

**News from the NM Transit Association President**

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Dear NMTA Members,  
I hope all of you have had, and are having, a great summer. It is nice to be able to enjoy all of the activities this state has to offer. It has also been nice to see a lot of you at NMTA activities that have occurred this summer.

On June 27th, NMTA had a training in Santa Fe entitled Procurement and Supply Chain Training. Thank you, Brent Roy from Creative Bus Company for the Supply Chain update portion, and Dan Wagner accompanied by John Clare for the Procurement training. This was NMTA's first Hybrid training. We had forty-eight in-person attendees and fifteen virtual attendees. Thank you for your patience as we transition into this Hybrid in-person and virtual world of training.

I would also like to thank Melissa Drake for obtaining and working with a company called Production Outfitters. The support and knowledge of the Production Outfitters staff allowed our first Hybrid training to be a huge success. In addition to

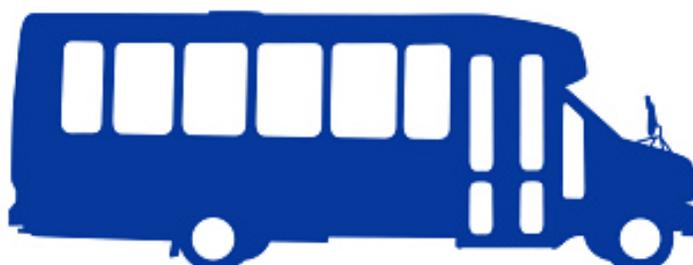
their technical support, Production Outfitters created a video recording of the training. If anyone wants a copy for use at your facility, please let Melissa Drake know.

On August 25th and 26th, NMTA assisted NMDOT in hosting a Blackcat Overview Training Session. This was a total overview of the BlackCat software used by the state.

Thank you to all of the members who submitted ideas for future training topics. NMTA works hard to meet the needs of all our member agencies and really appreciate member ideas and suggestions for training topics. Your input is very important to us.

As I write this letter Summer, is actually winding down. However, this is New Mexico and the weather is beautiful. The monsoon season is still officially here. As I travel around, it is very nice to see how the desert greens up with the rains. Again, I hope that all of you are enjoying life and you are healthy and safe. Thanks to all of you for everything you do for the citizens of our state.

THANKS  
*FOR KEEPING US MOVING.*





**News from New  
Mexico  
Department of  
Transportation**

## News From NM Department of Transportation

### Program Year 2023 Awards Update

The Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs) for the Section 5310 and 5311 programs for the 2023 program year are being prepared and will be sent to all subrecipients via DocuSign in mid-September. Staff is working with all subrecipients to finalize budgets for the MOAs. Please continue to check the Transit

Bureau website (<https://www.dot.nm.gov/planning-research-multimodal-and-safety/modal/transit-rail/transit-bureau/>) for the most current award levels for each program, as funding amounts may have been slightly adjusted as needed since the awards presentation in June.

### Transit Asset Management Plan

The Bureau is currently working with our subrecipients to update the Group Tier II Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan for 2023-2027. Our newest team member, Jason Lujan (see contact information below) has been reaching out to everyone to provide

updated vehicle information. The updated TAM Plan must be completed and approved by all participants no later than September 30, 2022. We appreciate everyone's prompt responses to requests for information and reviews of draft material.

#### Transit Bureau contact list

**Kevin Olinger**

(505) 469-3595

Kevin.Olinger@state.nm.us

**Gabrielle Chavez**

(505) 469-4413

Gabrielle.Chavez@state.nm.us

**Jason Park**

(505) 490-5347

Jason.Park@state.nm.us

**Jason Lujan**

(505) 487-0177

Jason.Lujan2@state.nm.us

**Deborah Bach**

(505) 819-9112

Deborah.Bach@state.nm.us

**Alexis Corning-Padilla**

(505) 699-4384

AlexisCorning.Padil@state.nm.us

**Vijay Ummadi**

(505) 469-7890

VijayK.Ummadi@state.nm.us



## Congratulations 2022 Samsara Driver of the Year, Jaime Herrera!



Congratulations Jaime Herrera from our All Aboard America! (AAA!) El Paso division for being awarded the 2022 Samsara Driver of The Year Award!

Jaime has been with AAA! since 2005, and is an operator on the AAA! NMDOT Park & Ride service.

The Driver of the Year Award recognizes an individual with an exemplary driving record. Jaime was selected for this award by Samsara from a pool of hundreds of drivers across the country. This is a huge accomplishment!

Here are some awesome numbers that Jaime put up on the “board” in 2021:

- Drove 80,441 miles
- Drove 1929 hours
- Had a 100% decrease in speeding
- Maintained a 98 safety score

Nice job Jaime!

Jaime and AAA! managers recently went to San Francisco where Jaime was presented with his award and received great accolades from Samsara as well as from bus and trucking companies from all over the country. As part of his award, Jaime is getting a check for \$1,000.00!



While he shines every day behind the wheel, the day in San Francisco was Jaime’s time to shine in front of industry leaders, and he did!

### It takes a family!

A special thank you to Stephanie Salcido (El Paso Trainer) for the hours that she spent with Jaime pushing him to improve every time he gets behind the wheel. And thank you, El Paso Division Manager, Felipe Trevizo for supporting Steph and Jaime, providing the positive reinforcement necessary to achieve such a great accomplishment.

In a blog post written by Audrey White from Samsara, Audrey speaks some very sincere and “true” words, not only about Jaime but AAA! as a whole. Audrey’s comments really “hit home”:

“This year’s winner cares deeply about providing an excellent experience for his passengers, taking his responsibility for their safety very seriously. All Aboard America! is part of the fourth-largest motorcoach operator in the United States. Safety is ingrained into their company culture, and one of their top performing drivers, Jaime Herrera, deeply embodies this value. All Aboard America!’s team prioritizes safety above all else.”

One of the things I love about Audrey’s statement is she speaks to the safety culture at AAA! as a whole. This award doesn’t just recognize Jaime, but it recognizes every individual at AAA! that pushes them to be the safest carrier on the road; Operations, Safety, HR, Maintenance, Admin, and of course our amazing Motorcoach Operators in all three states. One person doesn’t move mountains and continuously push the bar higher, “it takes a village” (and we have one!). So hats off to each and every one of you that not only embraces the behavior development behind the wheel, but to those that are an advocate for it.

Highlighting  
New  
Mexico  
Transit  
Members

All Aboard  
America!

## News from



North  
Central  
Regional  
Transit  
District



## WHERE WILL THE BLUE BUS GO NEXT?

NCRTD has begun work to update its Long-Range Strategic Plan, first completed in 2015, and will develop a meaningful 20-year mission and clear vision for the future of transit service in NCRTD's service area. The plan will prioritize investments and set the stage for new performance metrics to better allocate resources in a manner compatible with reaching the organization's goals to best serve the public. The development of the plan will include input from community members, riders, NCRTD staff, and the Board of Directors to ensure the path forward meets the needs of those who live, work, visit, and recreate in the region.

The District will also be developing its first standalone Tribal Transit Plan (previously incorporated into general transit service plans) that will serve as a foundational document to record existing transportation challenges and identify a strategic mobility vision for Tribal entities served by NCRTD. The eight-month planning effort focuses on developing and evaluating transit service alternatives for each of the Eight Northern Pueblos and the Jicarilla Apache Nation. The development of this plan will be a step forward toward ensuring that community members have accessible and reliable transportation options.

### NCRTD Board Approves Award of Bid and Contract for Construction of Additional Set of ADA Compliant Bus Shelter Stops

The District will now move forward with the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Phase VIII for the construction of ADA Compliant Bus Shelter Stops and Pads, and have awarded the contract to HO Construction.

Phase VIII will provide for the construction of up to 23 ADA-compliant bus stops at several locations within the Village of Questa, Taos County, Town of Taos, Coty of Española and Village of Chama. The project may include, grading, excavation work, demolition of sidewalks and/or old shelter pads, site

preparation, installation of new sidewalks, installation of concrete shelter pads, small retaining walls, landscaping, irrigation repairs and/or installation of bus shelters.



### NCRTD Will Commence Project to Renovate and Expand Headquarters

The NCRTD has begun plans and initial designs for the renovation and expansion of the Jim West Regional Transit Center which serves as the District headquarters in Española. Final design is nearing completion, with construction to begin as additional funding is secured. The project will provide for an additional 6500 square feet of new Admin space, a wellness/fitness room, additional meeting space, a quiet room for employee breaks and a private lactation room.



## Expanded Train Schedule and Reduced Qualifying Age for Seniors

The New Mexico Rail Runner Express now offers more options when it comes to traveling through central New Mexico. Effective August 1, 2022, additional weekday and Saturday trains were added to the schedule (the Sunday schedule remains the same). The new schedule will remain in place for one year. In addition, the age for seniors to purchase reduced fare passes was reduced from 62 to 60+. The changes come on the heels of a passenger survey that was conducted in March and April of this year and will provide passengers with more opportunities for convenient and flexible travel.

Learn more and view the schedule at [riometro.org](https://riometro.org).



## Rail Runner Offers 75% Reduction to All Fares Through End of Year



To provide extra affordability for commuters as gas prices remain high, the New Mexico Rail Runner Express has reduced all One-Way, Day, and Monthly Rail Runner pass fares by 75%. The discounted rate was implemented mid-April and will remain in place through December 31, 2022. It applies to full fares as well as those eligible for

reduced rates. The Annual Pass is not included in the promotion.

“Now, train passengers can get even more bang for their buck – whether it’s for their work commute or for travel and leisure – the Rail Runner remains a safe, convenient, and affordable choice,” said Dewey V. Cave, Executive Director for the Mid-Region Council of Governments.

Learn more at [riometro.org/farepromotion](https://riometro.org/farepromotion).

## Operator Training Highlighted During Operation Safe Driver Week

“Safety is number one – our top priority,” said David Maes, Training Coordinator for Rio Metro Regional Transit District. As part of Operation Safe Driver Week, July 10-16, 2022, a campaign was conducted featuring a behind-the-scenes look at the intensive training Rio Metro Bus Operators receive to keep passengers – and themselves – safe. Elements of the campaign included a blog post on Rio Metro’s website, an article in the July e-newsletter, and ads on the website, the Rail Runner, and a local newspaper.

Visit [riometro.org/blog](https://riometro.org/blog) to read the Operation Safe Driver Week blog post and learn more.



News from



Rio Metro  
Regional  
Transit  
District

## News from



## Rio Metro Regional Transit District

## News from



## South Central Regional Transit District

### Rio Metro Marketing Team Honored with Five SWTA Awards

The Rio Metro Marketing Department was honored to take home five awards from the South West Transit Association (SWTA) during this year's Summer University Conference in Arkansas. They included four Hit the Spot awards and the Spotlight Campaign award for the Category 2 system size:

- Spotlight Campaign – Rio Metro Human Trafficking Awareness Campaign
- Hit the Spot Award: Print – Rail Runner 15 Year Anniversary Magazine
- Hit the Spot Award: Electronic – Rail Runner "Catch the Bird" Video
- Hit the Spot Award: Social Media – Rail Safety Week
- Hit the Spot Award: Event – Seniors 60+ Ride Free on Wednesdays

In addition to the SWTA awards, Rio Metro has

received 10 additional marketing awards for campaigns and promotions so far in 2022. View them all at [riometro.org/awards](https://riometro.org/awards).



Allyne Clarke (pictured above)  
Marketing Director  
Rio Metro Regional Transit District  
New Mexico Rail Runner Express

### SCRTD Wins Federal Grants to Bring Electric Bus Service to the Mesilla Valley



The United States Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has awarded the South Central Regional District (SCRTD) two Low or No-Emission (Low-No) grants totaling \$5,583,764 to purchase up to six low-emission electric battery buses, charging infrastructure; staff to provide training; and to allow SCRTD to purchase the land it currently leases.

SCRTD Chairman, Javier Perez said that electric buses and infrastructure have benefits for the entire community, "Electric buses have no emissions. As a result they will improve the air quality for everyone in the county. However the benefits of electric power don't stop there. Electric technology substantially reduces maintenance costs as electric engines have

fewer parts and the cost of electricity has been lower than the cost of fossil fuels." SCRTD has partnered with the El Paso Electric Company to support technical requirements to install and operate the electric buses from SCRTD's Sunland Park Facility.

SCRTD Executive Director David Armijo said that the electric buses will be used on the agency's Yellow and Silver Routes that operate from Sunland Park to El Paso's Downtown Transit Center and the city's Westside. "The electric buses will be built in the US by Gillig, a long-time, US-based manufacturer of buses with an expected delivery of March 2024," Armijo said. "The buses will be heavy-duty 35 foot buses that will accelerate SCRTD's conversion to a zero-emission fleet. This funding, along with the additional grant funding for the acquisition of the land we now lease and the building of a facility to support the electric and low-emission buses, is another step in the progression of SCRTD into a full-fledged regional transportation agency."

Above is a Gillig Hybrid bus which is similar to the electric buses ordered.



### **Upcoming NMTA Quarterly Training Sessions and Transit Conferences...**

**Stay tune for training topics, dates and conference information to be announced in the months ahead.**

#### **Share Your Story!!!**

It is always so exciting to hear what transit is doing throughout New Mexico. NMTA is working diligently to highlight our New Mexico agencies through the NMTA Quarterly Newsletter, Social Media, and Op-eds.

As you all know, transit does so much in each of our communities. The goal of NMTA is to let New Mexico residents and government know all the positive service transit provides in our state. The more stories you contribute with us, the more information we have to share.

Articles can be highlights of special staff members who always go above and beyond to ensure quality service, stories from our passengers sharing their experience and the role that public transit plays in their lives, or about your agencies involvement in community activities/events.

Email your story to Melissa Drake at [mdrake@nm-ta.com](mailto:mdrake@nm-ta.com) today!

#### **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 .**

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**Twitter @NM\_Transit**

## NMTA Board of Directors Contact Information

### Executive Board of Directors

#### **Joseph Hardin, President**

Director Representing Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals With Disabilities  
Z-Trans/Zia Therapy  
Contact Info:  
Office: (575) 439-4900 ext. 152  
Email: ztrans@ziatherapy.org

#### **Elizabeth Carter, Vice President**

Director At Large  
Rio Metro Regional Transit District  
Contact Info:  
Office: (505) 843-1712  
Email: ECarter@mrcog-nm.gov

#### **Ed Powers, Treasurer**

Director At Large  
All Aboard America!  
Contact Info:  
Office: (505) 428-6316  
Email: EPowers@allaboardamerica.com

#### **Rebecka Hicks, Secretary**

Director Representing Rural Transit Systems  
Roswell Transit  
Contact Info:  
Office: (575) 624-6766  
Email: b.hicks@roswell-nm.gov

### Ex-Officio Director

#### **Kevin Olinger**

Transit Bureau Chief, NMDOT  
Contact Info:  
Office: (505) 469-3595  
Kevin.Olinger@state.nm.us

### Directors

#### **James Barela**

Director At Large  
Atomic City Transit - Los Alamos County  
Contact Info:  
Office: (505) 661-7433  
Email: james.barela@lacnm.us

#### **Michael Bartholomew**

Director Representing Urban Transit Systems  
RoadRunner Transit - City of Las Cruces  
Contact Info:  
Office: (575) 541-2500  
Email: mbartholomew@las-cruces.org

#### **Brent Roy**

Business Director  
Creative Bus Sales  
Contact Info:  
Office: (682) 808-9830  
Email: broy@creativebussales.com

#### **(Currently Open)**

Director Representing Tribal Transit

#### **Thomas S. Marking**

Representing Professional Member  
AARP  
Contact Info:  
Office: (505) 946-3603  
Email: tom.marking@wans.net

#### **Anthony Mortillaro**

Director Representing Regional Transit District  
North Central Regional Transit Districts  
Contact Info:  
Office: (505) 629-4713  
Email: anthonym@ncrtd.org



P.O. Box 15272  
Rio Rancho, NM 87174

Phone: 505-796-8377  
Fax: 505-212-0525  
E-mail: info@nm-ta.com