



State of New Mexico
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**Governor Susana Martinez Announces Funding for Key Highway
Infrastructure Projects in New Mexico**

*Leveraging New State and Federal Dollars, Large-Scale Projects Will Develop a
Stronger Economy, Improve Highway Safety, and Meet Important Community
Needs*

Artesia, NM — Today, Governor Susana Martinez announced the funding of several key, large-scale highway infrastructure projects in New Mexico. The projects will be funded, in part, by a \$45 million infusion of state infrastructure dollars that the Governor fought hard to secure, and which were approved during the recent special legislative session.

“New Mexico’s roads and highways are literally the foundation of our commerce,” Governor Martinez said. “Investing in our roads will keep our families safe and provide a stronger foundation for economic growth. That’s why we’re working to complete large projects around the state. We’ve seen what can happen when we commit a significant portion of state infrastructure money behind a large highway project and leverage federal funding to help us complete it. We will continue to work hard to fund projects that take care of our communities and grow and diversify our economy to meet the needs of our state.”

The projects that will now be fully funded and can proceed to design and construction phases are:

- Expansion of US 82 into a four-lane road between Artesia and NM 529. One of the most heavily traveled highways in southeastern New Mexico, a combination of personal vehicles and a heavy flow of large commercial trucks has made this highway one of the most dangerous in the state – particularly between Artesia and just west of Maljamar.

This project will expand the highway from two lanes to four throughout most of this corridor, shoulders will be added, and intersections will be improved and made safer.

- Improvement, Reconstruction, and Widening of NM 68 in Taos, between NM 518 and Camino Del Paseo Pueblo. Dubbed the “Gateway to Taos Improvement Projects,” this two-phase effort will first reconstruct NM 68 from NM 518 to La Posta Road, improving drainage, sidewalks, and curb ramps, as well as adjusting intersections to improve traffic flow and installing state-of-the-art smart signaling so that traffic can be moved in the most optimal and efficient manner throughout the entrance into Taos. The second phase, from La Posta Road to Camino Del Paseo Pueblo, would include widening a portion of the road to four lanes, smart signaling, improving the sidewalks and curb ramps, and reconstructing intersections as necessary for optimal traffic flow. Plagued by perennial traffic problems, these improvements should dramatically enhance the experience of residents and visitors to one of the busiest and well-traveled tourist destinations in New Mexico.
- Reconstruction and Enhancement of a Bypass Route on NM 6 between I-40 and Los Lunas. This project will significantly rehabilitate 18 miles of NM 6, starting at I-40, including replacing two bridges, adding shoulders, improving existing lanes, and reconstructing curves that do not meet design standards. The goal is to create a high-quality bypass route that will allow commercial trucks and other vehicles to move goods throughout our state more efficiently (specifically, goods being transported from our southern port to all points west via I-40, or to our southern port from the west via I-25 South). Additionally, this project will vastly improve a traffic route that can be used when major accidents, or other unfortunate events, occur on the eastbound lanes of I-40, west of Albuquerque, that produce significant traffic back-ups.
- Phase 5 of the US 64 Highway Widening Project between Bloomfield and Farmington. A key corridor for commercial traffic and a well-traveled route for residents of San Juan County, this stretch of US 64 has been under design or construction for the last ten years. These dollars will complete the funding required to construct the final portion of this widening project, which allows design and right-of-way purchases to begin in earnest (in preparation of phase 4 concluding). The road will be widened from four lanes to six, a raised median will be constructed, and improvements will be made to drainage and signaling along the route. Once completed, congestion throughout the entire corridor will be reduced, and the highway will better serve the region’s commercial and economic development goals.
- Construction of a New and Vastly Improved Interchange at I-25 and Rio Bravo in South Albuquerque. The Governor’s announcement today provides the final dollars needed to fully fund this interchange reconstruction project, allowing design to move forward and construction to be advanced on what has become a heavily congested interchange desperately in need of improvements. Under this project, the interchange will be completely reconstructed to allow for greater traffic flow and safer movement through the intersection. The reconstruction of the interchange has been cited as a major economic development need for the Albuquerque metro area.

State capital dollars were combined with an additional allocation of roughly \$45 million in federal highway funding to complete the funding required to construct each of the projects listed above. This additional federal funding comes as a result of redistributed highway money that was unused by other states, as well as federal dollars that can now be reallocated as a result of NMDOT's efficient management of road projects over the past few years. Altogether, this roughly \$90 million, will allow these five significant, large-scale projects to become a reality, and to be constructed sooner than could have been achieved otherwise.

“These are exciting projects that are going to benefit communities all across our state,” said Department of Transportation Secretary Tom Church. “By combining state and federal dollars behind key, large-scale projects like these, we will be promoting economic development in strategic ways, dramatically improving highway safety in these corridors, modernizing our highway infrastructure, and promoting tourism – while putting hundreds of New Mexicans to work. We’ve got a lot of work ahead of us, and we’re up to the task.”

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