

New Mexico Rail Runner Express Operations and Maintenance Facility Reconstruction

Project Summary

The Rio Metro Regional Transit District is pleased to announce the upcoming implementation of the Operation and Maintenance Facility (OMF). The OMF will replace the Rail Runner's existing 1960's-era freight facility, updating it with modern, efficient, state-of-the-art equipment to meet or exceed passenger rail industry standards across the nation. Once complete, the effort will significantly improve working conditions, reduce maintenance and repair costs, support well-paying jobs, and expand the resiliency and reliability of the Rail Runner.

Why Are Improvements Needed?

Since the Rail Runners expansion to Santa Fe (December 2008), Rio Metro has maintained 31 Rail Runner locomotives and railcars in an open-air facility and out dated buildings that date to the mid-1900s. This created conditions in which crews maintaining Rail Runner locomotives are often working in unfavorable conditions. This includes working in single and triple digit temperatures, ice and snow, blowing dust, thunderstorms and other inclement weather conditions. Additionally, with much of current maintenance being conducted outdoors, noise and emissions from maintenance potentially impacts surrounding neighborhoods.

The OMF construction will negate these and other conditions that compromise workplace safety and service efficiency, while also reducing environmental impacts on site and to surrounding neighborhoods, in addition, the OMF will support well-paying jobs, and enabling the future expansion of commuter rail service.

Project Details

Located near Downtown Albuquerque, NM, the centerpiece of the OMF construction includes a two-story maintenance shop equipped with a high-bay shop,



100 Iron Avenue, Albuquerque, NM

parts storeroom, work and storage areas, and offices. The shop features a heavy repair track for maintenance and inspections, and a storage track for truck and wheelset storage. The heavy repair track includes a maintenance pit; an overhead crane capable of moving large components; and platforms to provide rooftop access to locomotives and railcars. The building also features a parts storeroom, welding/machine shop, electronics, tool and lubrication storerooms, and crew offices.

These improvements are critical to providing better workplace safety and efficiency, reducing maintenance costs, preserving New Mexico's investment in the Rail Runner fleet, and reducing environmental impacts on site and to surrounding neighborhoods.

Strategic Goals

The OMF will be designed to meet the US Department of Transportation strategic goals. This includes improvements or benefits to the following:

SAFETY

- Lower risk of slips, trips and falls, and exposure to extreme temperatures
- Reduced parts contamination from moisture, blowing dust, exterior storage
- Integrated heavy machinery, fall protection, and platforms
- Improved lighting levels for inspections
- Increased security and prevention of trespassing

ECONOMIC STRENGTH AND GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS

- Supports prevailing-wage construction jobs
- Mechanical crew pay exceed NM's median household income
- Ideally located to minimize train deadhead and maximize past infrastructure investments

EQUITY

- Located in a historically disadvantaged community and area of persistent poverty
- Reduced noise and light pollution, as well as locomotive emissions to neighborhoods in 95th-percentile for diesel particulate matter
- ADA-compliant improvements to surrounding streets

CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY

- 50 percent reduction in train movements reduces emissions/increases service efficiency
- Improved stormwater/water quality infrastructure
- Indoor storage of lubricants and fluids, fixed fueling infrastructure, and improved spill protection

TRANSFORMATION

- Able to support future Rail Runner service increases
- Up to two-thirds less time to perform major repairs
- Rio Metro intends to pursue LEED certification
- Additional information regarding the OMF will be available as the project design advances.

Funding

In 2024, Rio Metro requested and was awarded \$22.5 million from the federal RAISE grant program helping to begin initial efforts regarding the design and development of the OMF. Rio Metro is actively pursuing additional funding opportunities to complete the design and construction of this project. Design is anticipated to last approximately 1.5 years and be immediately followed by two years of construction.

Questions

This project webpage will continue to be updated as the design of the OMF proceeds. Future opportunities to provide comments and ask questions will be available in the summer/fall of 2026.

Should you have any questions about the project that require immediate attention, please contact :

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