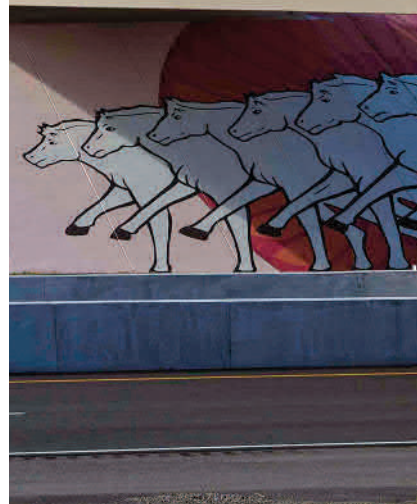
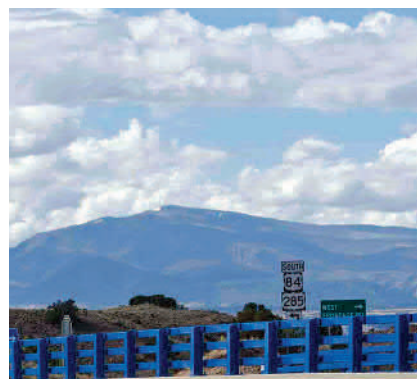




New Mexico DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION
MOBILITY FOR EVERYONE

Aesthetic Considerations for Structural Project Development, Execution, and Maintenance

MAY 2022



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Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Why consider aesthetics?	3
Who is responsible for developing aesthetic and artistic treatments?	5
How to develop aesthetic and artistic designs?	7
Public Involvement	8
Phase IA/B Considerations	10
Community Context	10
Historic Properties	10
Visual Analysis	11
Additional Engineering Refinements	12
Phase IC	12
Phase ID	13
Phase II and Beyond	16
Construction	16
Maintenance	16
What are some examples of aesthetics and artwork?	19
Structure Type	20
Deck and Girders	20
Abutments	21
Piers	21
Slope Pavement	22
Wall Barriers and Railings	22
Gateways	23
Medians	25
Lighting and Other Elements	25
Noise and Retaining Walls	26
Landscaping	26
Case Study 1: The NM 599/South Meadows Road Interchange	27
Case Study 2: The I-40/Acoma Interchange	29
Appendix A: Policies and Guidance	
Appendix B: Additional CaFE Information	

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Introduction

These guidelines establish a consistent process for evaluating the appropriate level of effort and types of aesthetic and artistic treatments that are warranted and contextually appropriate for a particular location. The guide focuses on treatments for structures including retaining walls, noise walls, and all elements of bridges such as decks, girders, abutments, piers, wingwalls, railings, medians, approaches, approach slab edges, deck edges, concrete wall barrier, and lighting. These guidelines address aesthetic enhancements, artwork, landscaping, and gateway treatments. The following pages provide a practical “how to” approach to incorporating aesthetic and artistic considerations into NMDOT projects. The manual is organized into the following sections:

- **Why** consider aesthetics?
- **Who** is responsible for developing and coordinating aesthetic and artistic treatments?
- **How** to develop aesthetic and artistic designs?
- **What** are some examples of common aesthetic and artistic treatments?



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Why consider aesthetics?

New Mexico is a state famous for its rich cultural heritage and vast scenic landscapes. The New Mexico transportation network, which spans the state and provides essential access for tourism and economic development, is often a visually prominent element of the landscape, with the structures and roadways lasting for decades and even generations. Because of this, **the NMDOT has an obligation to design, build, and maintain structures that are contextually appropriate, inspire beauty, contribute to a sense of community identity, and honor the local heritage and setting.** These ideas should be considered to the maximum extent possible within reasonable fiscal constraints. This obligation is also supported by regulations such as the New Mexico Art in Public Places Act, which requires consideration of art treatments as part of state-funded capital improvements.

This impetus for aesthetic and artistic consideration is also embedded in the mission statement of the NMDOT:

To provide a safe and efficient transportation system for the traveling public, while promoting economic development and preserving the environment of New Mexico.

As the transportation network is central to tourism and economic development in the state, aesthetics can have a direct impact on these elements. This connection is accentuated in the New Mexico Tourism website (<https://www.newmexico.org/places-to-go/true-trails/bridge-art/>).

The state also has a long history of incorporating aesthetic designs into public infrastructure projects that dates back to the New Deal era in the early 20th Century. This sensitivity toward contextual aesthetics and the expression of cultural values through public works from this era can be seen in everything from artistic murals that decorate the walls of state government buildings to structural designs using local stonework such as the retaining walls and bridges along the Santa Fe River (Figure 1).

While aesthetic treatment in major infrastructure projects is embedded in the mission statement and cultural values of the NMDOT, it is also reinforced in federal legislations such as the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and the National

NMDOT Mission Statement

To provide a safe and efficient transportation system for the traveling public, while promoting economic development and preserving the environment of New Mexico.



Figure 1. *Civilian Conservation Corps-constructed stonework, Santa Fe River Park, Santa Fe.*

Why Consider Aesthetics

- Project design should honor New Mexico's rich culture and encourage economic development.
- Aesthetic or artistic design can be used to mitigate visual and setting impacts to historic properties and communities.
- Implementation and maintenance of aesthetic or artistic design is coordinated at a local level through NMDOT and FHWA policies and guidelines.

Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). These regulations establish a framework for consideration of aesthetic and artistic treatments. Both regulations identify visual impacts as potentially having an adverse effect to the setting of communities or historic properties and they identify the need to mitigate these impacts. Aesthetic and artistic design, construction, and maintenance can be an important consideration in these mitigation efforts.

The NMDOT and New Mexico Division of the FHWA have a variety of policies, directives, and guidance associated with aesthetic design and related considerations such as landscaping, artwork, and community gateway elements. These policies, summarized below, are also presented in Appendix A.

- **Highway Commission Policy 69** establishes protocols and cost expectations for including decorative landscaping in project design
- **Design Directive 2006-08, Context Sensitive Solutions** establishes the NMDOT commitment to Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS)—a design philosophy where the need for safe and efficient transportation is blended with community desires and environmental preservation
- **NMDOT Gateway Guidelines** establishes the procedures for considering gateway treatments along state highway facilities in local communities
- **FHWA New Mexico Division Policy on Aesthetic Design** defines the parameters under which FHWA will participate in funding aesthetic and artistic treatments

These goals, regulations, and policies form a foundation of why developing and maintaining aesthetic treatment is an important consideration in project development and execution. The following section describes how to advance these treatments consistent with the NMDOT project-development process.

Who is responsible for developing aesthetic and artistic treatments?

Designing, implementing, and maintaining aesthetic and artistic enhancements as part of transportation projects requires a multidisciplinary team of engineers, architects, artists, and planners. The process also requires input from stakeholders such as property owners and community residents. The project development process, including development of aesthetic treatments, is designed to be a collaborative and iterative process among the multidisciplinary design team as well as community stakeholders. The overall process is guided by the Project Development Engineer with aesthetic or artistic design elements developed by the artist, landscape architect, or other design professional. Structural engineers provide input on the technical aspects of implementing aesthetic elements and transportation and environmental planners facilitate appropriate consideration of community interests, visual analysis, and other aspects of the aesthetic design process. Additional information on the responsibilities of each of these roles and how they interact during the project development process is provided in the next section.



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How to develop aesthetic and artistic designs?

This section outlines how to develop aesthetic or artistic treatments. Treatments include that are appropriate for the context of a community, are supported by stakeholders, and enhance economic opportunities.

An initial step in the process is to determine if aesthetic treatments are warranted. To determine this, one can consider questions such as:

- Does the project involve substantial slope paving, retaining walls or noise walls?
- Does the project involve new construction, rehabilitation, or replacement of interchanges or bridges?
- Are there major landform adjustments or alignment changes?

If the answer to these questions is no, then aesthetic or artistic treatments are probably not needed. However, if the answer to any of the above questions is yes, then the project design team approaches another decision point to determine the appropriate level of treatment. **Some projects require a limited amount of aesthetic consideration while other projects involve a more intricate context that may require a formal aesthetics plan.** Some of the major considerations in making this determination are:

- Is the project located along a scenic byway or in a historic district?
- Is the project area considered a gateway to a community or neighborhood?
- Is there strong community support for aesthetic considerations?

If the answer to these questions is no, then the treatment plan may be limited to simple elements such as color and texture treatments on a structure. This level of treatment is typically handled by in-house NMDOT staff with final treatment recommendations completed near the final design stage of a project. However, if the project does involve some or all of these

Additional Artistic and Aesthetic Treatment Considerations

Artistic and/or aesthetic treatments should be appropriate for the context of the community, supported by stakeholders, and enhance economic opportunities.

Level of Effort

Simple aesthetic treatments such as color or texture can often be completed by in-house NMDOT staff while more complex treatments or artistic designs are detailed in an Aesthetics Plan, usually completed by consultants.

Aesthetics Plan

The steps for developing an Aesthetics Plan are structured to coincide with the NMDOT Location Study Procedures as this is the method the NMDOT uses to develop most projects (see Figure 3).

Public Involvement

Public involvement is an iterative process that seeks to establish a system of two-way communication between the NMDOT and the community throughout the project development process.

Artist Involvement

Early engagement of an artist or landscape architect can facilitate the public discourse concerning aesthetics and art, even early in project design before specific treatment opportunities are identified.

components, then a formal aesthetics plan will likely be needed. This decision process is summarized in Figure 2.

The steps for developing a formal aesthetics plan are structured to coincide with the *NMDOT Location Study Procedures (LSP)* as this is the method the NMDOT uses to develop most projects. The LSP define two phases of project design with the first phase including planning through preliminary design and the second phase including final design. Phase I is further divided into four sub-phases (A through D):

- **Phase IA** develops the purpose and need for the project, establishes alternatives, and includes an initial evaluation of alternatives.
- **Phase IB** is the detailed evaluation of alternatives.
- **Phase IC** is the environmental certification for the project.
- **Phase ID** is preliminary design.

Implementing aesthetic considerations in structural and landscape design requires input and investigation throughout both Phase I and Phase II (Figure 3). The following is a discussion of the public outreach and steps involved in developing a holistic aesthetic and artistic design for structures and landscaping that is consistent with the typical NMDOT project-development process.

Public Involvement

Public input is essential for developing an aesthetically pleasing transportation system that is in harmony with its surroundings. Public involvement is an iterative process that establishes a system of two-way communication between the NMDOT and the community throughout the project development process. However, the goals of public outreach can vary throughout this process, especially relative to aesthetic and artistic treatments. The public outreach goals for each phase of project development are summarized below.

- **Phase IA/B**—receive input into community values and desires for how the transportation system should look and establish the need for visual/setting mitigations
- **Phase IC**—document the need for aesthetic or artistic treatments as mitigation for visual/setting impacts in the NEPA documentation
- **Phase ID**—receive input into the aesthetics plan and/or proposed artwork
- **Phase II**—provide updates on the aesthetic or artistic treatments

The level of public involvement can vary depending on the level of aesthetic design and/or the use of an artist. **When art is incorporated into a transportation project, the proposed treatment is required to be vetted through public involvement to be compliant with FHWA policy.** This can be accomplished through efforts such as public meetings, hearings, or other forms of outreach; however, public input must be sought and considered when incorporating art.

Figure 2. Aesthetic and Artistic Treatments Process

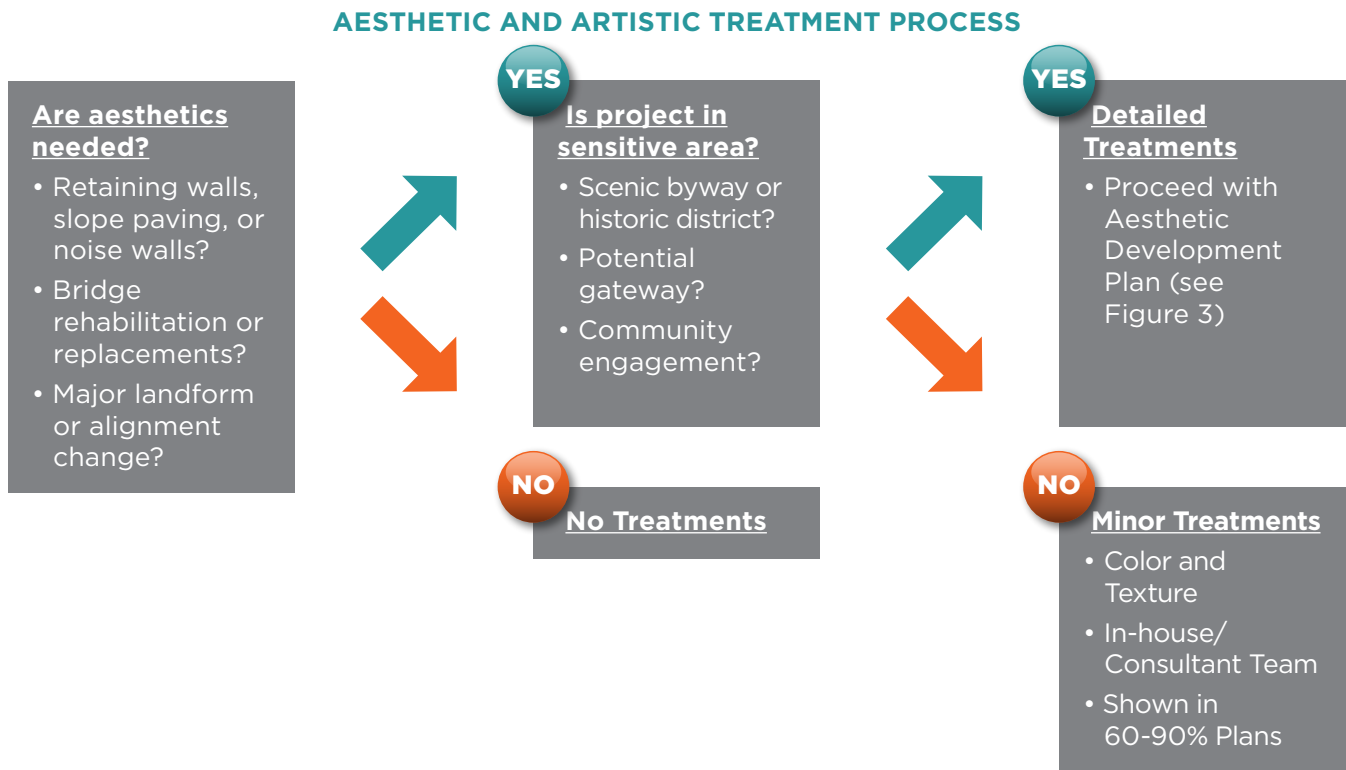
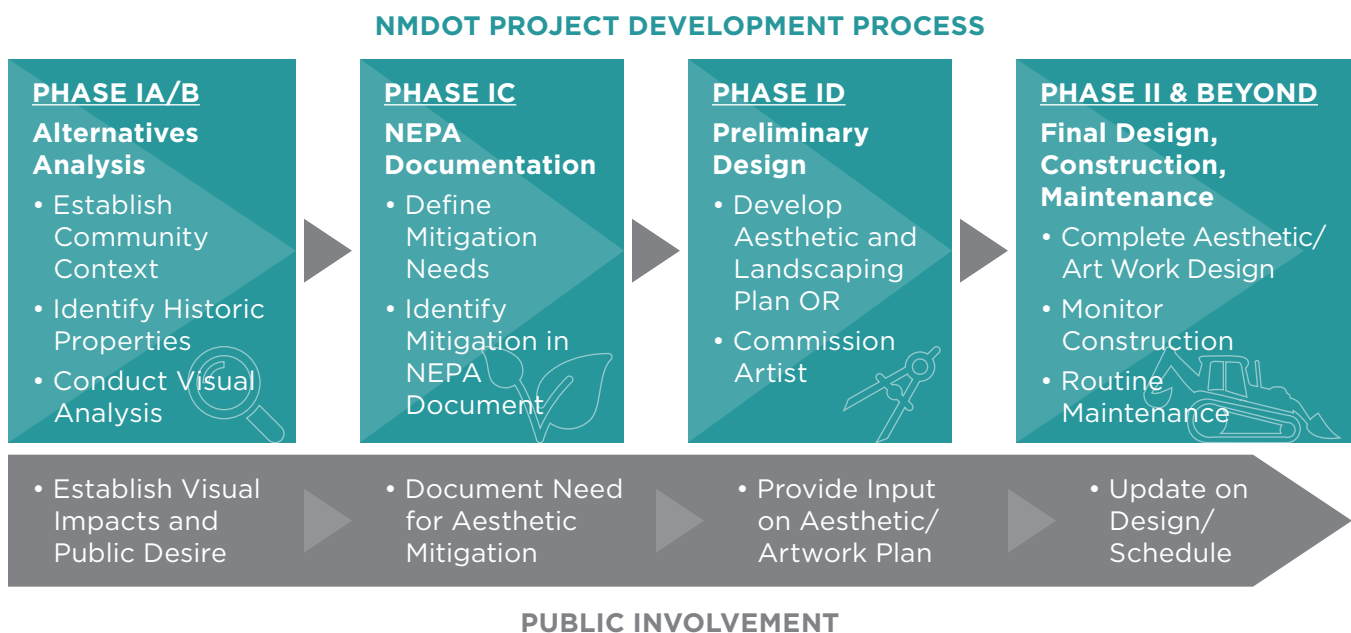


Figure 3. Aesthetics Plan Development



Phase IA/B Report

The Phase IA/B report provides valuable information for assessing aesthetic design such as community context, presence of historic resources, and visual impacts and opportunities.

Community Context

Establishing community context involves outreach to determine local views toward the transportation infrastructure and the appropriate level of and desire for aesthetic design considerations.

Public input on aesthetic treatments should also be pursued but is not always required when treatments are relatively simple. Treatments that are not unique to a project or region and involve only minimal elements such as textured concrete forms or colored concrete do not necessarily require public input. However, public involvement should be pursued when landscaping and aesthetic treatments are an extensive aspect of the project and unique to the location.

Phase IA/B Considerations

For less complicated projects, Phase IA and IB are often combined and are discussed as a single phase here. During this phase, the need for the project is verified, alternatives are developed to address the need, initial and detailed analysis of the alternatives occurs, and alternatives are selected to advance into Phase IC. To accomplish these tasks, information on the context and setting of the project area must be gathered. This information is essential to assessing the need, type, and appropriate level of aesthetic and/or artistic design. **Elements of the Phase IA/B process pertinent to developing aesthetic design considerations include establishing the community context, identifying historic properties, and evaluating the level of visual impact.**

Community Context

Establishing a community context involves research into a community and engagement with local stakeholders. It requires a CSS approach to project design where transportation goals such as safety and efficiency are blended with community priorities and local views. The context for a community and appropriate engagement strategies are defined early in Phase IA and are documented in a Context Sensitive Public Involvement Plan.

A CSS-level of engagement requires viewing the transportation network in a community as an economic, social, and cultural asset. These views can vary depending on a project's surroundings. For example, in urban areas, would a gateway treatment and intricate landscaping be appropriate, or would an artistic design on a structure be preferred? For more rural and natural areas, could an appropriate level of aesthetic treatment include contour grading, aesthetic bridge railings, and special architectural elements? It is also important to engage stakeholders in a dialogue of the fiscal constraints associated with the project.

This level of understanding can determine what degree of aesthetic or artistic design should be considered and can inform on the nature of those treatments.

Historic Properties

Identifying historic properties usually involves a cultural resources survey of the project area. It is normally conducted late in the Phase IB process or during Phase IC when the project footprint can be defined with confidence to ensure proper coverage of the project area. The effort is used to identify historic properties and

assess impacts of a project per the NHPA. These determinations are made by FHWA in consultation with the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) or Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) if on tribal land.

Since transportation facilities and structures have such a noticeable and lasting visual impact, they can often be seen as inconsistent with the setting of a historic property or community. If it is determined that a project has an adverse effect on one of these historic properties, then FHWA and the SHPO/THPO must agree on a form of mitigation. Often, this mitigation can come in the form of an aesthetic design that makes the structure more compatible with the historic setting. These designs should be developed in consultation with the appropriate SHPO/THPO. Recent examples of this approach include the bridge at the Acoma Interchange along I-40 west of Albuquerque and the Cañoncito Interchange along I-25 east of Santa Fe (Figures 4 and 5). In both instances, the aesthetic and/or artistic elements were identified as mitigations for adverse effects to historic settings.



Figure 4. *Acoma Interchange, I-40.*



Figure 5. *Cañoncito Interchange, I-25.*

Additionally, sometimes the structure can be a historic property itself. For historic bridges and roads, a specific protocol is implemented to evaluate alternatives and assess impacts. The NMDOT Environmental Bureau should be consulted in these instances. Once an impact to the resource has been identified, aesthetic structural design, combined with other efforts, is often still part of the mitigation effort.

Visual Analysis

Visual resources in a project corridor may include man-made resources such as pre-existing artwork, buildings, bridges, roads, reservoirs, or walls; or natural resources such as landforms, rock formations, vegetation, natural water bodies, and riparian areas (Figure 6). These resources could be in the immediate vicinity of the project or they could be part of a distant view. Additionally, a project's location relative to sensitive areas such as a scenic byway or a federal, state, or local park could affect the level of visual sensitivity for a project.

Aesthetics as Setting Mitigation

I-40 Acoma Interchange:

- Note the Bas-relief artwork and color on the bridge and abutments.
- Additional information provided in Case Study 2 (page 29).

I-25 Cañoncito Interchange:

- Color and texture on retaining walls create a mountain motif and break up the linear visual nature of the structure.
- Aesthetic design is more consistent with setting in this National Historic Landmark.

Historic Structures

Sometimes a structure is also a historic property. When this happens, consult with the NMDOT Environmental Bureau for appropriate consideration of project impacts and definition of aesthetic treatments.

Visual Assessment

Identify impacts to existing visual resources, consider viewer perspectives of and from the project area, and present measures to avoid or minimize adverse impacts.

Phase IC Documentation

The need for aesthetic or artistic treatments must be documented in the environmental commitments of the NEPA document and included in the construction plans for FHWA to participate in funding.



Figure 6. Scenic Landscape along I-40 near Laguna Pueblo (image from Google Earth).

Once sensitive visual concerns have been identified, a qualitative assessment of potential impacts can occur. This could involve identifying project elements such as removing landforms, creating steep cuts, removing extensive amounts of vegetation, or constructing new features such as bridges or walls.

Consistent with FHWA guidance, the visual assessment should identify impacts to existing visual resources, consider viewer perspectives of and from the project area, and present measures to avoid or minimize adverse impacts. If qualitative screening indicates potential impacts, more formal analysis following FHWA *Guidelines for Visual Impact Assessment of Highway Projects* may be required.

Additional Engineering Refinements

Additional engineering refinements are completed at the end of the Phase B process for alternatives that are not eliminated during the Phase A/B analysis. These refinements include elements that can affect aesthetic and artistic design such as the selection of a bridge type. **The NMDOT Bridge Procedures and Design Guide indicates that aesthetics should be an evaluation factor when determining bridge type.** While often too early in the design process to provide specific aesthetic or artistic treatment recommendations, the bridge form itself can be a major aesthetic consideration as it is often the most memorable and visually prominent aspect of the structure. Basic elements such as bridge type and superstructure depth can have a great effect on structural aesthetics and contextual appropriateness. As such, aesthetics should be a consideration of the analysis so that the team is aware of how aesthetics can be incorporated into the bridge design. **A landscape architect or aesthetic design professional should provide input on aesthetics during the bridge type selection process.**

Phase IC

Phase IC represents the NEPA documentation and environmental certification for the project. This step involves the official documentation of the FHWA decision concerning environmental impacts of a project. As discussed above, visual impacts can often be mitigated by including aesthetic, landscaping, or artistic elements in the project design.

Identifying the need for this type of mitigation in the NEPA document is required for FHWA to financially participate in aesthetic or artistic treatments. The need for aesthetic treatments

must be identified in the environmental commitments section of the NEPA document and in the Environmental notes of the construction plans. It should also be noted that the concept of mitigating visual impacts of a project through aesthetic/artistic design is applicable for state-funded projects as well.

Phase ID

Phase ID of project development is the preliminary design phase. By this stage, the general project location and design concepts are established, including the overall project footprint and structure types. Typically, the NMDOT views preliminary plans as a plan set developed to a 30% level of detail.

At this point the aesthetics plan and associated budget for the project should begin to be developed. **The aesthetics plan can draw from the Phase A/B report to develop background information such as the community context, community attitudes and goals for the transportation system, the historic setting and visual character of the area, as well as aesthetic considerations discussed in the Bridge Type Selection Report.** The aesthetics plan should consider:

- **Major design themes**—Themes should be applied across the various structural elements to develop a holistic aesthetic effect. Themes often focus on local natural resources such as a nearby landscape feature, cultural elements such as a local festival or tradition, or general Southwestern motifs.
- **Levels of treatment**—The level of treatment could consist of fairly limited color and texture applications, intricate landscaping designs, detailed aesthetic or artistic structural designs, or some combination of these elements. A summary of the different treatment levels and associated considerations is presented in Figure 7.
- **Cost goals**—Cost is established on a case-by-case basis depending on context, project budget, and funding sources. Legislation such as the New Mexico Art in Public Places Act defines 1% of the project budget for artistic enhancement, up to \$200,000. However, appropriate costs may well exceed this amount and should be discussed with the Project Development Engineer early in the process. This early planning will avoid confusion such as presenting a design to the public that ultimately may be cost prohibitive.
- **Priorities for landscape and aesthetic/artistic treatments**—Identify landscaping elements, roadway structures, and additional features that would receive aesthetic and/or artistic designs.

Aesthetic design should also be considered as an expression of cultural values. In addition to elements such as color, texture, and art, this could also manifest in other ways such as water harvesting, creating sinuosity in a drainage to reduce erosion, or landform/geomorphic grading to enhance environmentally self-sustaining properties.

It is also important for the aesthetics plan to recognize that treatments can be very individualized for local communities and may not progress at the same rate as other elements of

Aesthetics Plan

The aesthetics plan is developed during preliminary design and should draw from previously completed investigations related to aesthetics and reported in the Phase A/B Report, Bridge Type Selection Report, or environmental document.

Common Treatments Covered in NMDOT Bid Item 667003

- Form liners
- Integral color
- Metal shapes attached to structures
- Customized paint treatments
- Decorative lighting
- Free-standing sculptural elements

the project. In these cases, **it is important for a project design to allow opportunities for local communities to implement design treatments at a later time.** This often involves creating space and opportunity for the development and implementation of treatments after the project is complete, a blank canvas so to speak. Local funding options are often used in these situations, sometimes it is incorporated into the project budget as a local contribution and sometimes the treatment is funded separately after project design and construction.

Figure 7. Levels of Aesthetic Treatment

	LEVELS OF AESTHETIC TREATMENT		
	LIMITED TREATMENTS	MID-LEVEL TREATMENTS	INTENSIVE TREATMENTS
WHAT THEY ARE	Minor structural treatments such as color or texture and simple landscaping such as re-vegetation. These treatments should consider maintenance needs, existing bridge specifications, and the overall corridor context.	Detailed aesthetic treatments and landscaping design employing cohesive design themes across multiple project elements. Typically requires an Aesthetics Plan.	Detailed landscaping, commissioned artwork. Uses the Call for Entry and Application Management for the Arts (CaFE) system or a selection committee of local stakeholders.
WHEN THEY ARE USED	Used for minor projects that are not located in sensitive areas such as scenic byways, historic districts, or gateway locations.	Used for mitigation of visual impacts on projects involving sensitive areas such as scenic byways, historic districts, or gateway locations.	Used for projects with substantial impacts identified in a Visual Impact Analysis, projects located in especially sensitive areas, or with strong public support.
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT	Public involvement may not be necessary, but it is always encouraged.	Public involvement is important to the development of the Aesthetics Plan.	Per FHWA policy, public involvement is required when artwork is commissioned.
DESIGN RESPONSIBILITY	Typically completed by in-house NMDOT staff during Final Design.	Typically completed by a consultant during Preliminary Design and drawing on context from the Phase A/B and Bridge Type Selection reports.	Artistic design is completed by the artist. The selection process is managed by the design team including both NMDOT staff and consultants.
EXAMPLE			

The aesthetics plan should also determine if artwork is appropriate for the project or if aesthetic design and landscaping are appropriate. The FHWA New Mexico Division Policy on Aesthetic Design defines the difference between “art” and “aesthetics” as:

Art is decoration and/or enhancement of the facility developed in concert with a commissioned artist and incorporated into the transportation facility.

Aesthetics are texture, color, concrete stamping, or similar decorative measures added to or incorporated into elements of the transportation facility.

The primary difference between the two terms is the use of an artist in the development of a treatment. When commissioning an artist, appropriate procurement laws should be followed. NMDOT has made use of the CaFE to satisfy procurement requirements for several projects. The CaFE system is a web-based service that provides support for soliciting calls for artwork, managing the process, and selecting an artist. This process was used to select the artwork installed for the I-10/Motel Boulevard interchange in Las Cruces (Figure 8). Local residents generated the theme of “dinosaurs to space” with artist Karen Yank creating imagery of spaceships, dinosaurs, and desert vegetation along with braided-river imagery on the wing walls and bridge barriers. The artwork was selected from several entries using the CaFE platform.



Figure 8. I-10/Motel Boulevard in Las Cruces. Note the design elements of dinosaurs and space exploration.

The NMDOT or its consultant typically develops the CaFE solicitation. The solicitation should provide an overview of the transportation project, the opportunities for artistic treatments, expectations for artist qualifications, and direction on the selection and evaluation process. A project-specific example of the CaFE solicitation process, prospectus for artists, and selection panel documentation are provided in Appendix B.

While the CaFE system provides a useful tool for artwork selection, other methods are also appropriate such as when an adjacent landowner or stakeholder has a strong relationship to a particular area. Examples of this include the NM 599/South

Artistic Treatment Considerations

- Commissioning an artist can be achieved using the CaFE system or a local stakeholder-guided process.
- Artistic/aesthetic treatment budgets should be established on a case-by-case basis.
- Form liners and other treatments shall be budgeted as Bid Item 667003, *Artwork Complete*.
- Additional consultation with the artist may be needed during final design and construction.

CaFE System

Additional information on the CaFE system can be found at <https://www.callforentry.org/>.

Phase II and Beyond

All conceptual aesthetic plans should be finalized and included in the project plan set. Additional considerations include construction oversight and routine maintenance.

Meadows Road interchange (Figure 9) or the I-40/Acoma Interchange (see Figure 4). The NM 599/South Meadows Road interchange is located at the original site of Tesuque Pueblo and an artist was chosen by the Pueblo to provide artwork on the southern abutments and retaining walls. Artwork for the north side of the bridge was designed by an artist from the nearby Agua Fria Village. Similarly, the artist and design for the I-40/Acoma interchange (see Figure 4) was chosen by Acoma Pueblo.



Figure 9. NM 599/South Meadows Road photos. Photo on the left (south side of bridge) shows Tesuque Pueblo artwork while the photo on the right (north side of bridge) shows artwork inspired from nearby Agua Fria Village.

Phase II and Beyond

Phase II of the project development process is final design. This includes all design activity beyond the 30% plan set. During this phase of design, any conceptual plans put forth in the aesthetics plan should be finalized and included in the project plan set. This includes plan elements such as final dimensions, location, and weight of artistic elements, construction notes, and color specifications. Any maintenance agreements or funding responsibilities should be finalized with local agencies during final design as well.

Construction

Additional phases in the project lifecycle beyond final design include construction and maintenance. The NMDOT Construction Project Manager should be aware of any aesthetic or artistic treatments in the plan set so that he or she can monitor the appropriate implementation of the treatments. Similarly, an engineering firm with a construction-phase services contract should be fully aware of the plans and be available to answer design questions during construction. This may involve continued consultation with the artist.

Maintenance

Consideration of maintenance needs should begin when developing the aesthetics plan for all treatment options including the **identification of maintenance challenges, elements that can lessen future maintenance needs, and a clear delineation of maintenance responsibilities**. For example, depending on the location of a project, aesthetic treatments can often be subjected to graffiti. Considerations like these should be identified in the aesthetics plan and potential mitigations such as a textured



surface or an anti-graffiti coating can be considered when appropriate. The maintenance responsibility should also be clearly identified.

As a general practice, the NMDOT does not maintain irrigation equipment, landscaping, or gateway treatments, although warranties for landscaping plants could be included in the project budget. These warranties are typically limited to a 12-month duration. On-going general maintenance and landscaping needs are typically addressed by the local government agency and defined in a Landscaping Agreement and Permit with the NMDOT.

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What are some examples of aesthetics and artwork?

This section provides examples of aesthetic treatments implemented throughout New Mexico. In general, aesthetic considerations should be focused on the most visually prominent elements of a structure. For stream crossings, this is primarily the bridge railing. However, for overpass structures aesthetic considerations would be appropriate for several elements such as abutments, piers, wingwalls and revetments, exterior girders and deck edges, and barrier railings (Figure 10). The examples below show treatments for several of these elements from various locations around the state. Additionally, two separate case studies are presented as examples of implementing holistic design themes across several of these elements.

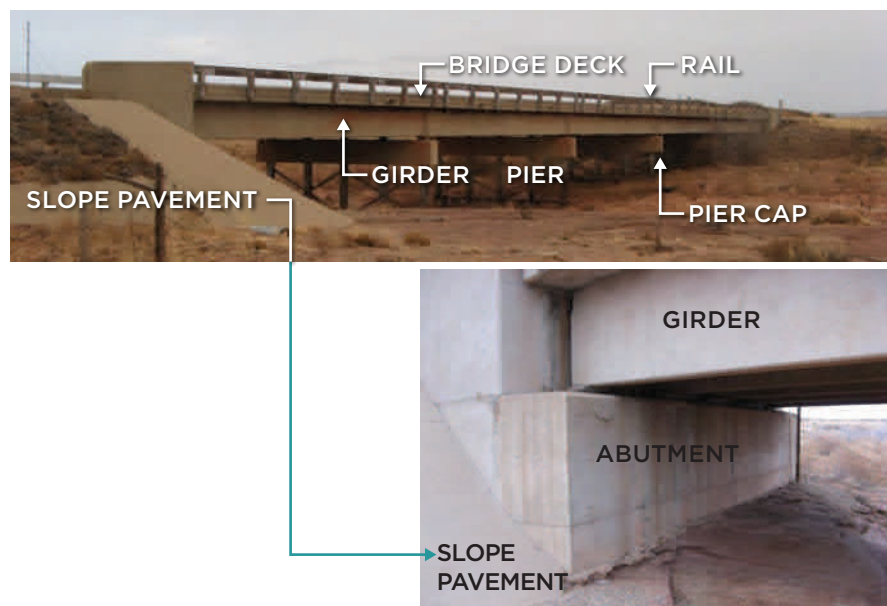
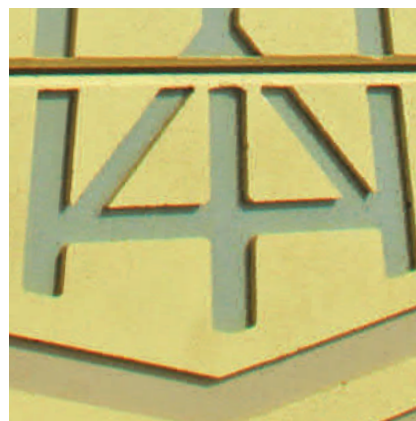
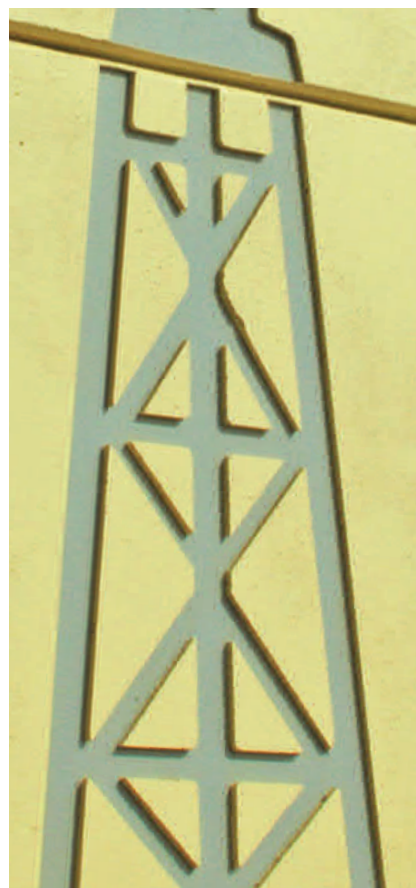
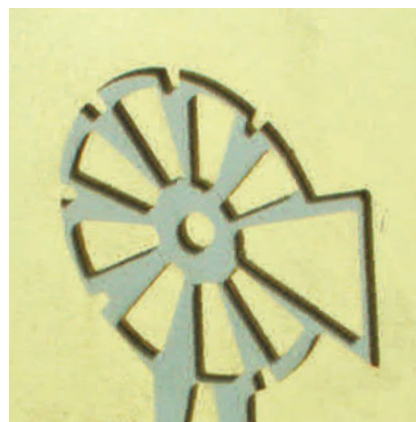


Figure 10. Diagram of common bridge components (image adapted from SWCA Environmental Consultants).



Structure Type

In many cases, the bridge form itself can be a major aesthetic consideration as it is often the most memorable and visually prominent aspect of the structure. Two prominent examples include the many overpass structures that form the Big I interchange where I-25 and I-40 meet in Albuquerque, and the Rio Grande Gorge bridge along US 64 near Taos (Figures 11 and 12). More typical bridge forms can also be aesthetically appealing such as those indicated in Figures 13 and 14 below.



Figure 11. Big I Bridge Structures.



Figure 12. Rio Grande Gorge Bridge.

Deck and Girders

Primarily visible by travelers passing beneath an overpass bridge, exposed girders and decking provide opportunities for color treatments and artistic designs. Examples of these treatments are located along the US 285 corridor north of Santa Fe. Note colors of both the exposed portion of deck and the girders, along with the design motifs. The image on the left prominently displays “K’uuyemugeh”, the traditional Tewa spelling of the name for this area, and graphically powerful images of maize, deer, and a woman in traditional Puebloan clothing. The image to the right displays “Posuwaegeh” which means “drink water place” the Tewa name of Pojoaque in the Tewa language. Adjacent imagery includes a ‘whirling log’ motif, a symbol of acquiring knowledge, as well as clouds, sun, and mountains.



Figure 13. US 285 Overpass south of the Buffalo Thunder Resort Exit.



Figure 14. US 285/Buffalo Thunder Road Overpass.

Abutments

Bridge abutments provide a prominent display opportunity for travelers passing beneath an overpass bridge. The image below on the left is located at the I-40/US 84 interchange in eastern New Mexico (Figure 15). It depicts qualities of the plains such as wind and windmills, and the Zia sun set against a yellow-tan background color which relates to the winter color of the short-grass prairie and resembles the state flag. The image on the right is the Missouri underpass beneath I-25 in Las Cruces (Figure 16). The image honors the natural landscape of the region with jaguars running toward the Rio Grande.



Figure 15. I-40/US 84 Overpass.



Figure 16. I-25/Missouri Overpass.

Piers

Piers and pier caps support the superstructure and are a visually prominent element of the structure for travelers passing beneath a bridge. The image below on the left is at the NM 599/South Meadows Road interchange near Santa Fe (Figure 17). Note the simple use of color and texture on the pier with a complementary color on the pier cap. These elements were designed to complement the prominent design themes on the wing walls and discourage graffiti on the piers. See Case Study 1 on page 23 for additional details. The image on the right is located at the I-40/County Road 4 interchange in eastern New Mexico (Figure 18). The design depicts popular New Mexico themes with yucca stands and the Zia sun symbol.



Figure 17. NM 599 and South Meadows Road.



Figure 18. I-40 and County Road 4.

Slope Pavement

Slope pavements can be visually prominent elements of a structure that afford opportunities for aesthetic and artistic enhancements. The image below on the left is located along US 285 south of Española on the Pojoaque Pueblo reservation (Figure 19). It features white horses with a brilliant red sun and provides a dramatic gateway experience for travelers moving to and from the area. The image to the right is located at the I-10/US 180 interchange in Deming and is inspired by traditional Mogollon pottery design elements (Figure 20).



Figure 19. US 285/Arroyo Seco Interchange.



Figure 20. I-10 and US 180 interchange.

Wall Barriers and Railings

Wall barriers and railings are very noticeable to travelers crossing a bridge. Along NM 4 in Jemez Springs, the wall barriers are embossed with imagery that conveys a spiritual relationship to the landscape, expresses a connection to the environment, and speaks to the power of faith and belief for both Native and Catholic religions (Figure 21). Along the I-40/Coors interchange in Albuquerque, the pedestrian overpass bridge uses metallic work with unique circular iconography as a vibrant gateway experience when entering or leaving the city (Figure 22).



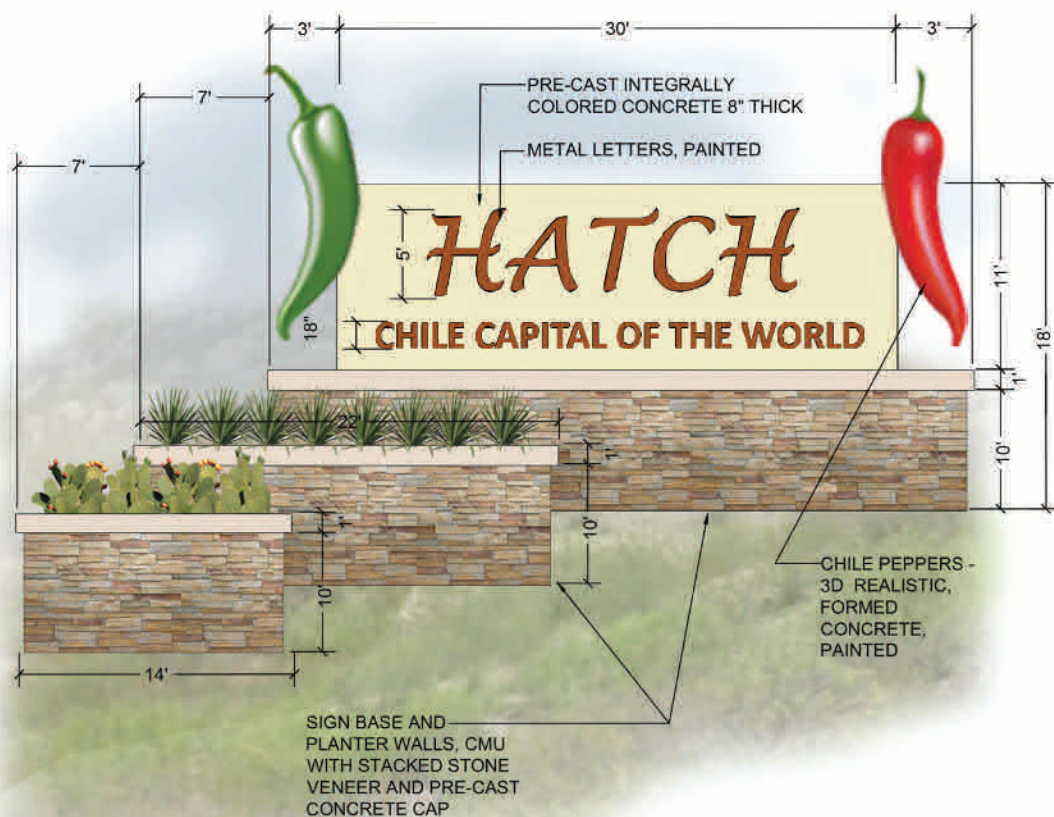
Figure 21. NM 4 at Jemez Springs.



Figure 22. I-40 at Unser Boulevard.

Gateways

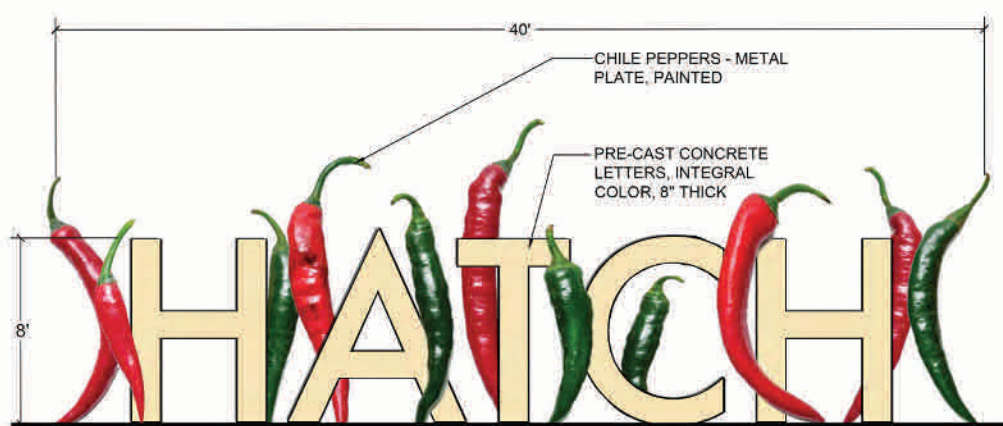
Gateways are statement pieces individualized for local communities and serve to notify the traveler that they are entering a special location. The images below provide two examples of gateway treatments for Hatch, New Mexico. The first is planned for the I-25 exit that leads to Hatch (Figure 23) and the second gateway example (Figure 24) is located closer into the community along NM 26. Both gateway elements speak to the importance of Hatch as a world-recognized producer of chile.



HATCH - CONCEPTUAL I-25 SIGN



Figure 23. I-25 Gateway concept for Hatch, New Mexico at the I-25 exit ramp onto NM 26 (image from Consensus Planning).



HATCH - CONCEPTUAL NM 26 SIGN



Figure 24. Gateway concept for Hatch, New Mexico along NM 26 near the entrance of the community (image from Consensus Panning).

Medians

These median treatments are both located in the Albuquerque area. To the left, Figure 25 shows decorative landscaping with an over-sized Native American pot sculpture in the I-40 median in Albuquerque. To the right, Figure 26 shows a snake sculpture in the median of University Boulevard south of the Albuquerque city limits.



Figure 25. Pot sculpture in I-40 median.



Figure 26. Snake sculpture in University Boulevard median.

Lighting and Other Elements

Lighting can consider the physical elements of the light fixture itself or how the light complements the aesthetic design. The image below on the left (Figure 27) is an example of lighting elements intentionally designed to fit a community context while the image on the right incorporates lighting along the bridge piers to affect the overall design aesthetic (Figure 28).



Figure 27. Light pole in downtown Aztec.

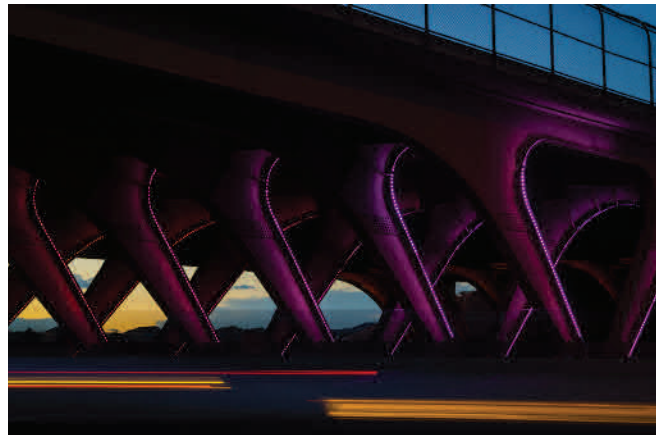


Figure 28. Lighting at the I-40/Unser Boulevard.

Noise and Retaining Walls

Often times extensive walls are required to mitigate traffic noise or to retain and secure slopes. These walls often involve aesthetic or artistic treatments. In the examples below, the image to the left is located along NM 528 in Rio Rancho and showcases hot-air balloon motifs, a pastime for which the region is famous (Figure 29). The image to the right is a noise wall along the Big I interchange in Albuquerque (Figure 30). It exhibits a flowing design representative of the Rio Grande while using texture and color to blend with the surrounding landscaping (Figure 30).



Figure 29. Noise Wall along NM 528 in Rio Rancho.



Figure 30. Noise wall along the Big I.

Landscaping

Landscaping can be a critical aspect of aesthetic design for interchanges and highway rights-of-way. The images below show how landscape design effects a finished and pleasing look to the Big I interchange in Albuquerque. The landscape design uses regionally appropriate vegetation and various types of gravel ground cover to compose a sustainable, low-water usage landscape.



Figure 31. Big I landscaping.



Figure 32. Big I landscaping.

Case Study 1: The NM 599/South Meadows Road Interchange

The NM 599/South Meadows Road Interchange is composed of an overpass, on- and off-ramps, and roundabouts along South Meadow Road at the entrance and exit ramp locations on either side of the overpass (Figure 33).



Figure 33. Layout of the NM 599/South Meadows Road Interchange (image from Google Earth).

Artistic components include bas-relief artwork on the bridge. The artwork was completed in 2013 and was a mitigation measure for the visual impacts on the viewshed for area residents. The interchange is located near the original home of Tesuque Pueblo, and Pueblo residents chose local artist Leanna Aragon to produce imagery for the abutments on the south side of the bridge. The imagery depicts the importance of corn in pueblo culture with prominent images of Avanu the water serpent (Figure 34), and the turkey (Figure 35). After Tesuque Pueblo was resettled, the area near the interchange was established as Agua Fria Village. Village native Leo Romero was selected by the Agua Fria community to produce imagery for the abutments on the north side of the bridge. The imagery depicts wood cutters harvesting wood in the nearby western Caja del Rio area (Figure 36) and the springs for which Agua Fria is named (Figure 37). The wall barriers above on both sides of the bridge have depictions of the mountain horizons which the traveling public encounters when driving in each direction (Figure 38). Additional aesthetic elements include textured piers and abutment faces, colored pier caps, and stamped concrete along the outside and inside borders of the roundabouts. The middle of the roundabouts was also contoured to collect rainwater and support native vegetation (Figure 39).



Figure 34. Avanu the water serpent and corn motifs.

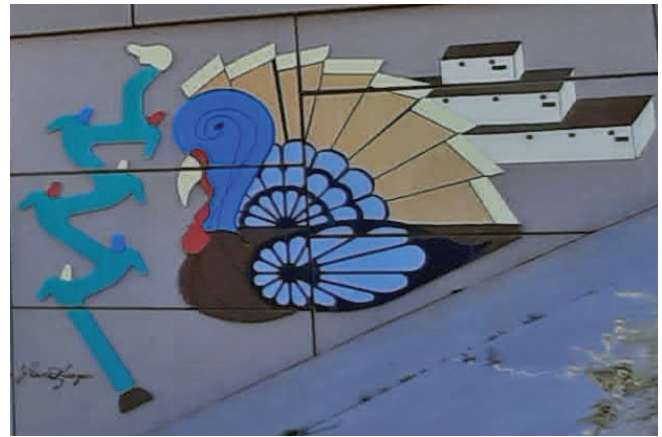


Figure 35. Turkey and corn motifs.



Figure 36. Wood cutter of Agua Fria Village.



Figure 37. Springs and villagers of Agua Fria.

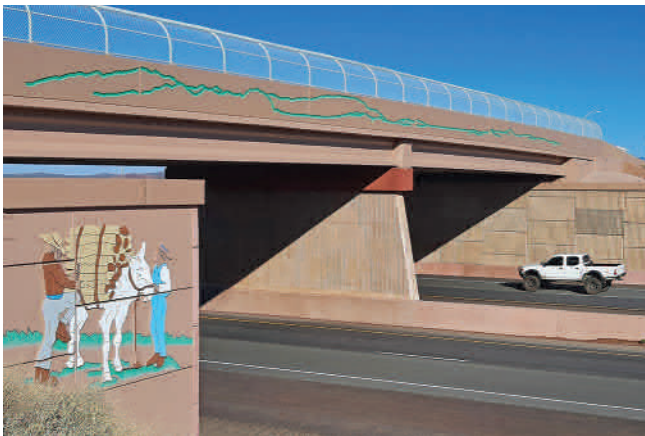


Figure 38. Mountain landscape is depicted on both sides of the bridge wall barriers. Also note the texture of the abutment face and piers, and color of the central pier cap.



Figure 39. Stamped concrete lines the inner and outer portions of the roundabouts. The inner portion is contoured to collect rainwater and is landscaped with native vegetation.

Case Study 2: The I-40/Acoma Interchange

Below is Exit 96 on Acoma Pueblo, which provides access to NM 124. The interchange is composed of an overpass, on- and off-ramps, and the adjacent highway which provides access to local residences and businesses (Figure 40).



Figure 40. I-40 Exit 96 on Acoma Pueblo (image from Google Earth).

Artistic components are focused on the overpass structure and include bas-relief artwork on the bridge, bridge color, and a prominent design on the girders that reads “Diits Iyaama,” the traditional Keresan name for the Village of McCartys (Figure 41). The parrot represents tribal

partners to the south with whom Acoma historically had trading relationships and the stair-step motif represents the surrounding mountains. Plants represent food, medicine, and fiber which support the community (Figure 41, 42, and 43). The artwork was completed in 2017 and was a mitigation measure for the visual impacts on the traditional cultural setting of the area.



Figure 41. Artistic design components of the I-40 Exit 96 bridge on Acoma Pueblo.



Figure 42. Exit 96 at McCartys. Note artistic design on girder and abutment; coloring on pier, abutment, and slope pavement; and texture on abutment.

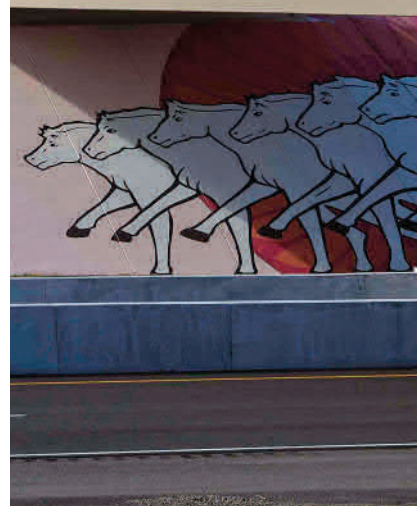


Figure 43. Exit 96 abutment. Note artistic design, color, choice, and texture.

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APPENDIX A: Policies and Guidance



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NEW MEXICO STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION



CP 69

09/21/17

Landscape Development on State Transportation Facilities

Reference: 23 CFR 752, Landscape Development and New Mexico State Department of Transportation Standard Specifications for Highway and Bridge Construction

This Commission Policy supersedes Commission Policy No. 69 approved February 23, 2012.

The New Mexico State Transportation Commission shall determine policy with regard to the expenditure of eligible state and federal transportation funds for landscaping projects on state transportation facilities.

- A. The New Mexico Department of Transportation shall consider, without any obligation to participate, contributing funds towards the costs attributable to the construction of a landscape project to be located within its rights-of-way on state transportation facilities, on a project-by-project basis, in conjunction with new construction or urban reconstruction projects in an amount not to exceed 1½ % of the Engineer's Estimate for the Project.
- B. Any additional funds required to construct the landscape project in excess of the percentages specified in paragraph A above, shall be the responsibility of the local governmental entity and must be funded by the local governmental entity prior to approval of the landscape project by the New Mexico Department of Transportation.
- C. The New Mexico Department of Transportation shall enter into a funding and maintenance contract with the local governmental entity prior to any design or other development of a landscape project on state transportation facilities whereby the local entity agrees to maintain the landscape project.
- D. Plant materials included in the landscape development shall be xeric plants (plants that need minimal water and are drought-tolerant). All landscape development shall conform to the criteria specified in the Landscape Permit Application for the District in which the landscape development is to be located.
- E. The Secretary of Transportation or designee shall formulate directives and procedures for the implementation of this policy.

Memo

New Mexico Department of Transportation

SUBJECT: Infrastructure Design Directive
IDD-2006-08 (Context Sensitive Solutions &
Context Sensitive Design Directive)

DATE: 9-08-2006

TO: Office of Infrastructure Divisions
Transportation Design Community

FROM: Steven P. Harris, Chief Engineer
Office of Infrastructure Divisions

FILE REFERENCE:
PSESHARE:Design Directives

In an effort to fulfill the agency's commitments to Context Sensitive Solutions and Design, this directive has been prepared to addresses traditional objectives as well as serving to preserve of other valued objectives. These objectives include such elements such as scenic, aesthetic, environmental and other historical resources combined with community values.

Attached to this memo are the Secretary's Directive on Context Sensitive Design and Solutions as well as the Department's new directive on this policy. I encourage you to employ these elements in every one of your projects.

As a reminder, the Design Directives reside in the PSESHARE drive. General Office staff is to utilize the \\asgopinon\pseshare drive to access the Directive. District and Regional Office staff can access the Directive utilizing the appropriate District drive as indicated below:

District 1	\\d1flsv03\design\$
District 2	\\d2flsv01\public\pse_section
District 3	\\d3-blade1\district3\ps&e_section
District 4	\\d4flsv04\designshared
District 5	\\D5flsv02a\D5Design
District 6	\\d6flsv02\pse_section

Infrastructure Design Directive (IDD-2006-08)

9-08-2006

Page 2

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Infrastructure Design Directive (IDD-2006-08)

9-08-2006

Page 3

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To: All NMDOT Employees

From: Rhonda G. Faught, P.E., Cabinet Secretary

Re: Secretary's Directive on Context Sensitive Design and Solutions (CSS):

This Directive instructs all NMDOT employees and others involved in the planning, development, construction, maintenance, and operation of all State transportation and support facilities to apply and adhere to CSS principles on all department projects.

Context Sensitive Design Solutions (CSS)

Context Sensitive Solutions is a model for transportation project development that has recently received much discussion and broad acceptance. Its essence is that a proposed transportation project must be planned not only for its physical aspects as a facility serving specific transportation objectives of maintaining safety and mobility, but also for its effects on the aesthetic, social, economic and environmental values, needs, constraints and opportunities in a larger community setting. In following NMDOT's Guiding Principles, NMDOT endorses the CSS approach for all projects, large and small, from early planning through construction and eventual operation.

This means that NMDOT employees working on projects and facilities should:

- Engage from the project's inception with representatives of affected communities, including elected and appointed officials and a widely representative array of interested citizens.
- Assure that transportation objectives of projects are clearly described and discussed with local communities in a process that encourages reciprocal communication about local views and needs in the overall project setting.
- Pay attention to and address community and citizen concerns.
- Ensure the project is a safe facility for both the user and the community.
- Consider the appropriate level of multi-modal relationships for enhanced mobility

CSS is a process that places a high value on seeking and identifying the "range of stakeholder wants", and if possible include desired project characteristics by, incorporating stakeholder values through project involvement and team consensus. NMDOT's belief is that consensus is highly advantageous to all parties and may help avoid delay and costs of project delivery.

The NMDOT will use CSS as an approach to plan, design, construct, maintain, and operate its transportation system. These solutions use innovative and inclusive approaches that integrate and balance community, aesthetic, historic, and environmental values with transportation safety, mobility, maintenance, and

performance goals. Context sensitive solutions are reached through a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach involving the project stakeholders.

The context of all projects and activities is a key factor in reaching decisions. As of now it will be considered for all State transportation and support facilities when defining, developing, and evaluating options. When considering the context, issues such as funding feasibility, maintenance feasibility, traffic demand, impact on alternate routes, impact on safety, and relevant laws, rules, and regulations must be addressed.

GOALS

Often times across New Mexico, communities desire that their main street be an economic, social, and cultural asset as well as provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods. In urban areas, communities want transportation projects to provide alternatives and opportunities for enhanced modal choice for travel and visual quality. In natural areas, projects can fit aesthetically into the surroundings by including contour grading, aesthetic bridge railings, and special architectural and structural elements. Addressing these needs will assure that transportation solutions meet more than transportation objectives.

CSS meet transportation goals in harmony with community goals and natural environments. They require careful, imaginative, early planning, and continuous community involvement. The Department's design manuals, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) regulations, FHWA's Flexibility in Highway Design publication, the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials' A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets, NCHRP Report 480, Best Practices for Context Sensitive Design and Context Sensitive Solutions, and many of the new guidelines in CSS principles and solutions all share a philosophy that explicitly point out the inherent flexibility within the design and engineering manuals and standards we use and where through sound engineering analysis and judgment design exceptions and variances can be processed or where through early use of CSS principles design exceptions and variances are not needed. This design philosophy seeks transportation solutions that improve mobility and safety while complementing and enhancing community values and objectives.

PLAN

The Secretary will create and develop an environment in which innovative actions, such as CSS, can flourish:

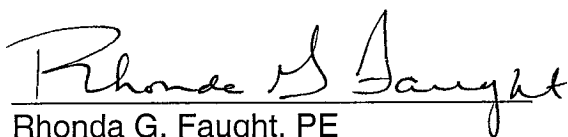
- Recognizes and highlights individuals, teams, and projects that advance the goals of this policy.

- Encourages staff to conduct and participate in meetings and conferences to expand the knowledge of CSS solutions internally and externally.

The NMDOT, through the CSS Division, will:

- Aid development and support of CSS transportation facilities.
- Aid in revising manuals and procedure documents to facilitate the application of CSS.
- Initiate and coordinate research to enable CSS.
- Encourages innovation, flexibility, and application in design.
- Facilitates coordination with resource agencies to assure facilities and activities are in harmony with the surrounding environment.
- Ensures communities have the opportunity to be actively involved in the environmental stage of the project development process.
- Ensures CSS commitments are sustained, as warranted, as a project moves through the environmental approval process.
- Support the inclusion of CSS when programming transportation projects.
- Communicate the importance of CSS solutions to the New Mexico Transportation Commission.
- Encourages the development of funding partnerships for CSS.
- Proactively ensure early and continuous involvement of stakeholders.
- Are responsive to requests by local communities, resource and other agencies, and the general public for CSS solutions.
- Assist in applying CSS solutions to local and other projects within the State right-of-way.

Approved by:



Rhonda G. Faught, PE
NMDOT Cabinet Secretary

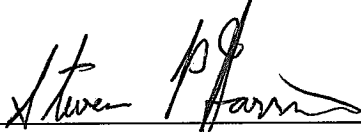
9/1/06

Dated

NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

08/25/06

**CONTEXT SENSITIVE SOLUTIONS and CONTEXT SENSITIVE
DESIGN DIRECTIVE (IDD-2006-08)**



Steven P. Harris, PE. Chief Engineer
Office of Infrastructure Divisions

AUTHORITY: Section 109 of Title 23 of the United States Code permits a design for new construction, reconstruction, and resurfacing of highways on the National Highway System to take into account the constructed and natural environment of the area, and other modes of transportation, and requires state design standards on non National Roads.

PURPOSE: Context Sensitive Solutions and Context Sensitive Design addresses traditional objectives such as safety and mobility with other valued objectives such as preservation of other valued objectives such as scenic, aesthetic, environmental, and other historic resources and other community values.

DEFINITIONS: As used in this directive:

1. "Context sensitive solutions and design" means a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach involving stakeholders for the development of a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic, and environmental resources, and other community values while maintaining safety and mobility.
2. For National Highway System routes under NMDOT jurisdiction, "context sensitive design" also includes the context sensitive design principles enacted by the federal government under Section 109 of Title 23 of the United States Code.

GUIDANCE

Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) can create balanced multi-modal transportation solutions.

The enhancements provided to a corridor or project through correct identification of "context" improves the quality of our projects and enhances quality of life for all of us.

The balancing of multi-modal transportation solutions allows for preservation of community, improved safety and mobility, enhanced quality of life, and community acceptance of a project.

CSS process will be integrated into all major projects- as formal scope direction in Consultant RFP's, and at less intensive levels for lower level projects. The NMDOT requires CSS Management Plans as part of all our major projects. The NMDOT will incorporate CSS principles in Planning, Development & Design with NEPA integration, and practices for CSS in construction and maintenance.

The NMDOT will:

- Include CSS as part of project development and project development and planning teams will support the use of CSS principals in our transportation facilities.
- Encourage innovation, flexibility, and application in design.
- Facilitate coordination with resource agencies to assure facilities and activities are in harmony with the surrounding environment.
- Ensure communities have the opportunity to be actively involved in the environmental stage of the project development process.
- Ensure CSS commitments are sustained, as warranted, as a project moves through the environmental approval process.
- Support the inclusion of CSS when programming transportation projects.
- Communicate the importance of CSS solutions to the New Mexico Transportation Commission.
- Encourage the development of funding partnerships for CSS.
- Proactively ensure early and continuous involvement of stakeholders.
- Be responsive to requests by local communities, resource and other agencies, and the general public for CSS solutions.
- Assure CSS solutions are applied to local and other projects within the State right-of-way.

PROCEDURES and RESOURCES for use and REFERENCE:

- a. NMDOT Cabinet Secretaries Directive for Context Sensitive Solutions (attached)
- b. AASHTO "A Guide for Achieving Flexibility in Highway Design – 2004
- c. NCHRP- Report 480, " A Guide to Best Practices for Achieving Context Sensitive Solutions
- d. Existing Guides and Links on NMDOT CSS Weblink

New Mexico Department of Transportation Gateway Monument Guidelines

I. General

Integration of community values into the transportation system can be achieved through visual enhancements that include Gateway Monuments. This guideline provides a method for the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) to allow visual enhancement of transportation facilities by tribal and/or local public agencies (T/LPAs).

A Gateway Monument is a freestanding, non-integral or non-required highway structure that communicates the name of a city, county, tribal or local public agency within NMDOT right of way (ROW). A Gateway Monument may include the name of the T/LPA and/or the officially adopted seal. The approval of a Gateway Monument proposal is made with consideration to safety (location, potential for motorist distraction, accessibility for maintenance, etc.), aesthetics, community support, and maintainability. Permit applications for the placement of Gateway Monuments must comply with these guidelines.

Gateway Monuments differ from structural aesthetic treatments (textures, colors, or patterns) incorporated into engineered highway features (sound walls, retaining walls, or other highway features).

A Gateway Monument that is an element of a bridge replacement in the NM Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) may serve as a mitigation for a visual impact the structure has on its surrounding if it qualifies through a Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) as conducted by the NMDOT. The cost of mitigation will be part of the project and will qualify for federal participation as per the FHWA Division Office 'Policy on Art and Aesthetic Treatments' (see Appendix B). Aesthetic treatment lighting maintenance costs specific to a Gateway Monument that qualifies as a mitigation measure and is part of a STIP project will also be the responsibility of the T/LPA through a lighting agreement. Maintenance of a Gateway Monument constructed with Federal participation will be part of NMDOT maintenance responsibilities unless otherwise negotiated with the T/LPA. Aesthetic lighting maintenance costs shall be the responsibility of the T/LPA in all cases.

If there is no visual impact from the project and a T/LPA desires a Gateway Monument, the T/LPA may fund the construction of a freestanding Gateway Monument and its maintenance by following the process defined in these guidelines.

Aesthetic treatment lighting maintenance costs specific to T/LPA-requested Gateway Monuments are the responsibility of the T/LPA.

Gateway Monuments may not be added to existing bridge structures.

II. Purpose

This document serves to define the roles and responsibilities of the NMDOT and the T/LPA for the administration, design, installation, maintenance and removal of Gateway Monuments. These guidelines define the procedures for submittal, review and processing of Gateway Monument Proposals.

These Guidelines support a Context Sensitive Solution by providing a way for the NMDOT to collaborate with T/LPAs to express the values of both the immediate community and the public at large. It requires the T/LPA to document support of the community by issuing a resolution recommending approval of the proposed Gateway Monument and requesting installation within NMDOT ROW. Per the FHWA Division Office 'Policy on Art and Aesthetic Treatments', services to develop the Gateway Monument must be acquired in a manner consistent with the appropriate procurement laws. In addition the selection of the Gateway Monument that is proposed must be vetted through public involvement. Public input must be sought, considered and documented when contemplating a gateway treatment, regardless of the funding source. This may be accomplished through public meetings, hearings, or other communications. Any resulting resolutions, local ordinances, or local voting results indicating support will be provided to NMDOT with the request for the permit.

III. Guidance

T/LPAs often desire transportation facilities to provide identification and a favorable image of the communities in which they are located. NMDOT encourages and promotes enrichment of the cultural and visual environment for transportation system users and local communities by facilitating and coordinating the integration of Gateway Monuments within the operational highway ROW.

A Gateway Monument request must be a stand-alone project not associated with any other current T/LPA project at the same location. Any costs associated with third party claims or litigation regarding Gateway Monument will be the sole responsibility of the T/LPA. Any damage caused to the NMDOT facility by the Gateway Monument or damage caused by maintenance activity of the monument will be the sole responsibility of the T/LPA. The T/LPA will be solely responsible for its replacement.

Gateway Monuments are discretionary features within the transportation corridor. Only one Gateway Monument will be allowed per NM, US, or Interstate route in each direction in and out of a T/LPA, for a total of two per public entity. The incorporation of a Gateway Monument will be evaluated for its potential for creating a distraction to motorists. Existing Gateway Monument features located on private or public property and within 660 feet of the NMDOT ROW will be considered the allowed feature and no additional Gateway Monument will be approved. NMDOT retains sole discretion for determining the location, appropriate size, content, colors, and other elements of the Gateway Monument. NMDOT has responsibility for approval of all Gateway Monuments on the NMDOT highway system and in addition, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will advise on Gateway Monuments on the Interstate and US highway system.

Gateway Monuments shall be located beyond the clear recovery zone along Interstate, US and NM facilities or protected with a barrier/guardrails treatment or otherwise placed to minimize the likelihood

of being struck by an errant vehicle. Gateway monuments may not be located in the medians of any divided highway.

Other improvements such as landscaping, decorative painting, or accent lighting may be considered in conjunction with the Gateway Monument proposal. Any improvements and maintenance thereof will be the responsibility of the T/LPA. Stand-alone landscaping treatments are not considered Gateway Monuments, although they may be part of the monument installation. If a T/LPA requests a landscape treatment only they should utilize the landscape permit. If the T/LPA requests landscape treatment as part of its Gateway Monument then the terms and conditions of the NMDOT Landscape Permit (see Appendix C) will be added to the Airspace Agreement (see Appendix D) . If lighting or irrigation is proposed for the Gateway Monument, the terms and conditions of the NMDOT utility permit and lighting agreements will be added to the Airspace Agreement. The Airspace Agreement will be utilized as the master agreement between the T/LPA and will be customized for each project.

IV. Design and Placement of Gateway Monuments

Proposed Gateway Monuments shall:

1. Be freestanding (unless incorporated in STIP project bridges).
2. Feature only the letters of the community name and/or officially adopted seal that has been associated historically with the community.
3. Include, if required by NMDOT, approved protective anti-graffiti coatings.
4. Be appropriate to its proposed setting and community context.
5. Be in proper size and scale with its surroundings. The maximum size of the Gateway Monument face will not exceed 400 square feet in total. The height will not exceed 20 feet above existing grade. Gateway Monument widths exceeding 20 feet will not be allowed on an Interstate.
6. Be composed of materials that are durable for the projected lifespan of the project.
7. Be located beyond the clear zone, or as approved by the District Traffic Engineer or designee and the Gateway Monument Committee depending on highway classification and functionality.
8. Be developed in such a manner to require low maintenance and to minimize exposure of workers and others to potential risks and impacts to the traveling public.
9. Be located where maintenance can be safely performed and in conformance with NMDOT procedures.
10. Be subject to the review and approval of NMDOT in consideration of design, size, and scale for appropriate integration on urban or rural highways.
11. Conform with Night Sky regulations
12. Meet industry standards in regards to rate of change of lighting features and allowable lumens.
13. Require T/LPA to agree to terms in the Airspace Agreement addressing maintenance by the T/LPA including accidental damage, vandalism, electrical costs if the T/LPA wishes to retain the structure.

Proposed Gateway Monuments shall **not**:

1. Be installed without NMDOT approval.
2. Be allowed within the center medians of a divided highway ROW.
3. Contain religious, political, special interest, private, or commercial messages of any sort, including, but not limited to, symbols, logos, business names, trade names, jingles, or slogans.
4. Contain any advertising, decorative banners, flags, or flagpoles.
5. Display telephone numbers, street addresses, or internet addresses.
6. Interfere with airspace above the roadway (including archways) or view-shed, or protrude or span over travel lanes or roadbeds unless attached to a bridge structure.
7. Create a distraction to the motoring public. The proposed Gateway Monument must be large enough to interpret at highway speed, but not be so large that it demands attention from the motorist.
8. Include reflective or glaring surface finishes.
9. Include illumination that impairs or distracts the vision of transportation system users.
10. Display blinking or intermittent or moving lights, including changeable message signs, digital displays or lighted static displays such as LED.
11. Include moving elements (kinetic art) or simulate movement.
12. Include water features, outside of necessary irrigation.
13. Include audio features.
14. Interfere with official traffic control devices or interfere with the operational NMDOT ROW above the roadway or airspace.
15. Be placed within NMDOT ROW upon trees, or painted or drawn upon rocks or other existing natural features.
16. Make use of or simulate colors or combinations of colors usually reserved for official traffic control devices described in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.
17. Require the removal of trees or other vegetation for visibility, or harm trees during construction. Pruning of tree branches or roots, and removal of shrubs should be avoided.
18. Negatively impact existing highway features, including existing signs, irrigation systems, necessary drainage patterns, and facilities.

V. Review/Approval Process

Gateway Monument requests will be reviewed with consideration to safety (location), appropriateness, communicativeness, and aesthetics and for minimal disruption to the traveling public when accessed for maintenance purposes.

The request for a Gateway monument from the T/LPA will require sequential NMDOT approvals by the local NMDOT District, the Property Management Bureau, and the Secretary of Transportation or designee. See Section IX for the submittal requirements for each stage of approval. See the Appendix E for a Gateway Monument Review/Approval Process Flowchart.

The local NMDOT District will review the Gateway Monument request and, if approved, will send an Interdepartmental Correspondence memo (IDC) with the request to the Property Management Bureau with answers to the following questions (see Appendix F):

1. Is the proposed action safe for the traveling public, including bike and pedestrians?
2. Will the proposed action interfere with maintenance operations?
3. Will the proposed action interfere, add to, or subtract from maintenance operations?
4. Is there any possibility of a transportation use in the future?
5. Are we creating a potential a FHWA Section 4-f situation for future use by the NMDOT for transportation purposes
6. Does the action cause drainage concerns or issues?
7. Does the action cause access concerns or issues?
8. Are there positive or political implications with the action?

Approval by the District of the initial request does not constitute approval of the project.

Once the request is approved by the District and forwarded to the Property Management Bureau for Preliminary Review, Property Management will request a resolution by the T/LPA as enumerated in Section IX. Monument details as enumerated in Section VIII must be observed.

Following a successful Preliminary Review, Property Management will initiate an Internal Review by requesting comments from General Counsel, the Regional Design Manager, Maintenance, Traffic, Lands Engineering, Legal, Environmental, Drainage, Roadside Environment, and Environmental Geology. Additionally, Property Management will research the rights-of-way upon which the T/LPA Requestor has proposed the Gateway Monument to determine if there are any restrictions; which would preclude its use. Property Management will be in communication with the T/LPA Requestor during this process regarding further documentation and information, which may be required. Once any issues are addressed and the review process is complete, the Environmental Bureau may issue an environmental certification for natural and cultural resources. However, if cultural and/or natural resource surveys are required, it is incumbent upon the T/LPA to conduct those surveys to state and federal standards. The documentation must be submitted by the T/LPA Requestor to Property Management, who will then forward it on to the NMDOT Environmental Bureau.

As part of the review process, if the proposed Gateway Monument is on an Interstate facility or US route, the Roadside Design Section of the Environmental Bureau will coordinate a Gateway Monument Aesthetics Committee for review and approval. The Committee will consist of four members from NMDOT: one representative each from Roadside Design, Environmental Bureau, Traffic Technical

Support Bureau, and the respective District supporting the proposal. A representative from the T/LPA and a representative from the T/LPA Gateway Monument development team (artist, architect, landscape architect, or engineer) are requested to attend the committee review. FHWA will serve in an advisory capacity on the committee for proposals affecting the Interstate and US highways. The Committee will review for appropriateness, communicativeness, and aesthetics. Gateway Monuments proposed for NM routes may be approved for aesthetics by the District Engineer (DE) or, at the DE's discretion, may be forwarded to the Roadside Environment Section of the Environmental Bureau for review as stated above.

Following an internal Review, Property Management will draft an Airspace Agreement, which may include provisions for landscaping, utilities, and lighting. Following this Property Management will seek legal approval, coordinate signatures with the T/LPA and then will obtain the signature of the Secretary or Designee for final approval. Following final approval, a work permit must be acquired for the construction of the monument by the T/LPA from the local District Traffic Engineer (see Appendix G).

NMDOT reserves the right to review and inspect during construction, for compliance with the approved Gateway Monument submittal. If, at any time during the process, NMDOT recommends any changes for a proposal that has not yet received final approval, the proposal may be returned to the T/LPA for revision. Once NMDOT approves a Gateway Monument proposal, no changes will be made to the Gateway Monument without prior written approval of the District Engineer. NMDOT reserves the right to change or rescind approvals during or after installation at NMDOT's discretion.

VI. Submittal Requirements for Gateway Monument Proposals

A Gateway Monument proposal must be supported by the T/LPA that has jurisdiction in the area where the Gateway Monument will be incorporated. The T/LPA will issue an adopted resolution or other official document recommending approval of the proposed design of the Gateway Monument and requesting installation within the operational NMDOT ROW.

For NMDOT District review a T/LPA may submit a Gateway Monument Request to the Traffic Engineer in the local NMDOT District. Accompanying the request should be a to-scale stamped architectural or engineering drawing and site plan with sufficient detail to communicate the concept. Conditions spelled out in Section VIII must be met. If the request is approved it will be forwarded internally to the Property Management Bureau with an IDC for Preliminary Review.

For Property Management Preliminary Review the T/LPA must provide an adopted resolution or other official documentation that describes the T/LPA's:

1. Jurisdiction over the area of the project site.
2. Approval of the Proposed Gateway Monument content and gateway message to be communicated.
3. Funding responsibility.

4. Commitment to ensure maintenance of the Gateway Monument (and any associated landscaping and/or lighting) including timely graffiti removal/repair, and removal (or restoration) of the Gateway Monument as needed.
5. Proposed schedule for commencing and completing project installation.

If Property Management determines the request meets these Preliminary Review criteria it will request further submittals for Internal Review as defined below.

A licensed landscape architect, or architect, or professional engineer as appropriate will professionally prepare, sign and seal submittals for a Gateway Monument Proposal. Exhibits, plans, and details will include, but are not limited to the following:

1. A full description of the proposed Gateway Monument, including location, construction, and installation techniques, details necessary to convey construction methods, proposed color scheme, proposed materials including, but not limited to, paint and protective coatings.
2. Specifications for proposed materials, including material data sheets.
3. A scaled drawing indicating the placement of the proposed Gateway Monument, including dimensions and offset (ROW lines, Edge of Pavement, Center Line, and Clear Zone).
4. Stamped drawings will additionally include details of footings and structure, including calculation of wind load.
5. Elevations and details clearly illustrating and dimensioning the proposal (the Gateway Monument must be aesthetically pleasing on all visible sides).
6. Landscape, irrigation and lighting plans if required.
7. Proposed message to be communicated.
8. Construction schedule.
9. Cost Estimate, including cost estimate for maintenance with ample funding source identified.
10. Traffic control plans and provisions if required.
11. Proposed maintenance plan and schedule (including proposed access for maintenance purposes).
12. Environmental Certification (see Appendix H, for both Natural and Cultural Resources and public involvement)

The T/LPA will adhere to and maintain compliance with departmental rules, regulations, NM and Federal laws, and any additional requirements NMDOT may apply to the project.

Once the Internal Review is complete, the Property Management Bureau will develop the Airspace Agreement as per Sections IV and V.

VII. Financial Responsibilities

All costs for proposed Gateway Monument design, construction, access for maintenance, maintenance, and if required, removal of the Gateway Monument will be the responsibility of the T/LPA and stipulated

in detail within the Preliminary and Final Gateway Monument submittals. All public involvement activities will also be the sole responsibility of the T/LPA.

The Airspace Agreement, for which there is no cost either initially or recurring, will stipulate that the T/LPA will hold harmless, indemnify, and defend NMDOT against any action associated with a Gateway Monument. NMDOT will assume the administrative costs associated with the Airspace Agreement, the Gateway Monument proposal reviews, and developing, issuing, and monitoring Work Permits for approved Gateway Monument projects. All other costs, including labor, materials, supplies, and traffic control (if required) for design, engineering, environmental certification, testing, construction, installation, maintenance, and removal of the Gateway Monument will be the responsibility of the T/LPA, including cost associated with damage to NMDOT ROW features caused by the Gateway Monument or its components. Coordination and resolution of any utility issues will be the responsibility of the T/LPA.

VIII. Maintenance

The T/LPA will be required to provide for regularly scheduled maintenance with minimal impacts to the traveling public for its projected lifespan. Maintenance will include, but not be limited to, restoration work to maintain the integrity of the approved Gateway Monument, maintenance of any associated landscaping or lighting, litter pickup, and graffiti removal. Gateway Monuments will be kept clean, free of graffiti, and in good repair. Graffiti removal will be performed by the T/LPA within 72 hours of its occurrence. All efforts to remediate vandalism of the Gateway treatment will be the sole responsibility of the T/LPA.

Maintenance access will be as stipulated by NMDOT in the Airspace Agreement and should be provided from outside the highway ROW, wherever possible. For projects located on Interstate highways, access will not be from the mainline. Maintenance practices will protect air and water quality as required by Federal and NM law. A NMDOT work permit must be obtained for each maintenance activity from the local District.

IX. Removal

The T/LPA will remove Gateway Monuments that, in the opinion of NMDOT, create safety or operational concern due to deterioration or inadequate maintenance. NMDOT will notify the T/LPA when it has determined that the Gateway Monument requires special attention. In the event the T/LPA fails to maintain, repair, rehabilitate, or remove the Gateway Monument in a timely manner, the NMDOT may remove the Gateway Monument after 60 days following notification to the T/LPA, and invoice the T/LPA for all costs of removal and restoration of the area. The responsible agent and invoice address shall be included in the Airspace Agreement.

NMDOT reserves the right to remove the Gateway Monument due to construction, rehabilitation, or other necessary activities affecting the transportation facilities without any obligation, compensation to, or approval from the T/LPA. NMDOT will strive to notify the T/LPA to allow for timely removal and salvage by the T/LPA (if possible). All costs associated with the removal and relocation/replacement (if possible), will be the responsibility of the T/LPA in coordination with NMDOT.

NMDOT reserves the right to remove or alter immediately or with advanced notification to the T/LPA any Gateway Monument that presents an immediate safety hazard to the public.

X. Pre-existing Monuments

For public safety purposes any monument in existence before the adoption of these guidelines and not in compliance with its provisions will be considered an encroachment and will need to be brought into compliance within two years of the issuance of this guidance via the Airspace Agreement process.

NMDOT Property Management will work with the T/LPA to coordinate the process.



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

New Mexico Division

August 22, 2012

4001 Office Court Drive
Suite 801
Santa Fe, NM 87507
505-820-2021
505-820-2040

In Reply Refer To:
ENVI 6

Mr. Alvin Dominguez
Cabinet Secretary
New Mexico Department of Transportation
PO Box 1149
Santa Fe, NM 87507

RE: New Mexico Division Office Policy on Art and
Aesthetic Treatments for Federal Aid Transportation Projects

Dear Secretary Dominguez:

The following policy is the framework to assist the New Mexico Division (Division) and the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) in administering Federal aid funds associated with the art and aesthetic treatments incorporated into transportation projects and associated visual impacts. It is not intended to be all encompassing for every situation encountered. Logic should always be applied in the decision-making process, and as always, when questions arise, communication between agencies is paramount.

As part of the policy it is useful to provide a definition to the words "art" and "aesthetic treatment" in the context of Federal aid. In simplest terms the definitions developed by the Division are as follows:

Art: Decoration and/or enhancement of the facility developed in concert with a commissioned artist and incorporated into the transportation facility.

Aesthetic Treatment: Texture, color, concrete stamping, or similar decorative measures added to or incorporated into elements of the transportation facility.

The foundation for mitigating for environmental impacts is found in: 23 CFR 771.105

(d) Measures necessary to mitigate adverse impacts be incorporated into the action.
Measures necessary to mitigate adverse impacts are eligible for Federal funding when the Administration determines that:

(1) The impacts for which the mitigation is proposed actually result from the Administration action; and

(2) The proposed mitigation represents a reasonable public expenditure after considering the impacts of the action and the benefits of the proposed mitigation measures. In making this determination, the Administration will consider, among other factors, the extent to

which the proposed measures would assist in complying with a Federal statute, Executive Order, or Administration regulation or policy.

The Division Office has established minimum criteria in order for project expenditures to remain eligible for Federal-aid funding. The NMDOT has the final authority to set transportation priorities for funding, thus the Division decisions focus on eligibility and compliance commitments.

1. In either aspect, whether art or aesthetic treatment, identified impacts must be recorded in the environmental documentation. The visual treatments will be mitigation for the adverse impacts. These impacts may be, but are not limited to, line of sight impacts, introduced elements, view shed considerations, or community/neighborhood impacts.
2. An environmental commitment outlining the mitigation associated with the visual impacts presented by the project must be recorded in the environmental documentation and incorporated into the plans, specifications, and estimate (PS&E) package.
3. Safety must be considered when developing visual treatments, i.e. plaque locations noting descriptions, artists, etc. must be located in a reasonable fashion. Decoration should maintain a subtle design, and avoid being registered as a distraction to drivers.
4. No advertising or commercial logos are allowed in visual treatments.
5. The NMDOT has final review and concurrence in the decision of the final design of treatments, i.e. the design material is subject solely to the NMDOT decision-makers' judgment. Determination of controversial, offensive, or inappropriate design material is at the discretion of the NMDOT review.

The primary difference in discerning art versus aesthetic treatment is whether an artist is associated with the treatment. When an artist is involved in the development of treatments, the artist services must be acquired in a manner consistent with the appropriate procurement laws. The second facet of pursuing art solutions to mitigate impacts is that proposed treatments shall be vetted through public involvement. This may be accomplished through public meetings, hearings, or other communications. Public input must be sought and considered when contemplating artistic treatments as mitigation.

Aesthetic treatments should also consider public input. This category of treatment is the simplest form of visual impact mitigation. It is sometimes used as a decorative aspect outside the determination of visual impacts. These types of treatments are common and not necessarily unique to a project or region. Textured concrete forms to simulate rock or brick are often used to soften harsh edges of concrete structures. Another common tool is stamping concrete or asphalt to give a desired appearance of stone or brick. These same concepts apply to the use of color treatments to concrete and asphalt.

Funding & Maintenance

Per the previously mentioned 23 CFR 771.105, project funds may be expended for mitigation purposes. Transportation Enhancement funding is also available for consideration as applied to art or aesthetic treatments. These funds have specific eligibility criteria that provide flexibility that may be different than this policy.

Costs and maintenance should be considered in the application of this policy. As stewards of Federal-aid dollars, there is a responsibility associated with evaluating reasonable and prudent solutions. The initial investment analysis as well as the long term impact of maintaining facilities is integral in the decision-making process. The maintenance responsibility for all projects under the Federal-aid system is with the NMDOT per 23 CFR 1.27 and 23 USC 116 and as such, art and aesthetic treatment are treated accordingly. The NMDOT may enter into agreements with parties to provide maintenance, but such agreements do not relieve the NMDOT of the responsibility to maintain the investment.

The following is a list of several references that form a basis for this policy and may assist in the administration and implementation of art and aesthetic treatments in New Mexico:

Laws, Regulations, and Guidance

Federal Law:

Department of Transportation Act of 1966, Section 4(f)
National Historic Preservation Act of 1966
National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
Highway Beautification Act of 1965

Federal Regulations:

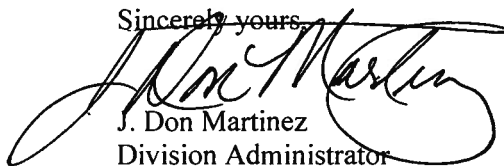
23 Code of Federal Regulations 771

Guidance:

FHWA Technical Advisory T 6640.8A
Visual Impact Assessment for Highway Projects, Publication Number FHWA-HI-88-054

There are many aspects involved in the implementation of publicly funded art and aesthetic treatments. As this policy is formally established and administered it is expected that there will be numerous inquiries regarding its implementation. The Division encourages the NMDOT to establish its own policy and guidance regarding art and aesthetic treatments. If you have question, please contact Greg Heitmann at (505) 820-2027 or greg.heitmann@dot.gov.

Sincerely yours,



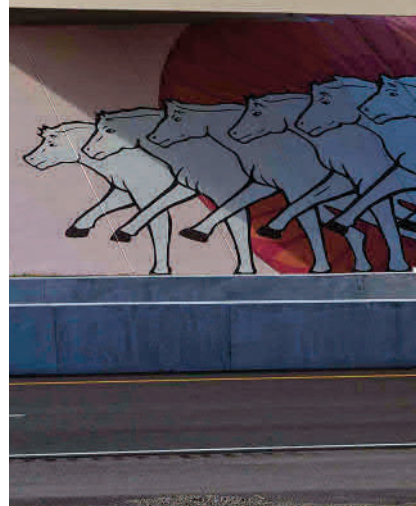
J. Don Martinez
Division Administrator

cc:

Mr. Paul Gray, P.E., Deputy Secretary, NMDOT
Ms. Kathryn Bender, Deputy Secretary, NMDOT
Mr. Max E. Valerio, P.E., Chief Engineer, NMDOT
Mr. Blake Roxlau, Environmental Design Manager, NMDOT



APPENDIX B: Additional CaFE Information



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NMDOT
PN/CN A301900
I-25/Montgomery Interchange Project



Aesthetic Treatment Selection Process

1. Develop Prospectus for Café website solicitation (March 7 to March 29)
 - a. NMDOT provide HDR with draft Prospectus.
 - b. HDR provide input to Prospectus.
2. Establish Local Selection Committee (LSC). (April 1 to April 29)
 - a. The LSC established by Bill Hutchinson
 - i. Voting
 1. Vicente Telles, Artist, vtelles1983@gmail.com
 2. Stephen Hutchins, Albuquerque Museum, shutchins@cabq.gov
 3. Ken Murphy, NMDOT D3 District Engineer, Kenneth.Murphy@state.nm.us
 4. Joe Casares, NMDOT Project Development Engineer, Joseph.Casares@state.nm.us
 5. Deborah Armstrong, State House Member District 17, debarmstrong2@me.com, 505-795-5164
 - ii. Consulting (Non-Voting)
 1. CSS – Bill Hutchinson – process, NEPA, WilliamS.Hutchinson@state.nm.us
 2. D-3 – Jill Mosher – budget, Jill.Mosher@state.nm.us
 3. D-3 – Justin Gibson – constructability, JustinL.Gibson@state.nm.us
 4. COA DMD– Mark Motsko, mmotsko@cabq.gov
 5. HDR PM, Danton Bean, Danton.bean@hdrinc.com
 - b. LSC review Prospectus.
 - c. Hold Kick-off meeting with LSC.
 - i. Provide comments on Prospectus. LSC approve Prospectus.
 - ii. Review and discuss selection process.
 - iii. Introduce discussion about criteria for finalist (aesthetic treatment area and treatment approach).



3. Set-up Café Website (April 1 to April 29)
 - a. HDR will set-up Café website. <https://www.callforentry.org/>
 - b. An electronic request for examples of artists work will be placed on the Café website.
 - c. Artists may submit up to six examples of their work through Café.
 - d. Request open for 4 weeks.
4. Submission Review (April 30 to May 8)
 - a. The LSC will conduct a review of submissions via Café.
 - b. Each LSC member will evaluate each artist's submissions using the Café on-line jury system (using numeric scores).
 - c. Potential finalists will be identified.
 - d. Up to five semi- finalists will be selected.
 - e. HDR provides \$500 to the semi-finalists to develop their artwork design concepts.
5. HDR contacts the semi-finalists. (May 9 to May 15)
 - a. Requests Artwork Design concepts
 - b. Schedules presentation of concepts
6. Preparation of Artwork Design concepts (May 15 to June 15)
7. Finalists Review (June 17 to June 21)
 - a. The finalists will make in-person presentations of their artwork design concepts before the LSC.
 - b. Based on the presentations, the LSC will evaluate the artists and their artwork design concepts.
 - c. Each LSC member will complete a score sheet for each of the semi-finalists. A score matrix table will be used to total and compare scores among the judges. LSC members may adjust their scores as part of open LSC discussion using the score matrix table. Based on the table, the LSC will select an artist to prepare the artwork.
 - d. All five LSC members must be present for the vote, which should reflect the evaluation in the score matrix table. The final selection of the artist and artwork design concept must be approved unanimously.
8. HDR contacts the finalist. (May 9 to May 15)
 - a. HDR prepares drawings to illustrate the identified placement surfaces and criteria.



9. Draft Artwork Design Preparation (June 24 to July 22)
 - a. The artist will sign a contract with HDR to prepare the artwork design.
 - b. The artist will prepare the draft artwork design.
 - c. The Owner Agency Representative (NMDOT Project Development Engineer) will provide written acceptance of the draft artwork design.
 - d. The engineer will pay the artist the first installment for the draft artwork design, (\$10,000).
10. Public Meeting (July 23 to 31)
 - a. The artist will present the draft artwork design at a NMDOT public information meeting.
 - b. This will provide the public with an opportunity to review the art.
 - c. The public comments will be summarized.
 - d. The Owner Agency Representative and engineer will provide guidance to the artist on responding to public comments on the artwork design.
11. Final Artwork Design Preparation (Aug. 1 to Aug. 29)
 - a. The engineer will review the draft artwork design for any needed technical adjustments or modifications.
 - b. The artist will prepare the final artwork design.
 - c. The final artwork design will be provided to the engineer for incorporation into project plan sheets.
 - d. The Owner Agency Representative (NMDOT Project Development Engineer) will provide written acceptance of the final artwork design.
 - e. The engineer will pay the artist the second installment for the final artwork design, (\$12,000).



NMDOT CN-A301900 I-25 Montgomery Interchange Aesthetic Treatment Prospectus

The New Mexico Department of Transportation is seeking an artist or artist team to advise and provide specific recommendations to the design team on the aesthetic treatment of the I-25 and Montgomery Interchange to be reconstructed in Albuquerque, NM.

This \$46 M project is on the mainline of I-25 in north Albuquerque and serves as a gateway to the Montano commercial area and river crossing of the Rio Grande to the west and the Montgomery commercial and residential areas to the East.



The project will address reconstruction and the capacity needs of the interchange and adjacent frontage roads for the next 20 years while providing an aesthetic experience for the estimated 94,000 trips by the traveling public that pass through the area on a daily basis.

Surfaces to be addressed may include bridge abutments, railings, project retaining walls, and pedestrian fencing as defined by the design team. Treatments may be expressed through color, texture, and unique repeating concrete form liners for vertical surfaces and metallic shapes for fencing. Treatments will address the cultural and natural resource qualities of this northern part of Albuquerque, and comprise an holistic aesthetic 'look' for the interchange without providing a distraction to the traveling public.

Interested parties must apply and be prepared to demonstrate aesthetic ability, ability to work as part of a team, and ability to work within time and monetary budgets.

Utilizing the CAFÉ website and process, the Local Selection Committee (LSC) will select five semi-finalists and conduct interviews before selecting a finalist and commissioning the work. The LSC will consist of NMDOT staff, local artist and government representatives. An honorarium of \$500 will be paid to each participating semi-finalist who must appear in person to meet with the LSC. A site-specific recommendation indicating the applicant understands the commission is not required at the interview however demonstrating understanding and the ability to produce a site-specific work are.

The LSC will select an artist or team to develop draft alternatives for presentation to the public and panel. At least one public involvement meeting will be required as part of the design process.

Among prominent local natural resource themes would be the Sandia Mountains, the West Mesa, and the Rio Grande Bosque. Among local cultural themes are the balloon fiesta park neighborhood, general Southwestern motifs, and transportation.

Maintainability and constructability of proposed features will be important evaluation criteria.

- The selection criteria shall include, but are not limited to:
- The qualifications of the artist(s) as demonstrated by the supporting materials.
- Attractiveness and potential of artwork design to enhance the project.
- Artistic merit and superior caliber of craftsmanship shown by the images.
- The degree to which the artwork fits within the context of the surrounding area.
- The artwork design's uniqueness and presentation of a distinctive visual image.
- The use of themes that align with the public's preferences.

The selected artist will be compensated as an independent contractor by the consulting engineering firm (HDR), \$10,000 for the draft alternatives for presentation to the public and \$12,000 for the final design.

The winning artist will work with the consulting engineer to translate imagery into CAD and engineering drawings.

Please read the following information carefully as incomplete or late submissions will not be accepted:

1. The artist will post on the CallForEntry (CaFE) website 3 to 10 images of previously completed work. Please review and adhere to the website instructions and requirements (see this link: https://artist.callforentry.org/image_prep.phtml). Tutorials can be downloaded using the links near the bottom of the web page.
2. The submission CAFÉ must include a written letter of interest that addresses the needs of the project, the artist's interest and motivation in preparing artwork for the project, and an outline of the artist's specific professional qualifications.
3. The submission on CAFÉ must include a current chronological resume or curriculum vitae demonstrating relevant work experience, particularly public art or privately funded commission projects. Please note that a biography or autobiography will not fulfill the requirement of a current resume.
4. The submission will include an annotated image list containing the title, media, dimensions, year of completion, project description, budget, and commissioning agency.
5. All materials must be submitted in digital format according to the specifications outlined by CAFÉ.
6. Please note that by default, CAFÉ will organize the images in your submission alphabetically. If you wish to present the images to the committee in a different order you must prioritize the images before submitting the application.
7. The LSC will not review supplemental information beyond what is requested, including materials specific to this project.
8. Failure to provide any of the published requirements will result in disqualification from the competition.
9. The initial submission consists of only the artist's general qualifications and experience on projects of similar scope and intent. The initial submission should not be a site-specific concept. Semi-finalists will be expected to submit a sample drawing or rendering relevant to the project.

The following are key dates in the selection process:

- April 2019 – Request for submissions posted on CAFÉ website.
- April 29, 2019 – Electronic Submission Deadline.
- May 2019 – Electronic Notification of Finalists.
- June 2019 – Finalist presentations, commission awarded.
- July 2019– Interim reviews, public meeting and final artwork due.
- August 2019 – Artwork scans completed and delivered to NMDOT in specific form.

Questions regarding the bridge art project should be directed to Danton Bean by phone (505)830-5412 or by email at Danton.bean@hdrinc.com.



New Mexico DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION
MOBILITY FOR EVERYONE

1120 Cerrillos Road
Santa Fe, NM 87504-1149
505.795.1401 or 505.795.2161
<https://dot.state.nm.us/>