



Public and Agency Involvement

Throughout the planning process, public involvement was key to the plan's success. At critical points during the process, public meetings were announced and held where citizen participation was openly welcomed and appreciated.

Four public meetings were held during the study. The public meetings offered members of the community an opportunity to provide input regarding transportation issues that should be addressed as part of the plan. Community residents were asked to comment on the existing and future transit services within and between Aztec, Bloomfield, Farmington, the community of Kirtland, and unincorporated San Juan County. The public was given the opportunity to review which transit services and other alternatives they thought should be pursued to meet the established goals.

KICK-OFF MEETING OUTCOMES

A kick-off meeting was held on Thursday, June 3, 2010 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. This meeting invited members of local governments, tribal representatives, transportation providers, and others who either deliver or rely heavily on public transportation services. The meeting was also open to the public. Approximately 30 people attended this meeting.



The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the project and study team, as well as to discuss the general schedule and tasks of the project. The study team sought input on ways to best communicate with and reach out to the public about the study. Maps were provided at the meeting for Aztec, Bloomfield, Farmington, and Kirtland for purposes of indicating areas of interest for the study, be they needs for new service, service improvements, or other concerns.

Public and Agency Involvement

Figure II-1 shows the areas of interest as reported by the group. Many comments were made about providing additional stops along the existing Red Apple Transit routes. Comments were made about serving developing commercial, retail, and casino locations south, west, and southeast of the current routes in Farmington. Comments were also received about providing new or additional services to developing residential areas such as Troy King Road between Farmington and Kirtland, Pinion Hills Boulevard in northern Farmington, NM 516 between Farmington and Aztec, and the community of Wild Horse Valley between Farmington and Bloomfield. Other comments were received about improving connections operationally and physically, particularly at the Orchard Plaza transfer center.

Comments were received about extended hours of service on weekdays and on weekends. Regionally, comments were received about making connections between Bloomfield and Aztec, as well as between the Farmington MPO area and Durango.

In terms of customer groups, comments were made about enhancing service for seniors and attending to this growing segment of the population.

Figure II-1
Service Need Comments from 1st Meeting

Areas Needing (More) Service

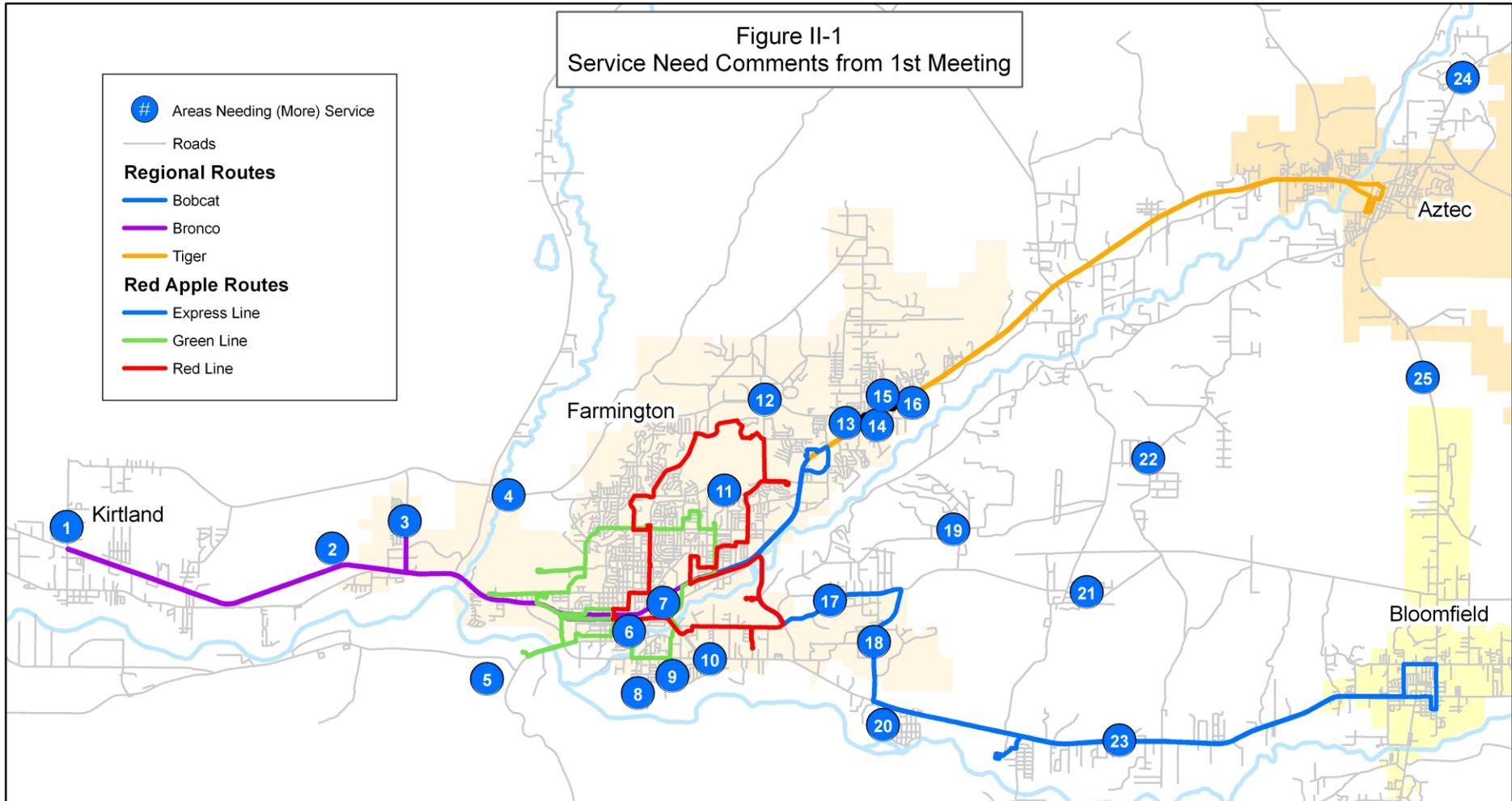
— Roads

Regional Routes

- Bobcat
- Bronco
- Tiger

Red Apple Routes

- Express Line
- Green Line
- Red Line



- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 Stop at SJ College West Campus | 11 Serve the Medical Complex at 30th | 21 Add service to Crouch Mesa |
| 2 New Housing | 12 Serve Pinion Hills Blvd/College Blvd | 22 Add service to Crouch Mesa |
| 3 Add to Green or Red Route | 13 Stop on S Foothills | 23 Add stops along Bloomfield Rte |
| 4 La Plata Ranch & Sports Complex | 14 More stops needed along east Main | 24 Consider Durango Connections |
| 5 New Casino | 15 Stop near Country Club | 25 Add Bloomfield-Aztec Route |
| 6 More stops on Murray Dr | 16 Stop near D.A.'s Office | |
| 7 More stops along Main St | 17 Add to Green or Red Route | |
| 8 Serve Sycamore | 18 Add to Green or Red Route | |
| 9 Serve Valle Grande | 19 Add service to Wildflower Pkwy | |
| 10 Add stop near spa | 20 Add service to Wildhorse Valley | |



ALTERNATIVES DEVELOPMENT MEETING

The second joint stakeholder/public meeting was held on Thursday, July 29, 2010 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Approximately 30 people also attended this meeting.

The purpose of this meeting was to review growth forecasts for the region and begin discussing alternatives that might meet the needs of the area. An initial presentation was given, showing both system and route level concepts. System-level concepts included grid service, hub-and-spoke service, multi-hub service, radial/trunk and branch, hub-and-loop (pulse), and timed-transfer service. Route-level concepts included stop spacing, frequency of service, span of service throughout the day, loop routes and linear routes, and overlaying of service in different ways. Route overlays were described as ways of both improving frequency and of introducing all-stop or preserving skip-stop (express) types of service where appropriate.

Participants were divided into groups and each group was given an area of focus. Using the system concept ideas, the groups were asked to determine which concepts could apply to the existing routes. The following are the summarized comments from each group.

Kirtland Bronco Route:

- First step would be to connect the route to some of the current Green route stops such as at Northgate Apartments, Walmart, the State Building, or the Civic Center. This would help improve transfers.
- Second step would be to create a local feeder route through Kirtland that connects to the stop at the Central Center.
- The Kirtland Feeder could serve San Juan College West Campus, Kirtland Central High School, and the neighborhoods around CR 6500/CR 6480, along CR 6200, and along CR 6100.
- Extend the Bronco Route to the San Juan College West Campus.
- Possibly implement a park-and-ride service from Kirtland to the two power plants.



Aztec Tiger Route:

- Add new stops along the current route at NM 516/Oliver (County Complex), the grocery store at NM 516/CR 350, and at NM 516/Foothills.
- Add a stop at the San Juan College East Campus.
- The route will need an extension of hours both earlier in the morning and later in the evening.
- New medical facilities are being built in Aztec that should have bus service.
- Create feeder loops that connect to the regional route.
- The City of Aztec is considering issuing a transit survey to gauge transit interest of its citizens.
- Have a route connecting Aztec to Bloomfield.
- Consider a rural route that loops along NM 574 and NM 170 (LaPlata) and connects back to Farmington and Aztec.

Farmington Routes:

- Consider making 20th Street the core route and having directional loops work off of 20th.
- To that effect, the Express route could detour onto 20th Street and terminate at Smith's and the Green and Red routes would be split into two semi- or half loops.
- If the Express route were detoured, then the Kmart and Museum stops could be picked up under the Red route.
- The medical facilities at 30th/Farmington need a stop.
- Stop needed at or closer to the Sycamore Center.
- A stop is needed at Piedra Vista High School.
- Could some stops, such as the airport, become dial-a-ride stops or on-demand stop?
- Consider an internal circular route that just serves the three transfer points at Smith's, Civic Center, and Orchard Plaza.



Bloomfield Bobcat Route:

- Need stops around Wild Horse Valley, Lee Acres, and at CR 350/CR 390.
- West Hammond (south and west of Bloomfield) is a growing area that will need service.
- Connect Bloomfield to the new medical facilities being built in Aztec.

- The extension of Pinon Hills Boulevard would alter the Bloomfield Route and help improve out-of-direction travel.
- New stops will be needed along CR 350 and CR 3950.

ALTERNATIVES REFINEMENT AND EVALUATION MEETING

The third joint stakeholder/public meeting was held on Wednesday, October 6, 2010 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. At the meeting, the major elements of Technical Memorandum #2 were presented, providing a peer review analysis of the Red Apple Transit system and an analysis of the service concept alternatives. The purpose of this meeting was to review and explain the various service options, to determine a preferred option for the regional routes and the Farmington routes, and to consider when and how to implement the changes described by the preferred options.

Two alternatives were provided for the regional routes and four alternatives were provided for the Farmington routes. Another map illustrated the accessibility of routes based on the spacing of bus stops. For each alternative, statistics on estimated ridership, costs, and fleet capacity were given. A brief description of each option is as follows:

- **Regional Option #1, Short Turn** – An all-day route would run from Flora Vista to Farmington along East Main and then loop around the southeast part of Farmington, using Browning Parkway, Wildflower Parkway, Andrea Drive, and US 64. An Aztec-to-Bloomfield route would be added during peak hours. The three regional routes to Aztec, Bloomfield, and Kirtland would not change and would continue to operate three times daily.
- **Regional Option #2, Limited Service** – Two routes would operate all day—one from Flora Vista west through Farmington to Troy King Road and one from McGee Park west to the Farmington Civic Center. Three routes would extend from the external points to serve Aztec, Bloomfield, and Kirtland three times daily. An Aztec-to-Bloomfield route would be added during peak hours.
- **Farmington Option #1, Central Hub** – Using a location at a place along 20th Street, seven routes would meet at this centralized hub and serve the various sections of the city.
- **Farmington Option #2, Split Loops with Trunk Line** – Both the current Red and Green routes would be divided with two separate arcs for a total of four routes. A fifth route would circulate from downtown to 20th Street to improve transfers among all of the routes.

- **Farmington Option #3, Linear** – Five routes would take a more direct approach and would principally serve major destinations north-south and east-west. Multiple transfer points would be created.
- **Farmington Option #4, Two Hub** – Most routes (three of five) would begin and end at the Civic Center and San Juan College (or the Animas Valley Mall) as they serve various parts of the city.

After presenting and explaining the alternatives, the public was asked to vote for their preferred alternative. Each participant was asked to give one vote for the regional options and three votes for the Farmington options. Regional Option #2 and Farmington Option #4 received the most votes. The options were discussed once again as a group to ensure these were the preferred options and to incorporate as many of the positive aspects of other options into the option that will move forward.

General Comments

- A stop at the fire station in Flora Vista is greatly needed.
- Spencerville along NM 516 needs a stop.
- Flora Vista and Spencerville have no real good connection into the existing system other than traveling into Aztec or into Farmington.
- The medical facilities around 30th and Farmington Avenue need a stop.
- Improved connections between Navajo Transit and Red Apple Transit are needed, especially around Kirtland and west Farmington.
- These connections should review timing and possibly aligning stops to help create informal transfer points while ensuring federal funding is not compromised.
- Consider extending Red Apple service to Waterflow and Hogback.
- A route should run from Shiprock to Farmington along US 64 and then circle back using N36 to serve residences along that road.
- Consider a loop route from Aztec to CR 350, east to Bloomfield, and back north to Aztec.
- The southern route, as shown in Regional Option #2, may be changed to provide service to the Sycamore Center and to the Crouch Mesa area.
- The brown line in Farmington Option #4 overlaps the dark blue route shown in Regional.

- Option #2. The difference is the regional option goes further out to west Farmington.

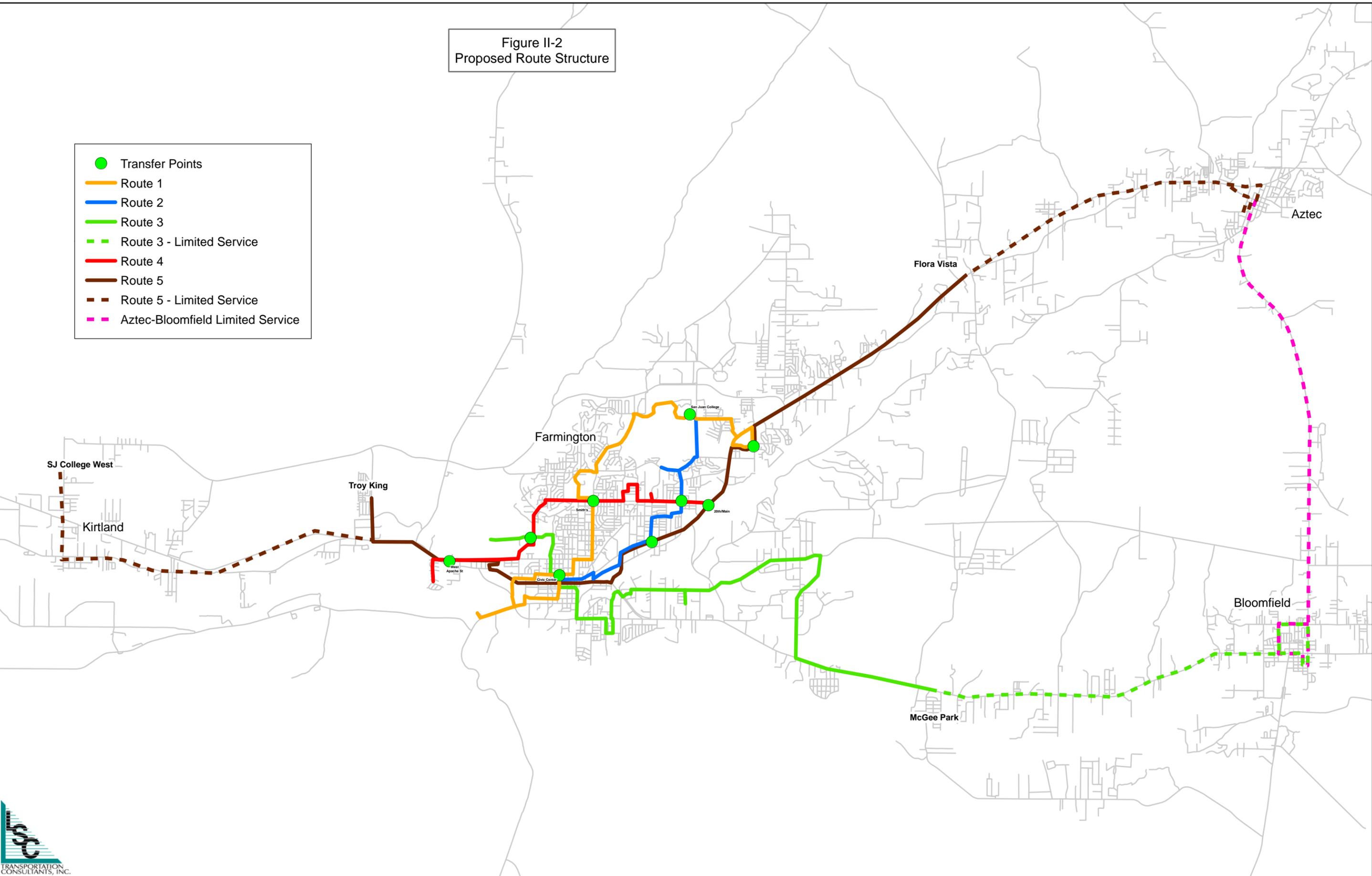
DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS REVIEW MEETING

The fourth joint stakeholder/public meeting was held on Wednesday, November 10, 2010 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The major elements of the Draft Report were presented, showing the route structure resulting from prior input and review. Preliminary versions of financial tables and implementation/phasing options were discussed. In addition to this meeting, Farmington City Council Meeting (November 9) and MPO Policy Committee Meeting (November 10) presentations were made to share the same materials. Farmington City Council asked that additional driver interviews be conducted, and the outcomes of those efforts are included in Appendix A. For this study, the key findings are the need for schedule adjustments to improve reliability and regular performance monitoring to maintain safe and efficient operations over time.

Figure II-2 shows the Draft Route structure that was the basis of discussion. Several variations on this structure were discussed and reviewed at the joint stakeholder/public meeting.

Figure II-2
Proposed Route Structure

- Transfer Points
- Route 1
- Route 2
- Route 3
- - Route 3 - Limited Service
- Route 4
- Route 5
- - Route 5 - Limited Service
- - Aztec-Bloomfield Limited Service



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The following comments were received at the stakeholder/public meeting and made as suggestions for revisions to include in the Final Report:

- The airport stop is not a utilized stop; it is rarely used by the community or visitors.
- The routes need to be created in such a way that they do not create a hazardous condition for drivers trying to meet unrealistic 30-minute headways.
- If headways are unrealistic, then the drivers may be forced to drive in an unsafe manner; anything to help the drivers to be safer is preferred.
- A route that is 13 miles one-way and 26 miles for a total round-trip is too long if we are trying to meet headways less than one hour.
- The owners of the Farmers Market are willing to allow the use of their facility in Flora Vista and Bloomfield.
- Spencerville residents are looking for a bus stop to be located close to the existing fire station.
- The new green route needs to still catch the current route stop located at the MOC.
- More on-street stops are needed, although some will need to be in parking lots, such as at the 30th/Farmington Avenue medical facilities.
- Navajo Transit would like to interface with the Red Apple and they are currently planning on making the interface at West Walmart and American Plaza.
- Additional interface with Navajo Transit may be in Kirtland and in Bloomfield.
- Navajo Transit will be completing an interline agreement with Amtrak, Santo Domingo Express, and Greyhound to provide service to and from the MPO region and other locations.
- Can local businesses maintain or purchase bus shelters for Red Apple Transit to help cover some of the cost?
- Which option will have fewer growing pains: phasing in changes to the system or a complete, one-time change?
- Can the existing routes start running in opposite directions to prepare for bi-directional linear routes?
- Is there a way to ensure service to all of the high schools in Farmington?
- Are there any suggestions for longer service hours and limited Sunday service in the Draft Report?

The Farmington City Council and MPO Policy Committees made these comments:

- The no-cost, revenue-neutral change to the route structure is preferred to the change which would phase changes over time and incur transition costs.
- Share cost/expense information at the public/stakeholder meeting.
- Provide for additional direct input from Red Apple drivers.
- Focus on performance criteria in terms of riders per hour, total riders per year, and total number of persons served in the community.