



New Mexico Transportation Information Exchange

NM TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION EXCHANGE

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Surface Transportation Policy Project - New Mexico

CALENDAR NEWS FLASH! JOIN US AT STPP-NM NEWS CONFERENCE! BUILDING DIVERSITY INTO OUR TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM: WHY NEW MEXICO NEEDS TO RE-EXAMINE TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

Officials from New Mexico's Surface Transportation Policy Project and other groups interested in transportation reform will host a news conference in front of the State Capitol in Santa Fe on **Tuesday, January 29th at 12:15 PM.**

A coalition of activists from groups including the Conservation Voters Alliance, New Mexico Conference of Churches and the Las Vegas/San Miguel County Chamber of Commerce will jointly call for an interim legislative committee to take a look at why New Mexico has lagged so far behind neighboring states and the rest of the country in developing serious programs that offer transportation alternatives. We have seen the need for alternatives that enhance public health and safety as well as promote economic development in rural and urban areas.

The nation as a whole has made tremendous progress with transportation over the last decade, thanks to changes in federal funding through federal ISTEA and TEA- 21 legislation. However, New Mexico has done little more with its federal money than build new roads, ignoring the condition of current roads and avoiding major improvements in transit, bikeways and other transportation modes.

Welcome to the first edition of STPP-NM's Transportation Information Exchange! My name is DeAnza Valencia and I am the Director of STPP's New Mexico Office. I have had the pleasure of meeting many of you through STPP's recent national survey outreach process as well as through our December statewide transportation coalition meeting. I want to thank each of you and your organizations for becoming a part of this exciting transportation reform network. Things are already underway here in the STPP office with upcoming press and legislative events in Santa Fe, as well as soon to be released STPP-NM reports and publications.

One of the goals of the STPP-NM office is to provide you with policy research, strategic tools and informational resources. Another way that we would like to serve you is through this newsletter. We hope that this e-newsletter will provide you with a forum to share your stories and news items. It is a way that we, as a reform-minded community, can remain connected, informed and, most importantly, active. This is

YOUR newsletter and we welcome your submissions and ideas. I look forward to working with each of you in the near future to ensure that we bring transportation policy into better service of the lives of all New Mexicans.

Sinceramente,
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ON THE CALENDAR

1000 Friends of New Mexico Growth Forum: How Does Urbanization Affect Our Public Health?,
Thursday, Jan. 31, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Location: Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, 2401 12th Street NW, Albuquerque (between I-40 and Menaul). Call 1000 Friends at 848-8232.

GABAC (Greater Albuquerque Bicycling Advisory Committee – a city/county committee), Monday, Feb. 10, 4:30 p.m. Location: Old City Hall, 3rd Floor conference room. Call Steve Decker at 768-2526

NEWS FROM THE NM TRANSPORTATION INITIATIVE TEAMS

(See the next section for a report on the NM Transportation Initiative's first meeting)

PRESERVE CULTURAL LANDSCAPES, HISTORIC, SACRED SITES AND SCENIC BYWAYS ISSUE ACTION TEAM

From Julianne Fletcher, Executive Director of New Mexico Heritage Preservation Alliance (NMHPA)

The Hondo Valley is on the list! The New Mexico Heritage Preservation Alliance (NMHPA) announced their Most Endangered Places this month. The Alliance's ten

sites include this historic landscape which is endangered by its own highway that may become too wide and too fast. (Editor)

The Hondo Valley in Lincoln County is considered significant as an endangered place. It was shaped as a cultural landscape by Hispanic farmers and ranchers beginning in the 1850s, the Hondo Valley gained fame as a result of the Lincoln County War of the 1880s. Through the notoriety of that war and its notorious folk hero, Billy the Kid, the landscape and landmarks of the Hondo Valley have assumed a key place not only in New Mexico history but in the representation of the American West in popular culture.

In the 20th century, the Hondo Valley became an internationally known visual representation of New Mexico through the work of leading 20th century artists who called it home. An adapted 1930s schoolhouse today serves as home and studio to internationally acclaimed artist Luis Jimenez. San Patricio grew famous with Peter Hurd, son-in-law of N.C. Wyeth. The work of Hurd, Henriette Wyeth, John Meigs, Michael Hurd, Carol Hurd Rogers, Peter Rogers and others has spread knowledge of the Hondo Valley's cultural landscape. The hand-dug communal acequia system continues to operate today, not only as irrigation but also as a social system and a traditional and legal means of allocating a scarce resource.

The threat to this landscape is the widening of U.S. Highway 70, now the New Mexico Department of Transportation's highest priority. It would increase the volume and speed of traffic, increase air and water pollution, require a greater number of road cuts, endanger the watershed and riparian habitat, and destroy or damage tree lines, acequias, fruit stands and certain older adobe buildings.

FOLLOW-UP NOTE

According to Susan Jimenez, an active member of the citizens' group, "We would like the Hondo Valley to be designated as a rural or cultural landscape. The views Hurd painted are still alive today, however being threatened by the "improved" highway. We have organized as a grass roots community organization, and have tried to talk to the transportation department, who has hired Parsons Brinkerhoff, a engineering consulting firm." Still, the citizens are not getting their concerns and issues heard and they continue to seek support from other New Mexicans and design consultants.

"Citizens of Hondo Valley (Lincoln County, NM) Resist 4-lane Road" describes the valley's battle at <http://www.raintreecounty.com/SaVCPCom.html>. The site includes a very powerful image by Luis Jimenez, which is available as a poster at \$20.00. Contact the Valley Community Preservation Commission, P. O. Box 62, Hondo, NM 88336 or by e-mail at vcpchondo@yahoo.com. (Editor)

FLEXIBLE HIGHWAY STANDARDS ISSUE ACTION TEAM

Ross Lockridge has a website that provides a great description of the need for public action on issues affecting new and re-constructed state highways. "As departments of transportation, having "completed" the Interstate Highway System, turn their attention to the reconstruction of American's rural roads, they have tended to bring with them the inappropriate design models of the "maximized-constant-speed

interstate" concept. These wider and straighter speed inducing (& sprawl inducing) design models have little relevance when applied to the design of rural residential "collector" roads. There is need in the country to develop traffic calming standards for rural and scenic roads."

Visit the website, Resources for Saving America's Rural (Collector) ROADS & Communities at: <http://www.raintreecounty.com/savingRd.html>. (Editor)

NEW MEXICO'S SCENIC BYWAYS UNDER SIEGE

From Ross Lockridge, Turquoise Trail Citizens Advisory Committee

Our scenic highways are threatened in the name of accommodating trucks and putting "low maintenance" as the priority in the design. Thus NMSHTD is designing not only wider lanes than are evidently necessary for over-all safety, but also they design in the name of maintenance-free roads. To keep moisture from getting under the road, they design the roadside tapers with extra asphalt, which is understandable, but they leave it exposed. They surround guardrails with the same. Growing green things, BEWARE!

The landscape architect they hired (to their credit) is apparently being ignored (not to their credit). Concerning the planned guardrail installation, Donal Simpson recently wrote: "The guardrails for the project are still shown to be installed with an additional 3.6 feet of pavement beneath and behind the guardrail. The CAC has objected to this installation since it first appeared on the drawings at the 65% submittal phase, but the Department has been obstinate in their refusal to propose other installation methods. In my opinion, this installation method is completely inappropriate for a National Scenic Byway, and is contradictory to the spirit of the project, of a Scenic Byway, and of the State Legislature Memorial encouraging the NMSHTD to exercise "special care and sensitivity" in the planning and design of NM 14. This installation method adds additional fill, additional cost, and excessive ugliness to the project, especially since there are nearly 2 miles of guardrail in the 4 mile stretch of road between Madrid and Cerrillos. In my opinion, it will be an embarrassment to the State if the road is built this way."

RULES MAY BE CHANGING FOR MORE FLEXIBILITY IN HIGHWAY DESIGN - new publications being released

From Ross Lockridge, Turquoise Trail Citizens Advisory Committee

It was learned at the January Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting in Washington that progressive engineers have been busy, and for the good. Landscape Architect Donal Simpson reports that the 2001 edition of the AASHTO "Green Book" was issued late in 2001. Although he hasn't seen it yet, he has seen a couple of excerpts that are substantial changes from the previous edition. AASHTO is also preparing a "Context Sensitive Design" manual.

The UMTCD (Uniform Manual of Traffic Control Devices) also has a brand new 2001 edition, with substantial changes, including signage and warrants for traffic calming. Also, the Federal Highway Administration is about to issue a Scenic Byways Design Guide. It is currently in printing.

It seems that the rules might be changing.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT WATCH ISSUE ACTION TEAM

from Diane Albert, Los Alamos County Cyclists Coalition (LACCC)

The Highway Department Watch team met in Albuquerque on January 18th. The Transit and Fix It First teams will join us and will be called the State Legislative Reform Team. We discussed the Jan. 29th STPP Press Conference that will be held on the steps of the State Capitol in Santa Fe, where the Alliance for a New Transportation Charter will be announced.

Diane Albert, Los Alamos County Councilor, announced that she had been elected Treasurer of the Commissioner Affiliates at the New Mexico Association of Counties (NMAC) Midwinter Legislative Conference Jan. 15. She also informed other meeting attendees that she had attended the 39th Annual Paving and Transportation Conference and had networked with several NMHTD engineers and made many valuable contacts.

Approximately 25 cyclists braved the cold on December 1 when the LACCC participated in the Holiday Lights Parade in Los Alamos. Check out our website at www.LABikes.org.

REPORT: TRANSPORTATION INITIATIVE GATHERS IN ALBUQUERQUE

On December 4, 2001, nearly fifty people attended the first meeting of New Mexican organizations interested and involved in transportation systems or the impacts those systems have on their constituents and communities. We grabbed our lunches and heard from STPP's national campaign coordinator Andrea Broaddus on the Alliance for a New Transportation Charter (ANTC) Campaign and the surveys that were conducted last summer.

STPP New Mexico's DeAnza Valencia defined the key issues she is concentrating on:

1. Assisting in STPP's federal legislative effort through The Alliance for a New Transportation Charter.
2. Advocating for fundamental reform in the decision-making processes of the New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department (NMSHTD.)
3. Preparing for a State Legislative Campaign in 2003. Legislation targeted for passage includes: Safe Routes to School, "Fix it First" to prioritize funding for road maintenance over new highway capacity and advocating for increased state investment in transit and alternative modes. Overall, legislative mandates for stronger linkages between land use planning and transportation spending will be supported.

Joanne McEntire provided information from the ANTC surveys conducted in NM last summer. Participants then considered the survey results and suggested additional issues. A total of twenty-three items were listed, which included the items provided by

DeAnza. Participants then voted for their top three items to prioritize the list. The top five items were:

Reform in the decision making process of NMSHTD

Fix it First to priority funding for maintenance

Flexible Highway Standards – design sidewalks, bike routes and roads for the communities and safety for everyone, not just those in the vehicles

Preserve cultural landscapes, also historic, sacred and scenic byways

Increased investment in Transit/Alternative Modes / ensure there are users

Four discussion groups were formed to focus on the top four items. They considered what they might accomplish as a team. Some of the groups identified a contact person, noted below as the communications coordinator. If you are not on a team, please consider whom you would like to work with and contact one of us!

1. Highway Department Watch. Communications coordinator: Diane Albert, e-mail: dalbert@los-alamos.net.

2. Fix it First

3. Flexible Highway Standards. Communications coordinator: Ross Lockridge, e-mail: murlock@raintreecounty.com

4. Cultural Landscapes: Historic, Sacred, and Scenic byways

PLEASE NOTE: In order to effectively meet the needs of our coalition advocates and for STPP to efficiently assist the teams, we are combining the "Fix it First" and "Transit and Alternative Modes" Teams with the "Highway Department Watch" team, and renaming it the "State Legislative Reform" Issue Action Team. We will also be combining the "Flexible Highway Standards" and the "Preserve Cultural Landscapes, Historic and Sacred Sites and Scenic Byways" teams. DeAnza

NATIONAL NEWS

THE ALLIANCE FOR A NEW TRANSPORTATION CHARTER (ANTC) DEBUTS (formerly known at the New Directions Initiative) AND NEW MEXICO ORGANIZATIONS SIGN ON!
Excerpts from STPP Transfer, December 19, 2001

STPP made a major investment this year in reaching out to and working with local groups to build broad-based national support for transportation reform and articulate a common vision. One of the products of that outreach process is a document declaring the need to make federal transportation legislation (ISTEA/TEA-21) truly work for communities, through a New Transportation Charter. The Charter states, "While many states have embraced ISTEA's tenets of community involvement and empowerment of local decision-makers, no state has yet implemented ISTEA to its full potential." The intended audience is transportation and political decision-makers and the general public.

Over 300 national and local groups endorsed the Charter in time for its public launch on December 13 in Washington DC. New Mexican organizations that have signed the charter are:

Alliance for Transportation Research Albuquerque NM
Great American Station Foundation Las Vegas NM
1,000 Friends of New Mexico Albuquerque NM
Concerned Citizens of Cerillos Cerillos NM (sp.)
Downtown Action Team Albuquerque NM
Gila Resources Information Project Silver City NM
Las Vegas/San Miguel Chamber of Commerce Las Vegas NM
New Mexico American Planning Association Aztec NM
New Mexico Conference of Churches - Jubilee Housing Albuquerque NM
New Mexico Heritage Preservation Alliance Santa Fe NM
New Mexico Main Street Program Aztec NM
Rails, Inc. Albuquerque NM
The Los Alamos County Cyclists' Coalition Los Alamos NM
Western Heights Neighborhood Association Los Lunas, NM

Together, endorsers of the Charter comprise the Alliance for the New Transportation Charter, a broad-based coalition working to make transportation better serve communities. By defining our campaign as an alliance we both (1) highlight the one feature that makes this campaign different from our ISTEAs and TEA-21 campaigns—our broader partnership, and (2) create a forum where our new partners can sign up for the campaign without necessarily joining the STPP coalition. The idea is to create a "comfort zone" for new partners who agree that transportation is not serving their interests, but are not yet ready to become active. Endorsing the Charter makes one a member of the Alliance, but there are no further obligations. ANTC members will receive STPP's newsletter, Progress, and remain informed of transportation issues and further opportunities to be engaged in the reform effort.

Endorsers are encouraged to continue circulating the charter, particularly for the endorsement of state and local elected officials, and local government. STPP can provide a model resolution for cities and counties to consider. The full text of the Charter, the list of endorsements, and the endorsement form are on the front page of STPP's website, <http://www.transact.org>. For more information, contact Andrea Broaddus at 202-466-2636.

"TEN YEARS OF PROGRESS" EVENT A SMASHING SUCCESS

On December 12, at a gala dinner event held at the J.W. Marriott in Washington, D.C., top Congressional and Administration officials, transportation industry representatives and reform advocates from across the country joined together to celebrate the transportation reform movement.

The dinner marked the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). Senator Lincoln Chafee (R-RI) presented the John H. Chafee Lifetime Transportation Leadership Award, named in honor of Senator Chafee's father, to former Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan. Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta accepted the STPP Transportation Public Service Award for his distinguished service in promoting an efficient and diversified transportation system.

Significantly, Senator Jim Jeffords (I-VT), Chair of the Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW)

Committee -- which is responsible for the transportation bill -- declared in his remarks that the event marked the beginning of the reauthorization process for the Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). He also announced the EPW hearing schedule for the coming year in preparation for the reauthorization.

REPORT DOCUMENTS DECADE OF ISTEA ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In honor of the 10-year anniversary of the passage of ISTEA, STPP released "Ten Years of Progress: Building Better Communities Through Transportation." The report profiles more than 70 innovative transportation projects around the country. It provides a summary of national statistics documenting how transportation has changed since passage of the landmark federal transportation law ten years ago.

The report profiles a wide variety of transportation projects that are enhancing health, safety, and security; conserving energy and enhancing the environment; creating equitable and livable communities; and promoting economic prosperity. However, the report also points to statistics and polls that indicate that more change is on the way. Use of transit and bicycles are both on the rise, and national polls show between 60 and 80 percent of Americans favor more transportation options. Many places have not taken full advantage of the potential of ISTEA, and a growing number of problems have been associated with automobile-oriented development, including the epidemic in obesity and a drain on family budgets.

The 48-page, full-color Ten Years of Progress report is available through the STPP-New Mexico Office. Please call (505) 243-8666. An indexed version can also be found at STPP 's website, <http://www.transact.org>.

SUPPORT MATERIALS FOR DISCUSSING TEA-3 WITH COMMUNITY LEADERS

The tenth anniversary since ISTEA became law presents an opportunity for recognizing important leaders who have made ISTEA funds work in communities. It is also time to begin a dialog about the next reauthorization in 2003, laying groundwork with opinion and decision makers during this moment of opportunity. We encourage you to visit with reporters, editorial boards, and local officials and talk about how transportation affects your community, and what a difference TEA3 can make.

STPP has prepared support materials as part of this effort, available upon request :

- Ten Years of Progress report, 47 pages bound, full color glossy
- Sample news release and talking points

- Advocacy Packet for meeting with Member of Congress, other elected officials, and editorial boards with draft letters and talking points
- Model resolution for local governments to endorse the New Transportation Charter

The report, the Charter, and the list of founding members of the Alliance are on our website,

www.transact.org , or e-mail DeAnza Valencia at dvalencia@transact.org. Hard copies of the report may be requested on the website, or by calling 202-466-2636. Please help us keep track of visits by reporting back about your meetings and events.

RESOURCES

Featured Website: www.abqspokes.org

GASP (Greater Albuquerque Spokes Persons) is the group that's trying to watchdog projects in Albuquerque that affect bicycling - like having bike access to Comanche and Martin Luther King where they go under I-25 restricted, and bikes being banned from frontage roads. The website has up-to-date news and items on NMSHTD. (From Gail Ryba, GASP)

America Walks is a pedestrian advocacy group, with a website at www.webwalking.com/amwalks/

The NM Transportation Information Exchange is a publication of the Surface Transportation Policy Project's New Mexico office. Editing this issue: Joanne McEntire. To subscribe, send your name, address, e-mail and affiliation to jomcen@spinn.net.

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 Mexico, Sacramento, San Francisco, and Washington DC.