

Santa Fe City and County Regional Planning Authority Regional Transit Service Plan

Final Report - October 2009



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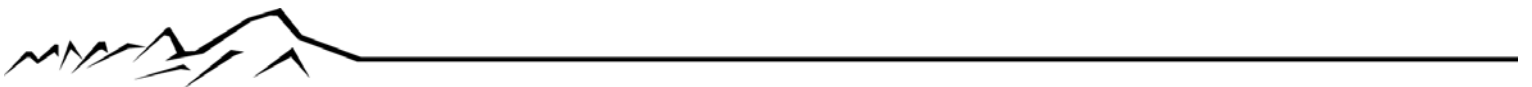
Project Partners

**Santa Fe County
City of Santa Fe/Santa Fe Trails
North Central Regional Transit District
Santa Fe Metropolitan Planning Organization
Northern Indian Pueblos
New Mexico Department of Transportation**

Prepared by:



In association with:



Introduction

In November 2008, Santa Fe County voters, along with those in several other north-central New Mexico counties, passed a one-eighth cent transit gross receipts tax. This “TGRT” is dedicated to funding the ongoing operation of, and transit connections to, Rail Runner, the region’s commuter rail service connecting Santa Fe and metropolitan Albuquerque. The Santa Fe City and County Regional Planning Authority (RPA) is responsible for allocating a portion of TGRT revenues within Santa Fe and Santa Fe County, and has prepared this first Regional Transit Service Plan to do so.

Background and Context

The provision of public transit serving Santa Fe and Santa Fe County is complicated, involving several operators and providers. Santa Fe Trails, a department within the City, provides local bus service primarily within the city, with one route (Route 22) serving unincorporated areas adjacent to the city’s south side. The City’s Parking Division operates the Santa Fe Pick Up, a downtown circulator connecting the end-of-line Santa Fe Depot Rail Runner station with major destinations downtown. The North Central Regional Transit District (NCRTD) is a state-authorized, multi-county transit provider that is also charged by the state with administering and overseeing the TGRT. Finally, the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT), through various contractual and administrative arrangements, manages Rail Runner, several employee shuttles connecting to Rail Runner stations, and a statewide park-and-ride system. There are other transit providers operating within Santa Fe County, including the Taos Express, private entities, and others. The regional transit network as of October 2009 is shown on the following page.

Another significant complexity level is the number of entities involved in regional transit planning, and for some, funding. In addition to the RPA itself as a regional City-County coordinator, and every entity noted above, Santa Fe County works directly with NCRTD to advise and help fund the latter’s transit service within the County and key connections to Los Alamos, Espanola, and neighboring counties. The Santa Fe Metropolitan Planning Organization, the region’s federally-designated transportation planning partnership, also plays a role in transit-related planning efforts. Finally, the many Indian Pueblos within and adjacent to Santa Fe County are key stakeholders in the planning and provision of regional transit service.

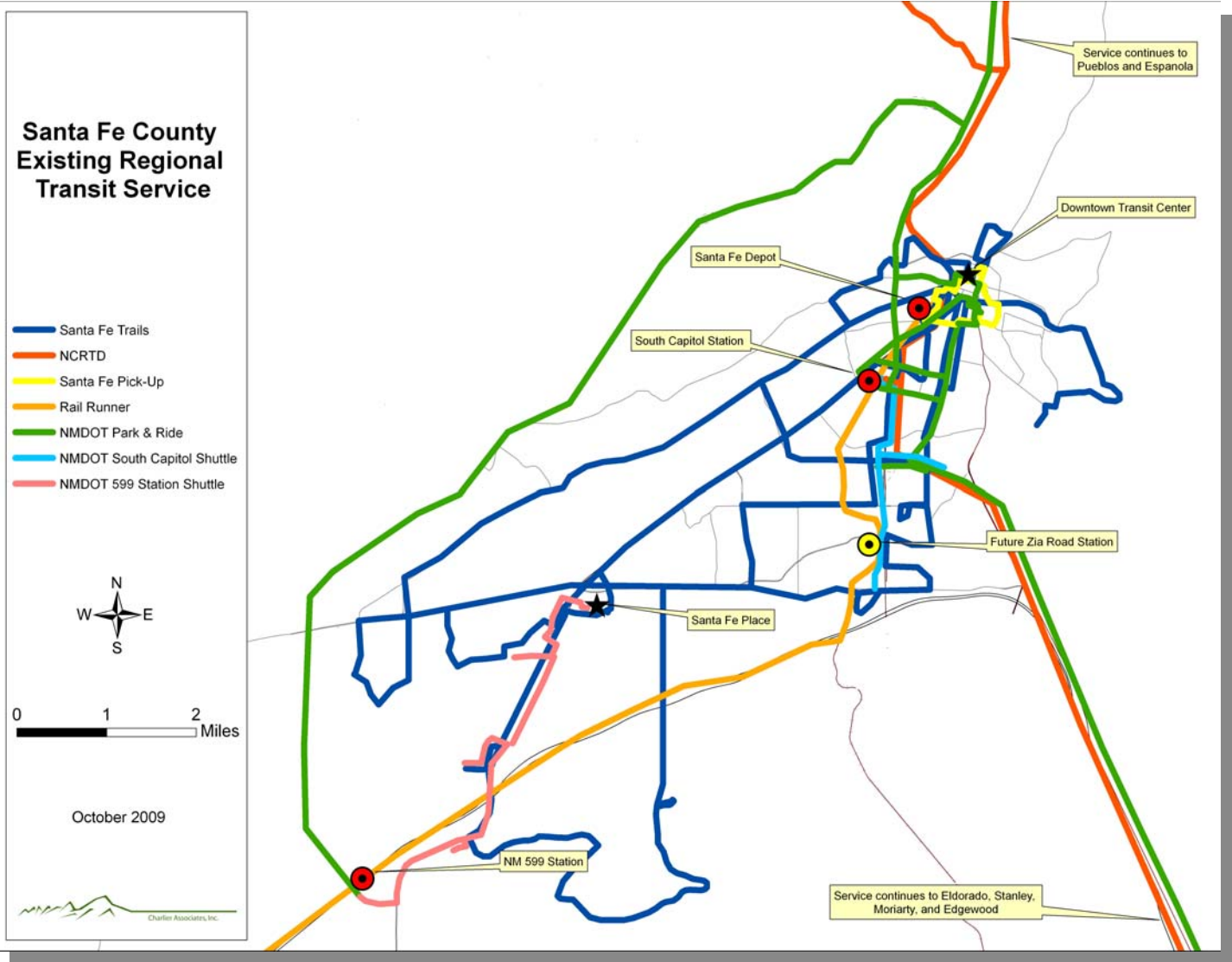
Plan Summary

After extensive consideration and discussion, the RPA voted in two separate motions at its September 28, 2009 meeting to allocate TGRT funding to all existing service operating within and between Santa Fe County for FY 2010 (October 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010). The first motion funded existing service in the city: Routes 2 and 4 Rail Runner service enhancements, Route 22, the Santa Fe Pick Up, imminent service reductions to other Santa Fe Trails routes, and NCRTD’s Greater Eldorado Express. The second motion funded these existing NCRTD services: Espanola to Santa Fe, Chimayo Fixed Route, Los Alamos to Pojoaque, and Pojoaque school students. The RPA then directed staff to recommend additional service funding with any remaining TGRT revenues in FY 2010. The RPA did not provide explicit direction for subsequent fiscal years.

Regarding this final point: This plan was initially envisioned as a five year service plan, and cost and revenue analyses were conducted for the period 2010 through 2014. However, this plan ultimately provides detail only for FY 2010 and 2011 for the following reasons:



Map 1: Existing Regional Transit Network



- TGRT revenue estimates will change dramatically over the next five years, likely downward. Given current economic conditions, tax and other revenue forecasts across the country are very unstable, especially in the short term.
- While the RPA did not take explicit action on TGRT funding for FY 2011-2014, it did endorse the concept of prioritizing funding for existing service before initiating new service. With TGRT revenues likely struggling to fully fund even existing service over time, future year forecasts are of limited value at this time, particularly with annual refinement and update to this plan.
- As the RPA's first-ever regional transit service plan, the technical and policy process to reach even this point was complex. As noted below, the value of this effort is to provide a solid foundation and framework for ongoing decision-making and plan refinements over time.
- Finally, difficult decisions will need to be made in the future about service eligibility, cost-effectiveness, and funding priority that will significantly impact future year planning efforts.

For all of these reasons, this service plan provides detail for FY 2010 and FY 2011. The plan also includes a recommended process and tools to update the plan in the future regarding ongoing assessment of existing service, evaluating the feasibility of proposed new service, and the timing and process to coordinate with NCRTD and other partners in updating TGRT funding allocation recommendations.

TGRT Overview

The context surrounding the TGRT is also complicated. The TGRT became effective on July 1, 2009, with a three month delay, per state guidance, until revenues became available for obligation on October 1, 2009. Through the measure's ballot language and by NCRTD resolution, 50 percent of TGRT revenues fund ongoing Rail Runner operations. Of the remaining 50 percent, 14 percent will be retained by NCRTD for administrative expenses and possible enhancements to regional service connecting to Rail Runner. The other 86 percent will be managed and monitored by NCRTD, allocated by the RPA, and spent by Santa Fe County and Santa Fe Trails, for new and increased regional transit service. This plan addresses planning for these "86% TGRT" revenues.

There is also complexity in defining what constitutes TGRT-eligible investments. Both the NCRTD Board and RPA have taken official positions on this issue through resolution and meeting motion, respectively. There is agreement that the TGRT's primary purpose is to fund new and expanded service connecting to Rail Runner stations, and that it cannot be spent on local service. The NCRTD Board will determine on a case-by-case basis TGRT-eligible service investments to meet its fiduciary and regional coordination obligations to NMDOT.

At its July 21, 2009 meeting, the RPA adopted the following eligibility criteria:

1. Will the potential service investment provide efficient and cost effective connections to Rail Runner service and regional connections/mobility?



2. Is the potential service “regional” in that it extends and enhances existing transit connections and/or connects at least two or more modes of transit, or to a designated transfer center such as Santa Fe Place, Rail Runner stations, or downtown?
3. Does the service appear to be technically viable, particularly from a cost efficiency perspective (such as cost per passenger, or cost per vehicle revenue mile)?
4. Correspondence from City Councilor Rosemary Romero requesting recommended service levels and alternative service operators for each specific area studied as well as project performance standards and evaluation criteria as part of the initial service plan and for periodic evaluation over time.

At its August 18, 2009 meeting, the RPA further clarified its position that TGRT revenues could fund recently implemented service meeting the criteria above, not just brand new service. And, the Board agreed that the definition of new/expanded service should be broad enough to include a new geographic component to an existing route, significant service increases (frequency or hours), and other similar investments to eligible routes.

Funding Policy Recommendations

This plan endorses the RPA positions noted above regarding TGRT-eligible investments. These actions allow the potential continued funding of service by Santa Fe Trails/City, and NCRTD implemented specifically to integrate with Rail Runner, the primary purpose of the TGRT. And, since the purpose of the TGRT is to increase Rail Runner connections and regional mobility, the specific service delivery configuration should not matter as long as these primary objectives are met.

Finally, with multiple transit service providers, routes, and service types in the city and county, the over-arching objectives of this transit service plan are regional integration and coordination to maximize regional personal mobility. As the designated regional transit funding mechanism, the TGRT should have minimal constraints on its flexibility and ability to meet these objectives.

Regional Transit Service Plan Purpose

At its most basic, this plan documents the RPA’s initial decisions in allocating TGRT revenues. While this is important and necessary, the enduring value of this plan is its foundation and tools for subsequent TGRT-funded service planning and decision-making over time. This plan is intended to be revisited and updated yearly using its accompanying tools to assess existing service, evaluate new service proposals, refine project costs and revenues, and update funding priorities.

Candidate Projects

The planning process began by identifying a list of candidate transit service investments – both existing and proposed – for potential TGRT funding and inclusion in this service plan. Each project stakeholder (listed at the beginning of this document) identified several short- and long-term service priorities. Additional ideas and priorities came from a series of five public meetings held by RPA staff in early 2009. Three important conclusions became apparent through this planning process:



- First, the cumulative universe of projects was far greater in cost than TGRT revenues could fund. Difficult choices would have to be made about selecting and prioritizing service investments.
- Second, given the complex technical and policy issues surrounding this project and the accelerated timeframe in which funding decisions needed to be made, this effort necessarily needed to emphasize a near-term planning focus.
- Finally, there are local and regional structural issues with route geography, transfer locations, service efficiencies, and other issues that, as above, need a longer term and more deliberative focus than this initial planning process and schedule could accommodate.

Through the planning process, approximately 30 potential service investments were identified for further analysis. These included existing routes, proposed new service, and various configurations of both existing and proposed service for several routes to test cost, ridership, and feasibility options. Existing routes by transit agency and major proposed new service investments are briefly described below.

Santa Fe Trails

Route 2: The highest-ridership route; connects the Santa Fe Place and Downtown Transit Centers via Cerrillos Road and serves the South Capitol and Railyard Rail Runner Stations.

Route 4: Central Santa Fe route also connecting the Santa Fe Place and Downtown Transit Centers with the South Capitol and Railyard Rail Runner Stations.

For TGRT budgeting purposes, Santa Fe Trails grouped Rail Runner-oriented service enhancements for Routes 2 and 4 together.

Route 22: Provides fixed route service between the Santa Fe Place Transit Center, Santa Fe Community College, the Institute for the American Indian Arts, and other stops in the city's south side and adjacent unincorporated areas.

Also, Santa Fe Trails identified imminent reductions to existing service as a high TGRT funding priority. No route or cost details were provided, so no technical evaluation occurred. The agency also identified a few other priorities at the end of the planning process, such as special events service, that were not known in time to be formally evaluated.

City of Santa Fe Parking Division

Santa Fe Pick Up: Circulator service running between the Santa Fe Depot Rail Runner station and major downtown destinations.

NCRTD

The NCRTD operates several local and long distance routes within its four-county service area. Santa Fe County service includes routes from Espanola to Santa Fe; Tesuque to Santa Fe; Los Alamos to



Pojoaque; Chimayo fixed route; existing or imminent service serving Tesuque, Pojoaque, and San Ildefonso Pueblos; and the Greater Eldorado Express (connecting Santa Fe with Eldorado, Galisteo, Stanley, Moriarty, and Edgewood).

Proposed Service

As noted previously, many service proposals were identified through the planning process. The following were advanced for further evaluation:

- *NM 14 Corridor:* Several potential configurations were considered to connect Santa Fe Place and/or the NM 599 Rail Runner Station with the State Penitentiary/County Jail complex, the Village of Cerrillos, and the Town of Madrid. Service along this corridor is the County's highest priority for new transit service.
- *Greater Eldorado Express:* Though existing service, this route was examined in various geographic component segments to gauge cost-efficiency, ridership, and mode share between Eldorado and Edgewood.
- *Pueblo service:* Significant coordination occurred with representatives from Tesuque, Pojoaque, San Ildefonso, Nambe, and Cochiti Pueblos regarding transit service needs and opportunities. The concept advanced for evaluation was one or more "Pueblo Express" route(s) that would provide commuter/park-and-ride service to each Pueblo with a focus on efficiently connecting the Pueblos to each other and to Espanola and Santa Fe. In this regard, this concept would need to be merged with NCRD's existing Espanola to Santa Fe service, and possibly its Tesuque Pueblo to Santa Fe service. Such service may not necessarily replace local service within or between Pueblos currently provided by NCRD.
- *Future Rail Runner connections:* When the NM 599 Station opened in August 2009, NMDOT began providing park-and-ride and shuttle service. However, Santa Fe Trails prioritizes connecting its Route 22 to the station, as well as connecting to the Zia Road station when it opens (the timing of which was unknown at the publication of this plan since it is private-development driven).
- *Other city connections:* Increased service along Airport Road/Cerrillos Road and connections to the Children's Museum were both identified through the planning process.
- *La Cienega and El Rancho de Las Golondrinas:* These areas, southwest of Santa Fe, represent another potential future transit service market.
- *Ski Santa Fe:* Another potential investment identified from the public meetings is service connecting the Santa Fe Depot Rail Runner Station and Ski Santa Fe.
- *Tesuque Village via Bishops Lodge:* The County identified this route as a priority to serve the Village of Tesuque and north Santa Fe.



Project Evaluation - Introduction

The next step in the planning process was to evaluate each project against a series of criteria to assess feasibility for TGRT funding. This process is not straightforward, as it involves existing and proposed service, urban and rural service, local and express/commuter service, and other variables that preclude a consistent and simple methodology. And, it should be emphasized that the operating environment and purpose of each route are different. For example, cost-efficiency is important to urban fixed route service, while social equity and a moral obligation to provide at least basic transit service is critical in outlying rural areas.

Put another way, there are policy tradeoffs between expanding service in the urban areas of Santa Fe to most efficiently serve the greatest number of people versus providing much-needed and much higher-cost service in outlying rural areas. Because each potential TGRT funding recipient (Santa Fe Trails, NCRD, Santa Fe County, Pueblos) has different needs, objectives, service/passenger markets, etc., it is that much more difficult to equitably prioritize and allocate the TGRT as a shared, limited regional resource. Accordingly, separate evaluations were conducted for rural and urban service as briefly described below. Rural and urban transit service planning can be summarized in these terms:

- **Rural and outlying service:** Targets commuters and those who rely on transit as primary or only transportation, especially for life-sustaining activities. It can be significantly expensive to provide service, with low ridership – social equity may supersede cost efficiency. Common service delivery options include park-and-ride, commuter express, demand response, vanpools employer-based transportation demand management, etc.
- **Urban service:** Targets discretionary ridership – positioning transit as a viable travel choice for personal mobility. Service provision should be coordinated with transit-supportive land use planning and urban design that emphasize lively, mixed-use, walkable neighborhoods. Service should be frequent, convenient, and direct, and target major destinations. Consists primarily of fixed route service with increasing frequency over time, setting the stage for high-capacity transit investment, such as bus rapid transit or light rail transit, in the long term.

Outlying/Rural Service Evaluation

Service outside of Santa Fe was evaluated in a two-step process. First, proposed service destinations (such as Cerrillos or Madrid) were evaluated using 2000 Census data (with local data included when available) to assess their feasibility for transit supportiveness. Analysis factors included the data elements listed below; these factors have a correlative, not necessarily causative, relationship to outlying/rural-oriented transit service feasibility:

- **Demographics:** very young and elderly, percentage female, lower median family income, percentage population below poverty line, and low auto ownership
- **Land use:** higher residential density, greater mix of land uses (such as residential, commercial, retail)
- **Network design:** good grid street network, short blocks, pedestrian-friendly environment
- **Driving deterrence:** long distances to primary destinations, high travel costs (gas, etc.)



- Route directness: direct access to trip origins and destinations, including Rail Runner
- Travel patterns: high “alternate modes” mode share, long commutes, high commute rates, low telecommuting
- TGRT funding eligibility criteria compliance

Because these factors do not have numerical threshold standards, especially ones that would apply specifically to Santa Fe County, each individual destination (such as Cerrillos or Madrid) was compared to the county as a whole to assess relative transit supportiveness and feasibility.

The second major step was to examine potential ridership and cost per passenger. Based again on Census and local data, a given area’s population was used to estimate daily vehicle trips. From there, a matrix arrayed with various “transit mode share” assumptions (ranging from one percent to about 10 percent) was used to estimate daily potential transit trips as a percentage of total daily vehicle trips. Using cost per passenger thresholds from NCRTD (primarily) and Santa Fe Trails, the various ridership estimates were compared against passenger costs to determine a “break even” point at which service would attract enough ridership to at least meet the cost per passenger threshold. The transit mode share at the break even point was then assessed for transit feasibility in the context that a one to three percent mode share is reasonable for this type of transit service.

For example, if Destination A needs a 12 percent transit mode share to break even on the cost per passenger threshold, its transit feasibility is very low. If Destination B needs only a one percent transit mode share to break even on a cost per passenger basis, its transit feasibility is likely very high.

Finally, based on all of this data and analysis, a qualitative assessment was made for the overall feasibility of a particular destination for transit service. This methodology is ideal for evaluating potential new service, but also works for assessing existing service with the caveat that the methodology is geared towards evaluating the transit supportiveness and feasibility of *places*, not the performance of existing transit *service* itself, though there is generally a strong correlation. Additionally, the various factors were not weighted or scored. Each factor was instead categorized using a yes/no or high/medium/low scale, depending on the factor. All the factors were then compared together for a given destination to qualitatively assess transit feasibility.

Urban Service Evaluation

The metrics for evaluating proposed new urban service are much different from those for outlying/rural areas. The following factors were applied qualitatively to assess proposed new urban service:

- TGRT funding eligibility criteria
- Higher residential density
- Greater mix of land uses (such as residential, commercial, retail)
- Development character (urban design and other transit-supportive aspects)



Another major consideration for urban transit planning is that strategic depth is preferable to broad breadth. That is, it is more desirable in terms of ridership, cost effectiveness, system efficiency, and other performance metrics to connect major destinations with frequent and convenient service in a select few strategic corridors than it is to have broad service coverage, which tends to be slow, costly, and inefficient.

Summary profiles of major new outlying/rural and urban service proposals and service feasibility recommendations are shown on the following pages. For several areas, data was either not available, or not available at the appropriate scale for transit sensitivity analysis. Alternatively, unique circumstances dictated a different analysis approach. In these cases, the project profiles discuss major issues and considerations.

Another major issue addressed in the project profiles is potential service provider. Suggestions are provided based on close coordination with NCRTD and Santa Fe Trails – they should be re-visited if such new service comes to fruition. In general, Santa Fe Trails indicated a preference for providing service within Santa Fe and to immediately adjacent unincorporated areas in the context of urban, fixed route, local service. In contrast, NCRTD's strength is in providing long distance, commuter, express, and other forms of service customized to individual community needs. The agency's unique ability to leverage and assemble grants and matching funds for a particular route or service also informs where and how it provides service.

A final consideration is Pueblo-oriented transit service. This plan recommends that decisions about such service should be made as a matter of policy, not through a technical methodology. This does not mean, however, that service should be provided if it is clearly not feasible or cost-efficient. Rather, given the unique needs of the Pueblos and their unique relationships with the NCRTD, County, and RPA, these decisions should be made collaboratively from a policy and intergovernmental perspective. Even so, the greater the universe of potential TGRT projects, the lower the funding ability and effectiveness of the TGRT.



Proposed NM 14 Service

Status/Type:

- New service – commuter express, park and ride

Service Characteristics

- Initial Segment: NM 599 RR Station to State Pen.
- Extended Segment: NM 599 RR Station or Santa Fe Place to Cerrillos/Madrid
- Round-Trip Distance: 6 miles to 38-44 miles
- Runs per Day: 6 (initial segment); 4 (extended segment)

Potential Service Provider

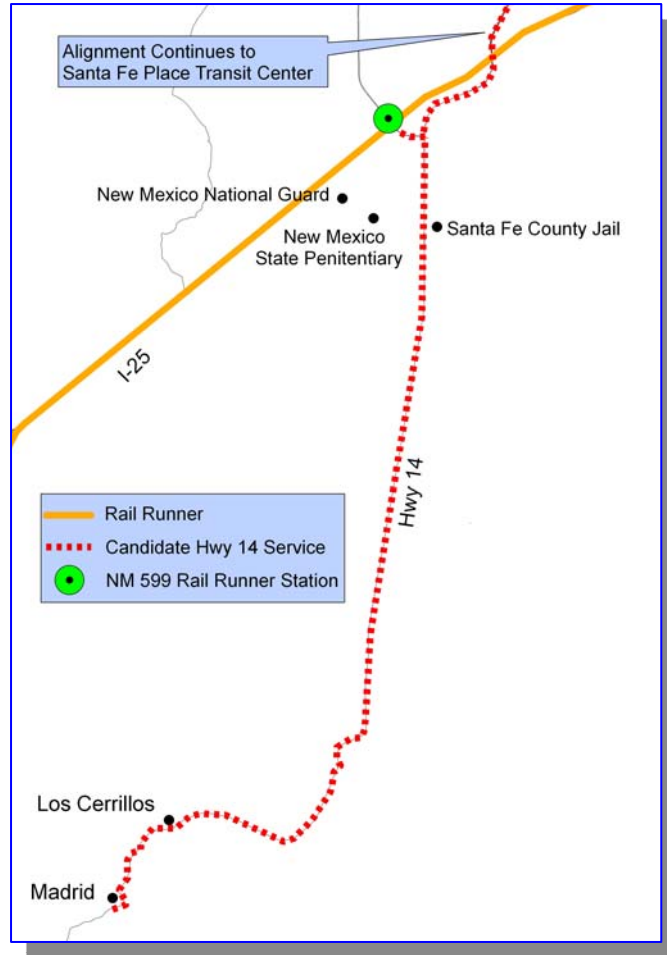
- Santa Fe Trails (if initial segment)
- NCRTD (if extended segment)

Target Market

- Commuting (state employees)
- Daily activities in Santa Fe (residents)
- Santa Fe-based tourism excursion

Annual Costs (Rounded)

- Capital: \$83,000 (initial segment); \$165,000 (extended segment)
- Operating: \$43,000-\$129,000 (initial segment); \$171,000 (extended segment)



Route Evaluation

Route Options	TGRT Funding Criteria			Cost Per Passenger	Transit Share Rating	Transit Supportive
	Efficient Connections	Regional Service	Viability			
Initial Segment Option A: 599 RR - State Pen.				NA	NA	
Initial Segment Option B: SF Place - State Pen.				NA	NA	
Extended Segment: SF Place - Cerrillos						
Ultimate Segment: SF Place - Cerrillos/Madrid						
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Below Threshold	Reasonable	High
	No	No	No	Above Threshold	Aggressive	Medium
					Formidable	Low

Overall Recommendation & Considerations

- Initial Segment may be viable. Since primary market is state employees, need to ensure that origins, destinations, and work shifts cluster to make this route viable as feeder service from 599 RR station.
- Extended Segment not recommended – does not generate cost-effective ridership.



Existing Greater Eldorado Express (GEE) Service

Note: GEE service was evaluated south of Eldorado to assess cost-effectiveness and feasibility.

Status/Type:

- Existing service – commuter express

Service Characteristics:

- Evaluated Eldorado to Edgewood
- Round-Trip Distance: 100 miles
- Runs per day: 4

Potential Service Provider:

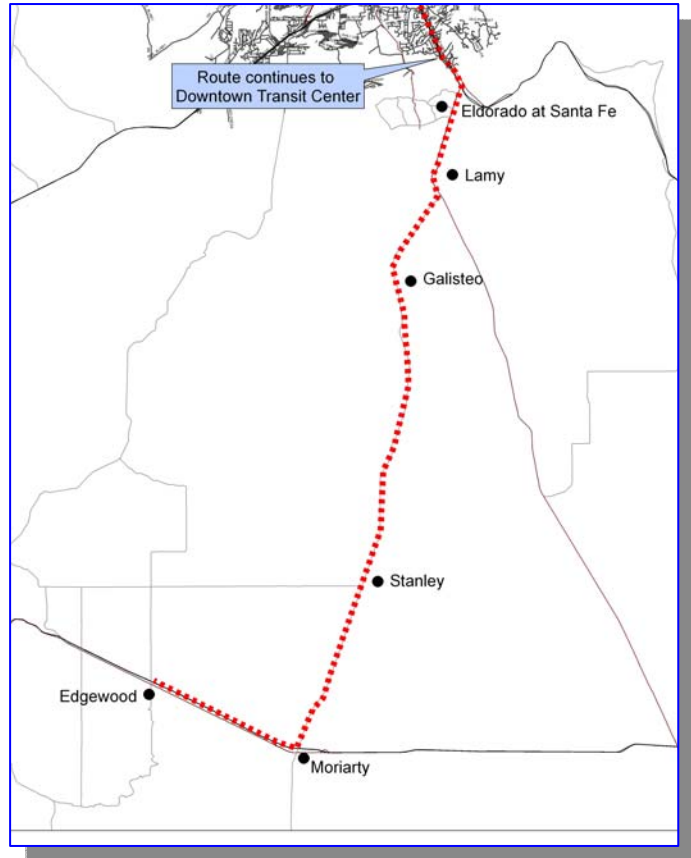
- NCRTD

Target Market:

- Commuting and daily activities to/from Santa Fe

Annual Costs (Rounded):

- Capital: \$54,000-\$108,000
- Operating: \$64,000-\$257,000



Route Evaluation

Route Options	TGRT Funding Criteria			Cost Per Passenger	Transit Share Rating	Transit Supportive
	Efficient Connections	Regional Service	Viability			
Downtown - El Dorado						
Downtown - El Dorado - Lamy						
Downtown - El Dorado - Lamy - Galisteo						
Downtown - Stanley - Moriarty						
Downtown - Stanley - Moriarty - Edgewood						
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Below Threshold	Reasonable	High
	No	No	No	Above Threshold	Aggressive	Medium
					Formidable	Low

Overall Recommendation and Considerations:

- Service from downtown to Eldorado is most viable.
- Continued service south of Eldorado not recommended – not cost-effective ridership.
- Commuting and daily activities in Moriarty and Edgewood are primarily associated with Albuquerque.



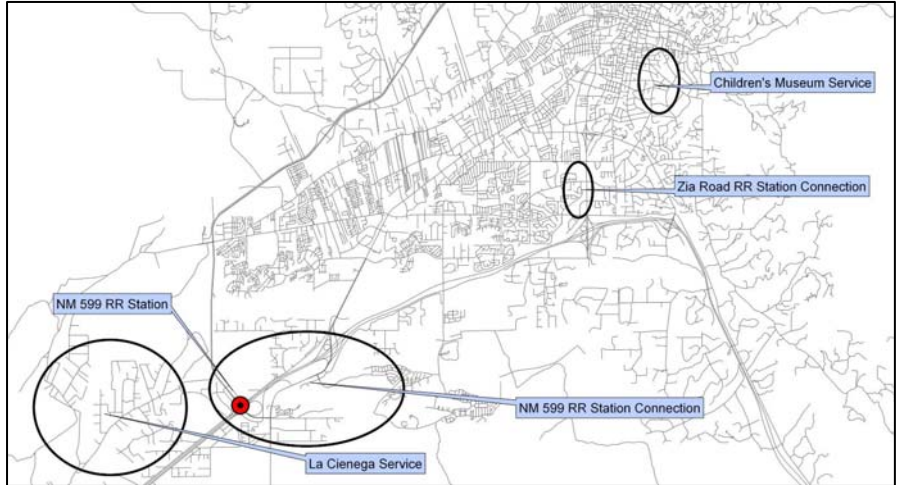
Proposed New Urban Service

Status/Type:

- New SF Trails service – fixed route

Service Characteristics

- Route 22 connect to 599 RR Station
 - Round-Trip Distance: TBD
 - Runs per day: 6
- Zia Road Rail Runner connection
 - Round-Trip Distance: TBD
 - Runs per day: 6
- Children's Museum
 - Round-Trip Distance: TBD
 - Runs per day: 6
- La Cienega
 - Option A - via 599 Station
 - Round-Trip Distance: 8 miles
 - Runs per day: 8 miles
 - Option B - via Santa Fe Place
 - Round-Trip Distance: 17 miles
 - Runs per day: 8 miles



Route Evaluation

Route Options	TGRT Funding Criteria			Residential Density	Land Use Mix	Development Character	Transit Supportive
	Efficient Connections	Regional Service	Viability				
Route 22 IAIA/Santa Fe CC							
Route 22 connect to 599 RR Station							
Future Zia Road RR connection							
Children's Museum							
La Cienega Option A - via 599 Station							
La Cienega Option B - via Santa Fe Place							
	Yes	Yes	Yes	High	High	High	High
	No	No	No	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
				Low	Low	Low	Low

Annual Costs (Rounded)

- Route 22 connection to 599 Rail Runner Station
 - Capital: \$180,000; Operating: \$107,000
- Zia Road Rail Runner connection
 - Capital: \$36,000; Operating: \$107,000
- Children's Museum
 - Capital: \$36,000; Operating: \$107,000
- La Cienega: Option A and B
 - Capital: \$263,000; Operating: \$143,000

Overall Recommendations and Considerations

- NM 599 and Zia Road RR connections appear most viable.
- Children’s Museum service may be viable but single-purpose service.
- La Cienega service does not appear viable and is the most expensive in this group.



Proposed Bishops Lodge-Tesuque Village Service

Status/Type:

- New service – fixed route

Service Characteristics:

- Round-Trip Distance: 12 miles
- Runs per day: 6

Potential Service Provider:

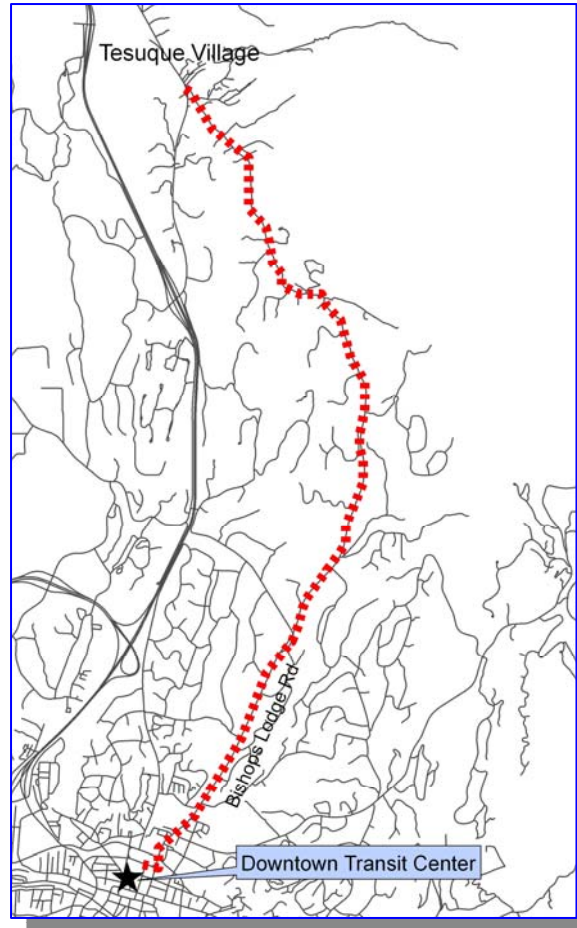
- Santa Fe Trails – fixed route

Target Market:

- Commuting and daily activities to/from Santa Fe and Tesuque Village
- Tourism

Annual Costs (rounded):

- Capital: \$525,000
- Operating: \$107,000



Route Evaluation

Route Options	TGRT Funding Criteria			Cost Per Passenger	Transit Share Rating	Transit Supportive
	Efficient Connections	Regional Service	Viability			
Santa Fe - Tesuque (via Bishops Lodge)						
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Below Threshold	Reasonable	High
	No	No	No	Above Threshold	Aggressive	Medium
					Formidable	Low

Overall Recommendations and Considerations:

- Not recommended – does not generate cost-effective ridership.



Proposed Ski Santa Fe Service

Status/Type:

- New service – winter seasonal express

Service Characteristics:

- Depot RR Station to Ski Santa Fe
- Round-Trip Distance: 40 miles
- Runs per day: 3

Potential Service Provider:

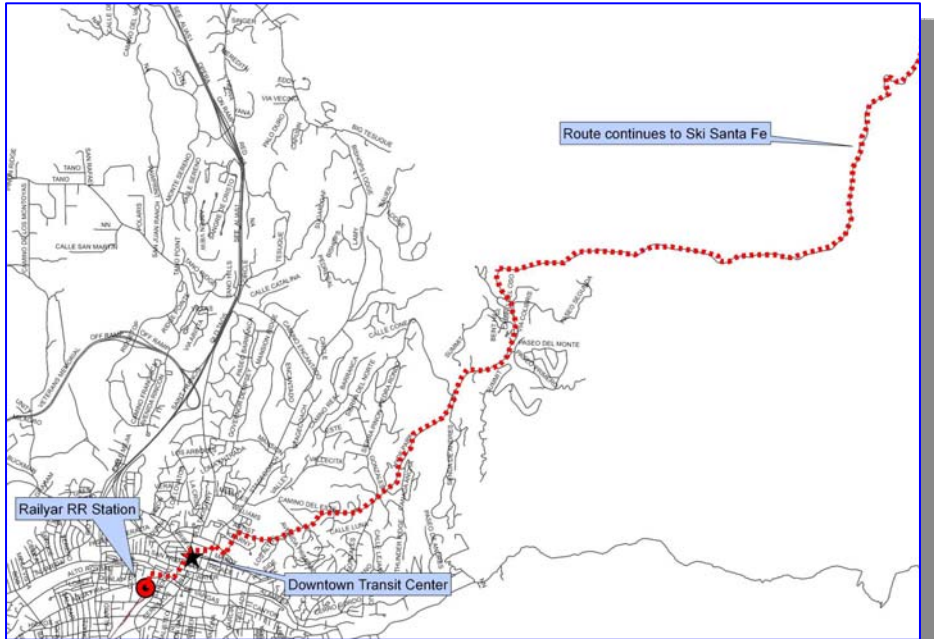
- TBD*

Target Market:

- Ski Santa Fe employees, skiers

Annual Costs (rounded):

- Capital: \$282,000
- Operating: \$50,000



Route Evaluation

Route Options	TGRT Funding Criteria			Cost Per Passenger	Transit Share Rating	Transit Supportive
	Efficient Connections	Regional Service	Viability			
Santa Fe Depot RR Station - Ski Santa Fe						
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Below Threshold	Reasonable	High
	No	No	No	Above Threshold	Aggressive	Medium
					Formidable	Low

Overall Recommendations and Considerations:

- Not recommended – does not generate cost-effective ridership.
- Service is oriented towards specialized, resort destination trips, not local/regional daily transportation.
- Service provision/operation and funding issues are complex – challenges include liability, rolling stock (vehicle) resources, weather, ski resort role, service provider, cost sharing, etc.
- Recommend further feasibility investigation beyond TGRT planning process.



Pueblo Express Service

Status/Type:

- New service – commuter express

Service Characteristics:

- Could be one or multiple routes
- Round-Trip Distance: 60-66 miles
- Runs per day: 6

Potential Service Provider:

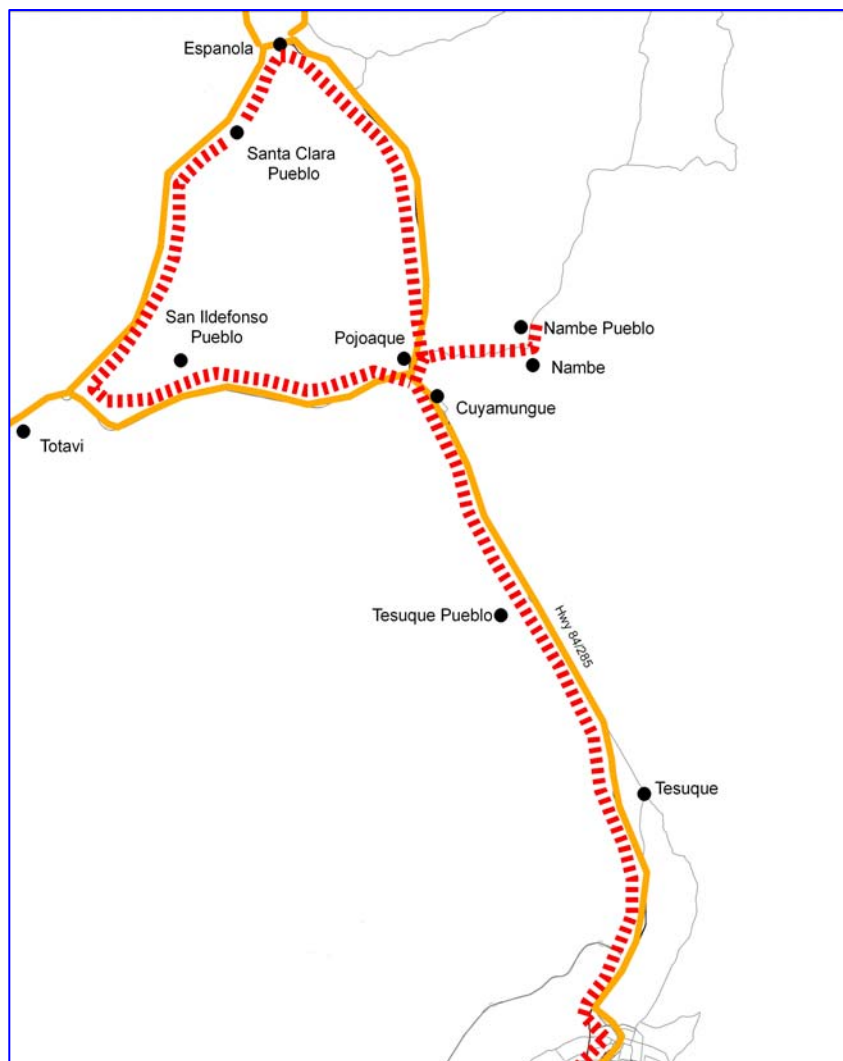
- NCRTD

Target Market:

- Commuting and daily activities to/from Santa Fe and Espanola
- Increased mobility and transportation access to/from Pueblos

Annual Costs (rounded):

- Capital: \$44,000-\$53,000
- Operating: \$130,000



Overall Recommendations and Considerations:

- Pueblo-oriented transit service decisions should be made as a matter of policy to ensure equity, access, mobility, and recognizing the Pueblos' unique needs.
- The RPA, Santa Fe County, and NCRTD should coordinate further with the Northern Pueblos regarding the viability and suitability of implementing the "Pueblo Express" service concept and the implications of doing so to existing NCRTD service.
- This includes choosing specific alignment(s) and integrating with existing intra- and inter-Pueblo transit service. Given the multi-county nature of this effort, cost-sharing arrangements will also need to be clarified and refined.



TGRT Revenues Analysis

As directed by the RPA, TGRT revenues were estimated for high, medium, and low scenarios per year based on state parameters and methodologies, and NCRTD guidance. As shown in Table 1 below, “86% TGRT revenues” range from \$1.2 million in FY 2010 to approximately \$1.7 million for FY 2011 and \$2 million for 2012.

Table 1: TGRT Revenue Estimates

Santa Fe County TGRT Revenue Estimates: FY 2010-FY2012
Based on Current State Data & Methodology: August 2009

	FY 2010	FY 2011			FY 2012		
		High ¹ 4.1%	Medium 2.0%	Low 1.0%	High ¹ 3.2%	Medium 1.6%	Low 0.8%
Anticipated Total GRT Revenue - SF Co.	4,583,084	4,293,892	4,207,272	4,166,024	4,431,296	4,274,588	4,199,352
Reduce by 10% to allow for declines in GRT	(458,308)	0	0	0	0	0	0
	4,124,776						
Reduce by 25% to allow for cashflow time lag	(1,031,194)	0	0	0	0	0	0
	3,093,582						
Reduce by 3% for DFA admin fee	(92,807)	(128,817)	(126,218)	(124,981)	(132,939)	(128,238)	(125,981)
Anticipated realizable GRT	3,000,775	4,165,075	4,081,053	4,041,043	4,298,357	4,146,350	4,073,371
Half of realizable SF Co. GRT to RailRunner	1,500,388	2,082,538	2,040,527	2,020,522	2,149,179	2,073,175	2,036,686
86% of remaining half to SF Co.	1,290,333	1,790,982	1,754,853	1,737,649	1,848,294	1,782,931	1,751,550
14% of remaining half to NCRTD	210,054	291,555	285,674	282,873	300,885	290,245	285,136

¹ Based on Consensus Revenue Estimate (August 2009)

The focus of this planning effort was on the “86%” TGRT revenues as this is the funding stream under the RPA’s direct control. NCRTD indicated that its “14%” TGRT revenues are needed primarily to cover system administrative costs, but may be used to supplement existing regional service as funding may become available over time.

Project Costs

Capital and operating costs were estimated for each existing and proposed transit service investment for comparison with TGRT revenues over time. Existing service costs for FY 2010 were generally provided by Santa Fe Trails and NCRTD. Proposed new service costs for FY 2010 and existing service for FY 2011 were estimated by using each agency’s unit costs – urban service (Santa Fe Trails) and rural service (NCRTD) – for vehicles (capital) and vehicle revenue hours (operating). Reasonable calculations were made about the service characteristics of each proposed project – how many runs per day, service days per week, vehicles per route, and so on – to calculate annual capital and operating costs per project. Operating costs were then escalated approximately three percent per year to be very cautious in accounting for cost increases over time. Similarly, unless matching fund information was explicitly known, none was included in the cost calculations. This is particularly important for NCRTD service, where many routes currently have federal matching funds which are not guaranteed to continue in subsequent fiscal years, meaning the TGRT may have to absorb the shortfall.

There are two other important aspects of project costs. First, the methodology described above is appropriate for its intended use as a planning-level tool. As noted by NCRTD in particular, though, costs vary widely by route and depend on such factors as the price of gas and oil changes and other very specific and variable costs that are difficult to assign accurately by route and over time.

Additionally, new service has significant up-front capital costs – purchasing vehicles, shelters, signs,



etc. These costs should not be amortized over time because the transit agency must pay for them up front. And, though recurring costs may be lower per year in subsequent years, ongoing operating costs are typically much higher for transit agencies than capital costs.

Recommended Service Plan

The recommended service plan for FY 2010 and FY 2011 is shown in Table 2. The plan incorporates the following principles:

- Continue funding all existing service to maintain short-term system stability and for which the City and County would otherwise have to make up the funding shortfall or eliminate service.
- Initiate new service cautiously, particularly in the current volatile economic climate.

Table 2: Recommended Regional Transit Service Plan – FY 2010-2011

Operator	Service Component	Estimated Annual Cost	
		FY 2010	FY 2011
SF Trails	Routes 2 and 4 Rail Runner Enhancements	\$175,000	\$180,250
City of Santa Fe	Santa Fe Pick Up	\$250,000	\$257,500
SF Trails	Exist. Service Reductions	\$100,000	\$103,000
SF Trails	Route 22 IAIA/Santa Fe CC	\$250,000	\$257,500
NCRTD	Greater Eldorado Express	\$250,000	\$264,814
NCRTD	Espanola - N/T/P Pueblos - Santa Fe (cost share)	\$55,500	\$176,470
NCRTD	Chimayo Fixed Route	\$27,750	\$74,430
NCRTD	Los Alamos - Pojoaque	\$29,250	\$39,768
NCRTD	Pojoaque School Students	\$11,250	\$29,227
NCRTD	NM 14 (NM 599 RR Station - State Pen. Complex)	\$125,100	\$64,698
SF Trails	Route 22 to NM 599 RR Station		\$289,563
Project Cost Totals		\$1,273,850	\$1,737,221
Revenue Projections (Low Scenario)		\$1,290,333	\$1,737,649
Balance		\$16,483	\$428

As shown, cumulative project costs (which include both capital and operating) are lower than anticipated revenues. To be very conservative, the “low” revenue scenario was used to compare with project costs. The remaining amounts shown are recommended to be held in contingency in case costs increase or revenues decrease.

The FY 2011 project costs include a three percent operating cost escalation as noted previously. It is important to emphasize that, for existing NCRTD service, the FY 2011 costs encompass the full 12-month period, rather than the “three-quarters” cost for FY 2010 explained earlier.

Comparing project costs and TGRT revenues for FY 2010 indicates enough available revenue to fund one new service investment. Initial service along NM 14 from the NM 599 Rail Runner Station to the State Penitentiary/County Jail complex is recommended because of its regional importance, direct



connection to Rail Runner, and relatively low cost and risk to test. Similarly, a new connection from Santa Fe Trails Route 22 to the NM 599 Rail Runner Station is recommended for 2011. These two projects scored highest qualitatively in the service evaluation and directly address the TGRT funding criteria.

The FY 2011 service plan is shown for illustrative purposes, with the expectation that the RPA will update the plan as described below. In doing so, the following recommendations are made:

- The RPA should reassess the eligibility of each existing service funded in FY 2010 against its now-adopted criteria for TGRT funding. With several months ahead free of the accelerated schedule pressures accompanying this initial effort, the RPA can more deliberately assess the status of all existing service vis-à-vis funding eligibility.
- Similarly, the RPA should also assess TGRT-funded existing service against the evaluation criteria and recommendations contained in this service plan. In particular, this plan recommends that the RPA carefully consider the idea of eliminating the Greater Eldorado Express south of Eldorado or Lamy due to low cost-efficiency and re-allocating that funding towards more highly-evaluated service.

Another critical issue is the relationship between existing NCRTD service, TGRT funding eligibility, and Santa Fe County’s financial contributions towards transit service – these three interests do not identically overlap. There are several existing NCRTD services that do not appear to meet the RPA’s TGRT funding eligibility criteria. Should the RPA choose in FY 2011 or in future years not to fund these services through the TGRT, it may fall to Santa Fe County to provide the required funding share or match to continue such services.

Updating the Regional Transit Service Plan

There are two elements to updating this plan – an ongoing performance assessment of existing service (and evaluation of new service requests), and the procedural and logistical process to do so.

Regarding the first element, national best practices were researched to assemble a set of performance measures suitable for this project to evaluate existing service over time. (New service should be evaluated as documented previously in this report.) These measures encompass a range of standard route performance metrics. Their initial application to Santa Fe Trails Route 2 and NCRTD’s GEE Route is shown in Table 3 below for illustrative purposes.

Table 3: Existing Service Route Performance Measures

Provider/Route	Annual Vehicle Hours of Service	Annual Vehicle Miles of Service	Passengers per Revenue Hour	Boardings/Day (Ridership)	Cost per Vehicle Revenue Hour	Cost per Vehicle Revenue Mile	Cost per Passenger
Santa Fe Trails							
Route 2	5,480	252,945	66	1,051	\$70.00	\$3.23	\$2.13
NCRTD							
Greater Eldorado Express	2,190	185,420	9	53	\$66.15	\$1.98	\$19.20



The concept is to establish a baseline for each route against which to measure its future performance on an annual basis. While this process is somewhat subjective in not assigning relative weights or scores to each measure, this step can be taken if trend data over time indicate a need to do so.

Regarding the second element, the following process is recommended to procedurally update this plan. In November of each year, the RPA should solicit proposals for new service. During December and January, the RPA should evaluate the new service proposals and existing service route performance, as well as update the revenue estimates. Based on the service evaluations, the project cost and revenue calculations should be updated in January and the project priorities revised accordingly. The RPA should consider the revised priorities at its February meeting, allowing time for further consideration or adjustments during its March meeting. This timeframe will allow the RPA to provide direction to the NCRTD by April 1st of each year. This in turn allows the NCRTD three months to adjust its service contracts before the new TGRT fiscal year begins on July 1st.

Conclusions

This first ever RPA Regional Transit Service Plan recommends TGRT funding investments for FY 2010 and FY 2011, as well as technical tools and a logistical process to evaluate existing and proposed service over time and to update this plan on an annual basis. Over time, as this process becomes routine and cost and revenue estimates become more stable, this plan can set the stage for consideration of longer-term, bigger picture service investments and coordination to evolve and strengthen the multimodal regional transit network serving Santa Fe, Santa Fe County, and surrounding areas.

