

State of New Mexico
County of Grant

Resolution # R-04-34

Request for Legislative Support for Regional Transit System

WHEREAS, the County of Grant operates a public transit system that currently serves the citizens of Grant, Hidalgo, and Luna counties; and,

WHEREAS, the Grant County Board of Commissioners would like to insure the financial stability of this system; and,

WHEREAS, the County of Grant has prepared a budget and plan for expansion of the current services to allow for better service for the residents of the aforementioned counties; and,

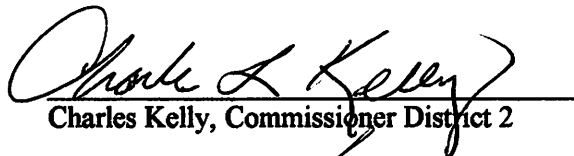
WHEREAS, the County of Grant considers the development of an expanded transit system to be integral to the economic development activities of the region;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Grant County Board of County Commissioners, that the attached plan for a Regional Transit System be considered for funding by the State Legislature as an economic development project during the 2005 Legislative Session. Grant County also asks that the area's legislators support this initiative as they seek to develop positive projects for the region.

Approved and adopted in a regular meeting of the Grant County Board of County Commissioners on this 9th day of December, 2004.

Attest:


Joseph Arellano, Commissioner District 1


Charles Kelly, Commissioner District 2


Henry Torres, Commissioner District 3


Mary Ann Sedillo, County Clerk

CORRE CAMINOS

A Future Regional Transit System

New Mexico must commit to a comprehensive long-term plan to develop regional transit. The "windfall" from the high oil prices, provides the financial resources to implement statewide transit. The purpose for 73-25-2 is:

- A. Serve the public by providing for the creation of regional networks of save and efficient public transit service.**
- B. Allow multi-jurisdictional public transit systems to reduce the congestion of single-occupant motor vehicle traffic by providing transportation options for residents;**
- C. Decrease automobile accidents by reducing traffic congestion of freeways and streets;**
- D. Reduce noise and air pollution produced by motor vehicles;**
- E. Prolong and extend the life of New Mexico's existing roadways by easing the traffic burden;**
- F. Provide residents with a choice of transportation alternatives so that seniors, youth, low-income and mobility-impaired residents and others unable to drive or afford motor vehicles continue to have full access to the goods, services, jobs and activities of the community.**
- G. Prove the New Mexico economy by increasing workforce and citizen access to education and higher paying jobs; and**
- H. Prolong and extend petroleum resources.**

Grant County, in the heart of rural Southwestern New Mexico, operates Corre Caminos, named the Best Transit in the State, March 2004. The Grant County Commission, Town of Silver City, community organizations, businessmen, schools, churches, etc. have actively supported rural transportation development. Their long- term vision is to have a regional public transit system serving the four southwestern New Mexico counties and eventually linking to the Rio Grande corridor.

The Grant Area Transit Authority (GATA), advisory board to Corre Caminos, proposes to work closely with the State and region to develop a comprehensive long-term Regional Transit Plan. The plan will build upon the transportation experience at hand and provide a mechanism to address regional transit questions and issues, including infrastructure, in this very rural portion of the State.

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A. Stakeholders: a stakeholder is anyone or entity that is or will be impacted by a regional public transit system.

1. The general public needs public transportation that is safe, timely, affordable and reliable (STAR)
2. Business: Commerce depends in some manner on transportation – employees can get to their jobs and home again in a reliable manner, customers are brought to the business, attendance at business development/economic development type community meetings is facilitated, and more.
3. Health Care (hospitals, primary care and mental health clinics, etc.): Providing access to services and activities that enhance not only a communities' health and wellness but also its quality of life is a primary function of public transit.
4. Local, State and Federal regional facilities: Access to local and regional government facilities or service sites is key for provision of safety net services.
5. Educational facilities: Public transportation provides a means of transport before and after regular school hours (recreation center and other "after-school" programs), affords transportation to nontraditional students such as senior citizens, and allows students from outlying areas to attend a university/vocational training 60 – 100 miles distant.
6. Municipalities: Both county-wide and regional transit connects diverse and distant communities
7. Transportation: Intra- and interstate transportation connections will be facilitated through a regional system. Amtrak, Greyhound and other interstate bus lines stop only at Deming and Lordsburg in the southwest NM region. Mesa Airlines operates to Albuquerque out of the Grant County Airport. The plan proposes an eventual interface with the Rio Grande Corridor.

B. Benefits: what can be expected from a rural, regional transit system?

1. Stimulates Economic Development: businesses interested in relocating often ask, "Is public transportation available?"
2. Jobs: A regional transit system will produce added jobs for Grant, Luna, Catron and Hidalgo counties. New jobs have an economic multiplier effect with the workers and their families needing food, shelter, services, entertainment, etc. in the various communities. Jobs include;
 - a) Office workers

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- b) Drivers
 - c) Mechanics
 - d) Dispatchers
 - e) Planners
 - f) Maintenance personnel
 - g) Construction jobs, when building terminal(s) and shelters.
 - h) Marketing professionals
 - i) Concession workers
3. Improved quality of life for the people of southwest New Mexico: all citizens are served on regular transit routes with special services for those in need.
 4. Improved access to higher education: connections to university and technical training facilities in Deming, Silver City, Lordsburg and Arizona.
 5. Environmental benefits: Conserves fuel & resources, cleaner air, less congestion

C. Approach:

GATA proposes that the plan entail three phases:

- *Near-term Phase: years 1 to 5
- *Mid-term Phase: years 6 to 10
- *Far-term Phase: 10 years plus.

Near-term phase (Years 1 to 5)

Goals and Objectives:

- Identify public transportation needs and opportunities.
- Establish the Southwestern New Mexico Regional Transit District.
- Secure funding for the Regional Transit District.
- Work with the New Mexico Legislature to establish a State Public Transit Fund to provide for the local cash match requirements.
- Secure Federal funding for the proposed regional transit operation.
- Establish an initial set of routes and stops.
- Locate and establish an appropriate initial transit terminal.
- Operate in a variety of environments and terrains. Document and build database.
- Develop working relationships with communities and counties.
- Establish connections to scheduled airline, bus and rail operations.
- Document economic impacts of rural public transportation.
- Hold an annual public transportation symposium.

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Mid-term phase (Years 6 to 10)

Goals and Objectives

- Continue to work with State and Federal authorities to provide outstanding public transportation to Southwestern New Mexico
- Continue to acquire experience in managing and operating a regional public transit system in a variety of environments.
- Establish routes that connect to the Rio Grande corridor.
- Establish additional terminals and transit stops.
- Establish a Transportation Learning Center to support and complement the Regional Transit System effort.
- Utilize the Transportation Learning Center to analyze data and conduct related research.

Far-term phase (10 years plus)

Objectives

- Have in place a safe, timely, affordable and reliable Southwestern New Mexico Regional Transit System.
- Coordinate with other regions of the state to have a statewide network of public surface transportation.
- Continue to acquire information on modular transportation aspects by working with municipalities on a major highway (buses and large trucks) and with rail (trains) or air service.
- Continue to utilize the Transportation Learning Center to analyze data and conduct research, and share information.
- Establish additional terminals and transit stops.
- Continue to integrate Southwestern New Mexico Regional Transit with communities and transportation in the Rio Grande Corridor.

D. Needs and Costs: funding is a critical element if the goals and objectives of this proposal are to be achieved. **ATTACHED FOR YOUR REVIEW IS A PRILIMARY ADMINSTRATIVE BUDGET AS A SAMPLE OF PROJECTED COSTS (PAGE 4).**

E. Summary:

- It is time for our state to develop a comprehensive integrated modular Regional Transit System Plan.

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- **Current state resources including the “windfall” from oil revenues provides for initiation and further development of the plan and regional transit system**
- **The proposal provides a means to methodically develop this plan and obtain “hands on” experience and information needed to make sound decisions.**
- **The proposal utilizes the expertise and experience of an established and state recognized transit system.**
- **A building block phased approach is proposed and the associated estimated costs are shown.**

This proposal is a win-win for the state of New Mexico and its citizens.

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RTD Projected Administrative Budget

ITEM	04-05 APPROVED BUDGET	PROPOSED Increase	05-06 Proposed Budget
VEHICLE INSURANCE	\$ 4,900.00	\$ 3,270.00	\$ 8,170.00
POSTAGE	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 600.00
ADVERTISEMENT	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 10,000.00
SUPPLIES	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 2,500.00
UTILITIES	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 3,000.00
TELEPHONE	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 5,000.00
SALARIES			
DIRECTOR	\$ 32,000.00	\$ 13,000.00	\$ 45,000.00
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	\$ 18,500.00	\$ 18,500.00	\$ 37,000.00
CLERK/DISPATCHER 1	\$ -	\$ 32,000.00	\$ 32,000.00
Marketing/Planner	\$ -	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00
FRINGE BENEFITS	\$ 19,000.00	\$ 30,500.00	\$ 49,500.00
AUDIT	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
DUES & SUBSCRIPT	\$ 400.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 700.00
TRAVEL	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 12,500.00	\$ 14,000.00
LAZARO/NOEL-TRAINING	\$ 2,000.00		\$ 2,000.00
TRAINING	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 3,500.00
EQUIPMENT REPAIR	\$ 100.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 400.00
PRINTING & COPYING	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
PHYSICALS	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 3,500.00
DRUG & ALCOHOL TESTING	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 3,000.00
OTHER-OFFICE LEASE	\$ 9,200.00	\$ 9,200.00	\$ 18,400.00
TOTAL OPERATING	\$ 107,900.00	\$ 161,370.00	\$ 269,270.00
LOCAL SHARE (20%)	\$ 21,580.00	\$ 32,274.00	\$ 53,854.00
FEDERAL SHARE (80%)	\$ 86,320.00	\$ 129,096.00	\$ 215,416.00

Fringe=Dir (\$45,000 x .38) + ASS. DIR. (\$35,000 x .38) + D1 \$25,000 X
.38) + D(SC) (\$25,000 X .38) === \$49,400