road, along with the NMDOT bus service from that lot, provides a critical link to Santa Fe for county residents.

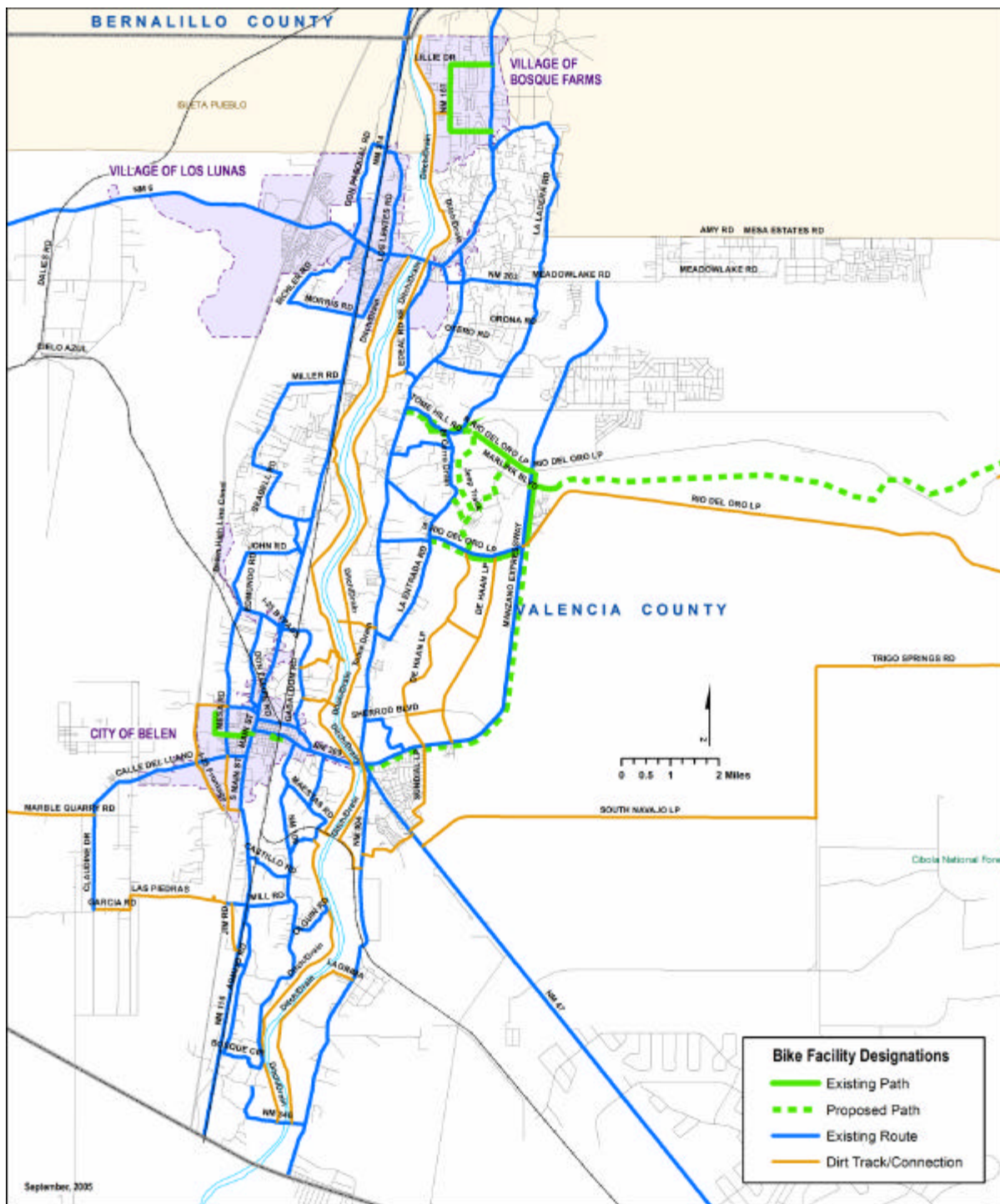
### ***Roadway Network***

The RTP area contains many arterial roadways, including interstate highways, U.S. highways, state roads, and local thoroughfares. The major roads in the region are shown in Figure 9. the most recently collected traffic flow data are provided on the maps in Appendix A. As population increases between now and 2030, the amount of traffic on these roads will intensify. Access to major highways is already an issue in Tarrant, Sandoval, and Valencia counties and will remain a concern throughout the RTP area as growth continues. In addition, there is a need to plan for the continued maintenance and improvement of these roads and for a more efficient roadway network in general.



**Figure 7. Regional Bikeway Corridors Map**





**Figure 8. Bicycle/Pedestrian Map, Valencia County Mobility Plan**

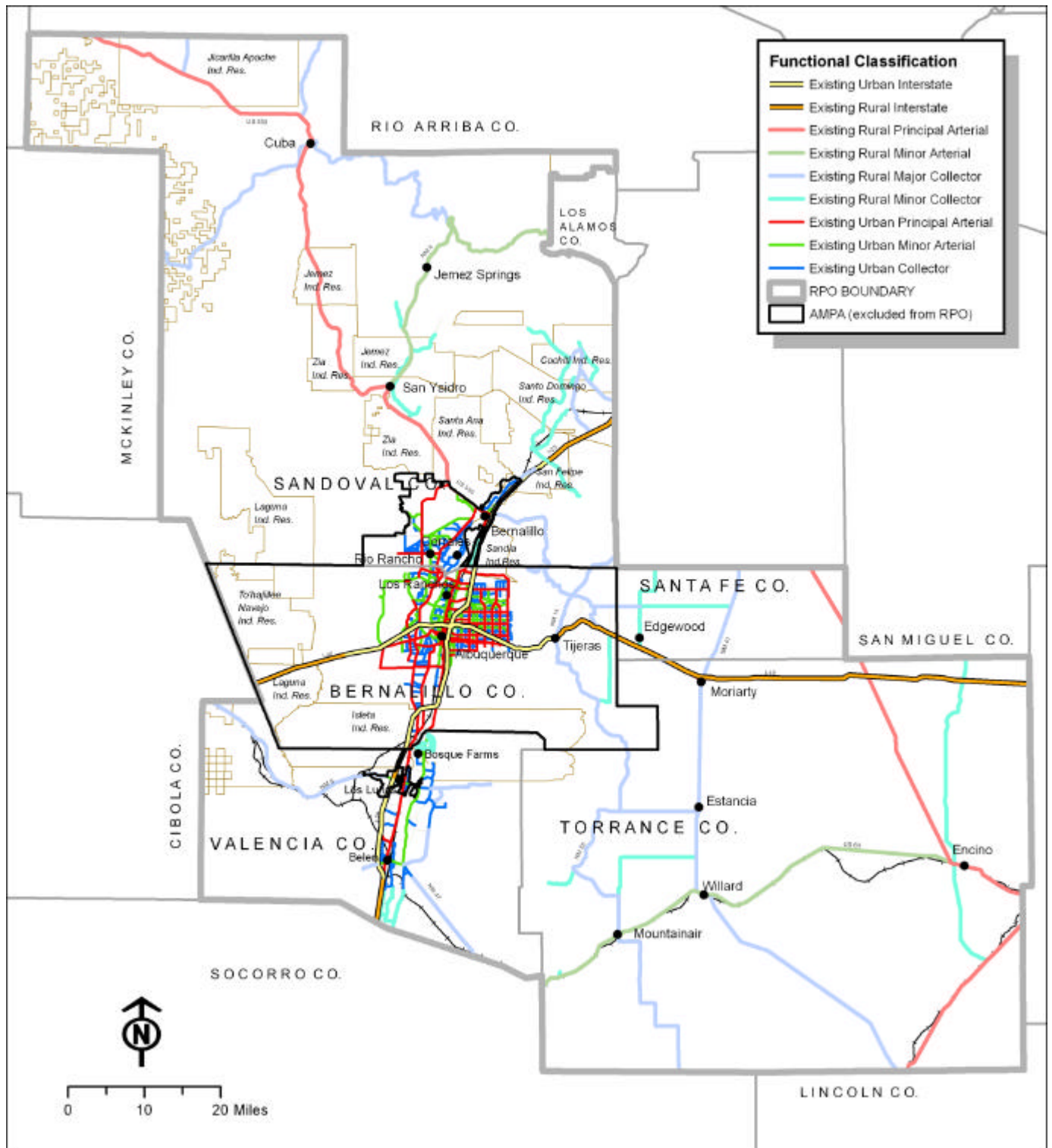


Figure 9. Roadway Network Map for RTP Area

*Traffic Flow Data.* An examination of the growth in traffic at key locations in a community can provide an understanding of the way growth has occurred, of travel patterns as a result of that growth, and of potential trouble spots as traffic continues to increase. There is often a relationship between the amount of traffic in a particular location and the number of crashes that occur at that location.

Identifying high-growth locations early on and applying appropriate engineering or other site-specific solutions can help officials and their staff to prevent unsafe conditions in the future and reduce driver frustration. The following tables identify locations in each of the four counties where average weekday travel grew 15 percent or more between 1996 and 2005. This data shows the growth in traffic on an average weekday for specific locations in each county.

In Sandoval County (Table 10) there has been significant growth in average weekday daily traffic on portions on the network. The majority of this growth has focused on the US550 corridor between NM528 and I-25. At the intersection of US550 and US 528 alone, traffic volumes have almost doubled in the last ten years.

**Table 10. Sandoval County: Average Weekday Daily Traffic, 1996-2005**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>Amount of Change</b>	<b>Percent Difference</b>
NM4 in Jemez Springs	Jemez Springs	1,700	1,900	200	12%
NM4/NM290	Jemez Pueblo	2,000	3,000	1,000	50%
NM22/NM16		1,900	2,200	300	16%
NM22 in Santo Domingo	Santo Domingo Pueblo	4,200	7,100	2,900	69%
NM165 at I-25	Placitas	7,100	8,900	1,800	25%
US550/NM4	San Ysidro	6,000	7,700	1,700	28%
US550/NM528	Town of Bernalillo	21,200	40,300	19,100	90%
US550/Camino Don Tomas	Town of Bernalillo	23,000	37,400	14,400	63%
US550/Hill Road	Town of Bernalillo	22,700	31,600	8,900	39%
US550/NM537	Jicarilla Apache	2,800	3,600	800	29%

The growth in traffic volumes in Table 11 reflects the population increases in the Town of Edgewood. Known as the Edgewood area for years, the Town of Edgewood was formally incorporated in 1999 and has seen consistent growth since that time. The almost 400 percent growth in traffic volumes on NM344 north of I-40 exemplifies the expansion of this community.

**Table 11. Southern Santa Fe County: Average Weekday Daily Traffic, 1996-2005**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>Amount of Change</b>	<b>Percent Difference</b>
NM344 north of I-40	Edgewood	1,800	8,900	7,100	394%
NM472 east of NM344	Edgewood	900	1,200	300	33%
NM41 north of NM472	Edgewood	1,200	1,400	200	17%
NM333	Edgewood	3,800	4,400	600	16%

Growth in Torrance County (Table 12) has occurred in two distinct environments. First, traffic volumes have increased on the facilities around the municipalities of Encino, Moriarty, and Mountainair. The most significant of this growth is on NM 41 north of NM333, in Moriarty. The second area where growth is evident is on Interstate 40. Growth in traffic at the Guadalupe county line has increased 26 percent in the ten year period.

**Table 12. Torrance County: Average Weekday Daily Traffic, 1996-2005**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>Amount of Change</b>	<b>Percent Difference</b>
I-40/NM3	Torrance	11,500	14,300	2,800	24%
I-40 east of Moriarty	Torrance	12,500	15,100	2,600	21%
I-40 at Guadalupe County Line	Torrance	11,400	14,400	3,000	26%
NM41 north of NM333	Moriarty	1,400	3,000	1,600	114%
US60 west of NM55	Mountainair	1,000	1,200	200	20%
US60 east of NM3	Encino	2,000	2,800	800	40%

In Valencia County (Table 13), vehicular traffic across the County grew steadily between 1996 and 2005 and in some areas increased substantially. While certain points can be attributed to growth in very specific areas (for example, the growth in traffic on NM6 just west of I-25 is clearly the result of increased development on the land just west of the interstate), it is not so simple to identify the source of growth on other roadway segments (for example, NM 47 south of River Road).



**Table 13. Valencia County: Average Weekday Daily Traffic, 1996-2005**

Location	Area	1996	2005	Amount of Change	Percent Difference
I-25 at Bernalillo County Line	Isleta Pueblo	18,700	29,500	10,800	58%
I-25 south of North Belen Interchange	Belen	9,400	13,300	3,900	41%
I-25 Bypass west of NM314	Belen	5,300	12,300	7,000	132%
Manzano Blvd north of South Rio del Oro Loop	Valencia County	1,000	2,300	1,300	130%
Meadowlake east of Manzano Expressway	Valencia County	4,200	5,200	1,000	24%
NM6 east of I-25	Los Lunas	8,900	23,900	15,000	169%
NM6 west of I-25	Los Lunas	1,200	8,000	6,800	567%
NM 6 west of Los Lentes	Los Lunas	19,800	24,100	4,300	22%
NM6 River Bridge	Los Lunas	24,300	28,200	3,900	16%
NM 47 at Bernalillo County Line	Isleta Pueblo	22,800	26,200	3,400	15%
NM47 north of NM263	Valencia Cty.	10,000	13,200	3,200	32%
NM47 South	Valencia Cty.	800	1,200	400	50%
NM47 south of River Road	Valencia Cty.	12,200	18,400	6,200	51%
NM263 west of La Ladera	Valencia Cty.	9,700	13,900	4,200	43%
NM304 north of NM346	Valencia Cty.	1,500	2,600	1,100	73%

**Bridge and Drainage Issues.** Two elements of the roadway network that require special attention are bridges and drainage facilities. There are critical bridge and drainage issues in the rural areas. The NMDOT maintains a bridge inventory and sufficiency rating system which is used to determine State priorities for replacing and rehabilitating bridges.<sup>5</sup> Many of the bridges in the RPO that are in most desperate need of repair are located in Sandoval County. There are bridges in Sandoval County along NM4, NM 165 and NM313 that are in serious need of repair. In Torrance County there are bridges in need of repair along both US60 and NM337. Valencia County has bridges in need of restoration along NM6 and NM304.

The climate and topography of the region present unique drainage problems because seasonal rainfall often occurs in brief but intense thunderstorms that can result in flooding and ponding. Storm water runoff from upland areas, irrigation water conveyance canals, drainage pathways such as arroyos and washes, and the streets themselves can cause flooding problems. Planning

<sup>5</sup> NMDOT's sufficiency rating system follows the Federal Highway Administration's sufficiency rating formula. Highway bridge data is evaluated by calculating four separate factors (structural adequacy and safety, serviceability and functional obsolescence, essentiality for public use and special reductions) to obtain a numeric value. The result is a percentage in which 100 percent would represent an entirely sufficient bridge and zero percent would represent an entirely insufficient or deficient bridge.

for drainage is generally conducted by the local governments, special districts, and regional authorities. These activities are carried out as part of local capital improvement programs. The NMDOT works with local governments and special districts to ensure that drainage issues are addressed on state-maintained roadways. Drainage issues rose in priority during the summer of 2006, which saw record precipitation and a corresponding rise in flooded roads and homes, and people who could not reach their homes by using the roadway network.

### ***Scenic and Historic Byways***

Six roadways that pass through the RTP area have been designated as Scenic and Historic Byways. These routes include byways along ancient Native American trading routes (Abo Pass), facilities that saw the movement of the Spanish into New Mexico (El Camino Real), routes of great scenic interest (Sandia Crest), and facilities that form part of more recent national history (Route 66). Figure 10 shows the Scenic and Historic Byways within the MRCOG region.

The New Mexico Scenic and Historic Byways Program was established in 1991 by the NMDOT and funding is provided by the Federal Highway Administration. The purpose of the program is to protect the scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, natural, and archeological integrity of the state's highways and adjacent areas.

These Byways form unique tourist attractions throughout the region, as well as being a source of pride and a reminder of our heritage for local residents. While the Jemez Mountain Trail Scenic Byway Association has been active in developing a management and implementation plan for that corridor, organizations for the other Byways in the region have not been as engaged. More funding is needed to assure full implementation of the plans which have been developed. In addition, support should be provided to update outdated planning efforts and assure that their recommendations are put into place.

### ***Aviation***

Because of the low population densities and large distances between communities throughout New Mexico, aviation is a vital link in the state and regional transportation systems. The airports in the Mid-Region RTP area also serve as reliever airports for Albuquerque International Sunport and Double Eagle II Airport in Bernalillo County. The airports in the RTP area are classified as either Gateway or Key airports. Both Gateway and Key airports are general aviation, basic utility airports designed to accommodate small aircraft (most single and many twin-engine aircraft). Gateway airports provide business access for general aviation and can attract business to a community. Key airports provide access to areas that do not have sufficient activity to justify a gateway facility. Figure 11 shows the airports located within the MRCOG region and identifies the status of each facility.

Airport improvements such as those being proposed at Belen's Alexander Municipal airport can have positive impacts on the local economy and implications for other transportation infrastructure. As small business jet travel rises, there may be a new emphasis on business connections in rural areas. The public airports in Belen, Estancia, Moriarty, and Mountainair can

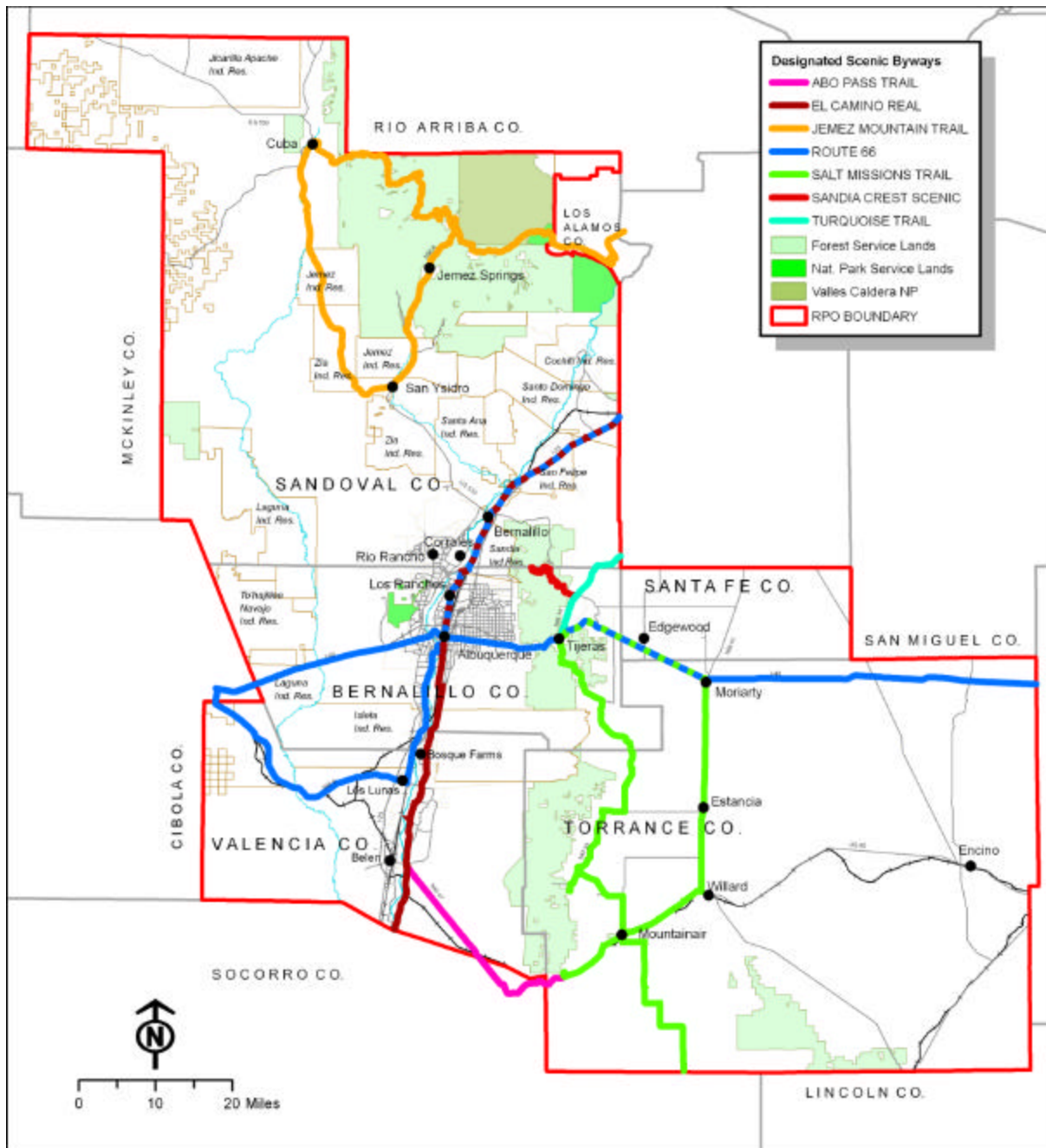
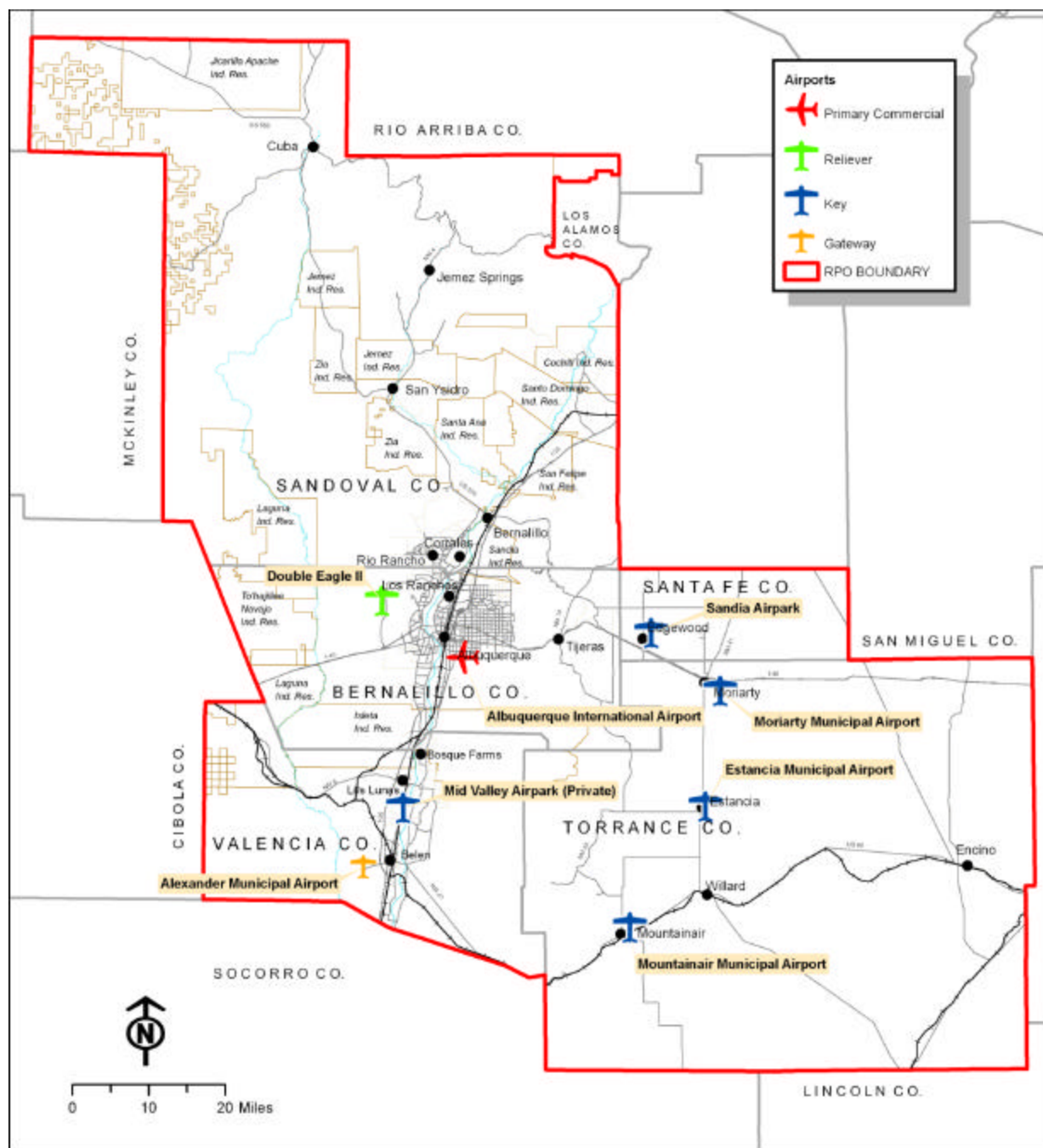


Figure 10. National Scenic and Historic Byways in RTP Area



**Figure 11. Aviation Facilities in the MRCOG Region**

play an important role in providing access for communities throughout the RTP area. These airports are used not only for passengers and cargo but also for recreational flying (gliding) and ballooning. Providing adequate access to them becomes important to local economies. Addressing the current gap in air service in Sandoval County is also an issue to be considered.

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM**

### **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 the public involvement program is as follows:

- Provide information to local media about the Long Range Transportation Plan and the points at which the public will be invited to comment
- Distribute public review information to local libraries and governments for on-site review by citizens
- Provide a link to public review material on MRCOG's internet site and identify the site in all materials pertaining to public review opportunities
- Participate in the planned NMDOT Citizens Conferences in Spring 2007
- Provide formal public review opportunities at the following points in plan development
  - Identification of major transportation-related issues
    - Approximately 30 day review period
    - One public meeting in each county
  - Long Range Transportation Plan Recommendation
    - Approximately 30 day review period
    - One public meeting in each county
- Elected Officials workshop in December 2006 in conjunction with a regularly-scheduled, advertised RTPO TAC meeting where the District Engineers from NMDOT Districts 3, 5, and 6 were present
- Formal announcement that Plan has been completed, and distribution of copies of completed Plan to libraries and local governments throughout the region
- Thank you letters to all persons who commented on the Plan or participated in the planning process who provided names and addresses along with their input

### **SUMMARY OF RESULTS**

#### **Review of Previous Plan and Interim Input**

A review of the previous plan with the RTPO TAC revealed a desire to retain much of the effort which had gone into the development of the goals for the previous plan. There was general consensus that these goals were appropriate, with some reworking. This reworking was completed in the summer of 2006 and is reflected in the goals for this current plan.

Discussions with NMDOT planning staff regarding the previous plan resulted in the identification of several issues of concern in relation to the previous plan. These concerns included the lack of specificity in the previous plan regarding proposed projects, as well as the need to adhere more closely to NMDOT's guidelines for the Plan. Adherence to the guidelines

facilitates incorporation into the State-wide long range transportation planning effort. In response to this concern, every effort was made during development of this plan to provide project specificity and to adhere to the NMDOT's suggested Plan outline.

Staff review of the previous Plan identified a potential need to modify the approach to public involvement to assure that citizens in each county had an opportunity to review and comment on the plan. The public involvement plan for the current planning effort addresses this by providing for public meetings in each county during the review and comment period for the draft plan.

### **Consultation With Local Officials**

Local officials from across the RTP area were invited to attend and participate in the RTPO TAC meeting on December 14, 2006. This meeting included presentations from each of the NMDOT District Engineers from Districts 3, 5 and 6. MRCOG staff also presented an overview of the information for the LRTP related to current and forecast socioeconomic data, as well as crash and traffic count data. This meeting included a discussion of a preliminary list of issues of concern to be included in the draft Plan.

### **Public Meetings**

The draft LRTP will be released for public review on Thursday, March 29, 2007. Comments on the draft will be accepted through Friday, May 4, 2007. During the public review period, the following public meetings are scheduled to be held:

- Valencia County, Belen City Hall, Tuesday, April 10, 2007 at 7 p.m.
- Valencia County, Bosque Farms Community Center, Thursday, April 12, 2007 at 6:30 p.m.
- Jemez Valley Community Center, Tuesday, April 17, 2007 at 7 p.m.
- Pena Blanca Community Center, Thursday, April 19, 2007 at 7 p.m.
- Town of Mountainair, Dr. Saul Building, 109 North Roosevelt, Tuesday, April 24, 2007 at 7 p.m.
- City of Moriarty Civic Center, Tuesday, May 1, 2007 at 7 p.m.

Confirmed details about meeting locations, dates and times are available at [www.mrcog-nm.gov](http://www.mrcog-nm.gov).

### **Comments**

Comments received during the public review process for the draft plan were summarized and recommendations for addressing them were presented to the RTPO TAC at their June 20, 2007 meeting. The TAC approved the Plan with the recommended changes, and these changes have been incorporated into the present document. Table 14 summarizes the comments received and the changes that were made in response.

**Table 14. Summary of Public Comment and Staff Recommendations**

<b>Person/Organization Providing Comment</b>	<b>Summary of Comment</b>	<b>Response</b>
Rita M. Padilla-Gutierrez (Valencia County)	Transportation problems in Valencia county area a north-south issue which Railrunner has alleviated to some extent. Planners and elected officials need to be educated about water availability and land use strategies. Do not divide agricultural and cultural communities by building bridges. Come up with creative ways to use exiting roadways to resolve transportatio problems. Impacting agricultural/farming lands is not an option!	Add language to Plan (page 3) that discusses population and employment forecasts in relation to water resources. Add language to Plan (page 46) that clarifies that planning for roadway projects must make every effort to reduce negative impacts on community cohesiveness and agricultural lands.
Rebecca G. Perry-Piper (Sandoval County)	Concerns regarding faulty inflationary extrapolation on population growth as a basis, without regard to limited water resources. Concern regarding not including Los Alamos County residents in discussions regarding security needs. Concern regarding insufficient visuals (maps) and typos in the text.	Add language to Plan (page 3) that discusses population and employment forecasts in relation to water resources. Add language to Plan (pg 34) clarifying that there appears to be a need to address traffic from Los Alamos County on NM4 during emergency situations. Modify visuals and apparent typos as appropriate (pg 51).
Jesse Davidson, Mountainair Planning Commissioner (Torrance County)	Population is Mountainair is expected to grow by 2030. Draft Plan shows no growth. Recent increase in sales of individual land parcels and homes is expected to continue. Town of Mountainair is developing a plan for improve airport site.	Provide information about growth in Mountainair to MRCOG demographer for inclusion in subsequent forecasts. Add language in Table 21 to reflect Mountainair preliminary plans for airport site (pg 54).

## **Visioning Process**

A preliminary draft vision was developed by staff in late Spring 2006, utilizing the work already completed for the previous Plan. This language provided the basis for discussions at the RTPPO TAC's regularly scheduled advertised meeting in June 2006, and further discussion and final approval at their meeting in August. The agreed-upon vision seeks to articulate a view of the region that acknowledges and preserves the unique character of the rural communities while taking advantage of the proximity to the metro area, including the potential for tourism development.

This page intentionally left blank.



## **MAJOR TRANSPORTATION-RELATED ISSUES**

### **ECONOMIC VITALITY**

Economic vitality is closely tied to adequate transportation infrastructure. In the RTP area, concerns about transportation in relation to economic vitality include:

- Providing public transportation for residents without reliable vehicles to provide access to jobs in the Albuquerque metro area
- Providing TANF families with access to day care, education, and employment
- Providing elderly persons on fixed incomes with access to health services while enabling them to remain in their life-long communities
- Providing air access to businesses looking to relocate to a small community

### **SAFETY**

The RTPO 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 external/internal roadways. In addition, travelers on roads in the RTP area are at risk because of the remoteness from municipal areas and associated services. MRCOG staff completed an analysis of crash locations between 2001 and 2004 on major roadways in the four RTPO counties. Using GPS data, locations where two or more crashes occurred were mapped. The GPS data was evaluated for each county, because each county has specific corridors that have high crash rates. While the causes for many of these crashes may be similar, each corridor should be evaluated more extensively to identify strategies for addressing these safety issues.

#### **Sandoval County Roadway Safety**

In Sandoval County the crash rates cluster along I-25 through the County and on US550 through the Town of Bernalillo to the NM528 intersection (see Figure 12). The sites of lesser crash levels, though still in corridors of concern, are strung along the US550 corridor in and around the Town of Cuba and in the NM4 corridor. While the more heavily traveled facilities (NM550 and I-25) have seen higher levels of accidents overall than other roadways, there appears to be a high ratio of crashes-to-traffic-volume in some of the lesser-traveled corridors such as northern NM4. This indicates that conditions could be improved.

A US550 Corridor Study is currently underway. One of the anticipated outcomes of this study is an alleviation of the safety concerns on US550 between NM528 and I-25. In addition, the I-25 corridor between Bernalillo County and US550 is currently being widened, with safety measures being included as part of that project. It is anticipated that this project will reduce the number of crashes in this corridor. North of the US550 interchange. NMDOT District 3 is continuing to evaluate the issues on I-25 and address them as part of its maintenance activities.

#### **Southern Santa Fe County**

The Town of Edgewood lies primarily within southern Santa Fe County and is a rapidly growing municipality in itself. In addition, the portion of I-40 which traverses the Town is also

experiencing the impact of growth further east in Torrance County. Figure 13 shows that the corridors where the majority of crashes have occurred in the Edgewood area are I-40 and NM344. The intersection of NM333 and I-40 has been particularly affected. To address these concerns, the NMDOT has plans to study the I-40 corridor between Moriarty and the Sedillo Hill interchange within the next few years. More information about this study is provided in the following section regarding Torrance County.

### **Torrance County Roadway Safety**

The vast majority of crashes in Torrance County in the 2001-2004 period occurred along the I-40 corridor between Guadalupe and Santa Fe counties (see Figure 14). In response to the increased traffic flow along I-40, the NMDOT has programmed funds for a study of the I-40 corridor between Moriarty and Sedillo Hill. This study will address potential safety improvements and other traffic-related issues along I-40 as well as NM333. The study will also look at potential additional interchanges and modifications to existing overpasses within this corridor.

In addition to the study of the I-40 corridor, the NMDOT is also initiating a study of the NM41 corridor between Moriarty and US60. This study will identify potential safety improvements and other traffic-related concerns. Drainage and pedestrian/bicycle/equestrian issues will also be taken into consideration as proposals are developed for this corridor.

### **Valencia County Roadway Safety**

In Valencia County (Figure 15) the majority of vehicle crashes in the 2001-2004 time frame occurred on NMDOT roads in or near the Rio Grande Valley. The state roads running through Bosque Farms, Belen, and Los Lunas all contain locations where crashes have occurred repeatedly. In addition, numerous crash locations have also been identified on the more rural portions of NM47 and NM263. There appears to be a strong correlation between the amount of traffic on these facilities and the number of crashes that occurred in this time frame. Given the pattern of crash locations in this portion of the County, it may be appropriate to complete an area-wide analysis which addresses roadway safety.

## **SECURITY**

Transportation infrastructure security can be addressed in terms of the security of public transportation riders, the use of transportation facilities to move people quickly in case of a regional or national emergency, and the security of homes and neighborhoods when localized natural disasters such as flooding occur.

Public transportation security is addressed by public transportation providers as part of their overall service plan. While regional security plans are being put in place, there may be a need to look at the feasibility of some access routes such as NM4 for evacuating national places of importance such as Los Alamos National Labs. This planning effort would need to be completed in close coordination with Los Alamos County and the planning organizations in that region. Given the winding characteristics and narrow shoulders of NM4 as it is currently designed, there should be grave concerns about this potential evacuation route.

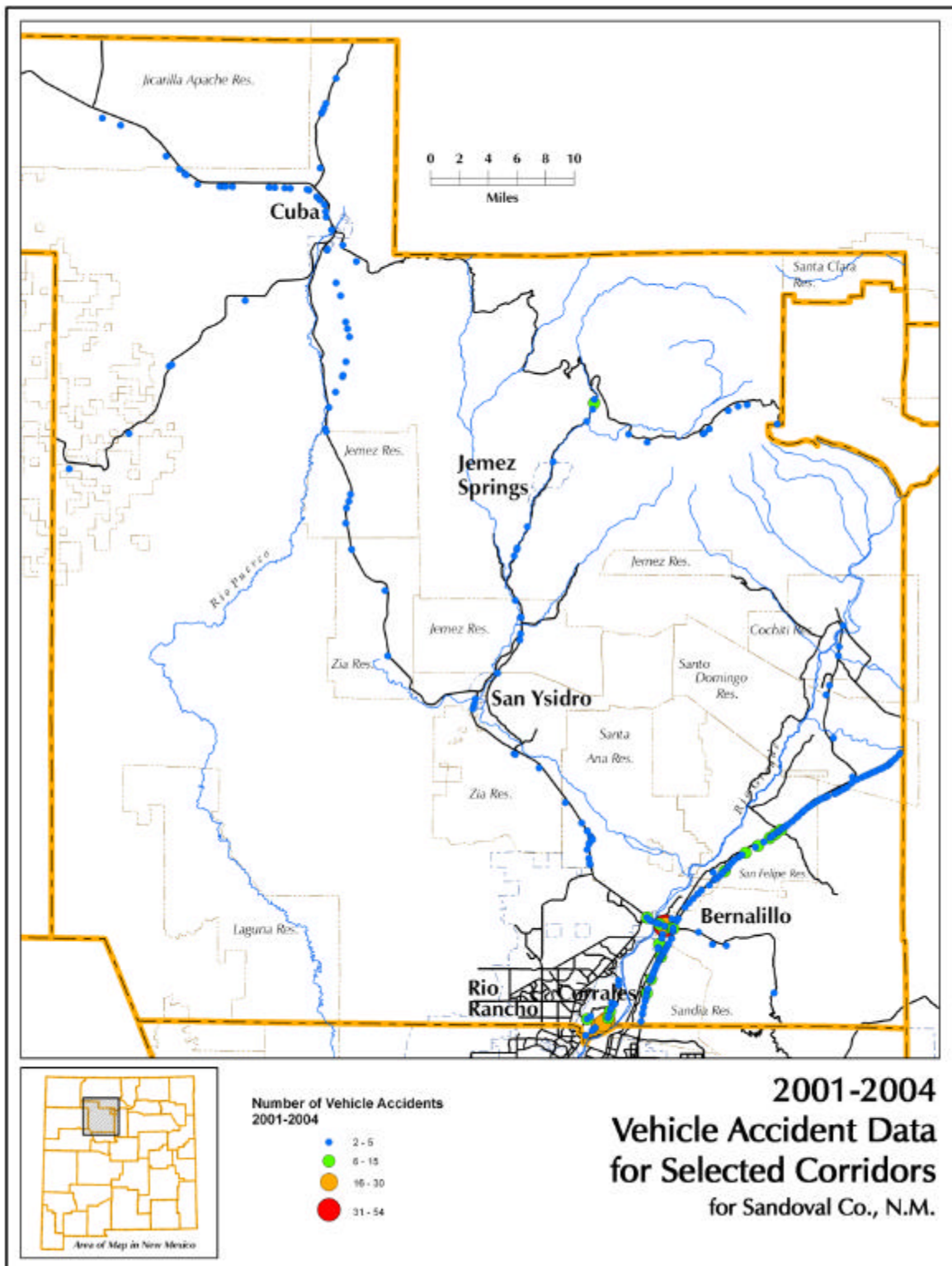


Figure 12. Vehicle Crash Data, Sandoval County

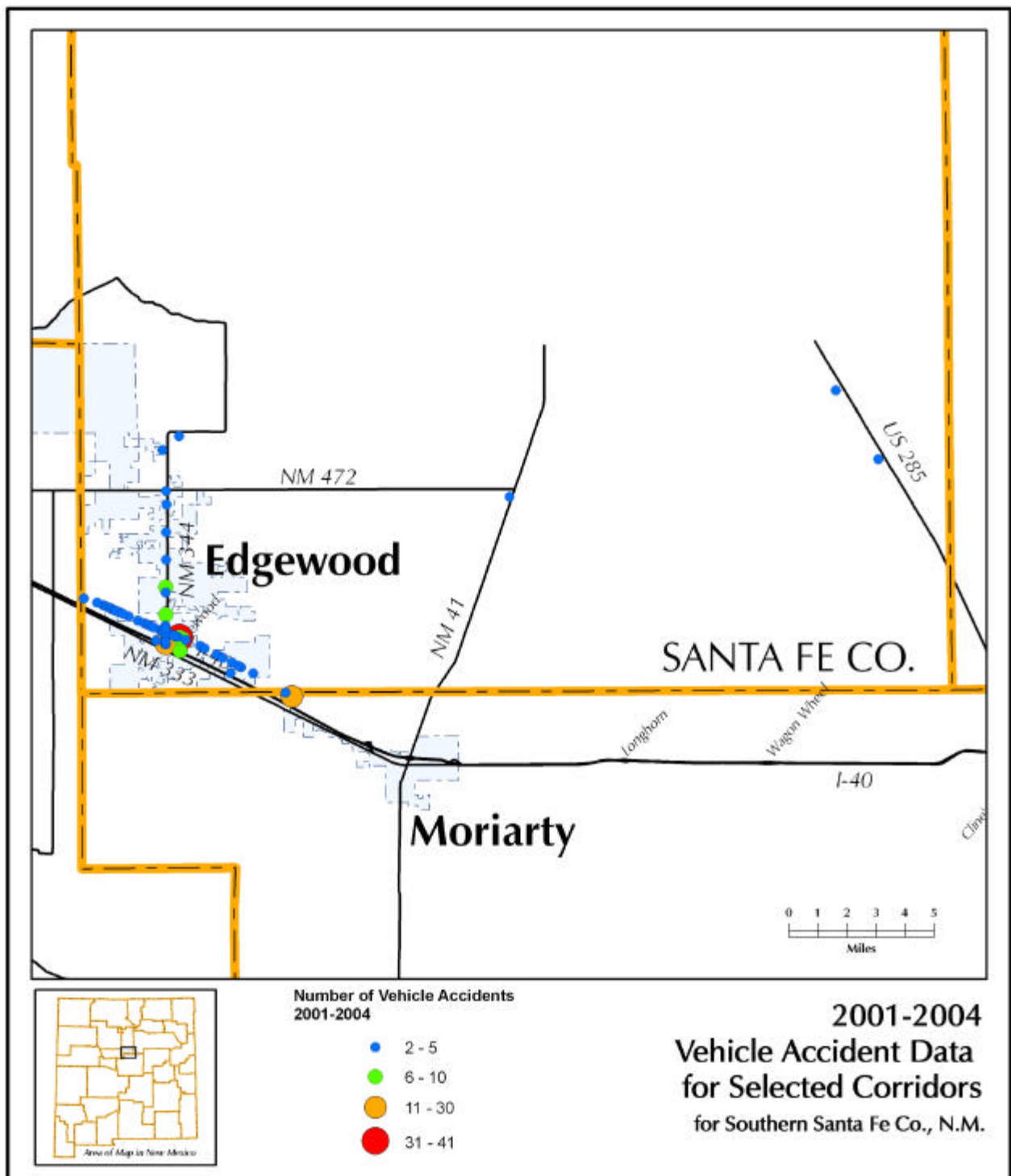


Figure 13. Vehicle Crash Data, Southern Santa Fe County

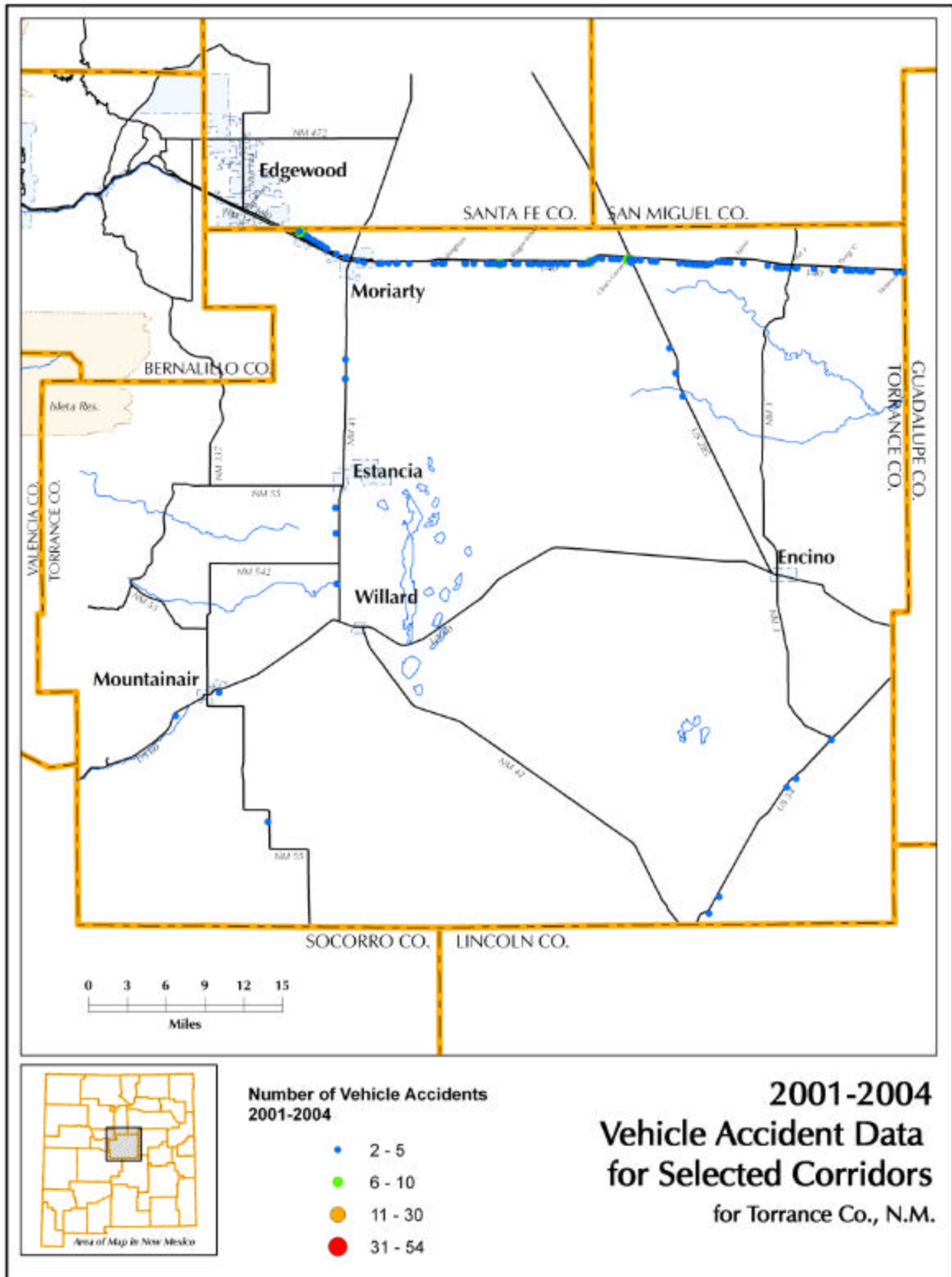


Figure 14. Vehicle Crash Data, Torrance County

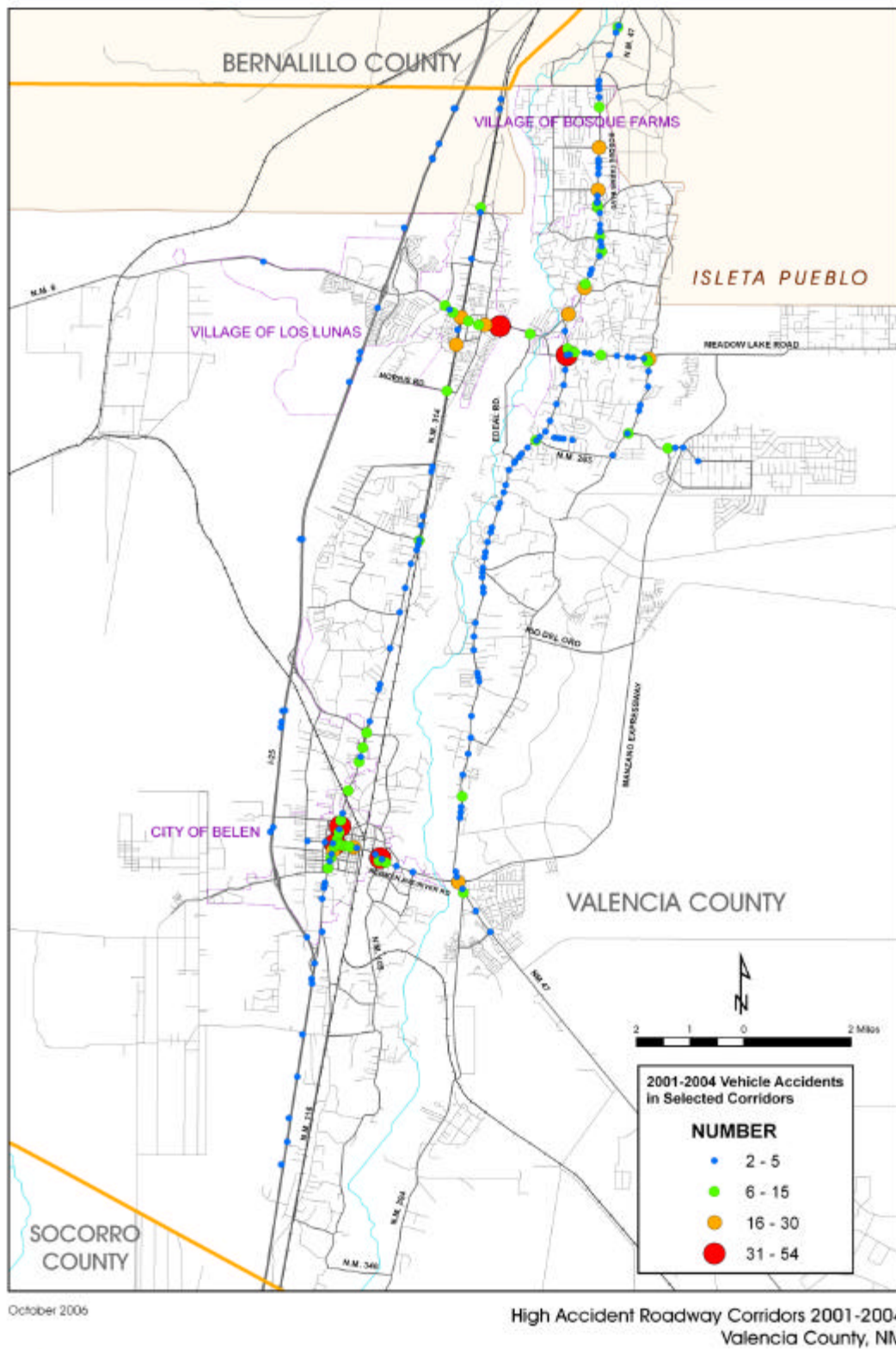


Figure 15. Vehicle Crash Data, Valencia County



Recent flooding throughout the state of New Mexico raises concerns about drainage issues and bridge sufficiency for all communities in the State. In the Mid-Region RTP area, Sandoval, Torrance, and Valencia Counties were all declared disaster areas because of severe flooding in the summer of 2006. Additional efforts should be made to assure that these conditions are alleviated so that these situations are not repeated.

## **ACCESSIBILITY AND MOBILITY FOR PEOPLE AND FREIGHT**

Much of the urbanized area of the MRCOG is served by public transportation systems. However, communities in the RTP area do not enjoy adequate transit services. While new services such as the commuter rail project and the Regional Transit District will provide some transit for communities near the AMPA, it is expected that outlying areas will still suffer from a lack of public transportation. The public transportation being planned for Sandoval County and in a currently skeletal form in Torrance County needs to be supported vigorously. The service that Los Lunas is providing to Valencia County should also be maintained and enabled to expand to provide for the needs throughout the County.

Bicycling and pedestrian trails can also provide increased transportation options in a region. The development of the Regional Bikeway Corridors map and the bicycle/pedestrian element of the Valencia County Mobility Plan are good steps in this direction. However, actual constructed bicycle and pedestrian trails are currently limited in the RTP area. While trails exist in San Ysidro, Belen, Bosque Farms, and rural Valencia County, additional funding is needed to make a truly comprehensive network available to citizens throughout the rural planning area.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

As a result of population and job growth throughout the RPO region, many municipalities are facing environmental challenges. The issue is how to maintain the vitality of these areas while preserving and protecting natural, historic, scenic, and cultural environments. Much of this work can be accomplished during the development process for traditional transportation infrastructure projects. However, specific projects that will enhance the experience of using the transportation network and provide alternatives to motorized transportation modes should also be identified and funded.

Stand-alone transportation enhancement projects in the RTP area that have been completed in the recent past include the Delgado Street Trail in Belen, the Bosque Loop Trail in Bosque Farms, and landscaping on the Moriarity Business Loop from Tulane to Hazel.

Transportation enhancement projects in the RTP area that are currently programmed in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) include the Rio del Oro Trail and Rio Communities Core Links Trail in Valencia County, landscaping at the I-40/Edgewood interchange, sidewalks and bicycle facilities on Golf Course Road in Valencia County, pedestrian facilities on US64 on the Jicarilla Apache reservation, the Becker Street project in Belen, pedestrian and bicycle facilities in Jemez Springs on NM4, and pedestrian facilities at I-40 and NM344 and NM333, as well as US60 and NM55 in Sandoval County. More emphasis should be given to these types of projects.

Projects on National Scenic Byways are also geared toward reducing the scenic and cultural impacts of road projects. National Scenic Byways in the RTP area include Jemez Mountain Trail, El Camino Real Historic Trail, Salt Missions Trail, Route 66, Abo Pass Trail, and Turquoise Trail. Federal Scenic Byways funds are currently allocated for implementation of the recently-completed corridor management plan for the Jemez Mountain Trail and funding for interpretive monuments and signs along the trail. Much work remains to be done on all of these Byways, to enable them to be the attractions and sources of pride they are capable of becoming.

## **INTEGRATION AND CONNECTIVITY OF TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS**

As gasoline prices and congestion continue to rise, the integration and connectivity of transportation systems across the region become more critical. To address these concerns, several activities are currently underway.

Valencia County is building a multi-modal facility in Los Lunas with Section 5309 capital funds. This facility will have the capacity to accommodate buses, vans, rail, various transportation offices, and will improve the transportation linkages between modes throughout Valencia County. The Village of Los Lunas' public transportation service will provide access to the commuter rail service.

MRCOG is spearheading an effort to develop a United We Ride pilot program for the four-county region. The goal of the United We Ride project is to establish an integrated, coordinated system for providing public transportation services to people who are transportation-disadvantaged. At the direction of the State legislature, the New Mexico Departments of Transportation and Human Services are co-chairs of an effort to implement coordinated publicly funded transportation services within every New Mexico County. The pilot project is expected to be completed in 2007.

Torrance County's work to bring public transportation to rural Torrance County and NMDOT's efforts to establish park and rides in Edgewood and Moriarty are two new initiatives which show promise in providing connectivity across transportation modes. In addition, there is an initiative in Sandoval County to provide a brokered public transportation service. This effort is being coordinated closely with the new Mid Region Regional Transportation District.

These initial efforts are critical to the integration and connectivity of the transportation system in the RTP area. To assure that full integration is achieved, current planning efforts such as the United We Ride Program and the Sandoval County public transportation work must be fully supported and the lessons learned there built upon. Additional funding to provide for planning and full implementation will be critical.

## **EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM MANAGEMENT**

While intelligent transportation systems are often implemented in urban areas across the country, the information provided by these systems is critical to the traveling public outside the metro area. Information about travel events on the urban interstate have a direct impact on travelers moving in and out of the urban area. Efficient transportation system management for the rural



area includes accurate, timely information about incidents on the interstate in and around the metro area. It will be critical to keep the needs of the rural users in mind while the DOT is working to put an ITS center in place that will provide this information.

In addition to information about roadway congestion, roadway surface conditions are particularly critical to rural travelers during the winter months. Providing this data should be a top priority in the development of an ITS system. Another aspect of system management is assuring smooth traveling conditions for users. This includes addressing congested portions of roadway, synchronizing traffic lights on heavily traveled arterials, and other means of providing for a smooth traffic flow.

As public transportation becomes more prevalent throughout the RTP area, transportation system management could also mean providing up-to-date information to users about the wait time for buses and passenger rail. Transportation management issues will also arise in assuring good connections between public transportation services and commuter rail service.

To assure that transportation systems across the RPO are managed effectively, it is important that funding continue to be provided for planning and coordination across agencies and modes.

## **PRESERVATION OF EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES**

Maintaining existing infrastructure and services is crucial to a successful transportation system. In the RPO, maintenance concerns have increased with the unusually high rainfall that occurred in the summer of 2006. The flooding and roadway damage that accompanied this precipitation underlined the need for properly maintained roads in order to reduce the amount of damage to roadways and neighboring properties that can be caused by natural occurrences.

The preservation of existing infrastructure is an issue of concern in communities such as Mountainair, where the majority of the municipality's roadways are dirt and gravel, and for counties such as Valencia, where over 80% percent of county roads are unpaved, and maintenance funds are inadequate to provide grading on an annual basis.

## **LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION NEEDS**

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

#### **Socioeconomic data**

The population in the RTP area is scattered in clusters throughout the region, with the majority in unincorporated areas. With over 105,000 residents in 2000, population grew by over 30,000 between 1990 and 2000, outpacing both the MRCOG region as a whole and the metropolitan area in terms of percent of growth. Growth is anticipated to continue steadily over the next 30 years, with the RTP area population increasing by about 65 percent over 2000 levels.

Valencia County is expected to gain the most new residents within the RTP area, with an anticipated increase of over 40,000. However Edgewood, in southern Santa Fe County, is expected to see the fastest rate of growth in the RTP area. In Torrance County, the majority of the growth is expected to occur in and around Moriarty. In Sandoval County, the population increase is expected to be primarily in the Placitas area, northeast of Algodones, and in the master planned communities of La Madera and Paa-Ko.

The metropolitan area is currently the center of employment for the MRCOG area and this characteristic is not expected to change significantly over the next 30 years. While the RTP area is expected to see faster growth rates than the MRCOG region as a whole, Bernalillo County is still projected to contain the numerical majority of new employment between 2000 and 2030. In the RTP area itself, Valencia County is expected to achieve the largest actual employment gain in the area, while Edgewood is projected to see the fastest rate of job growth. In Sandoval County, existing employment nodes are expected to continue to expand, while Torrance County is projected to experience job growth within Moriarty and Estancia and the surrounding areas.

While the growth in employment in the outlying communities is important to the life of those communities and will help to reduce some impacts on major roadway facilities between the rural and metro areas, that growth is not expected to be significant enough to reduce the need to provide for commute traffic into the metro area. The growth in population will continue to outstrip the growth in employment in the outlying communities. As a result, the need to provide for commuting travelers as well as for shopping, medical, and social travel, will increase between 2000 and 2030.

#### **Crash data**

An analysis of the crash data for Valencia, Torrance, Sandoval and southern Santa Fe counties for the period 2001-2004 is provided earlier in this Plan. It is clear from that discussion that crashes are a significant issue of concern for the rural areas. The majority of these crashes are occurring in state and federal transportation corridors. Several corridors in particular stand out. These include NM47 between the northern County line and River Road, Reinken/River Road in

Belen, I-40 through Torrance County, I-25 through Sandoval County, and the US550 corridor between I-25 and NM528. The cost of crashes in terms of congestion alone makes it imperative that these safety issues be addressed. Table 15 provides a prioritized list of the most dangerous intersections in the RPO area, based on this analysis. This information is also shown in Figure 16.

**Table 15. Top 29 Intersections With High Crash Rates, 2001-2004**

Street	Street	County	Intersection Ranking	Total Crashes	Injured	Fatal
I-40	MP 187	Torrance	1	46	14	1
Reinken Ave NM309	Sunshine Road	Valencia	2	42	15	1
NM47	NM263	Valencia	3	38	15	1
NM263	La Ladera Road	Valencia	4	18	9	1
Main St. – NM314	Chavez Avenue	Valencia	5	12	4	1
US550	Camino del Pueblo NM313	Sandoval	6	58	20	0
Reinken Ave - NM309	Main St. – NM314	Valencia	7	54	8	0
Main St. – NM314	Aragon Road	Valencia	8	31	15	0
Main St. – NM6	Carson Drive	Valencia	9	31	6	0
Main St. – NM6	Los Lentes Road	Valencia	10	29	7	0
Main St. - NM6	NM314	Valencia	11	26	15	0
NM47	South El Cerro Loop	Valencia	12	25	11	0
River Road - NM309	NM47	Valencia	13	25	8	0
I-40	MP189	Torrance	14	21	8	
NM47	Esperanza Road	Valencia	15	20	12	0
Reinken Ave – NM309	3rd Street	Valencia	16	20	4	0
NM 314	Court House Road	Valencia	17	18	10	0
South Bosque Loop	Bosque Farms Blvd - NM 47	Valencia	17	18	10	0
Main St - NM 314	Dalies Ave	Valencia	18	16	8	0
Valencia Road	NM 47	Valencia	19	16	6	0
US 550	MP 2	Sandoval	20	15	8	0
Reinken Ave - NM 309	6th Street	Valencia	21	14	7	0
US 550	Don Tomas	Sandoval	22	14	5	0
NM344	I-40	Santa Fe	22	14	5	0
Main St - NM 314	Didier Avenue	Valencia	23	14	4	0
I 25	MP 252	Sandoval	24	14	3	0
NM 47	Valencia Road	Valencia	25	13	7	0
I 25	MP 240	Sandoval	26	13	5	0
Main St - NM 314	Don Felipe Road	Valencia	27	12	5	0



## Traffic Flow Data

An analysis of the traffic flow data for the RTPO counties reveals clearly that traffic has grown substantially between 1996 and 2005, along with population. While this is not surprising, a look at the data does reveal specific locations of concern, where increases in traffic have already surpassed or are about to outstrip roadway capacity. A map showing the areas where substantial growth has occurred is provided in Figure 17. This map shows the change in average weekday traffic at selected locations throughout the rural portion of the MRCOG region. Identifying high-growth locations now and applying appropriate solutions can forestall unsafe conditions in the future.

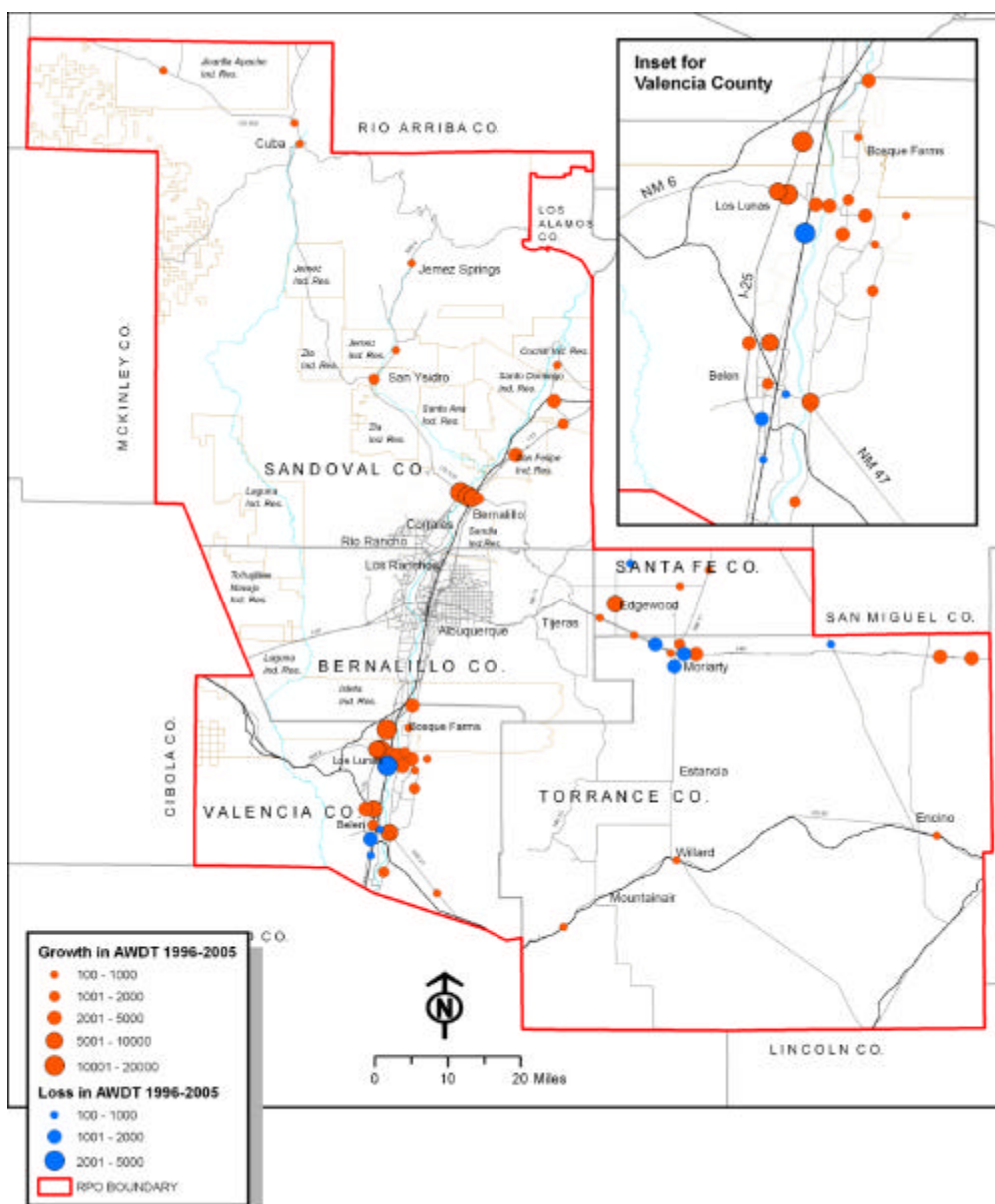


Figure 17. Change in Average Weekday Traffic, RTPO

## **INVENTORY OF PLANNED PROJECTS**

The tables on the following pages provide a list of transportation projects that have been identified by local jurisdictions and the NMDOT for the RTPO area. Some of these projects are in the development process. Others have not received any funding and no development work has been undertaken for them. All of them are needed to assure a sound transportation system for the rural communities, both within and between the communities and as the rural areas link to the urban center.

The planning and development process for transportation projects requires that impacts to neighborhoods, cultural resources, wildlife, and other resources be addressed prior to construction. This Plan assumes that these activities will take place. As part of this development effort, there is a need to assure that new roadway projects do not have a negative impact on community cohesiveness or agricultural lands.

The term “planned” is used here in a very general sense. These are not necessarily programmed projects, but they have been identified as being important to the communities in which they are located and to the rural area as a whole. Where funding has been identified, that information is provided in the “Programmed?” column.

The projects are identified by the type of project and, within each table, grouped by location. Where lead agency information is known, that information is also included. In most cases, the estimated cost numbers included in these tables are not intended to be used for programming purposes. They are included for comparison purposes only, to provide a general concept of what a project might be expected to cost. These numbers are estimates which were developed at different points in time using varying assumptions, as costs of materials and engineering has shifted. They would need to be re-evaluated prior to being included in a programming effort.

This list of projects is not intended to be inclusive. There may be other transportation project needs which have not been identified at this point in time. The purpose of this planning effort is to bring together the information known at this point and to identify further needs. It is expected that these tables will be updated as more information is developed.

**Table 16. Inventory of Planned Projects: Public Transportation**

<b>Project Name and Location</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Location/Lead Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Programmed?</b>
Mass Transit Project, Sandoval County	Construct multimodal center	Sandoval County	\$3,000,000	ICIP 2005-2007, GRIP II

**Table 17. Inventory of Planned Projects: Rail**

<b>Project Name and Location</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Location/Lead Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Programmed?</b>
NM304 RR Crossing	Construct railroad grade separation	Isleta Pueblo/NMDOT	\$4,000,000	2006-2011 STIP
Rail crossing safety improvements, Sandia Pueblo Farm Crossing	Railway crossing safety improvements	Sandia Pueblo	\$101,000	GRIP II
NM109, RR Crossing and Jarales Road	Construct railroad grade separation	Valencia County/NMDOT	\$4,000,000	2006-2011 STIP

**Table 18. Inventory of Planned Projects: Bicycle and Pedestrian**

<b>Project Name and Location</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Location/Lead Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Programmed?</b>
Becker Street, Main Street to First Street	Pedestrian enhancements, lighting, etc.	Belen	\$	STIP
Pedestrian Crossing, Railrunner station to Downtown	Pedestrian over crossing and facility	Belen	\$1,100,000	GRIP II
Camino del Llano, I-25 West	Pedestrian safety and drainage improvements	Belen		
Belen sidewalks and trails, city-wide	Bicycle/pedestrian facilities	Belen	\$300,000	ICIP 2005-2009
NM126 Pedestrian Access	Pedestrian facility	Cuba/NMDOT?	\$126,000	
Walatowa High School crosswalk and intersection	Bicycle/pedestrian facility	Jemez Pueblo		

<b>Project Name and Location</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Location/Lead Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Programmed?</b>
NM4 through Village of Jemez Springs	Multiuse trail and drainage improvements	Jemez Springs/NMDOT?	\$1,420,000	\$400k, 2006-2011 RTIPR; \$250k 2007-2008 funds, 2006-2011 STIP
Moriarty Bike/Ped Trail, Broadway to First	Bicycle/pedestrian facilities. Loop to schools, parks and City Hall.	Moriarty	\$301,000	2006-2011 RTIPR
Moriarty Streetscape Projects, city wide	Streetscape project	Moriarty	\$1,400,000	ICIP 2005-2009
Route 66, NM41 to I-40	Streetscape project	Moriarty/NMDOT		
San Ysidro multi-use trail	Bicycle/pedestrian facility	San Ysidro	\$720,000	
US550 Pedestrian Bridge	Pedestrian bridge	San Ysidro/NMDOT?		
Northwest Loop Corridor, US550 to I-40 at Rio Puerco	New facility	Sandoval County		
Rio del Oro Trail, UNM Valencia Campus to Tome Elementary to Manzano Vista Mid School	Bicycle/pedestrian facility	Valley Improvement Assoc. (Valencia Cty fiscal agent)		STIP
Rio Communities Core Link, Manzano Expressway to Rio del Oro South	Bicycle/Pedestrian facility..	Valley Improvement Assoc. (Valencia Cty fiscal agent)		STIP
Greenways Trail, Manzano Expressway to Coyote Springs	Bicycle/Pedestrian facility..	Valley Improvement Assoc. (Valencia Cty fiscal agent)		



**Table 18. Inventory of Planned Projects: Multimodal Facilities**

<b>Project Name and Location</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Location/Lead Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Programmed?</b>
Municipal Parking, Village of Jemez Springs	Parking lot	Jemez Springs	\$100,000	ICIP 2005-2009
Sandoval County Transit Facility, NM528 and Idalia	Public transportation facility with 150-vehicle park and ride	Sandoval County	\$3,600,000	GRIP II
Zia Pueblo property in Town of Bernalillo	Vehicular access, parking and pedestrian facilities,	Zia Pueblo	\$470,000	GRIP II?
Zia Pueblo property in San Ysidro	Vehicular access, parking and pedestrian facilities,	Zia Pueblo		

**Table 20. Inventory of Planned Projects: Roadway Network**

<b>Project Name and Termini/Location</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Location/Lead Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Programmed?</b>
Main Street, Phase IV (north Main)	Paving and lighting	Belen	\$1,750,000	ICIP 2005-2009
I-25 near Belen, Camino del Llano interchange	High mast lighting	Belen	\$250,000	ICIP 2005-2009
I-25 north Belen interchange	Reconfigure	Belen/NMDOT	\$15,000,000	
Bosque Loop, NM47 to NM47	Roadway paving overlay	Bosque Farms	\$550,000	GRIP II
Bosque Farms Roads, village-wide	Roadway construction	Bosque Farms	\$500,000	ICIP 2005-2009
Hanson Farm Road	Paving and signage	Bosque Farms	\$13,000	2006-2011 RTIPR
NM22 through Cochiti Pueblo	Roadway improvements	Cochiti Pueblo/NMDOT?	\$600,000	
Williams Ranch Road	Corridor Study	Edgewood	\$400,000	2006-2011 RTIPR
Edgewood roads, town wide	Roadway right-of-way and improvements	Edgewood	\$1,282,000	ICIP 2005-2009
I-40 Exit Ramp, Williams Ranch Road	New interstate exit	Edgewood/NMDOT	\$8,000,000	
Encino streets , village wide	Roadway improvements and curbs	Encino	\$515,000	ICIP 2005-2009

<b>Project Name and Location</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Location/Lead Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Programmed?</b>
East Alan Ayers Road, NM41 to Prison	Roadway improvements	Estancia	\$1,566,406	GRIP II
Storm Water Diversion, town wide		Estancia		
Estancia street improvements	Roadway improvements	Estancia	\$250,000	ICIP 2005-2009
NM47 Center Median, Bosque Farms village limits to I-25	Construct center median	Isleta Pueblo/NMDOT	\$7,047,000	2006-2011 RTIPR
NM314 and Coors Road	New roadway intersection (MPO)	Isleta Pueblo/NMDOT		
NM47/TR7 Intersection	Improve access	Isleta Pueblo/NMDOT	\$15,000	2006-2011 RTIPR
NM47/Chical (TR2) Road	Install traffic lights and construct turn lanes	Isleta Pueblo/NMDOT	\$715,000	2006-2011 STIP
I-25 interchange, south Isleta boundary	New I-25 interchange	Isleta Pueblo/NMDOT?	\$15,000,000	
NM4 around Jemez Pueblo	Roadway realignment	Jemez Pueblo/NMDOT?	\$9,680,000	\$1.4m 2007 funds in 2006-2011 STIP for prelim eng.
NM4, M.P. 2 to M.P. 4	Roadway drainage improvements	Jemez Pueblo/NMDOT?	\$1,230,000	2006-2011 RTIPR
NM4 through Village of Jemez Springs	Bridge replacement	Jemez Springs/NMDOT	\$2,000,000	2009 funds, 2006-2011 STIP
Camino Oriente, NM41 to Industrial Park	Roadway rehabilitation and paving	Moriarty	\$540,000	GRIP II
Paseo Poniente, Ida to Martinez	Roadway rehabilitation and paving	Moriarty		
Second Street	Roadway rehabilitation and paving	Moriarty		
Irene Street, NM41 to Violet	Pave roadway	Moriarty		
Poplar Street, NM333 to Poplar SW	Pave roadway	Moriarty		
Moriarty Street improvements, city wide	Roadway improvements	Moriarty	\$750,000	ICIP 2005-2009
NM41, Moriarty to Estancia	Widen roadway	Moriarty/NMDOT		

<b>Project Name and Location</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Location/Lead Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Programmed?</b>
NM333, Business I-40 to East of Rita Street	Drainage improvements	Moriarty/NMDOT	\$2,944,000	2006-2011 RTIPR
Mountainair roads	Roadway paving and improvements	Mountainair	\$23,200,000	GRIP II (partial) ICIP 2005-2009
Bridge 8	Replace bridge with wider structure	San Felipe Pueblo/NMDOT?	\$1,960,000	GRIP II
I-25 Exit 252	Interchange improvements	San Felipe Pueblo/NMDOT?		
I-25 interchange at San Felipe Elementary School	New interchange	San Felipe Pueblo/NMDOT?		
NM4 in Village of San Ysidro	Roadway realignment	San Ysidro	\$10,160,000	
Pipeline Road	Roadway improvements	Sandoval County	\$400,000	ICIP 2005-2009
Sandoval County Roads	Roadway improvements	Sandoval County	\$5,499,000	ICIP 2005-2009
Northwest Loop Road, US 550 to I-40 at Rio Puerco	New roadway – two lanes	Sandoval County	\$3,500,000	
NM290, 1.5 miles east of NM4 Junction	Bridge replacement	Sandoval County/NMDOT?	\$1,200,000	2006-2011 STIP (2010 funding)
Santa Ana Pueblo roads, community wide	Repave roads	Santa Ana Pueblo	\$1,760,000	GRIP II
NM22, I-25 west .2 miles	Roadway improvements	Santo Domingo Pueblo/NMDOT?	\$590,000	2006-2011 RTIPR
NM22/Mateo Overpass	Reconstruct overpass	Santo Domingo Pueblo/NMDOT?	\$600,000	2006-2011 RTIPR
Torrance County Roads	Roadway pavement rehabilitation and improvements	Torrance County	\$1,616,541	GRIP II
Lexco Road, I-40 to Martinez Road	Roadway improvements	Torrance County		
Landfill Road	Pave roadway	Torrance County	\$700,000	ICIP 2005-2009
NM41, Moriarty to Willard	Roadway improvements	Torrance County/NMDOT	\$400,000	\$400k for Corridor Study, 2006-2011 RTIPR

<b>Project Name and Location</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Location/Lead Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Programmed?</b>
US 60, Willard to Abo	Roadway improvements	Torrance County/NMDOT		
US 285, Lamy to Encino	Roadway improvements	Torrance County/NMDOT		
Manzano Expressway, Meadowlake to South Rio del Oro Loop	Roadway resurfacing and widening	Valencia County	\$12,000,000	GRIP II
East/West Corridor, I-25 to Manzano Expressway	New roadway and river crossing	Valencia County		
Golf Course Road, Rio Community Blvd to NM47	Repaving, street lights, and pedestrian facility	Valencia County	\$80,000	ICIP 2005-2009
Harrison Road, Camino del Llano to Southern end	Paving	Valencia County	\$425,000	ICIP 2005-2009
Monterey Blvd, Manzano to Bonita Vista	Paving	Valencia County	\$2,750,000	ICIP 2005-2009
I-25 Interchange south of NM6	New interchange connecting to new East/West Corridor	Valencia County	\$25,000,000	GRIP II (study)
NM47, Peralta Post Office to Valencia Road	Roadway reconstruction and addition of turn lane	Valencia County/NMDOT		STIP
NM47, Tome Hill Road to Marquez	Alignment study for additional turn lane	Valencia County/NMDOT	\$400,000	2006-2011 RTIPR
NM263 (Meadow Lake Road), NM6 to two miles east of Manzano Expressway	Roadway realignment and widening	Valencia County/NMDOT?	\$2,200,000	\$400k for alignment study, 2006-2011 RTIPR
South Dalies, Eighth to Fifth Street	Roadway drainage improvements	Willard	\$377,488	GRIP II
North Anita, 8 <sup>th</sup> Street to Anita	Roadway paving and drainage improvements	Willard		
North Salas, West 8 <sup>th</sup> Street to 11 <sup>th</sup> Street	Roadway paving and drainage improvements	Willard		
Willard streets, village wide	Roadway improvements	Willard	\$300,000	ICIP 2005-2009
Cabazon Road, 2 miles	Roadway improvements	Zia Pueblo		

**Table 21. Inventory of Planned Projects: Scenic and Historic Byways**

<b>Project Name and Location</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Location/Lead Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Programmed?</b>
Jemez Mountain Trail Corridor Management Plan Implementation	Corridor management plan implementation	Sandoval County	\$25,000	2007-2011 STIP
Jemez Mountain Trail Interpretive Monuments and Signs, Phase I	Location and construction of interpretive monuments and signage	Sandoval County	\$83,200	2007-2011 STIP

**Table 22. Inventory of Planned Projects: Aviation Facilities**

<b>Project Name and Location</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Location/Lead Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Programmed?</b>
Belen Alexander Municipal Airport	Construct crosswind runway and parallel taxiway with Medium Intensity Runway Lighting (MIRL). Widen parallel taxiway from 30' to 40'. Acquire additional land. Install lighted runway/taxiway signs and retro reflective markers. Install visual approach aids. Preserve and maintain existing pavement. Improve hangar area, install security (chain link fencing), supplemental wind cones (in progress). Construct snow removal equipment building, acquire snow removal equipment.	Belen	\$873,000	ICIP
Estancia Municipal Airport	Rehab existing dirt airport operating surfaces. Construct airplane parking area with tie downs and concrete helipad. Construct gate with combination lock and install reflective markings	Estancia	\$358,000	ICIP 2005-2009
Mid Valley Airpark	Preserve and maintain existing pavement	Mid-Valley Airpark Assoc.		ICIP

<b>Project Name and Location</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Location/Lead Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Programmed?</b>
Moriarty Municipal Airport	Acquire additional land. Expand hangar area. Acquire snow removal equipment, pavement sweeper and construct storage building. Construct crosswind runway and sail plan apron. Preserve and maintain existing pavement. Construct access road, fencing, aircraft parking apron and auto parking area. Upgrade water system.	Moriarty	\$3,420,050	ICIP 2005-2009
Mountainair Municipal Airport	Apply fly ash stabilizing treatment to existing runway and install reflective cones. Preserve and maintain existing facility. Extend town utilities to site to support improvements: paved runway, lighting, parking, hangars and potential light industrial/commercial facilities.	Mountainair	\$3,725,000	ICIP 2005-2009
General Aviation Feasibility Study, Sandoval County	Feasibility study for general aviation airport	Sandoval County	\$100,000	ICIP 2005-2009

## **PROJECTED TRANSPORTATION NEEDS**

The projects identified in the tables above reflect an on-going process by the communities in the RTPO to address current and projected transportation needs. As noted earlier in this document, the continued growth in population in the entire region will require additional investment in transportation infrastructure in many of our rural communities. This infrastructure ranges from safer interstates and state roads to new interchanges in key growth areas. While work such as the Valencia County Mobility Plan has identified key projects in that county, funding is still very much an issue. In Torrance and Sandoval counties, similar detailed long range planning exercises could help to identify and prioritize projects there.

This page intentionally left blank.



## **MID-REGION RURAL TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES**

### **VISIONING PROCESS**

The vision statement and goals for this update to the Long Range Transportation Plan were developed during the summer of 2006, with final adoption by the MRCOG RTPO TAC at their August 2006 meeting. MRCOG staff used the goals and objectives adopted by the RTPO TAC for the 2004 LRTP as a basis for suggesting a preliminary draft vision statement and goals for this update. The preliminary draft vision statement was revised during an RTPO TAC workshop in June 2006 and then adopted in August 2006. Both of these events occurred during regularly-scheduled, advertised meetings of the TAC. The statement below was the final result of this effort:

The vision for the Regional Long Range Transportation Plan is to provide a comprehensive multimodal transportation system that enables citizens and businesses in the rural communities to access jobs and services in a safe and timely manner, enhances the livability of communities, protects cultural values, and enables visitors to have a pleasant experience.

### **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Goal A: Maintain and improve the existing regional transportation network.

Goal B: Establish a comprehensive transportation network of sufficient capacity to meet local and regional circulation needs.

Goal C: Ensure a safe traveling experience for motorized and non-motorized users.

Goal D: Balance transportation needs with protection and preservation of the physical and cultural environments.

Goal E: Increase effective use of mass transportation and non-motorized alternatives to improve regional access and circulation.

Goal F: Encourage mixed-use and clustering land development to reduce travel distances and sprawl.

Goal G: Provide for a fully integrated, multimodal, and intermodal transportation system for the region.

Goal H: Maintain a long range transportation planning process in the regional planning area as a basis for programming improvements.

Goal I: Promote energy conservation to enhance the quality and livability of communities.

Goal J: Address the security of the transportation network, including regional emergencies.

## **SUMMARY OF NEEDS**

Tables 16 through 22 identify the needs in the rural portion of MRCOG's area. Many of these projects have been "planned" for a number of years. While they may have been included in ICIPs or identified through the RTIPR process, they have not been funded and completed, and so remain needs in these communities.

In addition to these project-specific needs, issues of concern such as drainage, safety on major roadways, and pressure from continued growth remain unaddressed on a regional scale.

## **NEEDS PRIORITIES**

While it is difficult to establish a priority list of projects when the need is so pressing in so many different directions, the RTPO TAC has established the following priority project list.

- Mass Transit Project, Sandoval County -- facility construction and project implementation
- NM4 through Jemez Springs -- multiuse trail, drainage improvements and bridge reconstruction
- I-25 North Belen -- interchange reconfiguration
- Edgewood I-40 Exit -- new construction
- NM47, Bosque Farms to I-25 -- construct center median
- NM47, Peralta Post Office to Valencia Road -- construct center median
- NM4 realignment around Jemez Pueblo
- Mountainair Roads -- paving and improvements
- Bridge 8 on NM313 -- reconstruction
- NM4 realignment around San Ysidro
- Northwest Loop Road, US550 to I-40 at Rio Puerco-- new construction
- NM41, Moriarty to Willard -- roadway improvements
- East/West Corridor, I-25 to Manzano Expressway -- new interchange, new roadway and river crossing

In addition to these project-specific priorities, the issues of drainage, safety on major roadways, and pressure from continued growth remain unaddressed on a regional scale. Priority should be placed on addressing these areas of concern.

## **IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

### **RURAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING VISION**

Provide a comprehensive multimodal transportation system that enables citizens and businesses in the rural communities to access jobs and services in a safe and timely manner, enhances quality of livability of communities, and enables visitors to have a pleasant experience.

### **PROJECTS AND SERVICES**

Implementation of all aspects of the RTPO Long Range Transportation Plan will require substantial levels of commitment from local communities and their elected officials, as well as support for the NMDOT and Federal Department of Transportation. Given the low revenue levels for many communities in the rural area, close coordination between state legislators, local officials, and the NMDOT will be essential. The MRCOG will continue to support this coordination effort in every way possible, while providing technical support and managing the regional decision-making process.

### **POLICY RECOMMENDATION PRIORITIES**

The following policy recommendations regarding priorities for the Rural Transportation Planning Area of the MRCOG were approved by the RTPO Technical Advisory Committee at their December 2007 meeting.

- Identify specific safety corridors. Identify and implement ways to enhance safety on those corridors.
- Increase public transportation
- Increase funding for roadway and bridge maintenance (pavement and drainage)
- Increase funding for aviation needs
- Identify and construct the interchanges needed in key growth areas
- Provide for bicycle, equestrian and pedestrian uses

This page intentionally left blank.

**APPENDIX A – CURRENT TRAFFIC FLOW MAPS FOR COUNTIES IN MRCOG  
RURAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**(TO BE PROVIDED IN PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT)**