



# New Mexico Transportation Information Exchange

April 2, 2003  
Vol. 2, Issue 4  
Surface Transportation Policy Project - New Mexico

---

## **FEATURES:**

### **ON THE CALENDAR**

#### **NM LEGISLATIVE ALERT**

- Success at the Roundhouse

#### **PRESS RELEASES**

- New Poll Shows Americans Eager to Walk More
- STPP Names Anne P. Canby as New President

#### **NEWS FROM THE NM TRANSPORTATION INITIATIVE**

- Walk Albuquerque
- RE Use It! New Mexico's Historic Railroad Districts
- TEA Update - Call Your Representative Today
- Getting "Street Wise"

#### **RESOURCES**

- STPP New Mexico Office Launches Website
- Construction on the Turquoise Trail
- American Disabilities Act and Transportation Issues
- Context Sensitive Solutions

---

### **ON THE CALENDAR**

---

April 8: WALK Albuquerque meeting. Time: 5:30. Location: Birdsong Books, 1708 Central Ave. SE. Information: Diane Scena, 266-8506, e-mail: [dscena@earthlink.net](mailto:dscena@earthlink.net).

May 18-21: America's Byways Conference 2003, sponsored by National Scenic Byways Program. Location: Albuquerque. Conference information:  
<http://www.byways.org/community/center/conference/index.html>

June 11 & 12: NMSHTD Bicycle, Pedestrian and Equestrian (BPE) meeting. Location: Grants. Information: Greg White, Coordinator, 827-5248, e-mail: [Greg.White@nmshtd.state.nm.us](mailto:Greg.White@nmshtd.state.nm.us).

---

#### **NM LEGISLATIVE ALERT**

---

## **SUCCESS AT THE ROUNDHOUSE**

Congratulations and thank you to the many advocates and professionals that have supported the successful transportation reform bills that recently passed in the New Mexico State Legislature! This has been a landmark year for the transportation reform community.

Five transportation reform bills and two memorials successfully moved their way through the maze of committees, amendments, and floor votes in the New Mexico House and Senate. Special thanks to the individuals and organizations who are part of the New Mexico Transportation Initiative.

A huge thanks to the primary sponsors of the bills, including Senator Ben Altamirano (D-Silver City), Senator Dede Feldman (D-Albuquerque), Senator Linda Lopez (D-Bernalillo County), and Senator Bernadette Sanchez (D-Albuquerque). From the House, thanks to House Transportation Committee Chairman Representative Dan Silva (D-Albuquerque), Representative Brian Moore (R-Clayton), Representative Lucky Varela (D-Santa Fe), and Representative Richard Vigil (D- Las Vegas).

Governor Richardson has already signed two of the passed bills. They include:

1. SB 34, Enabling Regional Transit Districts. Sponsored by Senator Ben Altamirano, the bill provides a framework for local governments to cooperate on regional transit projects. The funding appropriation of \$1.9 million was not approved. On the last day, the appropriation contained within the budget bill, HB 644, was amended out by Senator Carroll Leavell (R-Jal) on a 22 to 21 vote. The companion bill, HB 102, sponsored by Representative Dan Silva, moved through the Senate committees, but time ran out for a Senate floor vote.
2. Senate Bill 561, Transit Cap Removal. Sponsored by Senator Dede Feldman, the bill removes the expenditure cap on funds used by NMSHTD for "Public Mass Transportation." Its companion bill, House Bill 534, sponsored by Representative Lucky Varela, also moved through the Senate committees but time ran out for a Senate floor vote.

Governor Richardson has not yet signed three of the passed bills, and calls or e-mail messages supporting the following are encouraged:

### **1. SB 556, SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS PROGRAM**

The bill, sponsored by Senator Linda Lopez, initiates the Safe Routes to Schools program within NMSHTD. Although the appropriation was removed from the bill, two memorials (SJM 55, HM 16), entitled, "Safer Pedestrian and Bicycle Traffic," advises the NMSHTD to direct its efforts and federal transportation funding on "improving bicycle and pedestrian access and on traffic-calming projects in school zones."

### **2. SB 640: NM PASSENGER RAIL STUDY**

Sponsored by Senator Bernadette M. Sanchez, the bill provides funding for a feasibility study regarding the potential for passenger rail service linking El Paso-Juarez through New Mexico to Denver.

3. HB 881, NMSHTD NAME CHANGE, sponsored by Rep. Dan Silva. The bill changes the name of the New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department to the New Mexico Department of Transportation.

To contact the Governor's Office, call (505) 476-2200 or 476-2206. Or, send an e-mail to the Governor's Office of Policy and Planning, Bill Hume, Director: [William.Hume@state.nm.us](mailto:William.Hume@state.nm.us).

Related bills fared less well, but there will be opportunity for advances in future legislative sessions. They include:

1. HB 532, Mile-based Auto Insurance Coverage, also known as "Pay As You Drive." Rep. Dan Silva sponsored this bill, and Rep. Brian Moore sponsored a similar bill, HB 790.
2. HB 690, Creating a State Transit Fund, allowing distributions from the gross receipts tax on gasoline to support any transit program or system in the state. Sponsored by Rep. Dan Silva.
3. SB 420, Regional Transit District Gross Receipts Tax Act, authorizing a tax for management, construction and operation of a public transit system within a district area, if approved by voters. Sponsored by Senator Linda Lopez.
4. SB 666, Local Option to Fund Rail System, authorizing local governments to impose a local gas tax of up to three cents per gallon to be used for transit and light rail purposes. Sponsored by Senator Dede Feldman.

---

## **PRESS RELEASES**

---

### **NEW POLL SHOWS AMERICANS EAGER TO WALK MORE, SUPPORT SPENDING ON A BETTER WALKING ENVIRONMENT**

Albuquerque, NM -- A new national survey released today on attitudes toward walking finds that Americans want to walk more places more often, and are willing to invest in making it possible. Poll results show that if given a choice between walking more and driving more, 55 percent of adults choose walking more. The poll shows overwhelming support for policies to make the walking environment less dangerous for people of all ages, and especially children. A majority of 68 percent favor putting more federal dollars toward improving walkability, even within a constrained budget.

"We need to make walking a safe, easy and appealing option here in New Mexico," said Judith M. Espinosa, Director of UNM's ATR Institute and national board member of STPP. "Walking is a critical part of the transportation system, but our institutions, programs, policies, and funding aren't providing the balance that citizens want."

Nearly half of Americans consider traffic where they live a problem, yet building new roads is the least popular long-term solution among choices offered in the survey. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, people in the Mountain States region are spending an average of 65 minutes per day in a car, and 51 percent of all of their trips under a half-mile are made in a vehicle.

Sixty-six percent of the people polled said that the best solution is to "improve public transportation" or "develop communities where people do not have to drive long distances to work or shop." Only 25 percent of Americans advocate building new roads.

Policies that would make streets more friendly for walkers find overwhelming support in the poll:

- Design Streets for Slower Traffic Speeds: 84%

A wide majority support using state transportation dollars for street design that slows down traffic in residential areas, even though they may have to drive more slowly themselves. A majority of Americans (63 percent) report speeding as a problem in their neighborhoods.

- Use Federal Funds to Make Walking Safer from Traffic: 68%

A majority support increasing federal spending on making sure people can safely walk and cross the street, even within a constrained budget.

- Fund Safe Routes to School: 74%

A majority support using state transportation dollars to protect the walk to school from traffic dangers, making it easier for children to walk to school, even within a constrained budget.

Recently, Senator Linda Lopez (D-Bernalillo County) passed legislation (SB 556) that would set up a "Safe Routes to Schools" program within the New Mexico Highway and Transportation Department. The program is designed to make it easier for kids to bike and walk to school through funding engineering improvements around schools.

The New Mexico Legislature also passed companion memorials (SJM 55, HM 16) requesting that New Mexico direct more of its efforts and federal transportation funding on improving bicycle and pedestrian access and on traffic-calming projects in school zones rather than simply building and widening intersections.

Having a walking-friendly environment is especially important in light of the current epidemics of obesity and diabetes, which are caused and exacerbated by physical inactivity. Currently, one in five New Mexican adults are obese. In New Mexico, about 17 percent of people 40 and over have diabetes and one in every 400 to 500 children and adolescents has type 1 diabetes.

"If Americans had more opportunities on an everyday basis to walk and bike to work, we would be a much healthier nation. No wonder we have an epidemic of obesity in this country," commented Dr. Steve Pilon, an Albuquerque physician and walking and biking advocate.

"In New Mexico the accident rate for pedestrians is also disproportionately high, and we need to address this by investing in safe, convenient facilities for walking," said DeAnza Valencia, Director of the New Mexico STPP office. Currently, New Mexico is spending less than one percent of its federal transportation dollars on pedestrian and bicycle facilities. In Albuquerque, 22.4 percent of all traffic deaths were pedestrians, much higher than the national average of 11.8 percent.

The Surface Transportation Policy Project made recommendations to Congress on how the federal transportation law, up for reauthorization this year, could give communities the resources to become more walkable:

- Authorize a national Safe Routes to School program to dedicate federal safety funds to improving the walking environment around schools;
- Incorporate pedestrian and bicycle accommodations in every transportation project;
- Provide local decision-makers with more of the federal transportation dollars, as local governments own 75 percent of the roads and streets in America's transportation system; and
- Improve data and research efforts - currently only walking to work is counted in traffic studies.

#### **STPP NAMES ANNE P. CANBY AS NEW PRESIDENT**

The Surface Transportation Policy Project (STPP) announced that Anne P. Canby will become the next President of the organization. Ms. Canby brings a wealth of professional transportation

experience to the well-known reform coalition. She is a nationally recognized leader in the field of transportation, having served in many senior policy roles over more than two decades. From 1993 to 2000, she was the Secretary of the Delaware Department of Transportation (DOT). At the Delaware DOT she presided over dramatic changes, transforming a traditional highway agency into a multi-modal mobility provider, boosting public transportation services in the state, and promoting an open, collaborative decision-making process with many new transportation constituencies.

“I’m pleased to bring my background, experience and many vantage points to STPP,” said Canby. “I have been working for many years to implement transportation reform as a DOT secretary, a leader in American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), and in the U.S. Department of Transportation. I now look forward to helping STPP continue its critical efforts to provide better transportation choices and build more livable communities for all Americans.”

Ms. Canby has also served on the boards of numerous transportation organizations, including the Transportation Research Board, AASHTO, and the Northeastern Association of State Transportation Officials (NASTO). She is a member of the Urban Land Institute and the Institute of Transportation Engineers. She has been recognized for her leadership by the American Public Transportation Association, the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations, and the Delaware Chapter of the American Planning Association. She will assume her new position with STPP on April 1.

---

## **NEWS FROM THE NM TRANSPORTATION INITIATIVE**

---

### **WALK ALBUQUERQUE**

Diane Scena

Walk Albuquerque (WalkABQ) is a citizen-based advocacy group working to make Albuquerque a pedestrian-friendly community, as an indicator of a healthy and livable community. We seek to provide a voice for pedestrians in transportation and land use planning issues, and to influence policy, design and engineering decisions to improve the pedestrian environment.

Walk Albuquerque, formerly the Route 66 Walkability Advocacy Group, initially focused on Central Avenue. Central Ave. is a corridor that connects so many centers, including UNM, downtown, Old Town, the State Fair, the BioPark, and Nob Hill. The group is particularly interested in the opportunities and potential issues related to the rapid transit proposals for the Central corridor. WalkABQ is also interested in Safe Routes to School programs as a means to increase awareness and provide a focus for neighborhood-based pedestrian improvements.

To make this a truly broad-based grass roots initiative, we are looking for new members who are ready to work for change in their neighborhoods and/or citywide. The results will benefit all citizens in improved health, safety, air quality and urban form. A pedestrian-friendly city also fosters independence and mobility choice for children and others who are not able to drive. We meet monthly on the second Tuesday of the month at 5:30 pm.

If you are interested in being added to our e-mail list, or would like more information, contact Diane Scena, Director, at 266-8506, [dscena@earthlink.net](mailto:dscena@earthlink.net), or Doug Deaton, Coordinator, at [DCD87106@cs.com](mailto:DCD87106@cs.com).

## **RE USE IT! NEW MEXICO’S HISTORIC RAILROAD DISTRICTS**

Bay Stevens, Cultural Asset Development

It was standing room only for the RE Use It! workshop hosted by Cultural Asset Development in March. The workshop focused on the rich heritage of raii side commercial districts and their role in the future redevelopment of town centers. Community representatives from Tucumcari, Clovis, Mountainair, Clayton, Tularosa, Carrizozo, Portales and Harding County came to Albuquerque to get help on re-using historic raii side structures. Professionals and advisors came from as far away as Washington DC to assist.

The Town of Portales won the \$500 McCune Foundation award for the best presentation. They will use the prize as seed money to move their depot from its present location, straddled by railroad tracks, to a site in the historic district nearby.

Presentations, field trips, an evening of documentary films, and a special exhibit at the genealogy library on Central Avenue added up to two full days of activities. Visit [www.reuseit.info](http://www.reuseit.info) for news and updates.

**TEA-3 UPDATE - CALL YOUR REPRESENTATIVE TODAY AND URGE "STAY THE COURSE, MAKE TEA-3 EVEN BETTER."**

Congress is now working on a number of fronts related to the renewal of TEA-21, the nation's surface transportation law, scheduled to expire Sept. 30. This week, members are presenting project requests and new policy initiatives for federal highway and transit programs at a series of hearings held by the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee. Nearly \$300 billion is expected to be spent under the next law. These investments contain the potential to provide equitable transportation options for all citizens to have access to jobs and opportunities, or to leave communities struggling with design, policies and funding serving automobiles at the expense of other modes and perpetuating sprawl. In the current political climate, we must fight to preserve the environmental protections and landmark reforms established in ISTEA and preserved in TEA-21.

As Congress begins to focus more on renewal of the law, it is urgent that you check in with your Representatives and remind them of public opinion and the priorities of constituents using the transportation system. Contact your Representatives today and urge them to "stay the course" and build upon the ISTEA-TEA-21 framework in TEA-21 reauthorization.

Deliver this message, giving local examples:

- Americans want and deserve better transportation choices.
- TEA-21 is a good law that has served our community well.
- We need to invest even more in transit, bicycling, and walking facilities.
- Greater emphasis should be placed on "fix it first" policies.
- Local communities should have more control of federal transportation dollars.
- Environmental protections contained in NEPA and environmental programs like CMAQ should be preserved.
- The public also needs stronger assurances that new infrastructure investments will go towards making our air cleaner, our communities more livable and healthier, our economies stronger and more equitable, and our nation more secure.

To reach your representative, call the Capitol Switchboard at 1-800-839-5276. Visit [www.congress.org](http://www.congress.org) to generate a letter or personalized email message.

"Stay the Course: How to Make TEA-21 Even Better" can be used to help you and your organization clarify your message in support of better transportation investments and to communicate with elected officials. The policy platform can be read and downloaded at <http://www.transact.org/report.asp?id=203>

View the past and current calendar of hearings in the US Congress on TEA-3: <http://www.tea3.org/calendar.asp>

## **GETTING "STREET WISE"**

Joanne McEntire

The opportunity to learn more about the design of streets that are both pedestrian-friendly and auto-efficient was provided when New Urban News presented "Context-Driven Street Design," an interactive audio conference. The speakers, Peter Swift, Rick Hall, and Rick Chellman, have designed street projects and reviewed the research on context sensitive solutions. They suggested an alternative framework to enhance the AASHTO Green Book.

Recent studies confirm that the width of lanes, the effect of parked vehicles on the sides of the street, and the overall streetscape impact pedestrian-related accident rates. Traffic calming strategies include roundabouts at busy intersections and street medians, providing opportunities for drivers and pedestrians to establish eye contact. The speakers cited a study that found a 76% decrease in injury-producing crashes after roundabouts were installed. "Street diets," developed by Dan Burden, an expert in re-designing streets, have been successful in cities such as Seattle, as proven by reductions in collisions as well as increased capacity.

Transportation must have character as well as capacity. The speakers described the limitations created by AASHTO's classification system—only three types appear in two settings: urban or rural settings. The types are based solely on anticipated capacity. Thus, an arterial in an "urban setting" can be designed according to the same specifications, regardless of its surroundings. Vast improvements in road design could be developed if an additional set of street zones were included in the AASHTO design standards, or Green Book, including boulevard, avenue, and several others.

The "Transect," a classification system supported by the Congress of New Urbanism, identifies a range of land use patterns that occur in rural and urban areas, and the suburban or ex-urban places in between. It also suggests street types that correspond to the six land use patterns, so that the context of the place is an indicator of the kind of street that is appropriate. The motto is: "Plan land use first... transportation second." The speakers emphasized that mobility in urban places demands more modes, not just more lanes for traffic. A new publication on the Transect and context sensitive solutions for streets is scheduled for fall release.

---

## **RESOURCES**

---

### **STPP NEW MEXICO OFFICE LAUNCHES WEBSITE**

Be sure to check out the newest edition to the STPP website—a link to STPP-NM! It features past editions of the NM Transportation Information Exchange e-newsletter, recent press releases, and additional information on the STPP New Mexico office. Coming soon: a Resources Section with links to documents produced by STPP-NM. <http://www.transact.org/nm/>

## **CONSTRUCTION ON THE TURQUOISE TRAIL**

Ross Lockridge, webmaster

Recent website updates now include photos of portions of the Turquoise Trail, including images of the re-constructed San Pedro Overlook and the turn-out for PaaKo. Also provided are links to progressive DOTs involved with Context Sensitive Design programs for the education of their staff, recent publications & data, opinions of experts, web sites (including recommended standards for rural roads) and citizen group actions.

<http://www.raintreecounty.com/SaveLost.html>

## **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT AND TRANSPORTATION ISSUES**

The Independent Living Research Utilization program is a national center for information, training, research, and technical assistance in independent living. Its goal is to expand the body of knowledge in independent living and to improve utilization of results of research programs and demonstration projects in this field.

Two recent web-conferences related to transportation are available in text form on their website: 1) "Transportation and the ADA - Updates: What's Happening with ADA Transportation Around the Country," January 29; and 2) "Transportation and the ADA - Updates: Providing Non-discriminatory service in fixed route and paratransit services," February 12. View the archive of webcasts at: <http://WWW.ILRU.ORG/online/archive/index.html>.

The Disability Law Resource Project at ILRU is one of ten Regional Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers. Address: 2323 S. Shepherd, Suite 1000, Houston, TX 77019. Phone: (713) 520-0232 (w/ TTY)

## **CONTEXT SENSITIVE SOLUTIONS**

Serving as an online resource on Context Sensitive Design (CSD) the website provides a variety of links to DOT and citizens group websites, as well as links to individual documents. A Yahoo discussion group is also available to all interested people. <http://home.earthlink.net/~ckkaufman>

The NM Transportation Information Exchange is an e-mail newsletter of the Surface Transportation Policy Project's New Mexico office. Submissions are welcome on transportation and community-building topics. Send material to Joanne McEntire, Editor: [jomcen@spinn.net](mailto:jomcen@spinn.net); or mail: STPP-NM, 1001 Marquette Ave., Albuquerque, 87102; or Fax: (505) 248-1361.

To subscribe, send your name, address, e-mail and affiliation to [dvalencia@transact.org](mailto:dvalencia@transact.org). To unsubscribe, send a reply to this e-mail newsletter with "Unsubscribe" in the body of the message.

Editor: Joanne McEntire, [jomcen@spinn.net](mailto:jomcen@spinn.net).

STPP-NM Director: DeAnza Valencia, [dvalencia@transact.org](mailto:dvalencia@transact.org)

The Surface Transportation Policy Project is a national coalition working for transportation policies and investments that protect neighborhoods, increase access to goods and services, promote social equity, preserve the environment, strengthen the economy, and improve quality of life. STPP has offices in Albuquerque, New York, Pittsburgh, Sacramento, San Francisco, and Washington DC.