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### News from the NM Transit Association President



Hello NM Transit Family,  
I pray that everyone is safe and healthy during this continuing pandemic. I know all systems in the state are doing everything

they can to mitigate the effects of the Coronavirus and it appears to be working. Our state numbers of infection are decreasing and will hopefully drop to zero. However, now is not the time to let our guard down. Our passengers need for us to continue to be vigilant for, not only their safety and well being, but ours as well.

I feel that we, New Mexico's Transit Provider's, are proving how well we can handle extreme situations and life with adversity. We continue to offer very much needed transportation services for everyone in a safe manner. Thank you all for doing your part to ensure a safe means of transportation for your communities.

I'd like to say congratulations to PoPay Messenger - Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo for their recent grant award from the Federal Transit Administration for facilities. Read more about this on page 4 of this newsletter.

As transportation continues to change and moves forward, so does NMTA. At this time I would like to welcome James Barela from Atomic City Transit - Los Alamos County and Christy Ladd from PoPay Messenger- Ohkay Ohwingeh Transit to the NMTA Board of Directors.

I also wish to announce the current NMTA Executive Board. I will continue to serve as the NMTA Board President. Elizabeth Carter from Rio Metro Regional Transit District will continue as the NMTA Vice President. Stan Cooper has stepped up as the NMTA Secretary Ed Powers is now fully entrenched as the treasurer.

This letter is being kept brief, but hopefully the next letter will be much longer with a lot of good news. Until then, everyone remain safe and healthy. And continue proving how valuable New Mexico Transit providers are to the well being of New Mexico.

Sincerely,  
Joe Hardin

### More from NM Transit Association

If you haven't visited the NM Transit Association website recently, please do so. NMTA has been working on creating a more modern and easy to

navigate website, while highlighting New Mexico Transit Agencies. Please visit [www.NM-TA.com](http://www.NM-TA.com) today!





**News from New  
Mexico  
Department of  
Transportation**

## News From NM Department of Transportation

### COVID-19 Response

#### Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act

The NMDOT Transit and Rail Division has updated its program awards for Section 5311 recipients in program year 2021. In program year 2021, all eligible administrative costs will be reimbursed at 100% Federal share using CARES Act funds. Your baseline operating awards will be the same as your program year 2020 operating awards, and those eligible net operating costs will be reimbursed at 100% Federal share. Operating funds in addition to your baseline FY2021 award will not be funded with CARES Act funds. Those net operating costs will be reimbursed at the usual 50% Federal share. This arrangement will continue for FY 2021 as long as CARES Act funds are available. We believe we can continue reimbursing baseline operating and administrative costs at 100% through all of program year 2021, but this may change.

The latest program year 2021 award package for Sections 5310 and 5311 is available here:

[https://dot.state.nm.us/content/dam/nmdot/Transit\\_Rail/FY21\\_Award\\_Packet.pdf](https://dot.state.nm.us/content/dam/nmdot/Transit_Rail/FY21_Award_Packet.pdf)

Lastly, please continue to participate in the coordinated bi-weekly meetings with NMDOT. These meetings will start to transform from funding questions to looking forward from an operational and safety perspective.

### FTA Drug and Alcohol Compliance Audit

On August 18, 2020, NMDOT Transit and Rail received notice that we have successfully responded to all of the findings in our FTA Drug and Alcohol Compliance Audit. We are in full compliance with FTA's Drug and Alcohol

#### Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The NM Dept. of Homeland Security and Emergency Management can assist you with obtaining PPE for your staff. You should reach out to your local emergency manager directly, and that person will process your request through the State Emergency Operations Center for fulfillment.

#### Useful Links

NMDOT COVID-19 Transit Response Guidance [https://dot.state.nm.us/content/dam/nmdot/Transit\\_Rail/NM%20COVID19%20Transit%20Response%20Guidance.pdf](https://dot.state.nm.us/content/dam/nmdot/Transit_Rail/NM%20COVID19%20Transit%20Response%20Guidance.pdf)

FTA Frequently Asked Questions on COVID-19 and CARES Act <https://www.transit.dot.gov/frequently-asked-questions-fta-grantees-regarding-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19#CARES>

Centers for Disease Control – What Bus Transit Operators Need to Know About COVID-19 <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/bus-transit-operator.html>

Environmental Protection Agency - List N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2 <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>

Testing Program. Thank you to everyone for your prompt responses to requests for documentation and for revising your policies as needed.

## Training Sessions on NMDOT Transit and Rail Webpage

Ream Lazaro has prepared two video training sessions that are now available for streaming and download on the NMDOT Transit and Rail webpage: [https://dot.state.nm.us/content/nmdot/en/Transit\\_Rail.html](https://dot.state.nm.us/content/nmdot/en/Transit_Rail.html).

The first session discusses COVID-19 Safety Guidance for New Mexico Transit Agencies.

Also available is a session on Conflict Management and De-escalation for Transit Drivers and Supervisors. These sessions are self-paced and available at any time. We plan to offer more video training in the future, including a Defensive Driving session. Please let us know what training sessions would be helpful online.

## State Management Plan

A draft update to the State Management Plan is now available for 30-day public review at [https://dot.state.nm.us/content/dam/nmdot/Transit\\_Rail/DRAFT\\_SMP\\_August2020.pdf](https://dot.state.nm.us/content/dam/nmdot/Transit_Rail/DRAFT_SMP_August2020.pdf).

Updates include:

- Additions of the Transit Asset Management Plan and Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan processes
- Updating the Metropolitan Planning Program process to clarify that the NMDOT Transit and Rail Division must review and approve Unified Planning Work Programs prior to review
- Updating the list of documents required in the Section 5311 application process
- Removing all requirements for newspaper advertisement of intent to apply
- Clarifying the application process in BlackCat and requirements for RTPO/MPO presentations
- Updates to FTA drug and alcohol testing policy and procedures to reflect the increased testing rate for drugs
- Clarification of process for vehicle disposal and allowing Section 5311 recipients to apply proceeds to total transit budget
- Updated Title VI and ADA contact information

Comments on the plan are due on September 23, 2020.



## More From NM Department of Transportation

### State Technology Summit

If you need a ride, and you can't drive, how do you know what all of your options are? That is one of many questions that 30 participants from local transit providers and state agencies came together to discuss at the State Technology Summit from July 14-17. The New Mexico DOT Transit and Rail Division and the National Center for Applied Technology (N-CATT) convened a virtual summit to learn about ways to make trip planning and wayfinding easier for New Mexicans. The goal is to move the state closer to Mobility as a Service (MaaS), a concept that emphasizes the customer experience, from planning a trip to booking it, paying for it, and having real-time information about your trip status.

N-CATT provided briefings on strategies for procuring technology to avoid the pitfalls of investing in tools that don't serve the functions agencies need; held a discussion about what agencies would like to see from new technologies; and held breakout conversations with each region to cover agencies' individual situations, and the tools that would help them in their work.

Based on conversations through a series of breakout conversations, N-CATT and the DOT identified a number of areas that require further research to invest in the technologies that will most effectively help passengers around the state use transit to go where they need to, regardless of origin or destination.

DOT will also provide additional support to localities through a "buyers' guide" that will guide localities through the strategies that they can use to procure the technology that best suits their needs. In addition, the DOT will work individually with localities on needs assessments for proposed technologies to home in on the procurements that will best address challenges localities hope to resolve.

Localities will also have a continued role in driving the smart growth of transit technology in New Mexico. There will be a working group to identify priority challenges among agencies and what technologies the DOT can support to address those challenges.

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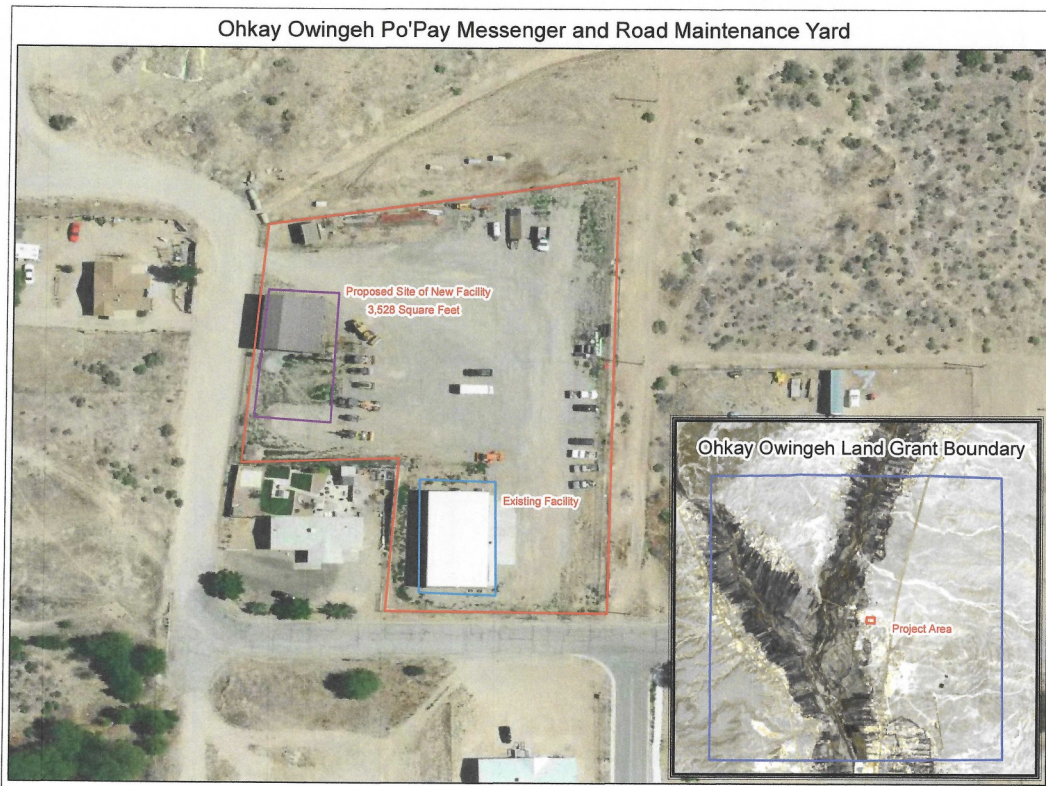
## PoPay Messenger - Ohkay Owingeh Receives FTA Grant Award for New ADA Compliant Transit Facility

Ohkay Owingeh operates a Demand Response public transportation services called the "PoPay Messenger." In FY2019, 13,618 trips were provided to 8,089 passengers. There is an emphasis on scheduling trips for human service needs including education, employment, and social services needs.

Ohkay Owingeh received \$582,664 from the Federal Transit Administration's FY2020 Bus and Bus Facilities Program to build a new ADA compliant Transit Facility. The existing facility was built in 2009, and its initial intent was to increase the short-term economic development initiative by providing a Tribal and public transit service.

During the start-up initiative, there were two transit employees. The Pueblo now employs four full time drivers and one full-time dispatcher. Ohkay Owingeh has outgrown the existing 900 square foot facility; and will build a new 3,528 square foot facility that is ADA compliant.

The new facility will accommodate the Pueblo's more than 1,800 customers with a disability that are currently unable to schedule rides due to the lack of an ADA compliant Transit Facility.



Highlighting  
A  
New Mexico  
Transit  
Member



PoPay  
Messenger -  
Ohkay  
Owingeh

## News from



## North Central Regional Transit District

### RTD Rolls Out New Uniforms from Mission Linen Company



This summer RTD staff are sporting a new branded look with uniforms for operations, fleet and facilities staff.

Beginning June 19th, the uniforms began rolling out. The uniforms consist of pants, shorts, shirts, hat, vest and jacket that will be

laundered and pressed each week. Clean uniforms are scheduled to be delivered each week on Thursdays in Española and Taos; dirty uniforms will also be turned in for exchange on these days.

Full time employees will be given a total of eleven sets of uniforms, while Part time staff will receive six. Transit operators are assigned blue uniforms, while supervisors have black, lead drivers red and dispatch grey with yellow accents. Facilities will also be receiving new uniforms that will include safety stripes to aid in their visibility while working in the field. Shorts may be worn from Memorial Day through September 30th.

### RTD Signage Update at South Capitol Station Kiosk

NCRTD has updated its signage at the South Capitol station kiosk, kicking off the first update to the new phase of RTD branded advertising in or around District bus shelters.

In an effort to provide more information and help the public understand what the “Blue Bus” is and how it operates, they have created more visually eye catching and “user friendly” signage to help provide riders and potential riders the information they need to better navigate the Blue Bus transit system.

Next on board will be large format advertising with district and route specific information, to be installed at newly erected shelters in the Town of Taos.



## NCRTD Installs ConnectPoint Real-Time Bus Arrival Displays



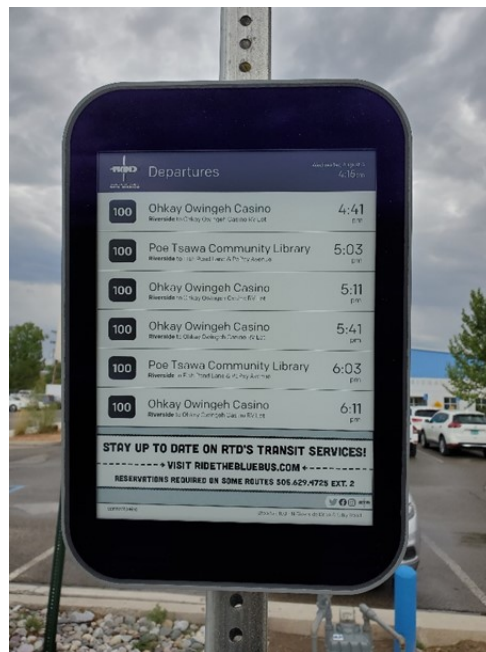
The displays will also allow NCRTD to post rider alerts as well as run campaigns if there are various messages to share. Currently there is a campaign running with three messages that change every 60 seconds (We're trying to get ConnectPoint to make those refresh at a quicker pace.) The three messages running as of August 12 are: a reminder to wear face coverings, a notice for employment recruitment and one reminding people to check the website as many routes are operating by reservation only.

The NCRTD has installed real-time bus arrival displays at five bus stop locations. The displays are solar powered and communicate with the AVAIL automatic vehicle location (AVL) trigger boxes located at timed bus stops that the mobile data terminals (MDTs) on the buses set off as the vehicle drives by.

One is located right outside the RTD headquarters in Española. The other four are installed at the South Capitol Station in Santa Fe, Taos County Admin, Guadalupe Church parking lot and the Española Transit Center.

In October, the District will take delivery of four additional displays that will be installed at Ski Santa Fe, Fort Marcy Park on the 255 route, Taos Ski Valley and at the new KTAOS park and ride location in El Prado.

The displays list the times of next arrivals to that stop where the sign is located and can post up to six incoming buses and routes. Each listing presents the route number and the destination of the final stop on that route. If the bus is incoming, it will post how many minutes before that bus arrives, and if it's further out it will list the time of arrival at that stop location.





News from



Rio Metro Regional Transit District

NM Transit PSA – A Statewide Campaign

As public transportation began to get its wheels turning again (even on a limited basis) after stopping service during the early stages of the COVID-19 Pandemic, a message about face covering became very important. Rio Metro Marketing created a campaign to encourage the thousands of New Mexicans who use transit to do their part in keeping us safe by wearing a face covering on public transit.

The campaign ran for 3-5 weeks starting on May 25. It aired on broadcast: KOAT, Effectv (formerly Comcast Spotlight) and MeTV; and on radio: Cumulus, AGM, ESPN Radio and Hutton Broadcasting. To spread the word even further, with the help of Melissa Drake at NMTA, other radio stations across the state aired the PSA. It was also translated into Spanish and aired on KLVO radio.

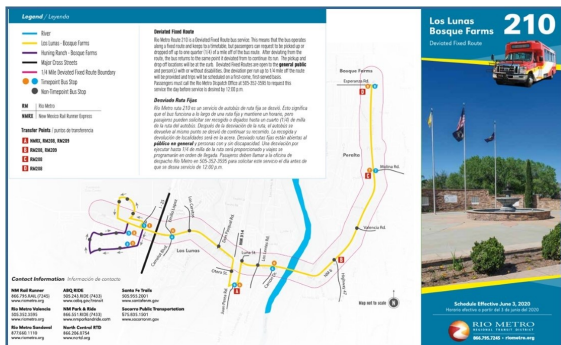
Approached by the New Mexico Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the video was adapted to include an American Sign Language

translation. Both the ASL and original versions of the video can be viewed on the New Mexico Rail Runner Express YouTube Channel and Facebook page.

To be inclusive of all media, the video was also adapted to print and displayed on the front page of the Santa Fe New Mexican and the Valencia County News Bulletin during the campaign period.



Bus Schedules Have a New Look!



Rio Metro’s bus schedules recently got a makeover. The schedule brochures were redesigned to meet the organization’s goal of clearly communicating information about the transit services provided within our service area.

“They have a fresh new look,” says Elizabeth Carter, Assistant Transit Director for Rio Metro Bus. “The new schedule brochures were designed to look like traditional bus transit brochures, making them easier than ever to use.”

Some of the key elements of the redesign include:

- **Numbered Stops** - Numbers are assigned to each bus stop on the map, making it easier to identify where the bus stop is located
- **Legend** - A new legend identifies transfer points to other bus and rail services, also indicated on the map
- **Identifiable Zone Changes** - Different colored lines on the map show fare zones so that riders are aware of the cost of the trip they wish to take

In addition to the design elements listed above, the overall color of the schedules was changed from red to blue, and they were given a more modern look with new pictures and graphic elements.

Find all of Rio Metro’s bus schedules online at [riometro.org/177/Bus](http://riometro.org/177/Bus).



## Operation Safe Driver Week



To promote safe driving behaviors by both our Transit Operators and the general public, Rio Metro conducted an Operation Safe Driver Week Campaign from July 13-17, 2020.

## New Rail Safety Activity Sheets

Across the country, kids have been home for months, and the start of the school year may be a virtual experience for many. In an effort to provide fun and educational resources for both parents and teachers, Rio Metro created new activity sheets and learning tools related to rail safety for elementary school age children.

A sample of the activities include:

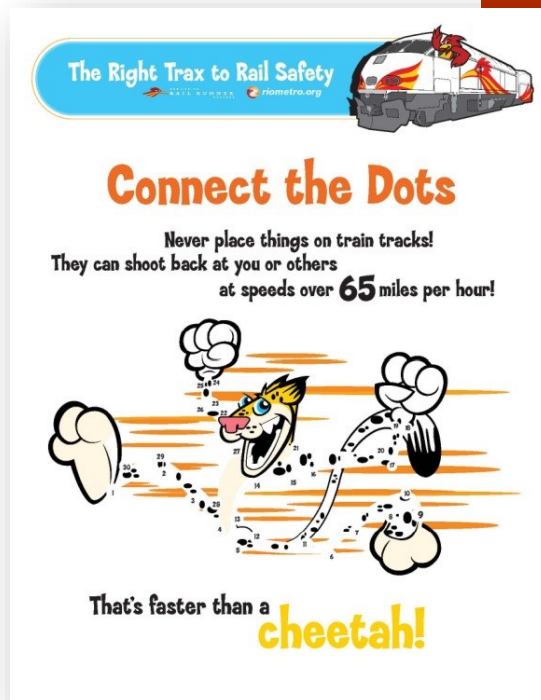
- A maze in which kids help a basketball player safely across the tracks to the hoop
- A hidden word search featuring important rail safety terms
- A word scramble with terms and information on important railroad signs and signals

In addition to the activity sheets, there are interesting safety tips and facts to read and discuss.

The campaign, held in conjunction with [Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance's](#) National Operation Safe Driver Week, featured enhanced safety messaging for our operators, as well as fundamental safe driving elements for all drivers.

Campaign elements included posters in our transit centers with daily messaging for the operators, and reminders over the dispatch radio every few hours. On the public side, daily safe driving tips were shared on Rio Metro's [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) platforms and on the Rio Metro website.

These free resources are available to download and print from the Rio Metro website: [www.riometro.org/activitiesheets](http://www.riometro.org/activitiesheets).





News  
From  
ABQ Ride



## ABQ RIDE Launching ARTx in Major Upgrade to Rapid Ride Service



Since 2009, the #790-Rapid Ride/Blue Line has provided a quick link for riders between Northwest Albuquerque and the University of New Mexico. On Saturday, Aug. 22, Albuquerque is launching a major upgrade to that service and renaming it **ARTx**. The new buses not only provide a more comfortable ride, but also have more room inside for bicycles, as well as Wi-Fi service. The project does not involve any major road construction along the route.

The new name better indicates that the routes are a local service option that complements the ART system, giving riders who need to make several stops that are closer together a good alternative to ART, meant to move riders very quickly over longer distances.

"From new transit centers and connections to getting the long-delayed

ART project up and running, we've made major improvements to Albuquerque's public transit system," said Mayor Keller. "With ARTx, we're giving the old Rapid Ride a major upgrade to better serve our residents who use these popular route—and now you can ride ART from Cottonwood to Coronado."

ARTx will run the same route as the #790; from UNM at Central Ave. to University Blvd., then west on Lomas Blvd., north on Rio Grande, west on I-40, and then north on Coors Blvd. past Cottonwood Mall to the Northwest Transit Center.

ARTx will not only feature a new logo, but will also have the sky blue theme color of the ART route painted on its stops, just in time for the coming school year. Many of the stops have already been re-painted, including the Northwest Transit Center, the northwest terminus of the route.

"The permanent ARTx schedule will depend on the COVID-19 climate moving forward and will be developed based on what UNM and CNM are doing in the fall," said Danny Holcomb, Transit Director. "ARTx represents a big improvement in the quality of this service for UNM and CNM students and Downtown workers."





## **Save the Date!!!**

### **Announcements:**

#### **Upcoming Quarterly Training Sessions and Annual Conference...**

##### **Summer Quarterly Training**

Due to the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic, all quarterly training opportunities are on hold until further notice.

##### **NM Transit Conferences**

Due to the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic, Upcoming NM Transit Conferences are on hold until further notice.

### **More From NMTA...**

Please check [nm-ta.com](http://nm-ta.com) regularly for upcoming news, upcoming legislative agendas, events in transit and more.

The Myth Busters Brochure is also available for your review and use at the [nm-ta.com](http://nm-ta.com) website .

#### **Follow us on Social Media:**

Facebook [@New Mexico Transit Association](https://www.facebook.com/NewMexicoTransitAssociation)

Twitter [@NM\\_Transit](https://twitter.com/NM_Transit)

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