

Health  
and  
Rural Public  
Transportation

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Mayor Pro Tem  
Emeritus  
Las Cruces, NM

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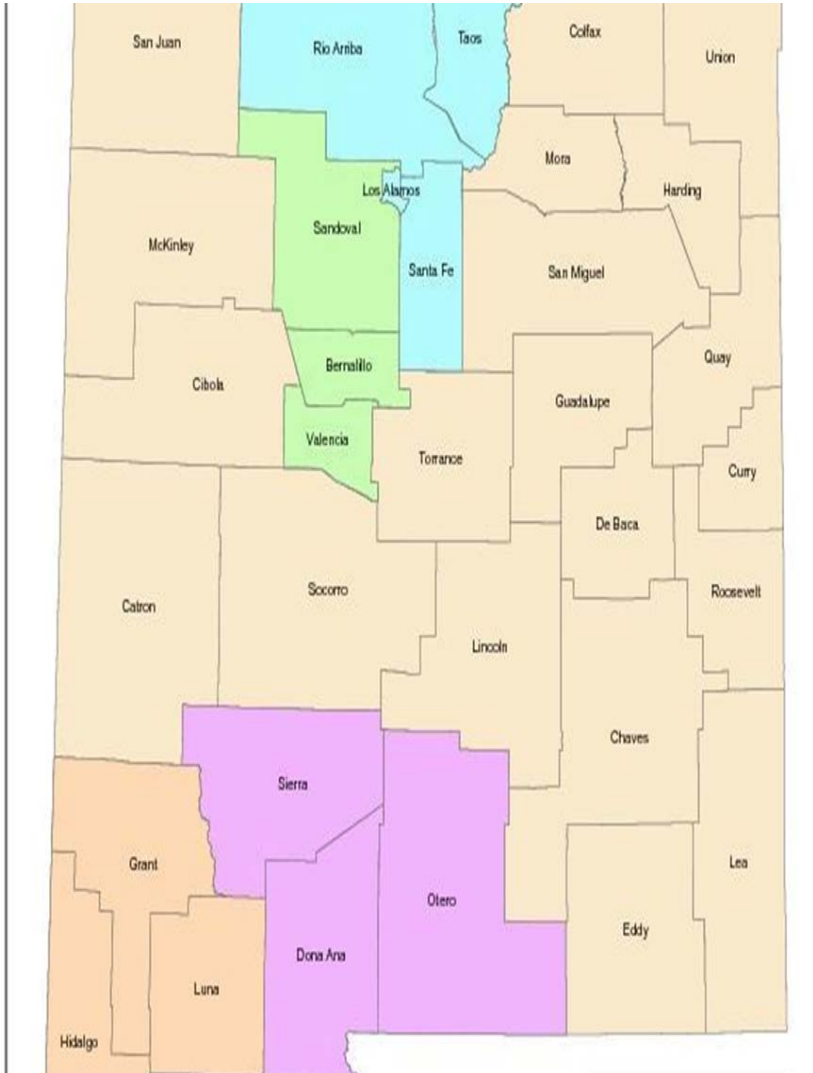
Legislative Health and  
Human Services

Committee

September 27, 2019



# Regional Transit Districts in NM



- Mid-Region RTD
- North Central RTD
- South West RTD
- South Central RTD

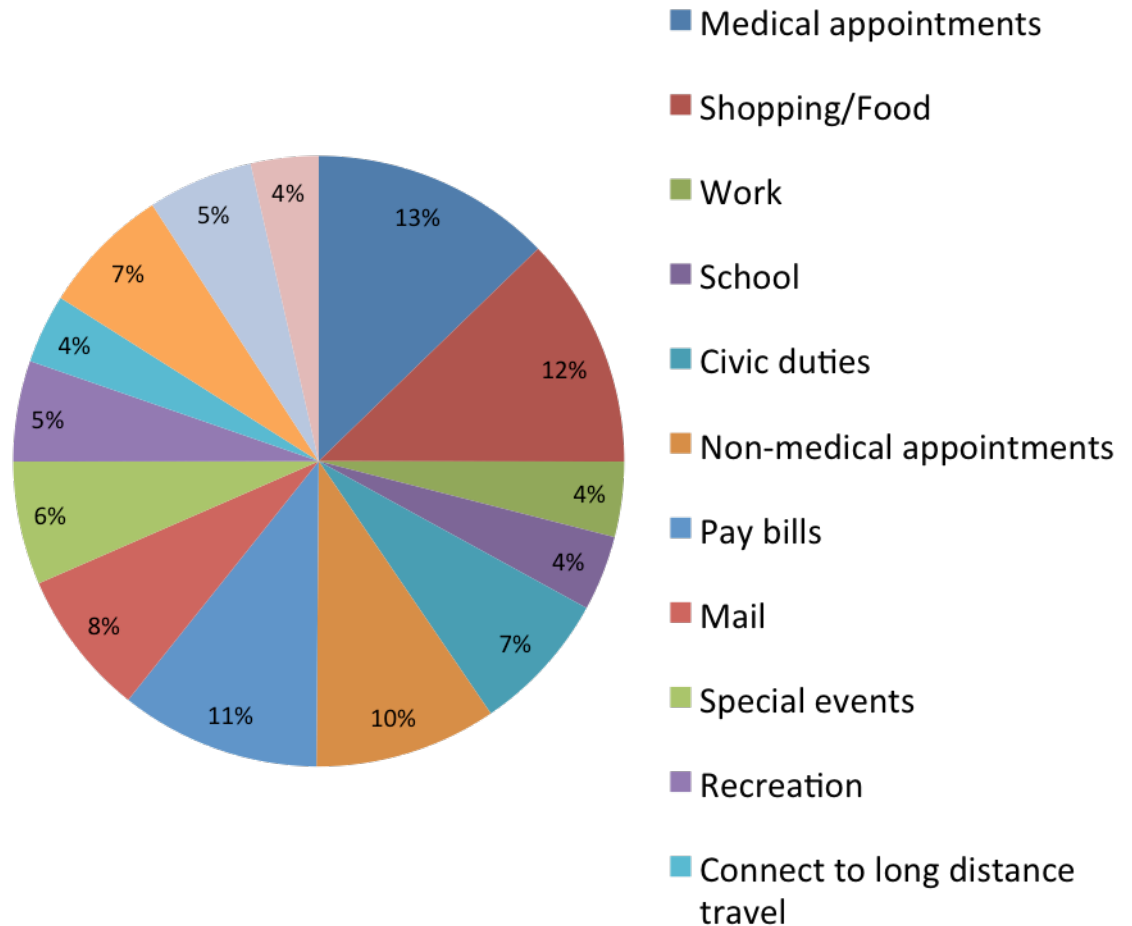
*2003 Regional Transit District Act enables two or more governmental units (the state, a county, a municipality, or an Indian nation, tribe, or pueblo) to join together to form a Regional Transit District (RTD).*

# Primary Need for Transit in Doña Ana County

Empowerment  
Congress (2013)  
Survey  
(208/300 questionnaires returned)

**Medical need** is the top reason that people need public transportation, followed closely by **access to food** and to do **other shopping**.

Primary need for public transportation



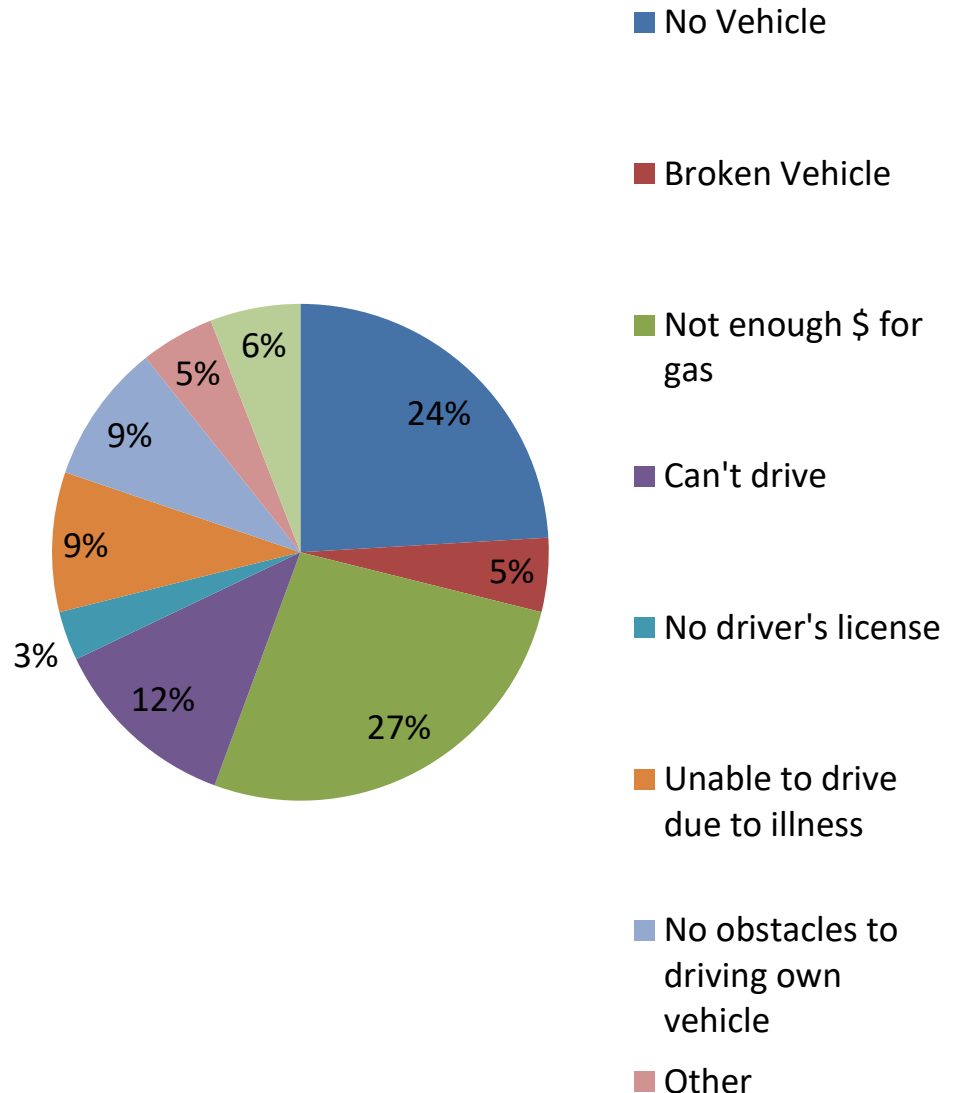
# Barriers to Using Personal Transportation

## Empowerment Congress Survey

(208/300 questionnaires returned)

The primary barrier that respondents face to using their own transportation is lack of **money for gas** (27%), followed closely by **not having a vehicle to use** (24%).

Barriers to Using Personal Transportation



# Transit Needs Index

- Population Over 65
- Persons with Disability
- Households Without Vehicles
- Percentage of Persons in Poverty Status



# Transit Needs Index



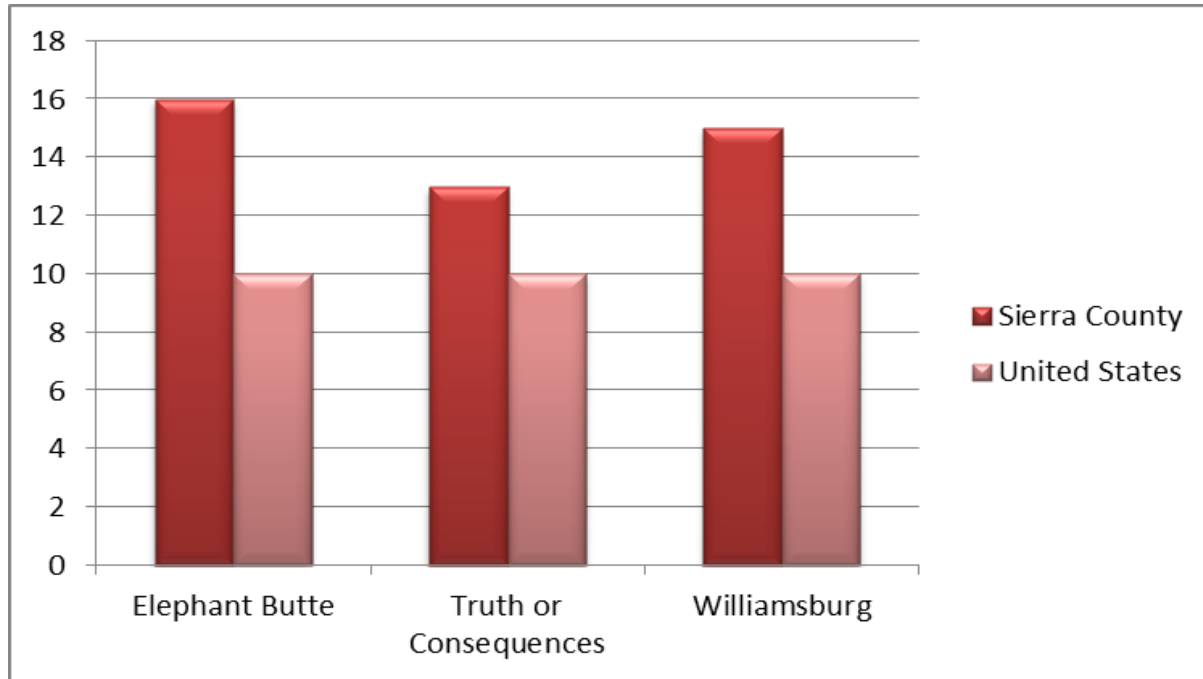
## Dona Ana County (10) Substantial Need

<b>Anthony</b>	<b>(12)</b>	<b>Major</b>
Chaparral	(11)	Substantial
Doña Ana	(11)	Substantial
Hatch	(11)	Substantial
Las Cruces	(10)	Substantial
Mesilla	(8)	Substantial
Radium Springs	(7)	Moderate
Santa Teresa	(10)	Substantial
<b>Sunland Park</b>	<b>(12)</b>	<b>Major</b>
White Sands	(6)	Moderate
<b>Vado</b>	<b>(12)</b>	<b>Major</b>

14 or higher = Critical; 12-13 = Major; 10-11 = Substantial; 8-9 Significant; 5 to 7 Moderate

Anthony, Chaparral, Doña Ana, Hatch, Sunland Park, University Park, and Vado all have a Transit Needs Index higher than the national average.

# SIERRA COUNTY



Elephant Butte and Williamsburg are both in the critical range.  
TorC is nearly there.

**14 or higher = Critical**; 12-13 = Major; 10-11 = Substantial; 8-9 Significant; 5 to 7 Moderate

# History of South Central Regional Transit District

2006

District formed

2014

- Starter bus service
- Inadequate funding
- Referendum failed



2016

- Increased funding
- New executive director with extensive transit experience
- Service launched in southern Doña Ana County
- Five bus routes
- Anthony, Chaparral, Sunland Park, and Alamogordo

2017

- Added connecting service to Northeast and Westside Sun Metro terminals in El Paso

2019

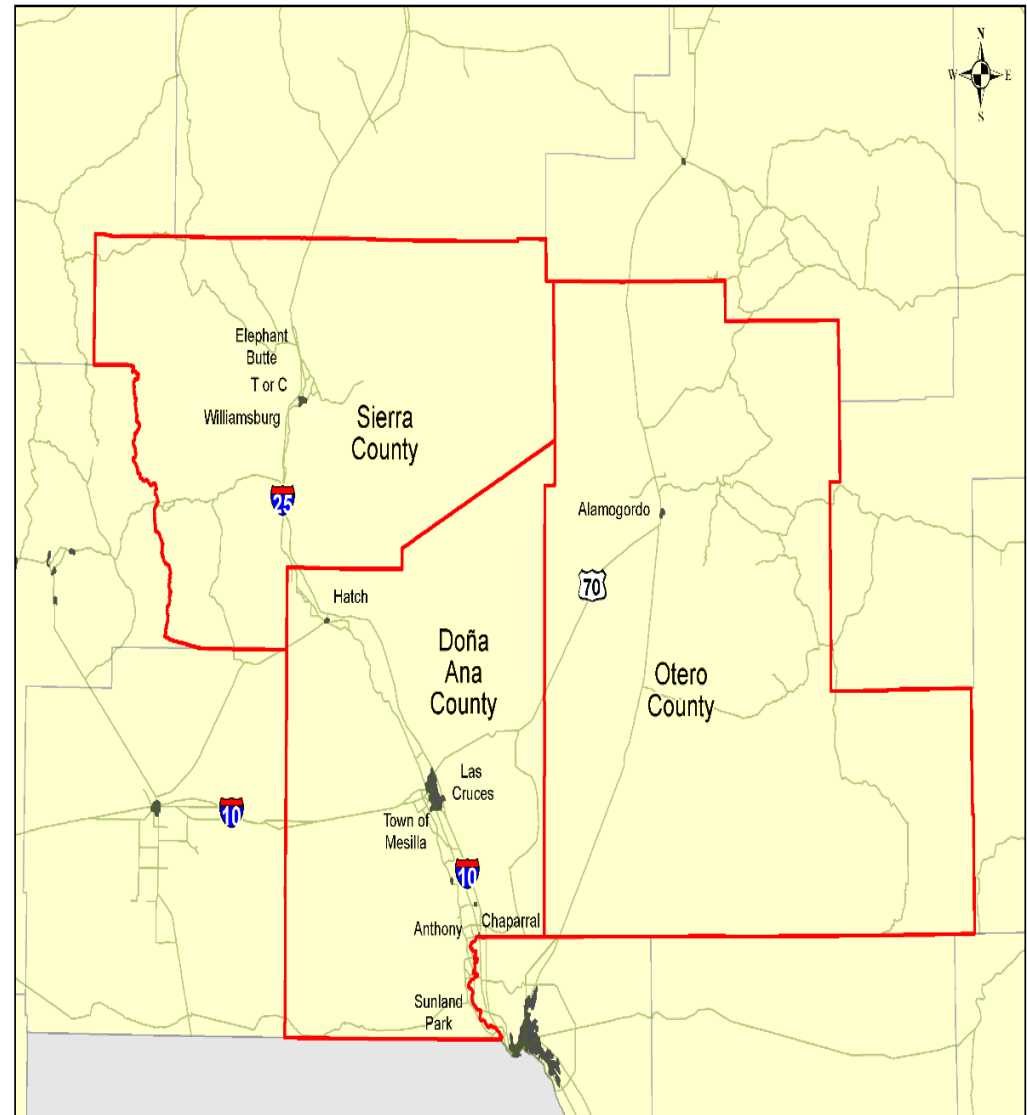
- Service continues to grow
- Northern Doña Ana County (Hatch) next
- Then Sierra County



# SCRTD Service Area

The mission of the South Central Regional Transit District (SCRTD) is to “strengthen communities, facilitate economic and educational activities, and promote health and safety through safe and efficient regional transportation services.”

- November 2006
- Seven member jurisdictions
- Taxing authority
- Provides regional planning and transit services.



# Benefits

## Health

- Medical appointments, groceries, community centers.
- Reduce unhealthy pollution.
- Fewer traffic crash injuries, disabilities, and death.
- Physical fitness. (Transit users average three times as much walking as average Americans).



## Safety

- A person can reduce his or her chance of being in an accident by more than 90% simply by taking public transit as opposed to commuting by car.
- Traveling by public transportation is 10 times safer per mile than traveling by automobile.



# Benefits for an Aging Population (AARP)

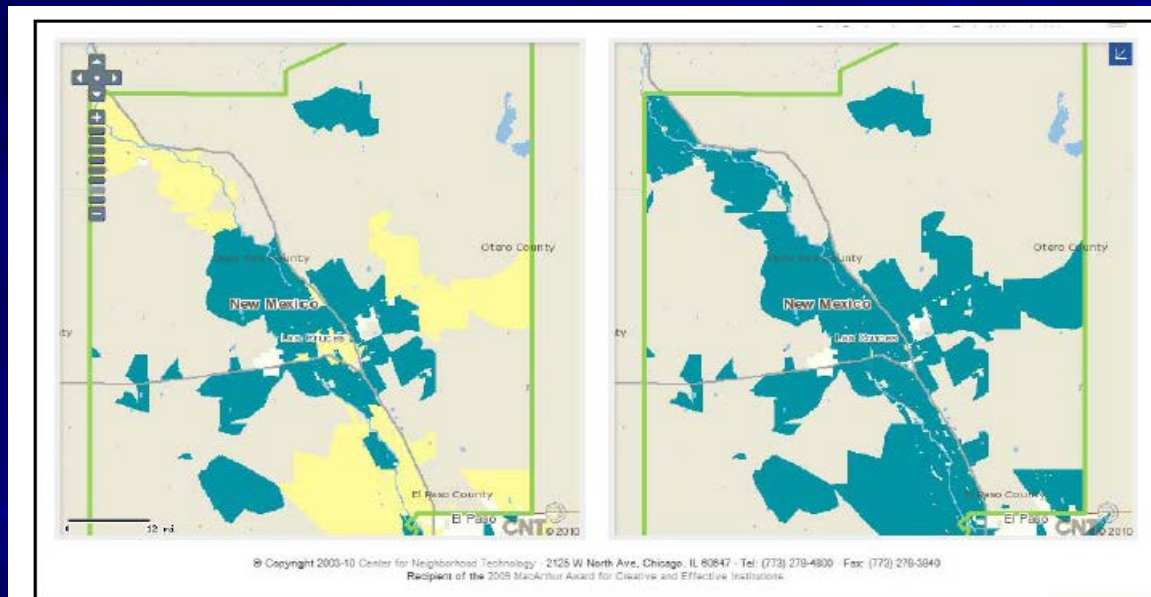
- New Mexico's population **over 60 is growing**
- The under 60 population is shrinking.
- **More than 30 percent** of New Mexico's population will be over age 60 by the year **2030**--nearly a **50 percent** from 2012.
- **50% of non-drivers age 65** and older **stay home** on any given day partially because they lack transportation options.
- They make **15% fewer trips** to doctors and **65% fewer trips** for social, family, and religious activities.
- AARP new "Age Friendly Communities" campaign promotes policies (including transit) that allow elders to live easily and comfortably in their homes and communities as they age.



# Public Transportation Saves Money

Two-person household can save, on average, \$9,823 a year by downsizing to one car, thus leaving more money for housing, food, and other necessities.

## Housing and Transportation Affordability Index



**FIGURE 2-14**  
Las Cruces Housing and Transportation Affordability Index  
Source: [Center for Neighborhood Technology](#)