



Jal Relief Route (NM 128)
Public Meeting Question/Comment Summary
July 14, 2020
Woolworth Community Library 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm

Question or Comment	Stantec/City Response
How did Stantec come up with the projected traffic volume modeling estimates?	<p>Stantec prepared a travel demand model using a four-step process:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Trip Generation. “How many trips are generated?”2. Trip Distribution. “Where do trips go?”3. Mode choice. “What travel mode is used for each trip?”4. Trip Assignment “What is the route of each trip?” <p>The team collected traffic data at key areas within the study area (both at intersections and along the streets), collected travel time data on NM 128, collecting other supplemental traffic data from agencies such as NMDOT, origin and destination data, socio-economic data such as population, employment, housing were conducted for input into the model. This model was calibrated and reviewed for consistency with actual conditions in and surrounding Jal. The team used consistent growth rates (for future conditions) to other planning initiatives led by the City.</p>
The northern routes would only be used by east/west traffic, so anyone wanting to go south would not use the relief route. They would take the	<p>The travel demand model results have demonstrated that the projected demand for routes north and south are very similar. Your</p>

old route instead. Same with the southern alternatives- people wanting to go north would use the old route instead of the relief route.	observation/statement is likely correct. A northern route would likely have less demand for traffic with origins/destinations to the south, and vice versa for the southern alternatives. The travel demand model projects the demand for both north and south alternatives.
How are you addressing connectivity with Highway 205?	A southern alternative would intersect NM 205. A northern alternative would not intersect NM 205. Detailed connectivity (i.e. stop-controlled, Signalized, grade separated, etc.) and specific lane configuration and geometry will be addressed during Phase I-B, detailed evaluation of alternatives.
The numbers from the traffic model don't seem to match what is actually going on through this area.	The traffic model was developed based upon existing traffic data, traffic projections, origin and destination data, and calibrated based upon existing conditions. Future conditions (20 year-future scenario) were derived from these variables, in addition to application of a growth rate that is consistent with other planning efforts undertaken by the City.
There was no talk of economic impact to city businesses. Is this being looked at? A relief route could be detrimental to the city economy.	An economic evaluation/study is being conducted for this project. We hope to have preliminary results to share soon on the potential impacts to business, as well as economic benefits to the region if the project is constructed.
With the northern alternatives, connectivity with Highway 18 and 205 would be lost.	With the north alternatives, connectivity/access to NM 18 would not be lost. Connectivity to NM 205 would occur via NM 18 and/or thru 3rd (Street).
Highway 205 connectivity was not studied.	NM 205 is in the study area and was captured at the NM 128/NM 205 intersection. Additional traffic data on NM 205 (if available) has been requested of NMDOT and Lea County if available. The team anticipates collecting additional traffic data (for NM 205 south), for use in the study/traffic analysis.
The effects of the relief route on Highway 18 traffic was not studied.	NM 18 is included in the study area and is being evaluated in the study.
Communication regarding the public meeting was lacking. Landowners whose land would be crossed by the proposed alternatives were not contacted.	This meeting was publicly advertised. The project development team will improve the communication/outreach of notices of upcoming public outreach activities.
The effects of each relief route on all roads needs to be studied.	Each of the key roadways and intersections in the study area are being/will be included in the study.

If we turn in comments, are they public? What is done with the comments?	Yes, the comments are made part of the public record. Each comment is considered in the project development process. A response is provided for each comment or question. A summary of the comments and responses will also be posted to the project website.
Will the PowerPoint presentation be made available?	Yes. It will be posted on the project website. This link is available from the City of Jal home page.
How would you like comments submitted?	You may submit comments via email, mail, or fax to Lara Thompson with SWCA. Her email/contact information is lara.thompson@swca.com .
The northern alternatives don't address the Highway 18 traffic from the south, which is greater than traffic from the north.	The NM 18 (north) traffic and NM 18 (south) traffic are similar in magnitude. You are correct, at the NM 128/NM 18 intersection, based upon traffic counts taken at the intersection, the NM 18 south leg has 27% more traffic (7,548 Vehicles per day (Year 2019)) than the north leg (5,933 vehicles per day (Year 2019)). Other factors (such as future growth areas) also need to be considered. The travel demand model provides a tool to evaluate this. Access will be provided from NM 18 to the selected alternative. A primary purpose and need driver of this project is to improve traffic flow East-West (NM 128) through an alternate route or thru upgrades to NM 128/while also providing system connectivity to NM 18.
The relief routes would just be moving the traffic jams from inside the city to the outside of the city.	The initial results of the alternatives have shown that alternative routes or an upgrade to NM 128 will improve traffic flow by allowing for regional traffic and thru traffic an alternative for east-west travel. The evaluation has shown that congestion on NM 128 will be improved with construction of one of the build alternatives.
The current state of traffic has commercial trucks crossing private land to avoid congestion on Highway 128.	This project will help to alleviate this concern.
A relief route would add more stops along Highway 18.	It is possible that a NM 18 crossing with a relief route alternative would be controlled by one of several means. A stop-controlled intersection (could be two-way or four-way), or a traffic signal. Other access alternatives, if selected, such as grade separation/interchange may not require that NM 18 traffic stop at all crossing the relief route alternative.

A southern alternative would deal with the traffic situation more so than the northern alternative.	A primary driver of this project (purpose and need) is to improve congestion, reduce travel time, and enhance travel for east-west traffic. An additional benefit of a north alternatives is that North Jal traffic would have more direct access to the new route. An additional benefit of a south alternate is that South Jal traffic would have more direct access to the new route.
The northern routes will divide private ranch lands, which will negatively impact access to water wells for livestock.	Options to mitigate this concern will be explored in the detailed evaluation and through property owner coordination and interviews during project development.
Traffic is definitely an issue. Trucks have passed passenger vehicles on the right side of the road (shoulder?) as the vehicle was turning into a driveway.	Traffic safety improvement is another key driver of this project. This project will alleviate some of the traffic congestion that may contribute to this driver behavior.
How is this going to affect businesses on Highway 128?	An economic analysis is being conducted to determine the benefits and costs associated with an alternative route. The team hopes to have preliminary results to share soon.
The businesses along Kansas Road pay gross receipts taxes, which are what keep the city running. How would a relief route affect the city's funds?	This is being evaluated in the economic analysis conducted for the project. The economic analysis considers the costs and benefits to the region, with and without construction of a relief route.
How are you going to get traffic to take the relief route?	A traffic model was developed to project the estimated demand of each alternative during the peak periods in the AM and PM. The route will be signed and designated to provide advanced indication (signs) for the alternate route. Many factors go into how much traffic is projected to take the alternative route. These factors include traffic flow, origins and destinations, travel time and congestion, and individual driver behavior.
What is the proposed action for the route through town? Would the road be widened to allow traffic to move through faster?	The E-W alternative considers upgrading NM 128 (to provide an additional thru lane in each direction). This alternative along with intersection improvements (geometric and traffic operation) is being considered and may or may not be the resulting preferred alternative moving forward. This will be determined during the evaluation process.
Another northern New Mexico town's economy was severely affected by the installation of a bypass. Can Jal afford for that to happen?	Many towns and communities have experienced positive benefits to the economy after construction of a relief route. There are strategies that can be considered during project

	development and can be carried forward after construction that can help. Some of the strategies include properly spaced access points, signage, marketing and advertising, business retention programs, and main street programs can assist with this outreach campaign.
Cutting through a private ranch property would cause many problems. Following property lines would be preferable.	The next phase will take the conceptual alternatives to be carried forward and evaluate them in more detail. The detailed evaluation will include one or possibly two alternatives that will more clearly define the route to mitigate this potential.
Pilot and other businesses might be willing to move to the city limits to add business to the relief route.	This is a possibility but will be up to the individual business owners.
Will rights of way that have not been dedicated by the state be honored?	Preliminary right of way needs are being explored for each of the alternatives. Once a preferred alternative is selected, right of way mapping, appraisals, title searches, and acquisition will be conducted to obtain legal right-of way for the entire project.
Where there is no right of way dedicated, will the private land be condemned?	It is the intent of the project development team to only use condemnation as a last resort, if it is in the best interest of the public to do so.
What will happen to the water supply if a new right of way fence crosses private property and cuts off its water supply?	Options to mitigate this concern will be explored in the detailed evaluation and through property owner coordination and interviews during project development.
A truck route around the city will hurt the local economy. Should consider widening Highway 128 and adding turn lanes within city limits. The cost for this would be much different compared to building a relief route.	The Economic Impact Analysis study will explore effects on the local economy. Widening NM 128 is an alternative that is being considered and evaluated as one of the options.
A relief route would divide grazing ranges and could affect animals' ability to access water. Ranchers need as much land as they can get to feed their livestock.	Options to mitigate this concern will be explored in the detailed evaluation and through property owner coordination and interviews during project development.