

RoadRUNNER Transit



Strategic Plan

2007-2011

Adopted March 19th, 2007

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List of Goals and Objectives

Goal A: Increase the Accessibility and Convenience of Public Transportation to All Citizens

- Objective 1: Expand fixed route service to underserved areas of the city
- Objective 2: Improve transit accessibility
- Objective 3: Reduce the amount of time spent waiting for and riding on the bus
- Objective 4: Extend service hours to the stated needs of the public
- Objective 5: Establish partnerships with major employers/destinations

Goal B: Provide Cost-Effective, Efficient, and Environmentally Sound Public Transportation

- Objective 1: Utilize performance measures for evaluating all aspects of the transit system
- Objective 2: Raise revenues to decrease burden on taxpayers
- Objective 3: Improve Dial-a-Ride cost-effectiveness
- Objective 4: Analyze and monitor fuel alternatives and fuel efficiency technologies
- Objective 5: Improve on-time performance of fixed routes
- Objective 6: Investigate implications of altering schedules and capacities on all routes

Goal C: Provide the Highest Possible Level of Customer Service

- Objective 1: Increase options for purchase and payment of fares
- Objective 2: Provide better information and physical comfort at bus stops
- Objective 3: Enhance the RoadRUNNER website
- Objective 4: Develop protocol for effectively handling comments and complaints

Goal D: Integrate All Transportation Modes and Coordinate Service with Other Transportation Providers

- Objective 1: Participate in the South Central Regional Transit District (RTD)
- Objective 2: Provide transportation services for special events and tourist attractions
- Objective 3: Develop intermodal center and other transfer points
- Objective 4: Encourage land uses that support transit and walking

Goal E: Maximize Safety and Security within the Public Transportation System

- Objective 1: Develop contingency plans for emergencies/disasters
- Objective 2: Ensure the safety of onboard passengers
- Objective 3: Ensure security of fuel storage and supplies
- Objective 4: Ensure security of transit facilities and assets

Glossary of Acronyms

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
AVL	Automatic Vehicle Locator
CNG	Compressed Natural Gas
DACC	Doña Ana Community College
EMNRD	New Mexico Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
IT	Information Technology
MDT	Mobile Data Terminal
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MVRDA	Mesilla Valley Regional Dispatch Authority
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NMSU	New Mexico State University
OEM	Office of Emergency Management
ROW	Right of Way
RSVP	Retired Senior Volunteer Program
RTD	Regional Transit District
TAB	City of Las Cruces Transit Advisory Board
BAU	Business As Usual
LRSP	Long Range Service Plan

Glossary of Italicized Terms

Fixed-route: Transit service provided on a repetitive, regularly scheduled basis along a specific route, with vehicles stopping to pick up passengers at and deliver passengers to specific stops.

Bi-directional Route Network:

Two way travel along a designated path of a road network.

Revenue or Service Miles:

The total miles when a vehicle is available to the general public and there is a reasonable expectation of carrying passengers that either directly pay fares, are subsidized by public policy, or provide payment through some contractual arrangement.

Headway: The amount of time scheduled between consecutive buses on a given route segment; in other words, how often the bus visits a stop.

Pulse or Timed transfer schedule:

A point or location where two or more routes come together at the same time to provide positive transfer connections. A short layover may be provided at the timed transfer point to enhance the connection.

Paratransit: Transportation service required by ADA for individuals with disabilities who are unable to use fixed-route transit systems. The service must be comparable to the fixed-route service.

Intermodal Facility:

A building or site specifically designed to accommodate the meeting of two or more modes of travel. For example, an intermodal station may service air, rail, and highway transportation.

Time Point: A designated location and time that a bus can arrive before – but not leave earlier than – the stated time as indicated in the route schedule. Timepoints are set to keep a bus running on schedule.

Peak Hour/Peak Period:

The period with the highest ridership during the entire service day, generally referring to either the peak hour or peak several hours (peak period).

Introduction

This strategic plan is intended to guide the development of RoadRUNNER Transit toward achieving its mission:

To enhance the mobility of all citizens of Las Cruces through safe, dependable, convenient, affordable, and cost-effective public transportation options.

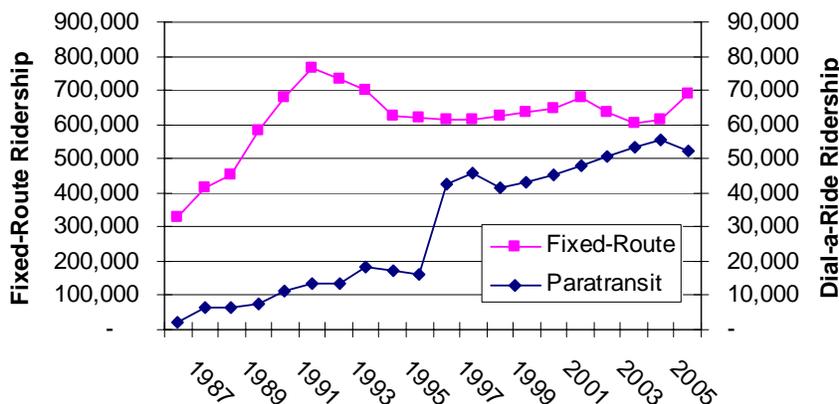
The plan outlines the desired progress of the public transportation system over the next five years. Annual updates will be given to the Transit Advisory Board and City Council regarding the status of each action item, and this progress will be reported in regular updates of the plan.

The Goals, Objectives, and Action Items in this plan were developed by Roadrunner Transit Staff, the Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the Transit Advisory Board. The plan was presented to the public on December 12th and February 1st and many of the comments received were incorporated into the document. Comments from our February 12th City Council Worksession were also incorporated in the document. Some of the action items are based on recommendations of a Nelson/Nygaard Consulting Associates study adopted by City Council in 2006 entitled, "Las Cruces Transit Network Analysis and Intermodal Transit Facility Site Selection" (available for download at http://lcmpoweb.las-cruces.org/mpo_projects/intermodal_center.shtm and at the Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organization and RoadRUNNER transit offices.). Other action items call for reports and specific analyses, and as these are completed, they will be included in the appendices of this document. Therefore, in addition to its function as a guiding document, this plan will serve to provide information about the decision making process to members of the public who are interested in learning about and improving the transit system in Las Cruces.

History of RoadRUNNER Transit

Fixed-route transit service began in Las Cruces in 1986. Regular fares were \$0.50, with a discounted fare of \$0.25 for students and seniors. These fares have remained unchanged to this day. In 1986, RoadRUNNER consisted of four routes, one of which served NMSU. Two more routes were added in 1988, and again in 1991 as the popularity of the system grew. A

Figure 1. Fixed-Route and Dial-a-Ride Annual Ridership



ninth route was added in 1996 to serve the east mesa. Since inception, the fixed route system has operated on a *pulsed* or *timed-transfer* schedule, with one-way loop routes designed to maximize coverage. Until 1994, all routes operated on 30-minute *headways*. However, the mounting pressures of traffic

congestion and lengthening of routes caused the timed transfer system to be unreliable at 30 minute headways, and as a result the headways were increased to 40 minutes. Since the headways increased, ridership has yet to regain the peak levels experienced in the early 1990's (Figure 1). However, ridership has been increasing since 2004, when newer, more reliable buses, as well as rising gasoline prices have made the system more attractive.

Curb to curb demand-response paratransit service (Dial-a-Ride) was established in 1986 along with the fixed route service. It originally operated within a ¾ mile radius of the fixed route service and was available to citizens who meet the qualifications of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This service is required by ADA in any area that offers fixed-route service. ADA qualified riders pay a \$0.75 fare, which also has not changed since 1986. In 1994, Dial-a-Ride was expanded to include the entire City of Las Cruces. In 1997, the service was merged with senior transportation, and all seniors who registered with Senior Programs became eligible to ride. Their fares continue to be paid for by a city subsidy, and as a result, this service is extremely popular with seniors (Figure 1). Paratransit trips as a percentage of total RoadRUNNER trips generally increased to a peak of just over 8% in 2005. For details on the current fixed route and paratransit systems, please see Appendix A.

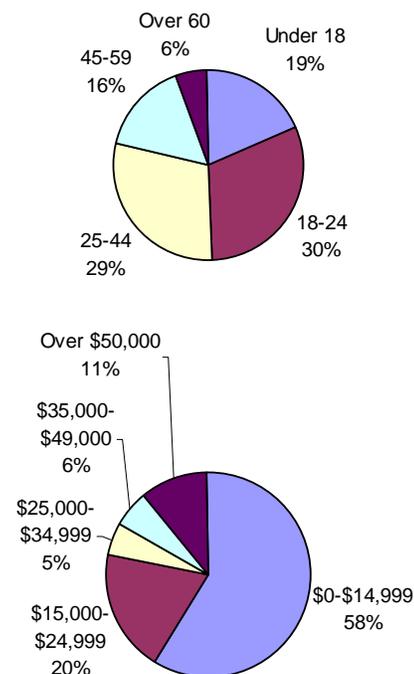
The 2006 Nelson/Nygaard study recommended a new *bi-directional route network*, a set of recommended new route expansions, and a site location and design for the new *Intermodal Center*. A map of recommended routes is provided in Appendix B. Implementation of this study would represent the most comprehensive change to the fixed-route transit system since its inception.

The Role of Transit in the Community

Transportation is the connection between individuals and their community. In most small to medium sized cities, including Las Cruces, the primary function of transit is to provide mobility to citizens with limited transportation options. It is estimated that nationally, about one in every three people cannot drive because they are too young, have a disability, or cannot afford to own or maintain a car. They depend on transit to get to school, work, doctor's appointments, shopping, and social activities. Transit is their lifeline.

A survey conducted by Nelson/Nygaard Consulting Associates in 2005 determined that 58% of Las Cruces transit riders had a household income below \$15,000 per year (Figure 2). It also asked local transit riders how they would have made the current trip if the bus had not been available. Only 5% would have driven a car. Nearly 18% would not have made the trip at all, 45% would have had to walk, and 23% would

Figure 2. Age and Household Income of Fixed Route Riders



have relied on friends or family to drive them. These responses indicate a high level of transit dependence among current RoadRUNNER customers.

The Nelson/Nygaard survey also found that fixed route transit riders are fairly young, with more than three quarters under 45 years of age, and only 6% over age 60 (Figure 2). This runs counter to a common assumption that many transit riders are seniors who no longer drive. A possible explanation for the low percentage of older riders is that many seniors utilize the Dial-A-Ride service. They may find it preferable to fixed route service because the ride is free, and they do not have to walk to or wait at a bus stop. However, for many of the Dial-a-Ride customers, there may be no transportation option other than the paratransit service, due to limited physical mobility. This accessible and convenient service is essential to maintaining their quality of life.

Challenges: Present and Future

While it is clear that the function of RoadRUNNER to date has been to provide transportation to citizens with limited options, this will not be the case forever. The experience of other cities has been that as they grow, transit begins to serve additional functions including congestion management and air quality maintenance. It becomes difficult to manage the ever increasing financial and environmental burden of automobile traffic without shifting a significant percentage of auto trips to other modes such as transit. In addition, according to a study done by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), *The Benefits of Public Transportation*; “the \$32 billion U.S. public transportation industry generates up to a 6-to-1 net return on investment -- which translates into higher revenues for cities and states” (p.12, 2002).

Transit provides relief from automobile traffic congestion and environmental hazards, and it directly stimulates our local economy by providing individuals access to essential services and job opportunities, and shopping and recreation destinations. In addition, transit has positive health and social outcomes. Improved transit options can revitalize our neighborhoods and encourage community activities and decrease our health costs. If we continue to develop a safe, accessible, reliable and attractive transit system the future of the City of Las Cruces will be able to support a better quality of life for ALL its citizens.

As the city and transit system grow and evolve, the vision is that RoadRUNNER will offer a true alternative to the automobile. RoadRUNNER transit will attract riders who wish to save money on gasoline and auto maintenance, and avoid the frustration of rush hour driving, or get work done during their commute. The overarching challenge that RoadRUNNER will face in the coming decade is to continue to serve the transportation disadvantaged, while positioning itself to expand ridership by providing an attractive, true transportation alternative. This challenge can be broken down into several components.

Growth and Development of the City

Perhaps the most pressing challenge that RoadRUNNER transit faces in the pursuit of its mission is the growth of Las Cruces itself. As shown in Table 1, the city’s population has increased nearly 20% in the last ten years, while the annexations have increased the land area by 10% in the same time frame. However, the number of *annual revenue (or service)*

miles traveled by the fixed route system has declined slightly over the last decade. Developing areas of the city are not getting fixed route transit service (although eligible citizens can still use Dial-a-Ride in these areas, as it serves everyone in the city limits). Moreover, state law prohibits the collection of impact fees for transit from new development, so if these newer areas are to be served, the entire citizenry will have to pay for it, not just the newer developments.

Year	Land Area (sq miles)	Population	Fixed-Route Revenue Miles
1996	51.43	69,411	398,432
2006	56.73	86,608	380,083
% Change	10%	25%	-5%

The type of development that occurs is important to transit as well. In order for transit to be cost effective, residential densities of 7 to 15 dwelling units per acre are typically required. Most new development in this region is typically of much lower density – on the order of 4 to 5 dwelling units per acre. Pedestrian-friendly development is also key, as nearly every transit trip begins and ends with a walking trip. Wide sidewalks, buffers from traffic, and shade are very important. Perhaps the most important factor, however, is connectivity of pedestrian routes. Studies consistently show that people are willing to walk about ¼ mile to access a transit stop. Having well connected pedestrian routes near a stop increases the directness of the average walking route, and therefore increases the number of people living within the critical ¼ mile zone. Currently, Las Cruces has few policies to encourage or require this kind of transit- and pedestrian-friendly development.

Bi-directional Service Plan Implementation

Expanding upon the current service plan in its existing form is costly and impractical. Thus, the suggested plan is to create a Bi-directional (two way) route network that completes one direction of the route within 30 minutes. In some cases, depending upon demand, one way of any particular route may be completed in 15 minutes to provide additional service in these areas. In certain high demand areas, the proposed network will also be able to provide 15-minute service where two routes overlap each other.

The bi-directional route network is easily scalable in that it enables an increase (or decrease) of service merely by adding an additional bus at certain times of the day. With the old system it would be impossible to increase the headways and still serve the entire area of the looped route. Another improvement over the current system is the increase of connections between the Downtown transfer point and the Mesilla Valley Mall transfer point. In the current system, the Mesilla Valley Mall transfer point is connected only by one route that travels back and forth to the Downtown transfer point. This is problematic when accessing services on the East side of town. The new Bi-directional service plan provides more options for connections to the East side and back to the Downtown transfer point making the system more efficient as the City of Las Cruces grows.

Frustrating for many customers is that the current circuitous routings result in some trips only being available in one direction, and for a lengthy riding time, even though the destination may be close by. The new Bi-directional plan increases the number of origins and

destinations through its timed connection between the two transfer points, and allows for the ability to board a bus, at the middle point of every route, every thirty minutes. Thus, in almost all cases, the Bi-directional plan will reduce the amount of time waiting and riding the bus to a specific destination, and will provide for more transfer options and direct routes to any possible destination.

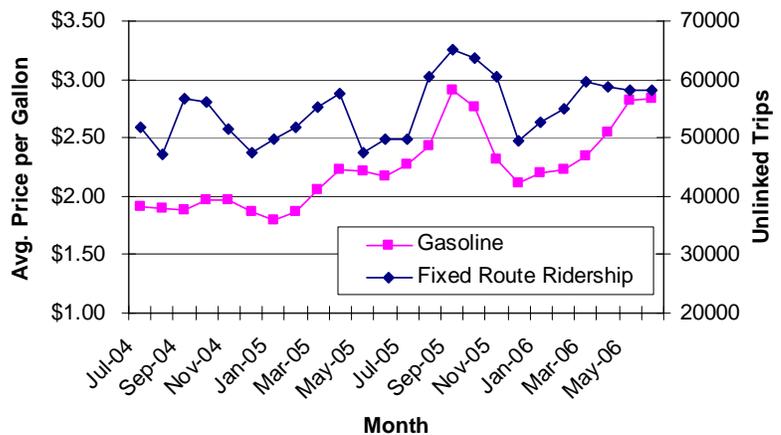
Four (4) additional routes were recommended by Nelson/Nygaard. Although the Strategic Plan uses the Nelson/Nygaard study as a guide for future route expansion, it is evident that as the City of Las Cruces grows more service will be needed to the East and Northeast. Specifically, it is pertinent that as roads get built out, such as Sonoma Ranch, that service is provided in this area. Thus, in order to provide service equitably, the Strategic Plan has specific action items related to keeping up with the pace of development. For example, by providing input into coordination between land use and transportation and the Regional Comprehensive Plan, and ensuring that as development occurs the Transit system is being provided for through the appropriate infrastructure, such as bus pull outs and shelter pads. The Strategic Plan currently outlines the priority of additional routes as follows: Route 13 (See Nelson/Nygaard report) along Elks and US-70 providing service to the East, a route located along Sonoma Ranch providing service between Mesilla Valley Mall and US-70, Route 12 (See Nelson/Nygaard report) providing increased service between the two transfer points along Lohman/Amador, and the fourth one to be determined.

High Fuel Prices

The high (and generally increasing) cost of gasoline poses both an opportunity and a challenge. On the one hand, higher gas prices have a significant positive effect on fixed route ridership (Figure 3). This fact not only increases fare revenue, but also raises the visibility of RoadRUNNER in the community as new riders try the system for the first time. On the other hand, rising diesel prices significantly raise transit operating costs.

Perhaps equally problematic however, is the indirect effect that high gas prices may have on the transit budget. On average, about 80% of the local match for transit funding comes from a \$0.02 per gallon gasoline tax. If high prices are sustained (as most experts predict), drivers will choose more fuel efficient vehicles and drive less, thus lowering gas tax revenue. This is already a problem with highway construction, which is funded partly through federal and state gasoline taxes, and could become a problem for RoadRUNNER as well. As such, the City should be prepared to look toward developing supplemental funding sources for transit.

Figure 3. Gasoline Prices and Transit Ridership



Paratransit Demands

Another challenge that RoadRUNNER faces is the generally increasing percentage of trips that are supplied by Dial-a-Ride service (Figure 1). Dial-a-Ride service tends to be more convenient than fixed route service, because it is curb to curb and eliminates the need to walk to a bus stop. This feature also makes it significantly more expensive. In 2005, the cost of providing one trip on fixed route service was \$2.93, while the cost of providing one trip on Dial-a-Ride was \$12.71. While this cost is a significant barrier to adding more vans and drivers, demand continues to rise. As a result, many seniors who desire to use the service at specific times cannot be accommodated.

Paratransit service, such as Dial-a-Ride, is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act, and will exist as long as the fixed route system does. However, when paratransit was initially required, the fixed route system was inaccessible to people with disabilities. Now, the majority of buses are wheelchair accessible, and with the next order, all will be. Recent models and all future purchases will have a low-floor, making boarding easier for all users. Some stops still lack ADA accessible routes to them, but the City is correcting this problem as fast as it can. Furthermore, in the last several years the City (often with the help of private entities through the Adopt-a-Shelter program) has added shelters to about 40 stops, with plans for many more. These bus shelters make waiting bearable for more people. As a result of these changes, many Dial-a-Ride users could be served by fixed route service, making the transit system as a whole more cost effective and efficient.

Safety and Security

In times of heightened terrorist threats and recent natural disasters, it is pertinent that the transit system is on the forefront of maintaining a safe and secure transportation. In addition, in the event of any type of emergency the transit system needs to be positioned to not only provide reliable transportation, but also to be integral in planning and executing the evacuation routes necessary for a quick and efficient exodus. This Strategic Plan outlines a series of steps necessary to accomplish these goals.

Goals, Objectives, and Action Items through 2011

In response to the challenges presented by growth and development the following Goals have been developed to further RoadRUNNER's mission statement: A) increase the accessibility and convenience of public transportation to all citizens, B) provide cost-effective, efficient, and environmentally sound public transportation C) provide the highest possible level of customer service, D) integrate all transportation modes and coordinate service with other transportation providers, and E) maximize safety and security within the public transportation system.

Each Goal is broken down to specific objectives and action items. Whenever possible, a timeframe and estimated cost (or revenue) is provided, as well as the staff person(s) and partnerships that will be necessary and responsible for their completion. If these actions are implemented in a timely manner, RoadRUNNER Transit should be in a position to fulfill the goals of its mission in the long run. Included with the Goals, Objectives and Action items is a Priority List that ranks 7 Action Items determined to be high priority.

Goals, Objectives, and Actions Items Matrix

Goal A: Increase the Accessibility and Convenience of Public Transportation to All Citizens				
Objective 1: Reduce the amount of time spent waiting for and riding on the bus				
Actions	Staff/Partner	Start	Complete	Notes/Progress
a) Implement recommended bi-directional service plan	Existing Transit Staff	FY 07/08	FY 07/08	Concept approved with Nelson/Nygaard report
b) Maintain bi-directionality for new routes and changes to existing routes	Existing Transit Staff	Ongoing	Ongoing	
c) Develop criteria for decreasing headways or establishing peak headways on existing routes	New Staff: Service Development Coordinator	FY 09/10	Ongoing	Contingent upon new hire
Objective 2: Improve transit accessibility				
Actions	Staff/Partner	Start	Complete	Notes/Progress
a) Convert entire service fleet to ADA compliant vehicles	Existing Transit Staff	FY 06/07	FY 07/08	Bid for 5 buses in progress
b) Adopt criteria for ADA accessible bus stops for use in designating new stops	Existing Transit Staff / TAB	FY 06/07	FY 06/07	Under TAB consideration
c) Develop plan for bringing existing stops into ADA compliance	NMSU co-ops	FY 07/08	FY 07/08	Data collection needed
d) Provide Braille bus stop locator signs	Existing Transit Staff	FY 07/08	FY 07/08	Signs on order
e) Perform pedestrian network analysis to determine actual 1/4 mile catchment area of bus stops, for use in determining stop spacing	MPO Staff	FY 07/08	FY 07/08	Analysis has begun on current routes - must be done on new routes. Cost for acquiring software
Objective 3: Expand fixed route service to underserved areas of the city				
Actions	Staff/Partner	Start	Complete	Notes/Progress
a) Add Route 13 (Nelson/Nygaard report) to retain service to East, North Telshor, and Elks Drive	Existing Transit Staff / MPO / Additional Staff	FY07/08	FY07/08	Should be done when bi-directional service plan is implemented
b) Provide service along Sonoma Ranch between Mesilla Valley Mall and US 70	Existing Transit Staff / MPO / Additional Staff	FY 08/09	FY 08/09	Contingent upon completion road and testing of route time
c) Add Route 12 (Nelson/Nygaard report) serving Lohman/Amador between the two transfer points	Existing Transit Staff / MPO / Additional Staff	FY 09/10	FY 09/10	May be extended east or west depending on timing, ridership demand
d) Add new route on east side	Existing Transit Staff / MPO	FY 10/11	FY 10/11	Contingent upon results of long-range planning
e) Develop long-range service plan based on demographic projections, the City's Comprehensive Plan, and the MPO Transportation Plan	MPO / City Planning / Consultant	FY 08/09	FY 08/09	Use Nelson/Nygaard as guide, additional routes needed east of I-25
f) Assist MPO staff in the development and maintenance of a comprehensive geodatabase of transit data, and integrate with MVRDA	MPO / Existing Transit Staff	FY 06/07	Ongoing	

Objective 4: Extend service hours to the meet needs detailed in 2005 rider/non-rider survey

Actions	Staff/Partner	Start	Complete	Notes/Progress
a) Provide Sunday service from 8:00am to 7:00pm	Additional Staff / FTE drivers	FY 08/09	Ongoing	11 additional hours on Sundays when fully implemented
b) Extend weekday service hours to 6:00am to 10:00pm	Additional Staff / FTE drivers	FY 09/10	Ongoing	3 additional hours every weekday per route
c) Extend weekend (Saturday and Sunday) service hours to 8:00am to 7:00pm	Additional Staff / FTE drivers	FY 10/11	Ongoing	2 additional hours on Saturdays
d) Establish a policy for holiday levels of service	Existing Transit Staff / TAB	FY 07/08	Baseline Budget	May require additional funding if service added

Objective 5: Establish partnerships with major employers/destinations

Actions	Staff/Partner	Start	Complete	Notes/Progress
a) Enter into contract with NMSU and DACC to allow students/ faculty/staff to ride free throughout the transit system	NMSU / DACC / MPO	FY 06/07	Ongoing	Lump sum payment would be made in lieu of fares
b) Develop generic program with fee schedule by which employers/ businesses can subsidize their employees/patrons transit trips	New Staff: Service Development Coordinator	FY 09/10	Ongoing	Contingent upon new staff
c) Develop opportunities for private sponsorship of fare-free or reduced fare days (Adopt-a-Route)	New Staff: Marketing / Events Coordinator	FY 08/09	Ongoing	Contingent upon new staff
d) Develop feasibility criteria for employers/destinations to pay for increased frequency or extension of service to serve their specific needs	New Staff: Service Development and Marketing / Events Coordinators	FY 09/10	Ongoing	Contingent upon new staff

Goal B: Provide Cost-Effective, Efficient, and Environmentally Sound Public Transportation

Objective 1: Utilize performance measures for evaluating all aspects of the transit system

Actions	Staff/Partner	Start	Complete	Notes/Progress
a) Establish and define indicators of efficient fixed routes/route segments and demand response service, as well as Starts for these indicators	New Staff: Service Development Coordinator / MPO	FY 08/09	Ongoing	Contingent upon new staff
b) Conduct a review of maintenance operations and revise protocols to improve cost-effectiveness	Existing Transit Staff / Consultant	FY 07/08	FY 07/08	
c) Increase utilization of smart fare cards to facilitate data collection	New Staff: Transit Technology Specialist	FY 08/09	Ongoing	Contingent upon new staff

Objective 2: Raise revenues to decrease burden on taxpayers

Actions	Staff/Partner	Start	Complete	Notes/Progress
a) Adopt a policy for advertising on RoadRUNNER transit property and website	Legal Dept / Existing Transit Staff / TAB	FY 07/08	Ongoing	Policy approved by TAB
b) Conduct impact study on effects of possible fare increase for both fixed-route and Dial-a-Ride	Existing Transit Staff / TAB / MPO	FY 08/09	FY 08/09	
c) Develop marketing plan to attract new riders to the fixed route system	New Staff: Marketing / Events Coordinator	FY 08/09	FY 08/09	Contingent upon new staff

Objective 3: Improve Dial-a-Ride cost-effectiveness

Actions	Staff/Partner	Start	Complete	Notes/Progress
a) Investigate and implement technology that can improve scheduling efficiency, including Automatic Vehicle Locators and enhanced scheduling software	New Staff: Transit Technology Specialist	FY 08/09	Ongoing	Contingent upon new staff and technology upgrade
b) Develop eligibility guidelines for seniors to use Dial-a-Ride	Existing Transit Staff / TAB	FY 06/07	FY 06/07	
c) Develop rider education program to help able bodied seniors to fully utilize the fixed route system	Senior Programs / RSVP / New Staff: Events - Marketing Coordinator	FY 08/09	FY 08/09	Contingent upon new staff
d) Revise Senior Programs fare subsidy to reflect rising ridership and cost of service	Existing Transit Staff / TAB	FY 07/08	FY 07/08	
e) Provide automated courtesy call to remind customers of ride pickup time	New Staff: Transit Technology Specialist	FY 08/09	Ongoing	Contingent upon new staff

Objective 4: Analyze and monitor fuel alternatives and fuel efficiency technologies

Actions	Staff/Partner	Start	Complete	Notes/Progress
a) Monitor developments in alternative fuels and fuel efficiency technologies	Existing Transit Staff / MPO Staff	FY 06/07	Ongoing	Cooperative agreement with MPO
b) Utilize alternative fuels / fuel efficiency technologies when they are cost effective and/or offer significant environmental benefits	Existing Transit Staff	TBD	TBD	

Objective 5: Improve on-time performance of fixed routes

Actions	Staff/Partner	Start	Complete	Notes/Progress
a) Locate new bus stops on far side of intersection when possible	Existing Transit Staff	FY 06/07	Ongoing	
b) Install traffic signal preemption devices to reduce the amount of time spent waiting for red lights	Traffic Engineer / New Staff: Transit Technology Specialist	FY 08/09	FY 08/09	Contingent upon new staff

Objective 6: Investigate implications of altering schedules and capacities on all routes

Actions	Staff/Partner	Start	Complete	Notes/Progress
a) Monitor capacity needs of each route by measuring peak ridership	New Staff: Service Development Coordinator / Transit Technology Specialist	FY 08/09	Ongoing	Contingent upon new staff
b) Quantify the difference in total costs of various sized vehicles	New Staff: Service Development Coordinator	FY 08/09	FY 08/09	Contingent upon new staff

Goal C: Provide the Highest Possible Level of Customer Service

Objective 1: Increase options for purchase and payment of fares

Actions	Staff/Partner	Start	Complete	Notes/Progress
a) Provide purchase of fare cards on the RoadRUNNER website	New Staff: Transit Technology Specialist	FY 08/09	Ongoing	Would result in additional postage costs depending on popularity. Contingent upon new staff.
b) Increase the number of physical locations where farecards are sold	New Staff: Marketing / Events Coordinator	FY 08/09	Ongoing	Contingent upon new staff

Objective 2: Provide better information and physical comfort at bus stops

Actions	Staff/Partner	Start	Complete	Notes/Progress
a) Add 10 new bus shelters with route maps and schedules per year, and prioritize locations based on average daily boardings, absence of shelters at nearby stops, and possibly customer requests.	Existing Transit Staff / TAB	FY 06/07	Ongoing	All shelters must be ADA compliant.
b) Establish maintenance schedule for existing bus shelters	New Contract	FY 07/08	Ongoing	Out to bid
c) Provide two-way bus stop signs to aid new riders in locating them	Existing Transit Staff	FY 06/07	FY 06/07	Included in route transition (see A1a)
d) Provide route maps and schedules at stops without shelters	Existing Transit Staff / MPO	FY 07/08	Ongoing	Add maps at about 60 stops per year until complete
e) Provide real time running information at major transfer points	Existing Transit Staff / MPO	FY 08/09	TBD	Research needed for cost and technical requirements
f) Provide all printed information in English and Spanish	Existing Transit Staff / MPO	Ongoing	Ongoing	

Objective 3: Enhance the RoadRUNNER website

Actions	Staff/Partner	Start	Complete	Notes/Progress
a) Provide wayfinding software, wherein one can enter origin and destination and receive detailed itinerary	New Staff: Transit Technology Specialist, IT Dept, EMNRD	FY 10/11	FY 10/11	Additional software needed. Also contingent upon hire of Transit Technology Specialist
b) Provide real time running information that can be easily accessed by cell phone	New Staff: Transit Technology Specialist, IT Dept	FY 09/10	TBD	Research needed for cost and technical requirements. Also contingent upon hire of Transit Technology Specialist
c) Make all information available on the website, including policies and procedures, reports and studies, and FAQs	New Staff: Transit Technology Specialist	FY 08/09	Ongoing	Contingent upon new staff
d) Develop pages for specific Start groups (e.g., kids page, employee page)	New Staff: Transit Technology Specialist / Marketing-Events Coordinator	FY 08/09	Ongoing	Contingent upon new staff

Objective 4: Develop protocol for effectively handling comments and complaints

Actions	Staff/Partner	Start	Complete	Notes/Progress
a) Develop web form that can be used directly by public, by operator taking phone call, and printed for distribution on vehicles	New staff: Transit Technology Specialist / Marketing-Events Coordinator	FY 08/09	FY 08/09	Contingent upon new staff
b) Address all comments/ complaints within 48 hours and track comments by subject. Report annually to TAB on results	Existing Transit Staff	Ongoing	Ongoing	

Goal D: Integrate All Transportation Modes and Coordinate Service with Other Transportation Providers

Objective 1: Pursue Regional Transit Initiatives

Actions	Staff/Partner	Start	Complete	Notes/Progress
a) Represent the interests of the City of Las Cruces in the formation of the RTD	MPO / RTD participants	Complete	Complete	RTD certified in November 2006
b) Provide support to the RTD Board of Directors and advisory committees	MPO / RTD participants	FY 06/07	Ongoing	
c) Complete Rail Feasibility Study	MPO / RTD participants	FY 06/07	TBD	Funding request submitted (state funds)
d) Complete Coordinated Human Services and Transportation Plan	MPO / Existing Transit Staff	FY 06/07	FY 07/08	

Objective 2: Provide transportation services for special events and tourist attractions to increase accessibility and mitigate congestion and parking problems

Actions	Staff/Partner	Start	Complete	Notes/Progress
a) Conduct a needs assessment for transit services for special events in the community	New Staff: Marketing-Events Coordinator	FY 08/09	FY 08/09	Contingent upon new staff
b) Develop fee structure and guidelines to ensure special services do not hamper regular service nor violate anti-charter regulations	New Staff: Marketing-Events Coordinator	FY 08/09	FY 08/09	Contingent upon new staff
c) Develop partnerships with non-city entities (e.g., Mesilla, NMSU, Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum) to provide transit services to special events	New Staff: Marketing-Events Coordinator	FY 08/09	FY 08/09	Contingent upon new staff

Objective 3: Develop intermodal center and other transfer points

Actions	Staff/Partner	Start	Complete	Notes/Progress
a) Construct primary intermodal center at Alameda and Lohman	Consultant	FY 07/08	FY 09/10	Preliminary design completed / Approval received
b) Investigate interim transfer points and amenities, including acquisition of a parcel north of US 70 for use as future transfer point	MPO / City Planning / Consultant	FY 08/09	FY 08/09	In conjunction with long range plan development (A3b)
c) Conduct feasibility study for improvements to secondary timed transfer point at Mesilla Valley Mall	Existing Transit Staff	FY 08/09	FY 08/09	Study underway. Funding required contingent upon study results.

Objective 4: Encourage development that supports transit and multimodal access to transit

Actions	Staff/Partner	Start	Complete	Notes/Progress
a) Provide annual report on the impact of new development on the transit system, to include cost of future service expansion and accessibility issues	MPO / City Planning	FY 07/08	Ongoing	Cooperative agreement with MPO and City Planning
b) Provide input into MPO pedestrian planning process	MPO	FY 07/08	FY 08/09	Cooperative agreement with MPO
c) Participate in Regional Comprehensive Plan update	MPO / City Planning	FY 06/07	FY 09/10	Cooperative agreement with MPO and City Planning
d) Develop policies for ensuring that bus stops (including consideration of pull-outs) are provided for on new thoroughfares	MPO / City Planning / TAB	FY 08/09	FY 08/09	To be done in conjunction with Long Range Plan (A3e)

Goal E: Maximize Safety and Security within the Public Transportation System

Objective 1: Develop contingency plans for emergencies/disasters

Actions	Staff/Partner	Start	Complete	Notes/Progress
a) Plan transit evacuation routes and route system changes in the event of a citywide emergency	OEM	FY 07/08	FY 07/08	Contact Office of Emergency Management
b) Prioritize routes for running in the event that fleet damage or driver absence prevents full service	Existing Transit Staff	FY 07/08	FY 07/08	
c) Ensure compliance with NIMS and ensure staff are trained in critical emergency areas	Existing Transit Staff	Ongoing	Ongoing	All current staff are compliant
d) Ensure proper inclusion of transit in City All-Hazard Plan	Existing Transit Staff	Ongoing	Ongoing	

Objective 2: Ensure the safety of onboard passengers

Actions	Staff/Partner	Start	Complete	Notes/Progress
a) Equip each service vehicle with video surveillance	Existing Transit Staff	FY 07/08	FY 07/08	
b) Upgrade vehicle radio system and equip each vehicle with Mobile Data Terminal	Existing Transit Staff	TBD	TBD	Contingent upon city-wide requisition - Cost not included in summary
c) Develop driver safety training tracking program, and report annually to TAB on driver training	New Staff: Trainer / Supervisor	FY 07/08	Ongoing	Contingent upon new staff
d) Include suspicious package and enhanced pre-trip inspection in driver training program	New Staff: Trainer / Supervisor	FY 07/08	Ongoing	Contingent upon new staff

Objective 3: Ensure safety and security of fuel storage and supplies

Actions	Staff/Partner	Start	Complete	Notes/Progress
a) Identify security features necessary for the new City Central site	Facilities Dept, Consultants	FY 06/07	TBD	
b) Examine feasibility of maintaining a reserve fuel supply separate from main supply	Existing Transit	FY 09/10	FY 09/10	
c) Encourage that the entire fleet use fuels that do not require special ventilation or maintenance facilities	Existing Transit Staff	Ongoing	Ongoing	

Objective 4: Ensure security of transit facilities and assets

Actions	Staff/Partner	Start	Complete	Notes/Progress
a) Install lighting and video surveillance in buildings and maintenance yards	Existing Transit Staff	FY 06/07	FY 06/07	Lighting budgeted in current budget
b) Develop enhanced, cost-effective cash control protocols	Cashier's Office, New Staff: Supervisor / Trainer	FY 09/10	FY 09/10	Contingent upon new staff
c) Install alarm system/panic buttons in vulnerable areas	Existing Transit Staff	FY 06/07	FY 06/07	Order through Facilities

Implementation Details

Priority List

One of the recommendations by the Transit Advisory Board was to provide an easily accessible Priority List of pressing Action Items. This Priority List corresponds with the implementation timeline. The Priority List is as follows:

- Implement Bi-Directional Plan
- ADA Compliant Fleet and Bus Stops
- Construct Intermodal Center
- Expansion of Hours (Sunday as first priority)
- Expand areas of service (at least one additional route providing service to the East side)
- NMSU Contract
- Better information and Physical comfort at Bus Stops
- Encourage Land Uses that support transit and multi-modal access to transit

New Staff Positions

In order to implement many of the Action items associated with the Strategic Plan, new staff positions are necessary. The first positions to be implemented in 2007-2008 are three new positions of a Supervisor/Trainer, a Grants/Contract Manager, and three (3) permanent Part Time Drivers. These positions are essential simply to keep up with the increasing demands on the current system. They will also help facilitate a better transition to the new Bi-directional plan.

The subsequent pertinent positions to be implemented in 2008-2009 are a Marketing/Events Coordinator, a Service Development Coordinator, and a Transit Technology Specialist. These positions are integral to accomplishing many of the goals set forth by the Strategic Plan. For example, these positions support expansion of web services, coordination of additional service hours and routes, increasing revenues from advertising, and coordination of special events and employer services.

Non-City Funding Sources

It is important to note that the costs associated with the Strategic Plan are local costs and infer a percentage being paid by federal monies. RoadRUNNER transit receives formula funding based on population for operation costs. However, at this time, RoadRUNNER transit is maxed out on its formula funding federal match for operating costs and therefore is responsible for 100% of increased operating costs. Thus, additional operating costs beyond the Baseline Budget included in this plan are total operating costs, whereas capital costs are assuming a federal match. It is possible that operating costs may be considerably lower than depicted in the plan if a proposed State Transit Fund is passed that will increase the cap on operating costs and off set the local match for capital costs. In addition, other revenue sources are being pursued through advertising, a service contract with New Mexico State University, and a possible fare increase.

Associated Costs and Graph

Additional Costs of Plan

	Fiscal Year					Total Cost
	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	
Baseline Operating Budget with 4% Growth Rate Increase	\$ 1,269,934.64	\$ 1,320,732.03	\$ 1,373,561.31	\$ 1,428,503.76	\$ 1,485,643.91	Not Included
Costs Associated with Service Expansion	\$ -	\$ 239,514	\$ 837,635	\$ 1,809,910	\$ 2,331,413	\$ 5,218,471
New Staff Costs	\$ -	\$ 160,000	\$ 300,000	\$ 300,000	\$ 300,000	\$ 1,060,000
Other Costs	\$ 17,500	\$ 548,000	\$ 497,500	\$ 596,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 1,734,000
Grand Total Cost Addition	\$ 17,500	\$ 947,514	\$ 1,635,135	\$ 2,705,910	\$ 2,706,413	\$ 8,012,471

Costs Associated with Service Expansion

		Fiscal Year					Total Cost
Goal Item	Description	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	
A3a	Additional Routes	0	1	2	3	4	
A3a / A4a	Addition of Sunday Hours	0	0	8	8	10	
A3a / A4b	Extension of Weekday Hours	0	0	0	3	3	
A3a / A4c	Extension of Saturday Hours	0	0	0	0	2	
	Subtotal	\$ -	\$ 239,514	\$ 837,635	\$ 1,809,910	\$ 2,331,413	\$ 5,218,471

New Staff Costs

		Fiscal Year					Total Cost
Description		2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	
Supervisor / Trainer		\$ -	\$ 45,000	\$ 45,000	\$ 45,000	\$ 45,000	\$ 180,000
Grants and Contract Manager		\$ -	\$ 61,000	\$ 61,000	\$ 61,000	\$ 61,000	\$ 244,000
Permanent Part-Time Drivers (3)		\$ -	\$ 54,000	\$ 54,000	\$ 54,000	\$ 54,000	\$ 216,000
Marketing / Events Coordinator		\$ -	\$ -	\$ 45,000	\$ 45,000	\$ 45,000	\$ 135,000
Service Development Coordinator		\$ -	\$ -	\$ 45,000	\$ 45,000	\$ 45,000	\$ 135,000
Transit Technology Specialist		\$ -	\$ -	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 150,000
	Subtotal	\$ -	\$ 160,000	\$ 300,000	\$ 300,000	\$ 300,000	\$ 1,060,000

Other Costs		Fiscal Year					Total Cost
		2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	
Goal Item	Description						
A1a	Implement Bi-directional Plan	\$ -	\$ 70,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 70,000
A1b	Maintain Bi-directionality	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
A1c	Criteria for decreasing and establishing peak headways	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
A2a	Convert entire fleet to ADA compliant vehicles	\$ -	\$ 255,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 255,000
A2b	Criteria for ADA accessible bus stops for use in designating new stops	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
A2c	Develop plan to bring existing stops into ADA compliance	\$ -	\$ 50,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 50,000
A2d	Braille bus stop locator signs	\$ -	\$ 3,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,000
A2e	Pedestrian catchment analysis software	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,500	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,500
A3a	Additional routes (vehicles)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 51,000	\$ 51,000	\$ -	\$ 102,000
A3b	Develop Long Range Service Plan	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 125,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 125,000
A3c	Development and maintenance of comprehensive geodatabase	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
A4a	Sunday service from 8am to 7pm	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
A4b	Weekday service from 6am to 10pm	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
A4c	Weekend Saturday and Sunday service hours	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
A4d	Establish policy for Holiday service	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
A5a	NMSU flat fee contract	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
A5b	Employer subsidy program	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
A5c	Opportunities for private sponsorship of fare free days (Adopt a Route)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
A5d	Develop feasibility criteria for service to employers	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
B1a	Establish and define indicators for service performance	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

B1b	Review of maintenance operations and cost effectiveness	\$ -	\$ 20,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,000
B1c	Increase utilization of smart fare cards	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
B2a	Adopt policy for advertising on RoadRUNNER property	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
B2b	Conduct impact study of fare increase	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
B2c	Develop marketing plan to attract new riders	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
B3a	Implement technology that can improve scheduling efficiency	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
B3b	Develop eligibility guidelines for seniors to use Dial-a-Ride	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
B3c	Develop rider education program	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
B3d	Revise senior program fare subsidy	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
B3e	Provide automated courtesy call	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
B4a	Monitor developments in alternative fuels and technology	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
B4b	Utilize alternative fuels with environmental benefits and when cost effective	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
B5a	Locate new bus stops on far side of intersection when possible	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
B5b	Traffic signal preemption devices	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 24,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 24,000
B6a	Monitor capacity needs of each route by measuring peak ridership	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
B6b	Quantify difference in costs of various sized vehicles	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
C1a	Provide purchase of fare cards on the RoadRUNNER website	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
C1b	Increase number of physical locations where farecards are sold	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
C2a	Add (10) new bus shelters with	\$ 14,000	\$ 14,000	\$ 14,000	\$ 14,000	\$ 14,000	\$ 70,000

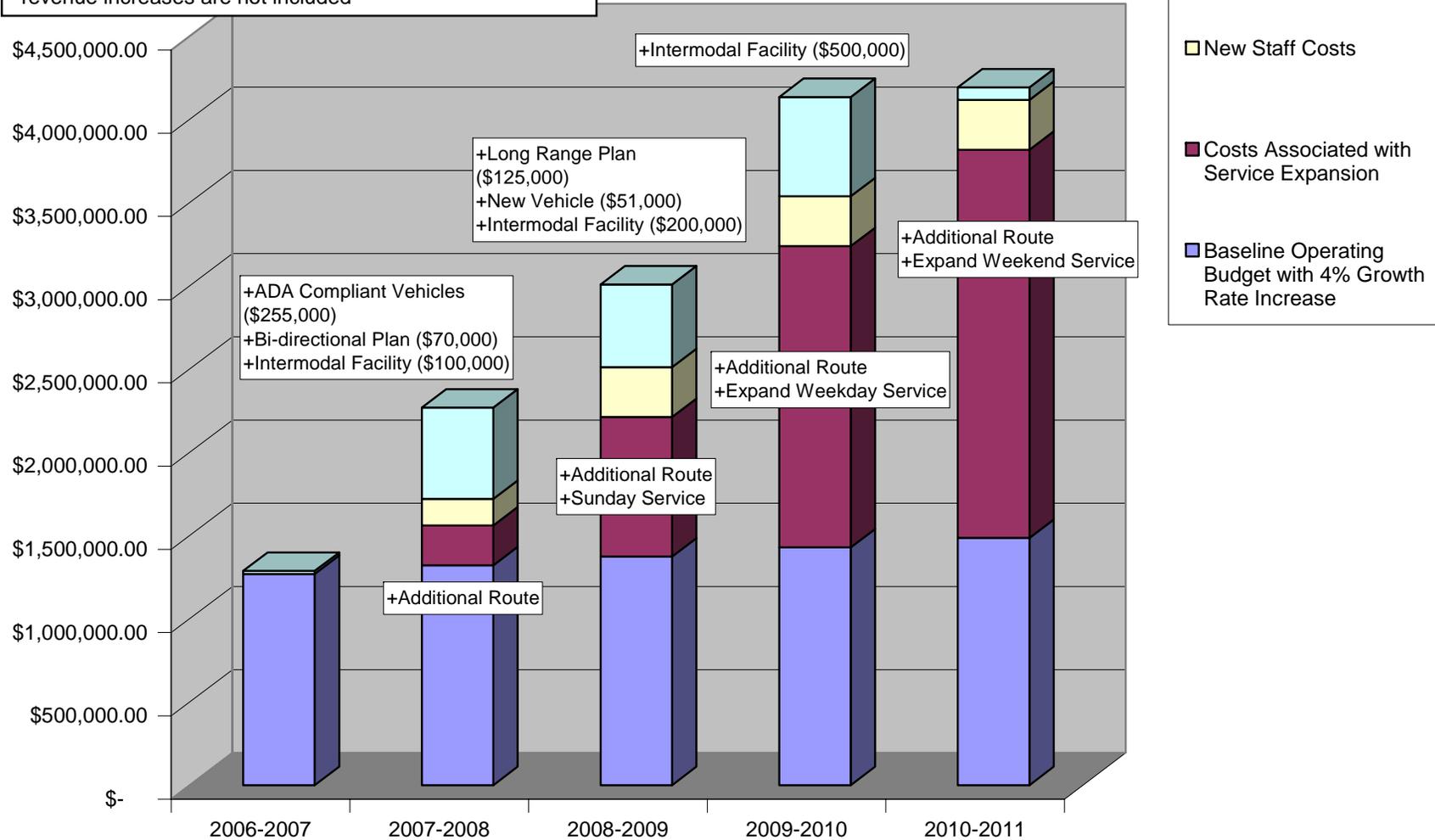
	route maps and schedules						
C2b	Maintenance contract for bus shelters	\$ -	\$ 19,000	\$ 19,000	\$ 19,000	\$ 19,000	\$ 76,000
C2c	Two way bus stop signs	\$ 3,500	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,500
C2d	Provide route maps and schedules at stops without shelters	\$ -	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000	\$ 48,000
C2e	Provide real time running information at major transfer points	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
C2f	Provide all printed information in English and Spanish	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
C3a	Wayfinding software	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000
C3b	Provide real time running information accessible by phone	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
C3c	Make all information available on website	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
C3d	Develop pages for Start groups	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
C4a	Develop web form for public comments	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
C4b	Address all comments within 48 hours and track by subject	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
D1a	Represent interests of the City of Las Cruces in Regional Transit District	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
D1b	Provide support to RTD Board and advisory committees	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
D1c	Complete Rail Feasibility Study	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
D1d	Complete Coordinated Human Services and Transportation Plan	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
D2a	Conduct needs assessment for services to special events	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
D2b	Develop guidelines to ensure special services do not hinder regular service	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
D2c	Develop partnerships with non-city entities for service to special events	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

D3a	Intermodal Facility	\$ -	\$ 100,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 500,000	\$ -	\$ 800,000
D3b	Investigate interim transfer points and amenities	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
D3c	Feasibility study for secondary timed transfer point at Mesilla Valley Mall	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 50,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 50,000
D4a	Annual Report on the impact of new development on the transit system	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
D4b	Provide input into MPO Pedestrian Plan	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
D4c	Participate in Regional Comprehensive Plan update	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
E1a	Plan transit evacuation routes in the event of citywide emergency	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
E1b	Prioritize routes for running in the event of fleet damage	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
E1c	Ensure compliance with NIMS and ensure staff are trained in emergency areas	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
E1d	Ensure proper inclusion of transit in City All-Hazard Plan	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
E2a	Equip each service vehicle with video surveillance	\$ -	\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000
E2b	Upgrade vehicle radio system and equip each vehicle with Mobile Data Terminal	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
E2c	Develop driver safety training and reports	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
E2d	Include suspicious package and enhanced pre-trip inspection	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
E3a	Identify security features necessary for new Central City site	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
E3b	Examine feasibility of maintaining a reserve fuel supply	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
E3c	Encourage entire fleet use fuels that do not require special facilities	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

E4a	Install lighting and video surveillance in building and maintenance yards	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
E4b	Develop enhanced, cost-effective cash control protocols	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
E4c	Install alarm system/panic buttons in vulnerable areas	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	Subtotal	\$ 17,500	\$ 548,000	\$ 497,500	\$ 596,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 1,734,000

Plan Implementation Costs

* all figures are local cost and contingent upon federal matches
 * revenue increases are not included



Public Meetings and Comments

**Transit Strategic Plan Public Hearing Summary
City of Las Cruces, Central Dona Ana County**

City Council Chambers

Address

Thursday, February 1, 2007

6:00pm - 8:00pm

Public Attendees: Mark Amezcuita (310) 804-0317
Monteen Henderson (702)443-3945
Wes Strain (505)373-1234
Georgette Strain (505)373-1234
Daniel B. Jett, Jr.
John Munos (505)522-9601

Elected Officials: Gil Jones City Councilor

Staff Attendees: Tom Schuster (505)528-3069
Caerllion (Caeri) Thomas (505)528-3148
Mike Bartholomew (505)541-2537
Nellie Garcia Transit Staff
Will Ticknor for Lori Grumet

Transit Advisory Board Member:
Betty Garcia

Meeting Summary:

This meeting was conducted in an informal format with discussion being conducted around the meeting table. Caeri Thomas began by introducing the Transit Strategic Plan and some of the issues the Strategic Plan attempts to address, such as the growth of the City of Las Cruces and the recommendations by Nelson / Nygaard that are helping to guide the development of the plan. The meeting was opened up for comments and questions from the attendees.

Wes Strain was first to voice his concerns as follows:

- Concerned that the proposed service plan did not provide equitable service to the East Mesa and Elks area as would be provided elsewhere in the City of Las Cruces
- Growth areas in the East are not addressed in the plan, specifically Sonoma Ranch
- Fares need to be increased
- Bus Shelters have not been put up in East Mesa as promised. Even if a shelter has to be moved with a subsequent service plan, there needs to be shelters erected in the interim
- Says that CDBG funded shelters are not being places where promised
- Bus Stop on Bataan Memorial and Mesa Grande are in the weeds – something needs to be done about this
- There needs to be long range planning for pull outs and bus pads as the development occurs – these issues need to be planned for in the current Strategic Plan
- Taking away service on Telshor is a major mistake
- There needs to be increased Marketing and Advertising for the transit system

These topics were discussed in length and Caerllion Thomas, Mike Bartholomew and Thomas Schuster gave feedback regarding the implementation of the new Bi-directional Plan and how this plan will address some of these issues, in addition the plan is set up in such a way to account for development to the East and extend routes or provide additional service accordingly.

Wes Strain said that it was not enough that we needed a long range service plan and that the present plan needs to be more specific about the growth in the east and the equitable distribution of service.

Transit and MPO staff intend to take these comments into consideration and incorporate more specific goals and action items in relation to east side service and growth, as well as planning for the future needs of transit within roadways, such as bus pull outs and shelter pads.

Wes Strain left the meeting and discussion continued with those still present.

Monteen Henderson (Client Logic employee) had many concerns about utilizing the current system. She raised concerns as follows:

- Service on East side is terrible – would rather walk than ride the bus
- Circuitous one way system takes too long to get to a destination
- Agreed that moving to Bi-directional Service Plan would help and voiced a concern that this be implemented as soon as possible

MPO and Transit staff discussed the Bi-directional Plan in length and explained how its configuration would account for the issues she raised. Again, it is pertinent that service along Telshor and Elks does not get decreased as this area of the City of Las Cruces needs to be well served.

Further comments by Ms Henderson and Mark Amezcua (Client Logic employee) as follows:

- Would like longer service hours sooner than proposed as their hours of business are 7am to 11pm daily
- Favors Bi-direction Service Plan
- Even the proposed service plan does not adequately address getting employees to their location (Summit Court off Telshor) – would require un-timed transfer with Route 4

MPO and Transit staff agree that longer service hours are a top priority. The Bi-directional route system and the extension of service hours are on the Strategic Plan priority list. Unfortunately, it is highly dependent upon funding for the service hours to be expanded, as the majority of cost for this is operating costs. The Strategic Plan outlines these costs and establishes providing Sunday service as a first priority with extending Weekday hours next.

Mr. Dan Jett also voiced his concerns as follows:

- A Bi-directional route on Lohman/Amador from Mt. View all the way to Motel Boulevard is most necessary and would be used by a lot of people
- Fares need to be increased as they have never been increased since the inception of RoadRUNNER transit

The Transit Strategic Plan addresses the issue of ridership on Lohman / Amador. The Plan calls for increased frequencies on this route as the current counts show this to be the route with the highest ridership. Service all the way to Motel Boulevard needs to be looked at.

Also in the Plan is an action item to look at the effects that a fare increase would have on the current low-income riders, and propose an increase that is acceptable.

LAS CRUCES AREA TRANSIT (RoadRUNNER)
TRANSIT ADVISORY BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

The Transit Advisory Board (TAB) meeting was held on Thursday, December 21, 2006 at City Hall, (Council Chambers) 200 Church St., Las Cruces, New Mexico.

Members Present: C. Harvey, Chairman; M. Baumann, B Garcia, J Garcia, S. Lopez; T. Reed

Others Present: Michael Bartholomew, Transit Administrator; Mary Ann Flenniken, Transit Administrative Secretary; Councilor Gil Jones, Lori Grumet, Public Services Director; Tom Schuster, MPO; and Caerllion (Caeri) Thomas MPO office; Earl Torres, Operations Supervisor. Various members of the public were present.

I. Call to Order & Roll Call

Call to order at 3:05 p.m. by C. Harvey. Roll call was taken.

II. Approval of Minutes for November 16, 2006

B. Garcia moved to approve the minutes for the meeting of November 16, 2006. Seconded by S. Lopez. All approved. Motion carried.

III. Election of Officers

S. Lopez moved to nominate Jonah Garcia to fill the position of Vice President which was vacated by C. Vander-Giesen. This position will only last until March. Seconded by M. Baumann. All approved. Motion carried.

IV. Discussion and Updates

a. Discussion of the Strategic Plan - T. Schuster and C. Thomas was introduced by M. Bartholomew who presented the Strategic Plan. Both reviewed the plan for the Transit Advisory Board and the public who attended. It was explained that if this is approved by the Board, this will then go to City Council for final approval. The Board made a suggestion to present this plan to the employees for comments prior to the public meeting. M. Baumann asked to prioritize the items presented in the strategic plan. Another public meeting will be held later and this will be announced in the new papers.

Betty Garcia motioned to accept this plan and seconded by J. Garcia. M. Baumann mentioned that before this come to a vote the cost should be considered. Councilor Jones mentioned that the local match is the one item that will be considered. T. Schuster explained some of the cost associated with this and reminded the Board that this is a plan only to strive for a general direction and it is used as goals for the transit system. This is not a contract. M. Baumann

moved to amend the motion to include a list of priorities. T. Reed seconded. All approved. Motion carried. On the first motion all approved. Motion carried.

b. Holiday Service Schedule for 2007 M. Baumann moved to accept the Holiday Service Schedule as presented. Seconded by J. Garcia. Motion carried and all accepted.

V. Public Comment

M. Markham discussed some of her concerns about the transit system. Specifically, some major streets not having transit service and lack of transit stops. M. Markham complimented the transit drivers.

D. Schmerbauch asked about improving the current Central Transfer Point while we were waiting for the new Intermodal Center.

VI. Board Comments

T. Reed mentioned that the bus drivers are courteous and there is a close relationship between them and the passengers. We have an excellent system here and it should be cherished.

VII. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

Prepared by:

Mary Ann Flenniken, Secretary

Approved by:

C. Harvey, Chair

Date: _____

COMMENT Received 2/1/07 via email: Dean Schmerbauch:

Hello democratically elected representatives and public servants;

Today, after a ride on Route 5, I arrived at the Branigan Public Library to find that the Transit Advisory Board meeting for January was canceled. Not postponed to later in January, but canceled until the February 15 monthly scheduled time! Therefore my concerns and those of other members of the public must be delayed a full month. I was not given a reason for the cancellation by Mr. Michael Bartholomew by phone. In order to avoid this month-long delay, I will use this forum to address just two issues I intended to air today. The city is spending \$5,000 on bus shelters that contain a plexiglass panel that is intended to hold a bus map and/or schedule for the route it serves. These stops have been in place a long time, yet there is nothing behind the plexiglass. Any type of information in these stops would be an aide to the infrequent rider and regular riders. I was informed by Mr. Bartholomew that the lack of info. in the shelters is due to a lack of manpower to install them. I suggested that volunteers, or prisoners, or persons that are assigned community service duties could be used. If the routes will all be changed to bi-directional during 2007, then there is no need to proceed with the shelter-specific Global Positioning System maps and schedules now being produced. They will all be invalid by year's end if not sooner. Why is money being spent to produce special maps/schedules when there is no manpower available to post the results? Is a Golden Fleece Award nomination warranted? I suggest posting in these panels, the currently available route schedules and maps already available on the buses and stored in the transit offices. At least give the riding public this much information since it will all become trash when the routes become bi-directional. I have been riding Roadrunner buses since March 2006 and have never observed one of these panels being filled or any maintenance to a shelter (however someone must be emptying the attached trashcans?) Here is the list I have compiled and previously sent to Mr. Thomas Schuster and Ms. C. Thomas on December 21, 2006. I have added two more locations to my list (incomplete though it still remains). The last two locations do not have a plexiglass panel as they are an older type, yet they are still bus shelters in that they have a bench and roof structure. By the way I do not believe the city and its corporate bus shelter sponsors are getting \$5,000 in value from the blue shelters because the mesh walls do not provide any protection from wind, rain or snow. At least one solid wall would enable a person to stand out of the wind and stay dry. The front panel next to the gutter is also mesh. Therefore when there is water or slush in the gutter the passing vehicles, especially 18 wheelers and the city buses themselves splash water into the shelter. I would be better off standing behind a tree. Thank you for your attention and anticipated action on these concerns. Bus patron, Dean Schmerbauch. Resident of Councilman Trowbridge's district. Shelters without maps/schedules; Valley & Picacho, Spruce at Walnut, Hadley at Motel, 1595 West Picacho at Diersen Charities, Motel and Picacho, 226 South Alameda at Dept. of Labor, and Brownlee & Valley at the Family Dollar Store.

COMMENT Received in person 12/21/06: Dean Schmerbauch

I was stranded at Motel and Hadley one evening around 6PM. I was shocked to hear that I needed to exit the bus at that stop. I assumed that the end point of the routes would be the CTP. This bus stop is not in a residential neighborhood. In other words there is no demand to get off there at 6PM. If the bus barn is by Meirscheid, why cant' the last bus stop on Rt. 8 be either at the CTP or the further East point on the way back to the bus barn? That way I could get off at Picacho and Valley which was my destination on the day I was told to exit the bus a mile from home. It seems to me that the token system is antiquated and also unfair. I paid for a \$7.50 monthly bus pass with a ten dollar bill on a bus. I received a \$2.50 change card back. I took the change card to the transit office to get my money back in cash. I was told I could only have tokens back and could not apply the \$2.50 change card towards my next purchase of a \$7.50 monthly bus pass. The transit office does not have a ticket machine that would allow the transaction! So I took the tokens, which I was also told could not be used in the future to buy a monthly bus pass! But the token value is a set 50 cents and I am eligible for 25 cent rides with my reduced fare card. But the ticket machines on the buses are not set up to refund 25 cents to me in either the form of cash or token or change card. In other words the tokens that were forced on me caused me to pay double for

my bus rides. Also I think the labor involved in making token transactions, and the cost to purchase the tokens from a factory could be eliminated by phasing out or ceasing the use of tokens. Why stay with a token system when the electronic passes and change cars are available? Also the bus literature contains the words "Exact change required – Drivers do not carry change". The phrase discourages riders without exact change. Since the machine issues change cards, this phrase is misleading. It seems prudent time to consider moving the CTP from the vacant building location where it is sited now, that offers no access to public phones, or public restrooms, and no walls on the shelters to protect riders from wind, snow, and rain, to a more civilized and climate controlled location. I suggest it be moved to the grounds on the new city hall. This is also a location that sells bus passes. The buses currently park on a public street and may present a safety hazard. To pull off the public roadway onto the paved city hall grounds would be a safety improvement and allow easier viewing of the route signs in the bus windows. A related issue would be to phase in new buses that incorporated a route sign in the rear window of the bus. This is handy on streets that are transited by two routes. If you turn a corner to such a bus stop and see a bus pulling away presently you don't know which bus just passed – the one you need or not? Should you wait or walk? Climate controlled lobbies such as you find at a Greyhound or train terminal could be added to public entrance of the new city hall. It might even encourage city employees to utilize earth friendly buses to get to work and eliminate the "I had car trouble excuse" for not getting to work. The MVM transfer point is not marked by any sign has neither a bench, nor bus shelter, nor access to a bus schedule. There are a number of public entrances around that huge building, yet riders must stand outdoors in the elements and tourists would have no idea that a bus stop exists at the mall. There is a large hotel across Telshor which also has a rental car drop-off inside. How can the city "Awaken the Downtown" if the people don't know how to get there? How is the decision made where to site a bus stop sign vs. a bus stop bench vs. a Comment cards carried on the buses could be used as ballots to decide the new bus shelters in 2007; please rank your top location citywide and turn into the driver by January 31". Place complete bus schedules on all buses for all routes and also post a complete schedule of all routes in all shelters. As an example all Santa Fe bus stops, even those that are just signposts, contain a spinning device that has the Rt. Map on one side and the schedule on the other. This would serve tourists and also locals in planning for the next day. Especially since the transit phones are not answered after 5pm to ask questions. Santa Fe Trails answers the phones until routes stop running, not just to 5pm. Santa Fe Trails replaces lost or stolen bus passes for free, as long as you can show the pass number as proof. Why is this not done here? Santa Fe is the third largest city in the state, about one-third the size of LC. Yet they run the buses to 10PM and seven days a week. I do not know the subsidy rate for their system as compared to LC, but if the operating funds are CDBG via the State or Federal government, then why the service disparity? Are those 35,000 New Mexicans in some way entitled to better bus service than the 90,000 LC residents spread over a larger urban area? Stores are open on Sunday in LC and it would seem civil to allow riders to go to church on Sundays in the City of the Crosses. Many businesses operate to 8 pm, 10 pm or 24 hours. I would think the Chamber of Commerce would support 7day and evening service? I worked in the mall at Santa Fe and could still get home from my job when the store closed at 9 PM. This is not possible in LC. Riders cannot go out to dinner or a movie in this town without being stranded when it is over. The local economy loses out.