

New Mexico Department of Transportation

RESEARCH BUREAU

Innovation in Transportation

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the mission of the Research Bureau?

Our mission is to perform high quality applied transportation research which provides innovative solutions to transportation problems confronting our customers in the New Mexico Department of Transportation, the people of the State of New Mexico, our Nation, and the Community of Nations. The Bureau seeks to accomplish this mission through close coordination with our partners and customers, consistent with strategic goals and key principles established by the Department.

2. How can the Research Bureau help me?

We serve all Districts, Divisions, Bureaus, and Sections of the NMDOT. We may partner with research institutes, universities, and the private sector to address construction, design, environmental, maintenance, materials science, multimodal, safety, and structural problems.

Below is a list of services we provide with approximate turnaround time:

- a. Information Referral (immediate response) that directs you to the right person with whom you can ask a question or discuss a problem
- b. On-Call Research (6 months) to address short-term, urgent requests.
- c. Literature Search (5 to 10 days) that identifies the best and most current practices used to address a problem (for example: erosion control, striping, snow fencing, toll roads, bridge replacement)
- d. Short-term Project (less than six months) that is conducted in-house by the Research Bureau staff (for example: overweight vehicle analysis, WIM data analysis, noxious weed management)
- e. Long-term Project (6 months to 24 months in length) that is contracted to a university, college, or consultant (for example, queue length modeling, testing of Ultra High Performance Concrete, reducing wildlife-vehicle crashes)
- f. Technology Transfer that takes existing technology (equipment and/or processes) and applies it to a new situation (for example: dust storm mitigation, fiber reinforced polymer study)
- g. Pooled Fund Study that combines our resources with those from other states to find solutions to a regional or national problem (for example: drainage design manual, Western Maintenance Partnership, Tire/Pavement Noise Reduction Consortium)

- h. Library that specializes in transportation research reports (TCRP, NCHRP, AASHTO, USDOT)

3. Who can propose a problem statement or research project?

Anyone, within or outside the NMDOT, can submit a problem statement. If the problem statement develops into a research project, it must have a Sponsor and an Advocate from the NMDOT.

4. What are the responsibilities of the Sponsor and Advocate?

A Sponsor is an NMDOT Bureau Chief, Division Director, or District Engineer who is willing to certify the need for the research. An Advocate is an NMDOT employee who is directly involved in defining the scope of the research project, guiding the research, and reviewing deliverables. The Advocate also attends quarterly progress meetings over the course of the project. Both the Sponsor and Advocate are responsible for implementing the results of the research.

5. What is the process to propose a problem statement?

The first step is to complete and submit a Research Request Form. If you have questions about the form, contact Research Bureau staff.

Next, Research Bureau staff will evaluate the submission to determine which of the services (in Question 2) is most appropriate. If a Research Request requires action beyond a literature search, the Research Oversight Committee (ROC) and the Federal Highway Administration must approve the project before it moves forward. If approved by the ROC, the Bureau will determine how the project should be done: in-house, through a contractor, or a pooled fund study. If the research is done in-house or by a contractor, a Technical Panel that steers and implements the research will be formed. If an outside contractor is needed, the Bureau issues an Invitation to Propose (ITP) or Request for Proposal (RRP) and an independent panel selects a contractor who completes the research project. The advocate and sponsor are responsible for implementing the results.

6. Who decides which research projects are funded?

The Research Oversight Committee, composed of NMDOT Deputy Secretaries and the Federal Highway Administration Research Engineer, makes all funding decisions.

7. Can the Research Bureau find solutions for small problems?

Yes. We encourage you to submit problem statements of any size and as many problems statements as you want. Some of these problems will have quick solutions; others will require longer study.

8. Can the Research Bureau help me find out how other states are solving a problem?

Yes. This is usually done through a literature review.

9. Can the Research Bureau buy equipment or technology for my section or crew?

Yes and no. Yes, if the equipment is necessary to answer the problem statement or is a transfer of technology to solve a different problem than the technology was designed to solve. No, if the equipment is something you simply need but don't have the budget to buy.

10. Where can I find examples of research problem statements?

Contact the Engineering Coordinator at the Research Bureau.

11. Is the research you conduct implemented?

Yes. Contact us for examples.

12. Do you have a library?

Yes. The Library has thousands of catalogued publications and internet access to more than a million transportation documents. The online catalog is available 24 hours a day.

13. Who can use the Research Bureau Library and when is it open?

The Library is open to the public M-F from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. except for public holidays and occasionally when the Librarian is traveling. It is located at 7500 Pan American Freeway, NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109. We advise our customers to telephone email or fax the librarian if you wish to visit the physical library to ensure a qualified person is available to assist you. If you have specific questions, please call 505.798.6740 to make an appointment with the Librarian. Only NMDOT employees, local transportation employees and employees of the Community of Nations transportation departments may check out materials directly. However, other persons who are interested can obtain a publication through their local library when asking for an interlibrary loan.

14. Whom should I contact if I have other questions?

Email research.bureau@state.nm.us or call Joseph G. Valdez, B.A., M.L.I.S., Research Bureau Librarian, at 505.798.6740. Fax: 505.798.6744.