



New Mexico DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION
MOBILITY FOR EVERYONE



Prepared by:

HDR Engineering, Inc.
2155 Louisiana Blvd NE
Albuquerque, NM 87110

In cooperation with:

New Mexico Department of
Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

Public Outreach Summary

NM 264 Alignment Study Milepost 0 to 16

CN 6101220

New Mexico Department of Transportation

July 11, 2023

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Introduction

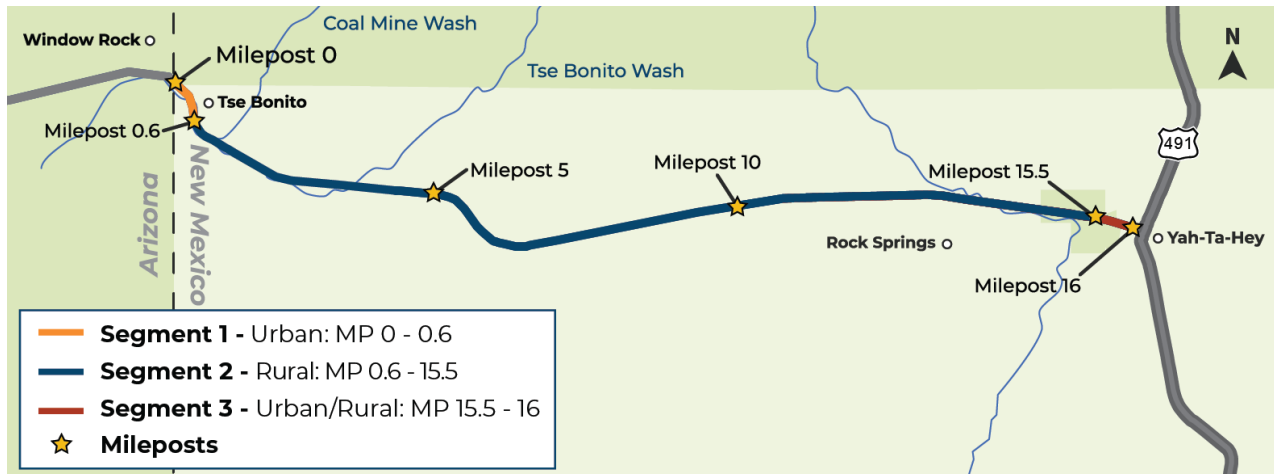
N.M. Highway 264 (NM 264) is a 16-mile highway that extends west to east from the New Mexico/Arizona state line (milepost 0.0) to the US 491 interchange near Yah-Ta-Hey (milepost 16.0) in McKinley County. It serves as a key corridor to the Navajo Nation, connecting communities to Window Rock, AZ, located five miles across the Arizona border. NM 264 also connects to US 491, eight miles north of Gallup. The NMDOT, in coordination with the Federal Highway Administration, is conducting the NM 264 Alignment Study (Study) and identifying why improvements to this highway are needed. The purpose of the Study is to document existing conditions and develop highway improvement alternatives for the corridor. Once the Study has been completed, the improvements will be prioritized, and as more funding becomes available, the work will be completed in phases.

NM 264 Alignment Study Milepost 0 to 16

The purpose of the project(s) would be to improve the roadway's condition and life expectancy, improve drainage conditions, address substandard roadway geometry, add multimodal facilities, implement access management, and improve overall safety. Each alignment study alternative was evaluated based on purpose and need, traffic operations, safety, existing access and land use, right-of-way and environmental impacts, constructability, and construction cost. Based on the alternatives evaluation and community input received early in the study process, the following alternatives are recommended to advance into the next phase:

- **Segment 1 - Urban Section (Milepost 0.0 to 0.6) - Tse Bonito**
 - Includes reconstruction of the existing roadway to include four, 12-foot (ft) travel lanes, a 16-ft two-way left-turn lane, 6-ft bike lanes, curb and gutter, and 6-ft-wide sidewalks. Other improvements would include improved crosswalk signal timing and the addition of lighting at the Alma Dr. signalized intersection.
- **Segment 2 Rural Section (Milepost 0.6 To 15.5)**
 - Includes reconstruction of the existing roadway to include four, 12-ft travel lanes, an 8-ft flush median, 8-ft outside shoulders, and rumble strips. Other improvements would include updated signs and striping with left-turn lanes to adjacent properties.
- **Segment 3 Urban-Rural Section (Milepost 15.5 to 16.0) – Yah-Ta-Hey**
 - Includes reconstruction of the existing roadway to include four, 12-ft travel lanes, 8-ft outside shoulders, a 16-ft two-way left-turn lane, and rumble strips. Other improvements would include updated signs and striping with left-turn lanes at major intersections.

Figure 1: NM 264 Alignment Study Limits



Public Involvement Process

NM 264 is a unique corridor, including both rural and urban segments, that provides key access for the Navajo Nation between Arizona and New Mexico. Due to this, there is a wide variety of stakeholders we must reach through these efforts including groups such as tribal communities, commuters, emergency services, schools and school transportation, agencies, and the traveling public among others. Ultimately, the goal of these public involvement efforts is to continue to identify these stakeholders' concerns and values to help guide the development of potential improvements along this corridor.

Public and agency coordination for this study began in the summer of 2022 with initial scoping letters being distributed to agencies and organizations in July of 2022. Following the initial coordination with agencies and the community, the study team planned and implemented a second virtual public meeting to review the alternatives developed and the study team's recommendations and solicit feedback. A summary of those efforts for the second virtual public meeting is highlighted below.

Second Virtual Public Meeting

The study team, including NMDOT staff, held the second virtual public meeting on Wednesday, May 17, 2023, at 6 p.m. via Zoom. To participate, the public was invited to log in to the meeting using the Zoom application, web browser, or via telephone.

The meeting focused on an overview of the study area, the preliminary purpose and need, existing roadway conditions, and the proposed highway improvement

alternatives and recommendations developed. Nineteen participants attended the virtual meeting. Comments and questions were accepted live, following the presentation. All questions and comments provided at the second virtual public meeting were recorded and are included in Appendix C.

Notifications

Copies of all the notifications can be found in Appendix A.

Newspaper Advertisements

The team developed and distributed two newspaper advertisements for this meeting. The newspaper advertisements provided an overview of the study, invited the public to attend the second virtual public meeting, and provided information on how to provide their comments. The advertisements – which also included the date, time, and log-in information for the meeting – were distributed in the following publications:

- Navajo Times (April 27, 2023)
- Gallup Independent (May 2, 2023)

Meeting Notification Poster

The study team distributed virtual public meeting fliers electronically to key stakeholders such as other agencies and tribal chapter houses, which included details on how to attend and participate in the virtual public meeting. Other agencies and tribal chapter houses included the Navajo Nation, Navajo Nation Division of Transportation, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Navajo Nation Chapters, Gallup-McKinley County Schools, Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments, and Bureau of Land Management.

Direct Mailer

A direct mailer was sent to 6,970 addresses in the study area to inform residents and property owners of the virtual public meeting. The mailer was distributed on May 2, 2023. The mailers were sent to the following postal codes within the study area:

- 86515- PBOX
- 87375- PBOX
- 87305- PBOX
- 87301- H033

Press Release

NMDOT distributed a press release to their local media list on May 11, 2023, that included details of the study and how to participate in the virtual public meeting.

Local Radio Stations

Copies of the direct mailer were provided electronically to local radio stations within the study area via email on May 2, 2023. The emails were sent to the following radio stations:

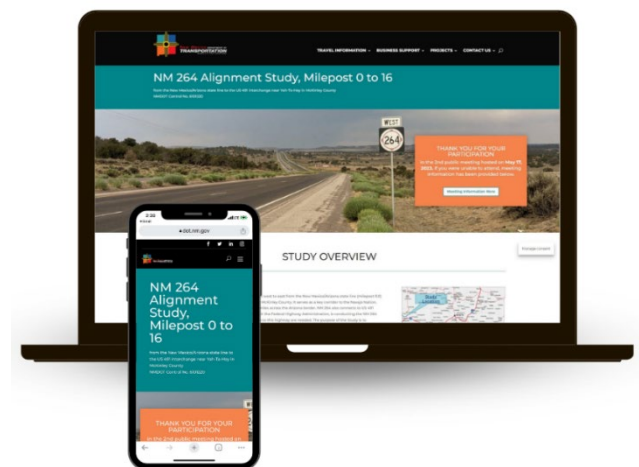
- KXXI 93.7 FM
- KYAT 94.5 FM
- KGLP 91.7 FM
- KTNN 660 AM/101.5 FM
- KHAC 880 AM
- KGAK 1330 AM

Social Media

Social media posts were developed for NMDOT accounts, including details on how to participate in the virtual public meeting, how to comment, and how to watch the recording of the virtual public meeting.

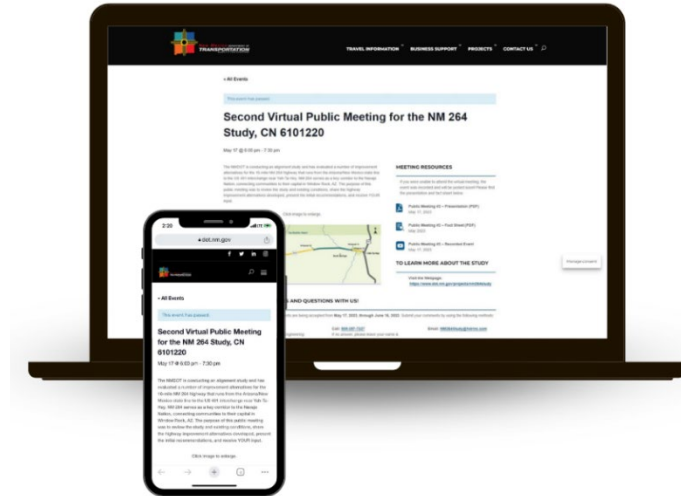
Project Webpage

The study webpage www.dot.nm.gov/projects/nm264study/ was updated in May 2023 and included information about the study and a link to the event webpage with full meeting details.



Event Webpage

An event webpage was created at www.dot.nm.gov/event/nm264publicmeeting2/, which included information about the study, how to log in and participate in the meeting, and how to provide comments on the study. Following the meeting, the recording of the event was also placed on this webpage to allow the public to watch the meeting at their convenience and continue to provide comments through June 16.



Public Meeting Materials

Copies of all the public meeting materials can be found in Appendix B.

Presentation

A PDF of the presentation was made available to the public through the study webpage in May 2023. In addition to the presentation, a link to the recording of the virtual public meeting was posted to the study webpage in May 2023, following the second virtual public meeting.

Fact Sheet

A fact sheet was posted to the webpage and provided information on the study, a map of the study area, and a study timeline.

Public Comments

A summary of all comments, responses, questions, and answers can be found in Appendix C.

Public comments were accepted from May 17 through June 16, 2023, in the following ways:

- Live at the virtual public meeting
- Study webpage: www.dot.nm.gov/projects/nm264study/
- Email: NM264Study@hdrinc.com
- Phone: 505.357.7327

- Mail: NM 264 Alignment Study C/O Victoria Romejko, HDR Engineering, 2155 Louisiana Blvd NE, # 3000, Albuquerque, NM 87110

In total, sixteen comments were received throughout the study period which focused on safety, drainage, access, lighting, and pavement. Ten of these comments were received during the second virtual public meeting and six were received during the comment period.

Virtual Meeting Questions and Answers (Q&A) and Comments

Ten questions and comments were submitted by attendees during the virtual public meeting and were responded to by the study team on May 17, 2023. The questions and comments pertained to highway safety, drainage, access management, lighting, congestion, and project funding.

Appendix C – Public Comments

Virtual Meeting Q&A and Comments

Additional Public Comments