

INTERNAL USE ONLY	
Date Approved:	




**BUDGET AND FISCAL POLICY DEPARTMENT
GRANTS ADMINISTRATION DIVISION**

GRANT APPLICATION SUBMISSION APPROVAL FORM

DEPARTMENT INFORMATION	
Date:	
Requesting Department/Division:	
Department/Division Contact:	
Anticipated Commissioners Court Meeting Grant Approval Date:	
Who from your department/division will speak on the agenda item?	
<p>Please list accompanying grant documents requiring the Authorized Official's signature.</p>	
GRANT OPPORTUNITY INFORMATION	
Grant Opportunity Title (as provided by Grantor):	
Grantor Agency:	
Type of Grant:	
Is this a renewal grant?	
CobbleStone Number for Most Recent Grant Award:	
Grant Announcement Date:	
Grant Due Date:	
Grant Period:	
<p>Grant Proposal Summary (one paragraph or less):</p>	

GRANT FINANCES	
A. Grant Funding to be Requested:	
B. Total Match Contribution (if applicable):	
I. Cash Match Amount and Description (i.e. County employee salaries, anticipated operating expenses, third-party monetary donations, etc.):	
a. Match Source Account(s) (if applicable):	
b. What fiscal year(s) will County match funding be needed in?	
II. In-kind Match Amount and Description (i.e. donated supplies/equipment, volunteer hours, donated professional services, etc.):	
C. Anticipated Program Income (if applicable):	
D. Total Project Amount (A + B + C):	
FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT	
1) What are the staffing requirements or needs for this grant? Please include salary and benefit amounts and anticipated salary and benefit increases for multi-year grants.	
2) What are the operational needs that will be requested through the grant (i.e. supplies, equipment, office space, travel, etc.)?	
3) Has this grant has been awarded in the past? If so, please provide the financial results of the most recently completed grant award cycle to include the award amount and the balance at the closing of the grant.	

<p>4) What is the sustainability plan for this grant and the services being provided if this funding is significantly reduced or is not awarded in future?</p>
<p align="center">PROGRAMMATIC ASSESSMENT</p>
<p>1) Is this grant and its purpose(s) aligned with the County strategic plan? How will this grant benefit your department/division and communities in El Paso County?</p>
<p>2) Please explain the capacity of your department/division to administer this grant and complete all programmatic reporting requirements during the grant period.</p>
<p>3) Will this grant require the use of contractual services? <i>If so, please contact the Purchasing Department, upon award acceptance to ensure your department is in compliance with applicable procurement policies and procedures.</i></p>

El Paso, County of
Applicant Information

Intercity Bus Application 2020
ICB-2021-EL PASO CO-00037

Application Instructions	<u>Application Instructions</u>
Agency Name	El Paso, County of
Person to be contacted regarding this application	
First Name *	Sal
Last Name *	Alonzo
Phone Number *	(915) 546-2015
Email Address *	salonzo@epcounty.com

By checking this box, you are indicating that the service profile for this organization is accurate. *

✓

Project Summary

1. Project Service Area, enter the percentage of each*	Rural: 62%
	Urban: 38%
State Planning Region *	8
What is the project name? *	El Paso-Anthony, Texas Las Cruces, New Mexico Intercity Bus Service

2. Provide a summary of the proposed project(s) for which the funds will be used. *

The Gold route has provided over 525,554 passenger trips & leveraged \$ 11.5 million from the State of New Mexico in the past 11yrs. The El Paso-Anthony-Las Cruces Gold route which began service on September 1, 2009, consists of 5 northbound & 5 southbound AM trips & 4 northbound & 7 southbound PM trips. Service is provided every weekday except major holidays between 4:32 AM & 9:49 AM in the mornings & 3:10PM & 8:39 PM in the evenings using 57-Passenger, ADA accessible & bathroom-equipped motor coaches operated by All Aboard America. The project allows connectivity between public transit systems in two counties & two states & includes stops in Anthony, Tx; at the Sun Metro Westside Transfer Center w/ connection to El Paso County Rural Transit; at NMSU; in downtown El Paso allowing easy transfer to the Sun Metro system & in downtown Las Cruces w/ convenient transfer to South Central New Mexico Rural Transit, Las Cruces Roadrunner connecting White Sands Missile Range. Due to the quality of the motor coaches utilized for this service & the low fares, anticipated ridership is likely to mirror the current range of demographic types in the corridor. Users of the service are anticipated to include residents of El Paso, Las Cruces & Ciudad Juarez; residents of Anthony, Vinton, students of the UTEP, NMSU, workforces associated w/ Ft. Bliss & White Sands & other populations. W/ its stop in Anthony, the Gold route provides a safe, reliable & affordable transportation option to rural north & largely low-income El Paso County & convenient access to job & educational opportunities in both El Paso & Las Cruces. Additionally, the service removes scores of single-occupancy vehicles in the congested I-10 corridor. There is no other transit option providing this service, the project addresses multiple objectives in the Regional Coordination Plan to fill unmet gaps in service & to participate in regional coordination efforts, specifically w/ adjacent southern New Mexico.

3. The Texas Transportation Commission has established the Strategic Plan. Demonstrate to what extent the project responds to one or more of the Strategic Plan goals. *

The El Paso County ICB application to continue the El Paso-Anthony- Las Cruces commuter service aligns with multiple TxDOT Strategic Goals ;
Strategic Goal 1: Deliver the Right Project,
Strategic Goal 2: Focus on the Customer,
Strategic Goal 3: Foster Stewardship and
Strategic Goal 6: Promote Safety.

The popular El Paso-Anthony-Gold Route, now in its eleventh year, provides commuters with affordable, strategically placed, and conveniently scheduled motor coach service along a congested I-10 corridor with a direct connection to local service in El Paso, rural El Paso County, Las Cruces, New Mexico State University and White Sands Missile Range. The ICB project provides safe, high-quality commuter transportation and access to a wider range of employment opportunities for workers and a more dependable workforce for employers. The project will also be an advantage to college students and take advantage of a recently adopted reciprocity agreement allowing students to attend both the University of Texas at El Paso and New Mexico State University. Built on a partnership with New Mexico DOT, the project leverages a significant contribution making Texas dollars go farther. Finally, the weekday commuter hour service is a safer alternative to daily commuting on the congested I-10 segment between El Paso and Las Cruces.

4. Identify project partners and describe what each partner will do for the project.

Partner Name

NMDOT

Description of Activity

Manages the project by subcontracting with a private company that supplies the motor coaches, drivers and operates the service

5. Certification of Non-Profit Status

If applying as a non-profit organization, attach documentation to certify nonprofit status.

Accepted documentation:

1.Proof that the Internal Revenue Service currently recognizes the applicant as an organization to which contributions are tax deductible under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code;

2.A statement from a State taxing body or State Attorney General certifying that :

1.The organization is a non-profit organization operating within the State; and

2.No part of its net earnings may lawfully benefit any private shareholder or individual;

·A certified copy of the applicant's certificate of incorporation or similar document if it clearly establishes the non-profit status of the applicant; or

·Any item described above if that item applies to a State or national parent organization, together with a statement by the State or parent organization that the applicant is a non-profit affiliate.

Certification of Non-Profit Status

Demonstrated Need and Project Description

1. Describe the specific need for the project: what service gaps, performance gaps, or unmet needs will be filled by the proposed project? For each gap or unmet need, provide convincing data to demonstrate why the project is needed.

There are no other public transit services linking the public transit systems of El Paso and Las Cruces, yet thousands of individuals travel between the two communities and points in between every day. Private transit providers operating in the corridor do not provide connectivity between the El Paso and Las Cruces transit centers and do not operate on schedules that allow arrivals and departures centered on typical business hours. Nevertheless, the El Paso-Las Cruces commuter shed is one of the fastest-growing corridors in all of West Texas with a substantial number of trips occurring in both directions each day creating significant congestion on IH-10 and other major arterials between the two points. According to the 2000 US Census Journey to Work data (the last date for which such information from that source is available), 4,674 commuters were traveling from El Paso to Doña Ana County and 10,266 were regularly traveling from Doña Ana County to El Paso County for work. According to officials at the El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), in 2009 those numbers increased to approximately 7,000 to 10,000 commuting from El Paso to Las Cruces and 12,000 people commuting from Las Cruces to El Paso. Additionally, the El Paso MPO estimates that 7,000 to 8,000 people travel from Juarez, Mexico to Las Cruces every day. U.S. Census 2019 American Community Survey estimates indicate that the city of El Paso had a population of 682,686 and Las Cruces had a population of 101,014. El Paso County had a population of 840,758 and Doña Ana County had a population of 217,522. When Juarez, Mexico is included, the combined urban and rural area around El Paso has a population of over 2,500,000 residents. Many of these individuals cross international and state boundaries on a regular basis for work, school, or other activities. Both El Paso and Las Cruces have relatively high percentages of low-income residents, persons with disabilities, veterans, older adults, and households without access to automobiles. The existence of an affordable and reliable mobility option like the Gold Route is critical for those who need to travel this corridor or who find they can improve their well-being by doing so.

2. Provide a detailed project description and describe how the project addresses the demonstrated need.

The El Paso-Anthony-Las Cruces Gold route which began service on September 1, 2009, consists of five northbound and five southbound AM trips and four northbound and seven southbound PM trips. Service is provided every weekday except major holidays between 4:32 AM and 9:49 AM in the mornings and 3:10 PM and 8:39 PM in the evenings using 57-Passenger, ADA accessible and bathroom-equipped motor coaches operated by All Aboard America. The project allows connectivity between public transit systems in two counties and two states and includes stops at the Sun Metro Westside Transfer Center and New Mexico State University and allows easy transfer to the Sun Metro system including the new downtown streetcar system with a connection to UTEP's Miner Metro, El Paso County Rural Transit, South Central New Mexico Rural Transit District, Las Cruces Roadrunner buses and shuttles to White Sands Missile Range. Because of this connectivity between transit systems, the project will be able to meet the needs of diverse populations in the El Paso area. Due to the quality of the motor coaches utilized for this service and the low fares, especially when considered at a cost per mile basis, anticipated ridership is likely to mirror the current range of demographic types in the corridor. Users of the service are anticipated to include residents of the urban centers of El Paso, Las Cruces,

and Ciudad Juarez; residents of Anthony, Vinton, and the nearby colonias, students of the University of Texas at El Paso, New Mexico State University, workforces associated with Ft. Bliss and White Sands and other populations. Service connecting the populations of Anthony and Vinton, Texas to both El Paso and Las Cruces is of particular importance. Anthony has a per capita income of only \$ 11,099 with 30.2% of individuals living below poverty according to the U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 American Community Survey. Additionally, an estimated 7.1% of the population relies on public assistance, and 11.1% of households report no vehicle available. The nine northbound and eleven southbound trips operated each day affording a total daily capacity for 1140 passengers. The low fares make the use of the service on a daily basis extremely cost-effective and are the only affordable means for many to access jobs and services, providing great benefit to workers and employers alike. The route is designed to directly link to the El Paso and Las Cruces urban transit systems as well as the El Paso County rural system allowing easy transfer and access to the entire region. The service operates every weekday except for major holidays during the most heavily traveled commute hours and expresses between distant stops using motorcoach rolling stock making the commute not only affordable but safe, comfortable, and quick. The service, route, schedule, and equipment were all carefully considered to maximize accessibility and utility for the largest population concentrations, workers, those with mobility impairments, and those with low incomes. The project was begun as a demonstration project and has exceeded ridership expectations. ICB funds will be dedicated exclusively to net operating expenses and will be matched nearly two to one by the NMDOT. One hundred percent of the project is devoted to ICB mobility and the requested amount will be dedicated exclusively to service within the state of Texas. No funds are being requested for project administration, indirect costs, or overhead expenses. Of the 48.8 one-way miles for each trip, the Texas segment is 21 miles or 43% yet the State of New Mexico is contributing more than 60% of the cost of the service. Continued support of the Gold Route is a prominent activity in the Far West Texas/El Paso Regional Transportation Coordination Committee (WTEP) Regional Plan. In addition, the project is a direct outcome of the Regional Plan objective to "Establish and maintain a working relationship with appropriate entities to enhance regional transportation coordination with Las Cruces, Chaparral, Sunland Park and other relevant South Central New Mexico public transportation planning efforts" as stated on page 55 of the Plan. The WTEP Coordination Committee voted unanimously to endorse the project for ICB funding and authorize a letter indicating that the project is consistent with the Regional Plan. With no other such service, the Gold Route represents an unduplicated solution to a pressing mobility need. The very low cost makes it accessible to low-income populations and contributes significantly to their ability to save more discretionary income compared to the cost of automobile travel. The location of the Anthony, Texas stop near the route mid-point makes the large labor markets of both Las Cruces and El Paso a relatively few express bus minutes away. The use of motorcoach equipment provides a safe and comfortable ride on an otherwise crowded IH-10 corridor, with a high degree of reliability conducive to job retention.

3. Provide clear and concise project goals and describe the associated objectives of each goal.
Save for additional rows

Project Goals

- Link local public transit systems in El Paso, Las Cruces and rural El Paso County
- Provide inter-city mobility options for residents of the region especially those with low-incomes and/or residing in rural El Paso County

Associated Objectives

- Maintain El Paso -Anthony- Las Cruces Gold route service with convenient links to multiple local, regional & national transit systems
- Ensure Gold route fare structure is affordable & stops are accessible to targeted populations

- Reduce the use of single-occupancy vehicles on the congested I-10 corridor
- Increase Gold Route ridership

- Ensure schedule & route address passenger travel demand & service is safe, reliable comfortable & convenient
- Continue successful elements of previous marketing efforts & devise & launch new marketing efforts most likely to result in increased ridership

4. Describe specific project tasks and deliverables to achieve the objectives identified above.
Save for additional rows

Objectives

- Maintain El Paso -Anthony- Las Cruces Gold route service with convenient links to multiple local, regional and national transit systems
- Ensure Gold route fare structure is affordable and stops are accessible to targeted populations
- Ensure schedule and route address passenger travel demand and service is safe, reliable comfortable & convenient
- Continue successful elements of previous marketing efforts & devise and launch new marketing efforts most likely to result in increased ridership

Tasks

- Prepare an Inter-Local agreement with New Mexico DOT for the continued operation of the Gold Route timed to ensure uninterrupted service
- Negotiate fare structure that continues affordability for low-income passengers
- Review current service standards, route configuration and schedule to address rider and potential rider input as appropriate
- Review and assess previous marketing efforts and develop new marketing approach and materials and launch marketing as appropriate

Deliverables

- Executed Inter-Local Agreement and seamless continuation of service
- Agreement on fare structure that remains affordable
- Appropriate revision to service and operating standards in Inter-Local agreement
- Marketing plan, materials and schedule

5. Describe how this project meets the scope and objectives of the grant program and how it correlates to priorities outlined in this call for projects.

Intercity bus mobility is at the core of this project. Because of the linkage between the Gold Route service and those of Road Runner Transit in Las Cruces and Sun Metro in El Paso with additional convenient connections to rural systems serving El Paso and Doña Ana Counties, the service fills an important system gap creating a more seamless mobility network for the area. The stop in the rural Texas town of Anthony provides an important commute addition to the limited existing El Paso County service and allows for needed express service to job destinations in downtown El Paso, downtown Las Cruces, and New Mexico State University. The Westside Terminal stop provides a much quicker connection to routes

serving west side El Paso destinations and the Downtown El Paso stop provides timely connections to the east-west national Amtrak system and the Greyhound, El Paso-Los Angeles Limousine, and Autobuses Los Paisanos bus lines.

6. Identify the goals, objectives and/or priorities in the area's most recent five-year public transportation/human services transportation plan that relate to the need for the project.

Save for additional rows

Five-year plan goal, priority, or objective

-Fill unacceptable service gaps, especially for transit-dependent populations, through continuous identification & assessment of changing mobility needs, expansion of financial support, increased efficiency, redeployment of redundant resources & services innovation
-Establish & maintain a working relationship w/ appropriate entities to enhance regional transportation coordination w/ Las Cruces, Chaparral, Sunland Park & other relevant South Central NM public transportation planning efforts

How the project relates

-El Paso borders New Mexico & shares a common local economy/labor market. Mobility for this adjacent travel-shed has important quality of life, economic, educational & cultural significance. The importance of a mobility option between these hubs is demonstrated by the routes ridership & popularity
-Prior to the Gold Route service, there was no public transit linking El Paso, TX, & Las Cruces, NM; private transit providers do not provide connectivity between El Paso & Las Cruces transit centers

7. Describe how the project supports regional multi-use or multi-modal opportunities.

The project is a long-term partnership between El Paso County and the New Mexico Department of Transportation which subcontracts with All Aboard America for the operation of the service. The project was originally planned in close coordination with Sun Metro, El Paso County Transit, Las Cruces Roadrunner, South Central New Mexico Rural Transit District, White Sands shuttles, and New Mexico State University to maximize regional mobility and ease of transfer between these systems. Importantly, the service stop in Anthony was identified with the assistance of Anthony, Vinton, and surrounding rural community leaders to provide the greatest level of access for residents in northern rural El Paso County. The popular El Paso-Anthony-Gold Route, now in its eleventh year, provides commuters with strategically placed and scheduled affordable motor coach service along a congested I -10 corridor with direct connection to local service in El Paso, rural El Paso County, Las Cruces, New Mexico State University, and White Sands Missile Range. The ICB project provides safe, high-quality commuter transportation and access to a wider range of employment opportunities for workers and a more dependable workforce for employers. The Gold Route service provides a direct link to Road Runner Transit in Las Cruces and Sun Metro in El Paso with additional convenient connections to rural systems serving El Paso and Doña Ana Counties, filling an important system gap and creating a more seamless mobility network for the area. The stop in the rural Texas town of Anthony provides an important commute addition to the limited existing El Paso County service and allows for needed express service to job destinations in downtown El Paso, downtown Las Cruces, and New Mexico State University. The Westside Terminal stop provides a much quicker connection to routes serving west side El Paso destinations and the Downtown El Paso stop provides timely connections to the east-west national Amtrak system and the Greyhound, El Paso-Los Angeles Limousine, and Autobuses Los Paisanos bus lines.

8. Describe how the project integrates and coordinates between different public and /or private providers to expand options or maximize performance in rural areas of the state.

Intercity bus mobility is at the core of this project. Because of the linkage between the Gold Route service and those of Road Runner Transit in Las Cruces and Sun Metro in El Paso with additional convenient connections to rural systems serving El Paso and Doña Ana Counties, the service fills an important system gap creating a more seamless mobility network for the area. The stop in the rural Texas town of Anthony provides an important commute addition to the limited existing El Paso County service and allows for needed express service to job destinations in downtown El Paso, downtown Las Cruces, and New Mexico State University. The Westside Terminal stop provides a much quicker connection to routes serving west side El Paso destinations and the Downtown El Paso stop provides timely connections to the east-west national Amtrak system and the Greyhound, El Paso-Los Angeles Limousine, and Autobuses Los Paisanos bus lines. The service eliminates a serious mobility gap for the citizens of Anthony and surrounding areas by providing express intercity bus service primarily during heavily trafficked commuter hours to areas with the highest concentration of jobs and job-related services. Project planning closely considered the El Paso MPO analysis of potential ridership and commute patterns and the Anthony stop was primarily instituted to provide work-related mobility for this and nearby underprivileged communities.

Project Implementation

1. Identify benchmarks or milestones that will be used to determine if the project is on track to be completed on time, within scope, and on budget. /font>

The project has operated without interruption for more than ten years and El Paso County will work to ensure its seamless continuation beginning with the advance adoption of an extension to the existing inter-local agreement between El Paso County and New Mexico DOT to ensure service on September 1, 2020, and every service day thereafter. Subsequently, service benchmarks include the monthly review of Gold Route performance and financial data to monitor ridership and cost trends as well as the impact of route marketing efforts.

2. Describe risk mitigation strategies that will be used to keep the project on schedule and within the scope and budget.

Given its longevity and the experience of project managers and the service operator, project implementation risks are minimal. Nevertheless, New Mexico DOT requires All Aboard America to maintain and make available backup vehicles should a motorcoach have to be removed from service. Also, significant road work on sections of I-10 that are part of the route is nearing completion, creating a safer roadway and El Paso County maintains a close working relationship with Sun Metro to make any adjustment that may be required from changes to Sun Metro's Westside Transfer Center, its downtown terminal or other operations that may affect passenger access or transfer.

3. Describe any other fund sources that will be used to plan, initiate implement, or sustain the project/service.

The State of New Mexico through its Department of Transportation contributes approximately 60% of the cost of the service, roughly corresponding to the portion of the route mileage occurring in that state. As has been the practice over its 10-year history, The ICB grant awarded by TxDOT will be divided into equal monthly payments made to NMDOT, with New Mexico covering the balance of net operating costs with its funds, including any unexpected operating costs beyond New Mexico's portion of route mileage. A Letter of Commitment detailing the State of New Mexico's financial and operating role in the Gold route program is attached.

4. Describe how the project's benefit value to the community will be evaluated.

While significantly contributing to the mobility of needy individuals and their pursuit of training, jobs, and self-sufficiency, the presence of the Gold Route also contributes to the community of Anthony, Texas, and nearby communities by making the location a more desirable location as a residence and for a business by virtue of its presence as a stop on a commuter express route. The stop is likely to stimulate transit-oriented development which can attract new residents and businesses thus expanding local economic development, jobs, and opportunity and increase property values that benefit local government and schools. In addition, relieving congestion along the significant I-10 segment of the route improves safety and travel time for all its users and improves economic development prospects for the affected markets and workforce. The project will also be an advantage to college students and take advantage of a recently adopted reciprocity agreement allowing students to attend both the University of Texas at El Paso and New Mexico State University. Built on a partnership with New Mexico DOT, the project leverages a significant contribution making Texas dollars go farther. Finally, the weekday commuter hour service is a safer alternative to daily commuting on the congested I-10 segment between El Paso and Las Cruces.

Roles and Responsibilities of Stakeholders

Examples of local stakeholders can include, but are not limited to, the following: *local businesses, workforce agencies, human service agencies, city officials, county officials, riders or the general public.*

1. Describe what groups/entities (stakeholders) were consulted or assisted in the development of this specific project. Describe how they participated in the project development.

The project was initially developed ten years ago with the active participation of El Paso County, the New Mexico Department of Transportation, Sun Metro, Las Cruces Road Runner, and New Mexico State University. More recently, the newly re-formed South Central New Mexico Rural Transit District has been consulted about inter-connection opportunities between the systems. Before and throughout its existence, the Far West Texas/El Paso Regional Transportation Coordination Plan was consulted to better understand mobility issues and needs in the corridor, and the Far West Texas /El Paso Regional Transportation Stakeholder Committee has been advised of and has thrice voted to endorse the project as consistent with its plan and authorize letters of support for its funding applications. The project fills a critical mobility gap in the region. Key players in the development of the project and its ongoing management are identified in question 2 in the Experience and Capacity section and question 2 in the Roles and Responsibilities sections of the ICB Evaluation Criteria. The project was originally planned in close coordination with Sun Metro, El Paso County Transit, Las Cruces Roadrunner, South Central New Mexico Rural Transit District, White Sands shuttles, and New Mexico State University to maximize regional mobility and ease of transfer between these systems.

2. Identify specific stakeholders who will actively participate in proposed project activities. Describe the specific activities in which they will be involved and their roles.

Mr. Sal Alonzo, Transportation Engineer, in El Paso County's Public Works Department will manage the project and will oversee the execution of an inter-local agreement with NMDOT, monitor performance and cost reporting, and implement the passenger survey and analysis process. Kevin Olinger, NMDOT Transit Bureau Chief, will be responsible for administering the inter-local agreement with El Paso County. Gabrielle Chavez, NMDOT Transit Planning and Service Coordination Manager will assist in administering the inter-local agreement with El Paso County and with oversight of the NMDOT Park & Ride program, which includes the Gold Route. Jason Park, NMDOT Commute Options Program Manager, oversees the NMDOT Park & Ride's Gold Route operations.

3. Describe how the agency has or will coordinate with the Regionally Coordinated Transportation Planning lead agency(ies) in the project area.

The Gold Route Service was originally initiated in response to a mobility gap identified in the Far West Texas/El Paso Regional Transportation Coordination Plan and has received the endorsement of the Far West Texas/El Paso Regional Transportation Coordination Stakeholder Committee each time the project has been presented for the committee's endorsement. El Paso County is an active member of the Far West Texas/El Paso Regional Transportation Coordination Committee and will work to ensure the service remains consistent with the regional plan and that the resources dedicated to its continuation meet a mobility priority for the region. Service statistics will be presented regularly to the Far West Texas/El Paso Regional Transportation Coordination Committee to ensure that the project continues to be a relevant part of its regional coordination strategy and to elicit feedback through this public forum. Additionally, the service will be included in an anticipated needs assessment as part of an update to the Regional Plan and will afford multiple opportunities for public comment. Finally, any service changes indicated by ridership or other service data will be presented to stakeholders and the public for comment before service changes are implemented.

Experience and Capacity

1. Describe qualifications the agency has for management and oversight for a project of this type, size, and scope.

El Paso County has served as a rural transit district for more than twenty years and operated numerous public transportation services involving numerous funding programs and sources. In addition to its four §5311 funded commuter routes, it operates a CMAQ-funded commuter route, the Gold Route now in its eight-year of operation and an extensive CMAQ-funded vanpool program. El Paso County previously served as the Far West Texas/El Paso Regional Transportation Coordination Committee Lead agency and continues to play a leadership role in regional transportation coordination. As the ICB grant recipient and project manager, El Paso County provides the support of its County Attorney, County Auditor, and accounting staff all of which serve under the purview of the El Paso County Commissioners Court and its various TxDOT reviewed and compliant policies and procedures.

2. Identify project staff who will contribute to the project. Describe their roles, responsibilities, and

qualifications.

Sal Alonzo, Transportation Engineer, manages public transportation programs for the County of El Paso and will serve as Project Manager with responsibility for the administration of the grant agreement with TxDOT and inter-local agreement with the New Mexico Department of Transportation. Mr. Alonzo has more than twenty years of experience in public works administration and operations and currently oversees El Paso County's rural transit district program, multiple Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) funded transportation programs, an extensive vanpool program and is an active participant in the regional human services-public transportation coordination project. Jason Park oversees the Gold Route operations. Mr. Park was promoted to oversee the NMDOT Park & Ride Program in November 2019. He has worked in NMDOT's Transit & Rail Division for four years working with the rural transit programs and holds a Bachelor of Science in Information Technology. Mr. Park's role is as the primary contact for invoicing, monthly statistical reports, and coordination and oversight of NMDOT's Contractor, All Aboard America!, Inc. Gabrielle Chavez assists in administering the inter-local agreement with El Paso County and with oversight of the NMDOT Park & Ride program, which includes the Gold Route. For the past year and a half, Ms. Chavez has been the Transit Planning and Service Coordination Manager with NMDOT's Transit & Rail Division. Ms. Chavez has been with NMDOT for over four years working with public transit and planning and holds a Masters of Public Affairs degree. Kevin Olinger NMDOT Transit Bureau Chief will be responsible for administering the inter-local agreement with El Paso County. For the past 2 years, Mr. Olinger has been the Transit Bureau Chief of New Mexico DOT's Transit and Rail Division, which is responsible for programming, distributing, and overseeing compliance of a \$30-50/million annual transit program, directing the fifth largest bus public transit system in the state and coordinating multimodal connections to the state's commuter rail system. Before joining New Mexico DOT, from 2002 to 2017, he was the Deputy Director of the Transportation Division at the New York City Department of City Planning, where he oversaw zoning policy analysis and conceptual and preliminary design studies for street improvements for all modes of travel. He received a Master of City Planning from the Georgia Institute of Technology and a Bachelor of City Planning from the University of Virginia. Jack Wigley, President of Industrial Bus Lines, Inc. dba All Aboard America will play a direct role in executing and managing the contract and service. Ed Powers provides support as Safety Director/Motor Coach Operator Trainer. Fred Ullom serves as Divisional General Manager, Louie Garcia serves as Statewide Park & Ride Operations Manager, and Benji Natividad serves as Manager of the Gold Route service. Ray Rodriguez serves as Maintenance Manager and John Little serves as Office Administrator. All possess extensive transit experience. El Paso County is requesting only operating expense funds. No management, administrative or indirect costs will be charged to the grant.

3. If a consultant will contribute to the project, describe the type of services they will provide. If a consultant is presently secured, describe their prior experience with similar projects.

No consultants have or will be involved in the project.

Note: When consultant services are used, TxDOT must ensure all federal and state procurement processes are/have been followed. TxDOT usually oversees each phase of the procurement process.

Project Evaluation

1. Describe how the agency, including any partners, intends to evaluate the overall success of the project.

Include information on the evaluation of this project at major milestones or stages and identify specific areas to measure.

In addition to its ongoing review and analysis of monthly performance and cost data, El Paso County will conduct periodic passenger surveys to identify operating issues and determine passenger preferences. The survey will include questions related to boarding locations, route, service schedule, fares, frequency and purpose of use, transfer to other systems, and other information that might inform service adjustments. In the past, such information has been used to improve the service with successful results. Apart from ridership and survey results, impact on the affected communities is difficult to measure, particularly in isolating the role of the Gold Route on surrounding communities. Most current ridership appears to be commuters using the service to get to jobs. As the labor market continues to tighten in El Paso and Dona Ana Counties, the service will maintain its importance. Recent increases and the steady upward trend in gasoline prices will likely increase ridership since gas prices and Gold Route ridership have maintained a constant inverse relationship. Also, as congestion on this segment of the I-10 corridor increases with growth in the region, the Gold Route provides a reliable, cost-efficient mobility alternative for these commuters. The quality of the Wi-Fi-equipped motor coaches is highly desirable for passengers riding the entire length of the route allowing for more productive use of time. Naturally, in addition to increasing employment options for its passengers, this commuter service alleviates congestion, saves passengers money, and pollutes much less than the alternative of single-occupancy automobile travel. Daily and weekly ridership, vehicle and revenue hours, and vehicle and revenue miles statistics will continue to be collected and analyzed, and reported monthly. Rider comments will be collected at different periods each year and will be used along with service data and public comments to consider possible service adjustments. This ridership information and a careful analysis of operating costs will allow for a more accurate projection of the EPALC's net operating deficit. A year-end report will be prepared and built on this analysis to detail the route's ridership, revenues, and costs.

Attach originally developed letters of commitment from stakeholders who will provide resources for this specific project.

New Mexico Department of Transportation Support Letter

https://apps2.txdot.gov/apps/egrants2/egrants2_uploads/786032_337472-764287_337472-NMDOTLetterofSupport.pdf

Attach originally developed letters of support from stakeholders that are endorsing the proposed project.

Far West Texas/El Paso Regional Transportation Coordination (WTEP) Letter of Support

https://apps2.txdot.gov/apps/egrants2/egrants2_uploads/786032_337474-764287_337474-WTEPLetterofSupport-2020.pdf

Upload other attachments, as appropriate.

Is this an operating assistance project?

☒ Yes ☐ No

1. Route name

Gold Route (El Paso-Anthony-Las Cruces Route)

2. Is this a new or existing route?

☐ New ☒ Existing

3. Is this a feeder service route?

☐ Yes ☒ No

4. If multiple routes are submitted, rank each in priority order. *

1

5. Does this route travel outside of Texas? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

6. What is the total route mileage within Texas (one way)

21

7. Insert the amount of funds awarded in the past 3 years, if applicable.

Fiscal Year	Amount
2020	\$496,788
2019	\$496,788
2018	\$420,180

8. Insert the total amount of operating funds requested per year. (up to 2 years)

Fiscal Year	Amount
Year 1	\$526,436
Year 2	

9. How many years has this route received operating assistance from TxDOT?

10

10. If this route has received operating assistance for more than 2 years, describe how this route has shown improvement and any actions taken to make this route profitable.

Although ridership fell slightly from FY 2018 to FY 2019 (most likely due to temporarily low gasoline prices) ridership has steadily increased over the life of the service. Prior marketing efforts have shown positive results and will be strategically conducted in both the El Paso and Las Cruces markets to promote the service. In addition, any passenger suggested changes to the service that increase ridership will be considered and implemented when appropriate.

11. Ridership data for the last 3 years (if applicable), repeat information for each year (limit to 1 year time frame).

Beginning date	End date	Average daily passenger count	Total passengers (yearly)	Total miles (yearly)	Number of scheduled stops (one way)	All admin/operating/other (expenses) for year	All fares/donations/other (revenues) for year	Cost per Passenger	Cost per Mile
9/1/2018	8/31/2019	134	49009	232500	5	\$1,349,537	\$144,848	\$28.00	\$6.00
9/1/2017	8/31/2018	142	51650	233430	5	\$1,307,026	\$149,351	\$25.00	\$6.00
9/1/2016	8/31/2017	207	52110	230518	5	\$1,283,877	\$150,112	\$25.00	\$6.00

Is this a facility project?

[] Yes [✓] No

[]

As an authorized official of the El Paso, County of

I certify to the following:

- 1.The information presented in the application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.
- 2.I have not intentionally made any misstatements or misrepresented the facts.
- 3.The organization has the resources and technical capacity to support the project.
- 4.The organization has the resources and technical capacity to provide the required match.
- 5.The organization uses generally accepted accounting standards for its financial recordkeeping functions.
- 6.The organization will participate in a continuous, comprehensive dialogue throughout the life of the project.

This includes but is not limited to:

- On-Site monitoring by TxDOT personnel
 - Timely submission of required reports
 - Timely written notification of events that will affect the outcome of the project
- 7.The organization will comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

This includes but is not limited to:

- Annual Certifications and Assurances
- Master grant agreements
- Project grant agreements
- Applicable federal program circulars and similar federal and state guidance

8.Applicant Affirmation: Compensation has not been received for participation in the preparation of the specifications for this call for projects.

By checking and completing this document I certify that the above statements are true and that I have the authority to sign this document.

Name

Title

Date

Agency Name

El Paso, County of

Program Type

ICB

Does this budget include indirect costs? *

Yes ☒ No

If yes, please enter the Indirect Rate

%

Attachments	Description	Upload
If this budget includes In-Kind funds please upload supporting documentation.		

When entering budget line items, fill out a row and then press the save button for additional rows.

Description	Scope			Fuel Type			
EMER RELIEF - OPERATING 100% - 30.09.08	Award Amount	State Match	Local Match	In-Kind Match	Total Funds	Match Ratio	TDC
# of Units	\$203,683				\$203,683		0
	Award Amount	State Match	Local Match	In-Kind Match	Total Funds		TDC
Subtotal:	\$203,683	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$203,683		0



January 13, 2020

Mr. Sal Alonzo
Department of Public Works
El Paso County
800 E. Overland, Room 208
El Paso, Texas 79901

RE: El Paso County TxDOT Coordinated Call Intercity Bus Application for Bus Service between El Paso, Texas, Anthony, Texas and Las Cruces, New Mexico

Dear Mr. Alonzo:

The New Mexico Department of Transportation, Transit and Rail Division is pleased to provide this Letter of Commitment for El Paso County's Intercity Bus application to continue the NMDOT Park and Ride intercity bus service linking El Paso, Anthony, Texas and Las Cruces, New Mexico. The State of New Mexico plans to provide funding to support this service with \$752,053 in FY2021 and \$763,054 in FY2022 for a total of approximately \$1,515,107.

As you know, this service began on August 31, 2009 and has demonstrated success. During this time, New Mexico DOT has contributed approximately \$11.5 million towards this project, and the Gold Route has provided 525,554 trips over the past 10 years. I am confident this service will remain a valuable transit service for the region and will continue as a model of cooperation between city, county and state transit agencies for the Region VI office of the Federal Transit Administration.

I look forward to working with you and the County of El Paso to continue improving the mobility and quality of life of the residents in the El Paso – Las Cruces corridor and enhancing the region's overall transit system. If I can provide you with additional information or assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me at (505) 699-4350.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kevin Olinger".

Kevin Olinger, Transit Bureau Chief
NMDOT Transit and Rail Division

**Michelle Lujan
Grisham**
Governor

Michael R. Sandoval
Cabinet Secretary

Commissioners

Jennifer Sandoval
Commissioner, Vice-Chairman
District 1

Bruce Ellis
Commissioner
District 2

Vacant
Commissioner
District 3

Walter G. Adams
Commissioner, Chairman
District 4

Vacant
Commissioner
District 5

Charles Lundstrom
Commissioner, Secretary
District 6

FAR WEST TEXAS / EL PASO REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COORDINATION COMMITTEE (WTEP)



January 16, 2020

Evaluation Committee, Public Transportation Division
Texas Department of Transportation

Officers

Yvette Lugo
Chairperson
Area Agency on Aging

Sal Alonzo
Vice Chair
County of El Paso

Victor Reta
Secretary
City of Socorro

Steering Committee Members

Xavier Bañales
Amistad

Patricia Jaramillo
Department of Access and
Eligibility Services

Mary "Tita" Nuñez
Big Bend Community Action

Mailing Address:
3210 Dyer
El Paso, Texas 79930

www.gobusgo.org

To the Evaluation Committee:

WTEP encourages the development of transportation programs that address local mobility priorities that are consistent with our Regional Transportation Coordination Plan. As a result of the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Public Transportation Coordinated Call for Projects for Various Programs, WTEP allotted a time slot so that regional transportation and other organizations with the intention to submit proposals for this call would present a summary of their projects to the Stakeholders Committee for review and discussion.

This letter is intended to affirm that The County of El Paso presented a summary of their proposal during the Stakeholder Committee meeting on January 16, 2020. The Committee unanimously approved a motion to authorize this letter of endorsement as it was deemed compliant with the Regional Transportation Coordination Plan's Objective 5.5 "Identify resources and erect passenger shelters at previously identified sites on County rural routes" within Region 8.

The Far West Texas / El Paso Regional Transportation Coordination Committee (WTEP) is pleased to provide this Letter of Endorsement for The County of El Paso as they submit the application for Section 5311 Intercity Bus and Rural Discretionary for Fiscal Year 2021/2022. These funds will allow The County of El Paso to continue their efforts to "Work to eliminate physical, financial, regulatory and operational barriers to the delivery of seamless regional transportation" (WTEP Goal 5).

Should you have any questions regarding this letter of endorsement or its approval, please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully,

Yvette Lugo,
Chairperson

Far West Texas / El Paso Regional Transportation Coordination Committee
(WTEP)

Mission Statement

Proactively facilitate the planning and coordination between transportation providers, health and human service agencies and advocacy organizations in the six-county Far West Texas region to maximize mobility and the efficiency and effectiveness of public transportation resources.