

# Virtual Public Meeting Summary

## Jarales Road (NM 109) Railroad Grade Separation Project

(NMDOT Control Number A302220)

August 19, 2021

### Meeting Overview

The New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT), in cooperation with the BNSF Railway, hosted a Virtual Public Meeting for the Jarales Road (NM 109) Railroad Grade Separation Project (Project) within Valencia County, New Mexico. The Project is centered on a proposed highway–rail grade separation of Jarales Road (NM109) between Trujillo Road and Camino De Crystal. The purpose of the Project is to provide a safe, uninterrupted route for Jarales Road traffic across the BNSF railroad that will accommodate current and future rail operations. The need for the Project is to address critical conditions at the crossing including physical deficiencies, safety, travel congestion, and system connectivity. The purpose of the meeting was to present the selected alternative and receive input.

The virtual meeting was advertised in the *Valencia County News-Bulletin* newspaper on August 5, 2021. Copies of the meeting notice and an informational handout were mailed to approximately 235 property owners, businesses, organizations, agency and elected officials, and people who had attended and signed-in to previous meetings. The notice was also emailed to approximately 95 elected officials, agency representatives, community organizations, and individuals in the Project area. In addition, more than 1,200 postcards announcing the meeting were delivered via the U.S. Postal Service’s Every Door Direct service to addresses on local postal routes in the Project area. The meeting was also announced on the NMDOT’s and Valencia County’s websites. Banner signs (3 x 6 feet) were also placed on Jarales Road on the north and south sides of the railroad tracks where vehicles stop to wait for crossing trains (photo below).



The meeting notice and advertisements invited the public to review the Project at the NMDOT website, <https://nm109.nmdotprojects.org/>, between August 5 and September 3, 2021. This website included a Project overview, information on the previous public involvement activities, Project reports and documents, and a Project timeline. For those without internet, Project team contact information was provided to help people participate in the meeting. Comments were requested at the live meeting or by email, mail, or phone by September 3, 2021.

The meeting notice (attached) invited the public to register for the live virtual meeting via Zoom through the link <https://bit.ly/jarales-zoom>. The meeting was held from 6:30 to 8:00 PM on August 19, 2021. At the beginning of the meeting, instructions were given on how to participate in Spanish and a separate channel was provided via Zoom with Spanish language translation. After an introduction to the Project team, a live narrated PowerPoint presentation was given (attached), followed by a public comment/question-and-answer period accessed via phone, email, and Zoom. Project team representatives were available to address questions and discuss the Project following the presentation. The Project team/panel members available to give the presentation and respond to questions included:

- Justin Gibson, NMDOT, District 3 District Engineer
- Jill Mosher, NMDOT, District 3 Assistant District Engineer
- Sandra Chavez, NMDOT, Project Development Engineer.
- Lindsay Mullins, BNSF Railway, Executive Director of Government Affairs
- Edward Cordova, Wilson and Company, Principal Engineering Consultant
- Kelly Heath, Wilson and Company, Structural Engineering Consultant
- John Taschek, Ecosphere Environmental Services, Inc., Environmental Planner
- Joey Herring, Ecosphere Environmental Services, Inc., Public Meeting Controls

Approximately 73 non-Project team members of the public registered for the meeting, with 57 attending/participating via Zoom and 14 via telephone. During the meeting, 29 comments were received via Zoom or email, and responses were provided by Project team members. During the comment period, 6 additional questions or comments were received by email or phone. The comments/questions are summarized below and included in detail on the following pages with responses where available. Meeting materials and written comments are included in the appendices.

**Table 1: Summary of Comments**

<b>COMMENT CATEGORY</b>	<b># COMMENTS</b>
Construction questions/schedule/detours/access at specific locations	7
Project support/recognize cooperative efforts of participants	5
Rail noise concerns/horns	4
Property acquisition/lack of contact with owners/taking at specific locations	4
Fuel truck traffic to BNSF yard	2
Property values/taxes/zone changes	2
Visual enhancements/barriers on the bridge	2
Access for farm equipment	2
Question on pedestrian facilities	1
Rail operations at other locations	1
Technical issues with Zoom/meeting assistance	3
Drainage pond questions/mosquitoes/weeds	1
Availability of Phase A/B report and BNSF plans	1
Request for presentation	1

## Comments at Live Presentation:

1. **Senator Greg Baca:** (live Zoom comment) I want to recognize the participation and contributions of the City of Belen, mayor and council; the Valencia County Commission; NMDOT and particularly Secretary Mike Sandoval; the BNSF and Lindsay Mullins for their continued investment in Belen and for living up to the responsibility of the bridge; and the citizens of Jarales, including Susan Cordova, who have made this Project happen. I appreciate everybody's time for being here tonight.

**Response:** (Joey Herring) Thank you for your comments Senator.

2. **Julia Dendinger:** (written Question and Answer function via Zoom [Q&A]) Will there be specific pedestrian "lanes" in the bridge or will foot traffic use the shoulder?

**Response:** (Sandra Chavez) There will be a paved shoulder for foot traffic. Sidewalks were not included on the bridge because there are no pedestrian facilities on NM 109 on either side of the railroad crossing, but there will be shoulders.

3. **Gene Martina Padilla:** (Q&A) Can you provide information in regard to the current fuel trucks contracted to provide fuel to BNSF trains per their route on Jarales Road? Also, in regard to the noise level impact.

**Response:** (Lindsay Mullins) I don't have information here regarding the routing of fuel trucks. I can get more information and provide it to you after the meeting. Rail noise is not expected to change much after the Project is complete.

(John Taschek) Regarding roadway noise, the higher elevation of the bridge is likely to project traffic noise further out into the community, but noise immediately adjacent to the structure will likely be lower. Because traffic volumes and speeds are quite low on Jarales Road, we are not expecting noise impacts. We are in the process of completing a traffic noise study.

4. **Steven Ferguson:** (Live Zoom) Will this bridge protect property values in a tax way or spread it out to the community? Will there be any tax increases?

**Response:** (Sandra Chavez) I am not aware of any tax increases. This may be a question for Valencia County in regard to more taxes resulting from increased property values. The Project costs are funded by the NMDOT and BNSF Railway.

5. **Steven Ferguson:** (Live Zoom) Another question, what would it take to move the stop signal for trains on the north side of Castillo Road to the south side? When Jarales Road is blocked, sometimes Castillo Road is also blocked by northbound trains stopped north of Castillo Road; sometimes they back up all the way back to Mill Road. You could move the stop signal south of Castillo Road on this very long, straight section of track and it would leave the intersection open.

**Response:** (Lindsay Mullins) The operation of the Belen Yard is complex, as mentioned earlier there are 90 trains per day. I will take this question to our team and get specific information. Our intent is not to interrupt the community, which is the purpose of the current Project.

6. **Gene Martina Padilla:** (Q&A) Has a review been done of farming equipment that will be traveling on the bridge. For example, tractors with cutting implements that are at 16 feet that will be traveling on the bridge. Will there be any blind spots that can impact the safety of both sides of the roadway?

**Response:** (Edward Cordova) We are considering a maximum 5-percent grade on the bridge, which is appropriate for the design speed, and we have looked at sight distances. There will be adequate sight distance and room for safe stops.

7. **Bennie Padilla:** (Q&A) Why did I not get a survey if the road in front of my house will be affected?

**Response:** (Sandra Chavez) We have contacted all of the property owners whose land will be taken for right-of-way. If you send an email or contact information, we will get in touch with you directly.

8. **Beatrice Jojola:** (Q&A) How much property will be taken from Camino De Crystal on the east side going south?

**Response:** (Sandra Chavez) None at this time.

9. **Eugene Pickett:** (Live Zoom) This Project is a tremendous and positive step. It will have a positive impact on the whole area. This is an emergency route. Also, have you been in contact with Willie Walker, who lives near the tracks and may be impacted by right-of-way taking?

**Response:** (Sandra Chavez) Thank you for your support. Yes, we have been in contact with the Walkers.

10. **Eugene Pickett:** (Live Zoom): I understand the need for social distancing, but the difficult technical aspects of Zoom in a rural community may be why more people haven't been getting on the meeting. I think there is more support and interest than is reflected here tonight

**Response:** (Sandra Chavez) Yes, we understand what you are saying. The meeting is being recorded and will be available to view on the NMDOT's Project website. The comment period will extend until September 3.

11. **Jesse Sanchez:** (Q&A) Will the construction sequence start with the improvements on Gallegos Road to allow access to residents on Lazy Lane before it's closed off?

**Response:** (Edward Cordova) Yes, we will build the Gallegos Road improvements before closing Lazy Lane. We will also build the Duke Road improvements before closing Jarales Road.

12. **Steven Ferguson:** (Live Zoom) In the previous plan, the drainage pond was closer to the tracks. Now in the current plans, it's closer to Duke Road. Will it fill up with water and create mosquitoes? Also, who will clean up weeds? They were big this year.

**Response:** (Edward Cordova) Yes, it was in a different location. We moved it to optimize the amount of right-of-way taken. The pond won't be very deep, 3 ½ feet at the deepest. It will drain

within a day and we don't anticipate mosquitoes. We don't know yet who will be responsible for weed control, either Valencia County or the NMDOT.

- 13. Gene Martina Padilla:** (Q&A) In regard to the traffic study has it been reviewed as to the increase of fuel trucks carrying fuel to the BNSF rail lines?

**Response:** (Lindsay Mullins) Lots has happened with the pandemic. BNSF's business has declined. We are looking at supply chain challenges. As a result, we don't have a date for expansion of the Belen Yard. We still endeavor to grow, but there is no timeline now. Additional fuel truck congestion is not expected in the near future.

- 14. Bennie Padilla:** (Q&A) When will I need to be vacated? I have not received any information about the pay out of my land. When will that be sent out? Also, is the County Commissioner involved in this project?

**Response:** (Edward Cordova) We have talked to all the property owners whose land will be acquired. We will contact you directly.

(Justin Gibson) Valencia County is a partner and stakeholder in the Project. The BNSF managed the Phase A/B Study and the NMDOT is managing the environmental documentation and design. The County is a stakeholder, but they are not directly responsible for the Project.

- 15. Jay Dub:** (Q&A) You gave an estimated start time of late summer/early fall 2022 for construction. What is the expected length of time until completion?

**Response:** (Sandra Chavez) The design should be complete in late fall and construction will start in 2022. It is likely that construction will require two seasons, so 1 to 2 years. We don't know exactly at this point.

- 16. Michael Lovato:** (Q&A) Will Jarales Road stay open during bridge construction?

**Response:** (Sandra Chavez) No, it will be closed during construction.

- 17. David Hyder, County Commissioner:** (Q&A) Can you explain detours during construction?

**Response:** (Edward Cordova) We are currently working on the 60-percent design. The preliminary discussions with the County include using NM 346 to south and Reinken Avenue to the north for detours. Local traffic will still use Castillo Road.

- 18. Lina Benavidez, Valencia County Public Works Director:** (Q&A) Will the County see a traffic control plan prior to construction? I am concerned about semi-trucks detouring on Castillo and Mill Roads.

**Response:** (Edward Cordova) We will submit traffic control plans to the County with the 60-percent design.

- 19. Anthony Maestas:** (Q&A) The concrete barriers on the River Road bridge block the view of the river while crossing. Is it possible to consider using a metal barrier to increase the view of the land?

**Response:** (Sandra Chavez) Yes, we can consider use of a metal barrier. We have to comply with the BNSF's requirements for a crossing over their tracks. We will look into it.

- 20. Steven Ferguson:** (Live Zoom) When construction starts on the south side where the retaining wall will be located, will Jarales Road be closed. Also, will trains continue to blow their horns after the bridge is complete.

**Response:** (Sandra Chavez) Yes, we will have to close Jarales Road when construction starts. Lindsay can address the question of horn blowing.

(Lindsay Mullins) In theory yes, but horn blowing is governed by Federal Railroad Administration rules that train operators have to follow. When the crossing is in place, horn blowing should stop. You may still hear horns from operations at other locations up and down the rail corridor. We may be able to implement a quiet zone for the area. We will have to look into it.

- 21. Steve Ferguson:** But at least the Project will reduce horn blowing.

- 22. Gene Martina Padilla:** (Q&A) Will the tax zone be changed into an industrial area?

**Response:** (Sandra Chavez) We are not aware of any zone changes that would result from the Project.

- 23. Ignacio Gallegos** (email): I am a homeowner, who has the property to the north side on Gallegos Road which is slated to be partially reduced. This is a question for BNSF. Is the BNSF Phase A/B study available for public view? Is this presentation available? Also, Concerning the expansion of the BNSF rail lines and depot, are there plans available to view? Finally, concerning noise, the idling of trains creates a low hum and shaking. While the noise from trains horns will be reduced, I worry that the ambient noise will be increased. Are noise mitigation efforts in the plans?

**Response:** (John Taschek) The Phase A/B report is available on the NMDOT website and the presentation and recording of this meeting will also be placed on the website.

(Lindsay Mullins) We don't expect rail noise to change much after the crossing is completed. Things will remain as they are now. At this time, no plans are available for rail yard expansion, including the number of tracks.

- 24. Gene Martina Padilla:** In regard to the concrete design, can you consider incorporating a decorative concrete design similar to the NMDOT bridge with I-25 and Los Lunas or similar to Albuquerque I40 decorative community design?

**Response:** (Kelly Heath) Yes, we will look at decorative design options for the bridge.

- 25. Ignacio Gallegos:** As a follow-up concerning the ambient noise, it is not the noise from the yard that I am concerned with, it is the noise of trains idling as they wait to cross the river bridge or as they wait to enter the yard. The trains idle just to the east of the current Jarales crossing.

**Response:** (Lindsay Mullins) We will consider your comment. I will take it back to the company. We have regulations that control idling, for example to maintain air in the brake system. I'm not sure what we can do, but we will look into it.

- 26. Danny Monette, Valencia County Manager:** (Live Zoom) Valencia County will continue to be a partner on this Project. We want to keep everybody informed and have a dialog on issues like property values and control of mosquitoes.

**Response:** (Sandra Chavez) Thank you. The NMDOT will also continue to be a partner with the County on the Project.

- 27. Steven Ferguson:** (Live Zoom) I want to thank the whole organization for tonight's meeting. I live next to the tracks. Trains leaving sometimes play with the horns and it's a high noise level. Is there a complaint number when this happens? Sometimes there are 10 to 15 blasts late at night.

**Response:** (Lindsay Mullins) I'm sure it can be frustrating. I'm always impressed by how much people in the neighborhood know about railroading. If you give me your address I will follow up with you.

- 28. Fernando Darcangeli:** (Q&A) Thank you, great meeting!

**Response:** (Joey Herring) Thank you for attending. We apologize for the technical difficulties. Does anybody else have questions? Does the NMDOT have anything to add?

- 29. Lina Benavidez, Valencia County Public Works Director:** (Q&A) Thank you! Great meeting. Very informative.

**Response:** (Sandra Chavez) Thank you for your participation. If anybody thinks of anything else, let us know.

(John Taschek) We had lots of good comments tonight. The comment period goes until September 3<sup>rd</sup>. We will then put together a meeting summary and post it on the website.

(Edward Cordova) Thanks, good questions. Mr. Padilla, we will be in contact regarding your property.

**Follow-up Response:** (Edward Cordova) I contacted Mr. Padilla this morning. He told me that 529 was his address, but his house is on the Westside of the road, across from the Mascarena's. I informed him that we were not purchasing any homes on the westside of the road. He was glad to know that we were not affecting him. When the Project is complete he would have to use the frontage road to get to his home.

He also wanted to know what direction the new tracks were going to be built. I told him there are plans for new tracks on both sides of the existing tracks and our new bridge would go over all of them.

He thanked me for getting back to him and had no more questions.

## Other Comments not Addressed Live at the Meeting:

1. **Alicia Lopez, Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD):** (Q&A) This project crosses three MRGCD facilities and we are here to help in the review and licensing of proposed modifications.

**Response:** (Joey Herring) Thank you for your help.

2. **Helen Walton:** (Q&A) When will additional tracks begin construction? How will the construction of those tracks impact traffic on 109?

**Response:** (John Taschek) At this time, no schedule or plans are available for rail yard expansion. Jarales Road (NM 109) will be closed during construction of the additional tracks and overpass Project. A traffic detour plan will be developed as the design proceeds.

3. **Jesse Sanchez and Crystal Conner:** (email) We live at 19 Lazy Lane and received the flyer for the Jarales Road project and have some concerns with the plan and access to our home. We farm around the area and use Lazy Lane to bring equipment in and trailer loads of hay to our property. Our concerns are with Lazy Lane becoming a dead end on the south end by the railroad tracks, and access entry from Gallegos Road to the north of us. Currently Gallegos Road is narrow with a sharp 90 degree turn to the south making it impossible to turn a truck and 32-foot trailer south on to Lazy Lane, as well as driving a 16-foot-wide hay cutting machine down Gallegos Road. We would really appreciate it if someone could come out and take a look at the situation that will impact our access.

**Response:** (John Taschek) I will pass your comments on to the project engineers and add them to the record. If you can, attend the upcoming virtual meeting and we will be in touch further about your concerns. Thank you for your comments.

(Edward Cordova) Nice talking to you on the phone this morning. As discussed, we plan on widening Gallegos Road to accommodate 2-11' driving lanes with 2 foot shoulders. Gallegos Road will be end up being a basecourse/gravel county road. We ran a turn template with a 33' trailer, and you should be able to turn your trailer, but do need to use most of Gallegos Road and Lazy Lane to do so. The Cul-de-Sac at the end of Lazy Lane will also allow you to turn your trailer.

You had mentioned that you would like to see Gallegos Road widened before we close Lazy Lane. We haven't developed our construction staging yet but will definitely consider having this as one of the first tasks.

If you would like to meet and talk more about the project, please do not hesitate to reach out to Sandra Chavez (NMDOT Project Manager) or myself. Sandra is CC'd. Thanks for reaching out to us.

4. **Henry Gabaldon:** (phone 8/20/21) Mr. Gabaldon requested a copy of the meeting presentation so he could view the maps in more detail.

**Response:** As we discussed yesterday, here is the Jarales Rd. RR Overpass meeting presentation.

5. **Tony Carrillo** (phone 8/12/21) Mr. Carrillo requested help accessing the Zoom meeting.

**Response:** The link below will take you the meeting registration page. Press and hold down the Ctrl key on your computer and left click the link. The Zoom Registration page will come up. Fill in your name/information and click the Registration button. In a few minutes you will get an email from Zoom with a link that will connect you to the meeting at the designated time (6:30 pm) on August 19. I hope this works but let me know if you need some assistance.

6. **Benita Montano** (phone 8/12/21) Ms. Montano requested assistance accessing the Zoom meeting.

**Response:** The link below will take you the meeting registration page. Press and hold down the Ctrl key on your computer and left click the link. The Zoom Registration page will come up. Fill in your name/information and click the Registration button. In a few minutes you will get an email from Zoom with a link that will connect you to the meeting at the designated time (6:30 pm) on August 19. I hope this works but let me know if you need some assistance.

Public Meeting Summary Submitted by John Taschek, Ecosphere Environmental Services, Inc.:

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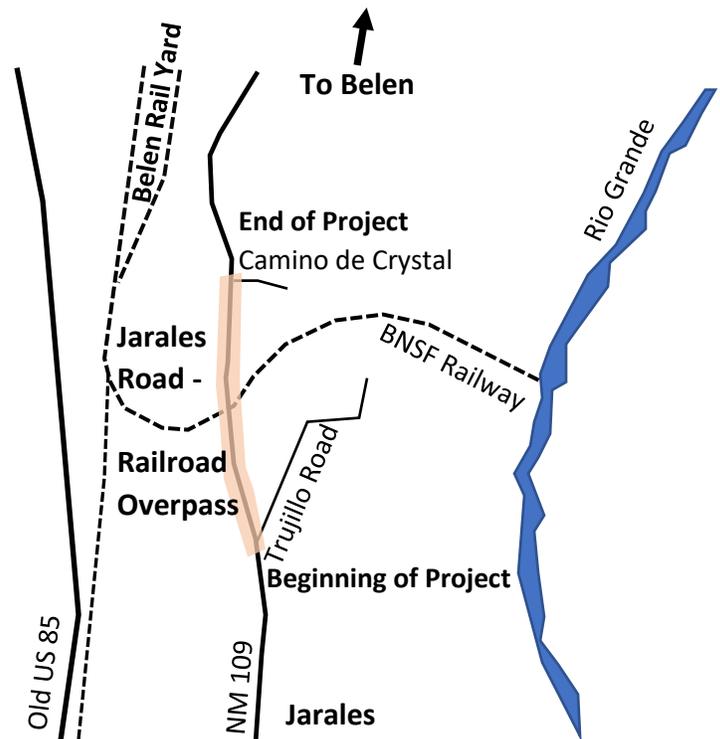
Date 9/13/21

## **Appendix A: Meeting Notice**

## Live Virtual Public Meeting Jarales Road (NM 109) Railroad Grade Separation, Project A302220 August 19, 2021

The New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT), in cooperation with the BNSF Railway, is hosting a Virtual Meeting to discuss a proposed highway–rail grade separation of Jarales Road (NM109) between Trujillo Road and Camino De Crystal. The **purpose of the Virtual Meeting** is to present the selected alternative and receive your input. The meeting will involve a short presentation with time available for questions and discussion.

The **purpose of the project** is to provide a safe, uninterrupted route for Jarales Road traffic across the BNSF railroad that will accommodate current and future rail operations. The **need for the project** is to address critical conditions at the current crossing including physical deficiencies, safety, travel congestion, and system connectivity.



### How to Participate:

**When:** Thursday, August 19, 2021  
6:30 to 8:00 PM via Zoom

**How to Join:** Register for the Zoom meeting with the following link: <https://bit.ly/jarales-zoom>  
Telephone Option: 1 253 215 8782 and Meeting ID: 835 9514 4900

**Meeting Format:** During the meeting, a Project presentation will be given and a question and answer session will follow. NMDOT and BNSF representatives will be available to address questions and discuss the proposed improvements.

**Spanish Language:** Se proporcionará traducción al español en la reunión.

**Record of Meeting:** We will record the meeting so you may view it later on the website below.

### How to Obtain More Information:

**Website:** Additional project information can be viewed at the following NMDOT website:  
<https://nm109.nmdotprojects.org/>

**Meeting Assistance:** To request assistance in participating in the meeting without internet, contact John Taschek at 505-980-0993.

**Spanish Language:** Para obtener información en español, comunicarse con Kellye Junchaya al 505-610-9232 o [junchayas@msn.com](mailto:junchayas@msn.com).

### Comments can be submitted during the meeting and by mail or email:

Attn: Jarales Road (NM 109) and RR Grade Separation  
Ecosphere Environmental Services, Inc.  
320 Osuna Road NE, Suite C-1  
Albuquerque, NM 87107 or  
[itaschek@ecosphere-services.com](mailto:itaschek@ecosphere-services.com).

**Please submit your questions or comments no later than September 3, 2021.**



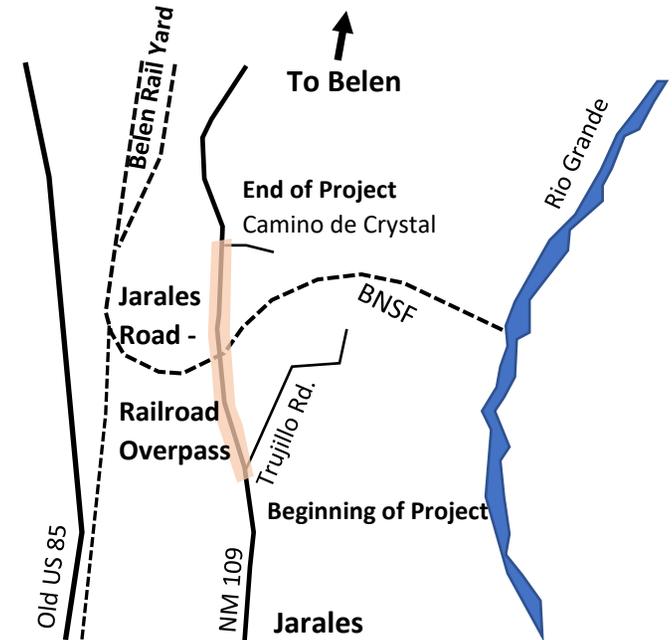
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 Albuquerque, NM 87107 or  
[itashchek@ecosphere-services.com](mailto:itashchek@ecosphere-services.com).  
**Submit comments by September 3, 2021.**

Attn: NM 109/Railroad Grade Separation  
Ecosphere Environmental Services, Inc.  
320 Osuna Road NE, Suite C1  
Albuquerque, NM 87107





# Live Virtual Public Meeting

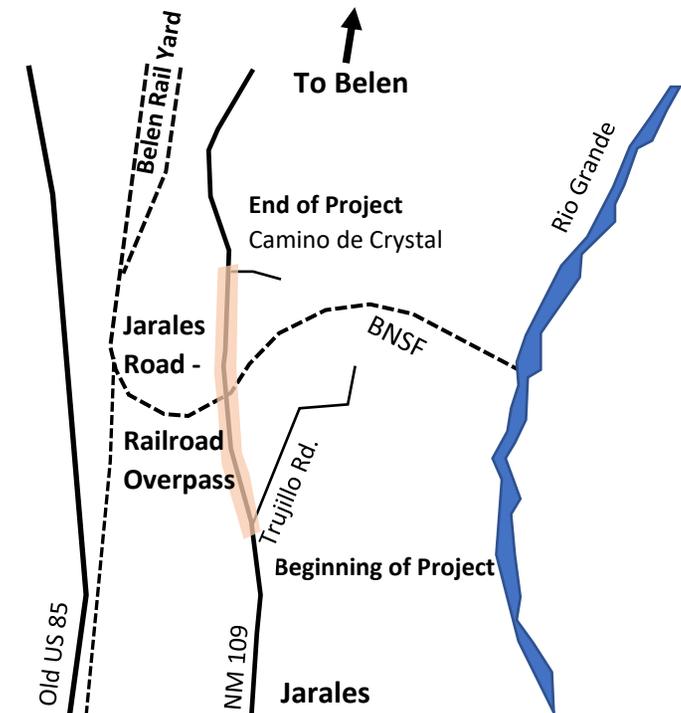
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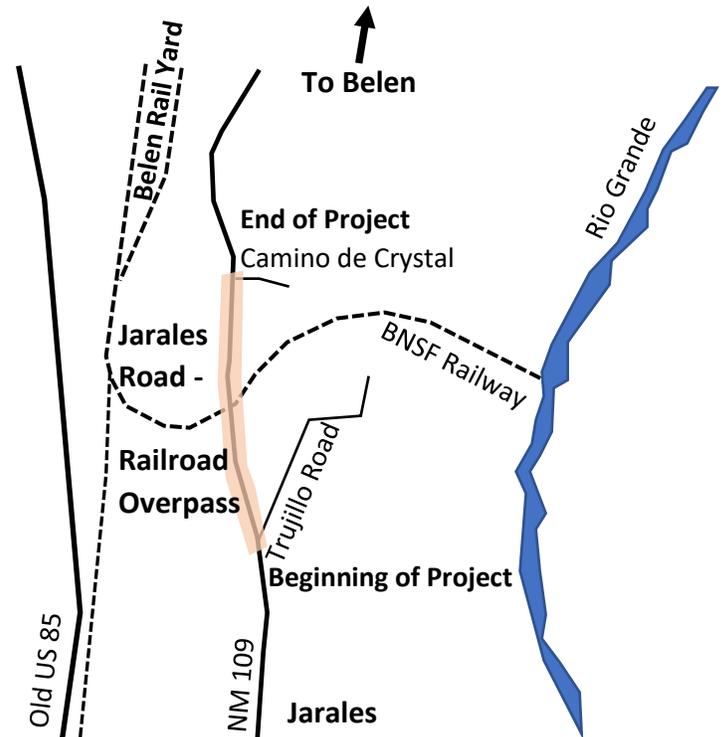
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**Please submit your questions or comments no later than September 3, 2021.**

## Project Background

The NMDOT, in cooperation with the BNSF Railway, propose to replace the existing at-grade railroad crossing of NM 109 and the BNSF tracks at the east end of BNSF’s Belen Yard. The BNSF proposes to construct eight additional tracks through the corridor to add capacity for the Railway’s operations. Due to concerns about increased vehicular and rail traffic, public access, and emergency service response times, the BNSF and NMDOT have determined that a grade separated crossing is needed. As part of the study, public meetings were held June 11, 2019 and August 18, 2020, at which times alternatives were presented and the preferred alternative was discussed.

## Purpose and Need

The purpose of the project is to provide a safe, uninterrupted route for pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular traffic along NM 109, while accommodating current and future rail operations. Specific needs are based on:

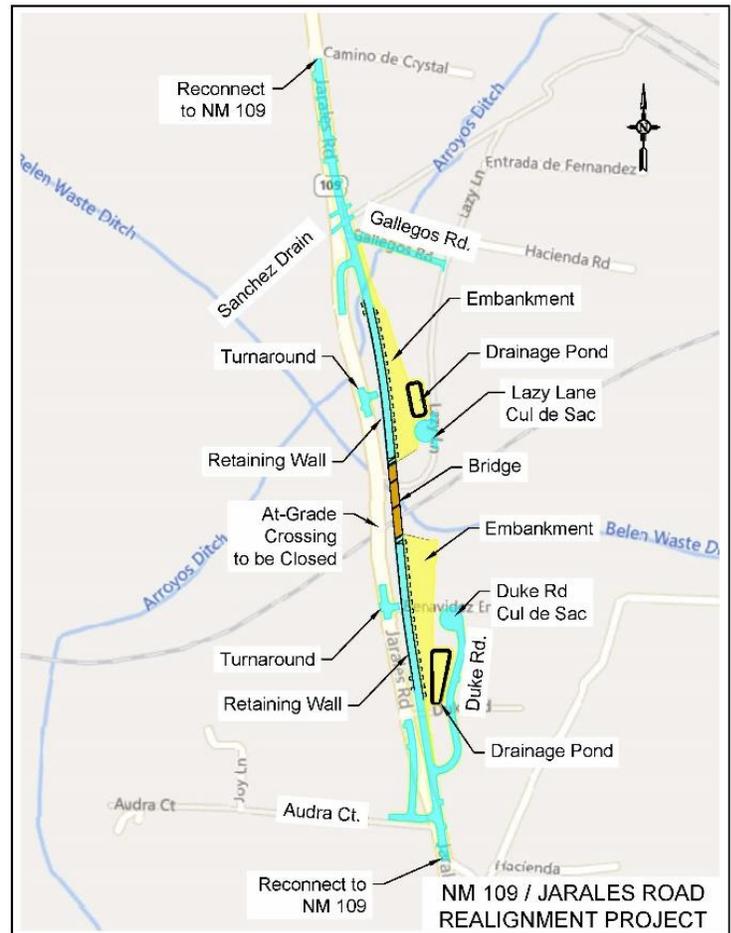
- **Physical Deficiencies** – shoulders are not adequate for bicycles and pedestrians.
- **Safety** – is an inherent concern for road/rail at-grade crossings. Five vehicle/train accidents have occurred in the past 10 years.
- **Travel Demand and Congestion** – will be impacted with growth in rail operations and the addition of tracks, impacting response times for emergency services.
- **Access** – relates to driveway and cross street spacing, which exceeds NMDOT standards and can affect safety and traffic operations.
- **System Connectivity** – access between areas served by NM 109 to the north and south is restricted by current conditions. Future railroad expansion plans would increase this problem.

## Project Description

The project includes a new alignment about 70 feet east of existing Jarales Road with a bridge over the railroad. The design would include a combination of embankments and retaining walls and irrigation crossings would be extended or replaced. Existing Jarales Road and several local roads would be realigned and/or reconnected to the proposed new roadway. Drainage ponds would also be created on the east side of the new alignment. See the project website for more information.

## Project Development Process

The project was developed in accordance with the NMDOT’s Location Study Procedures. The previous Phase I/A/B study identified a preferred alternative in 2019/20. The environmental documentation, concurrent with project design and right-of-way acquisition, are ongoing. Construction is expected to be completed in 2023.



Public Involvement We are here.

## **Appendix B: Meeting Presentation**

## Virtual Public Meeting #3

August 19, 2021

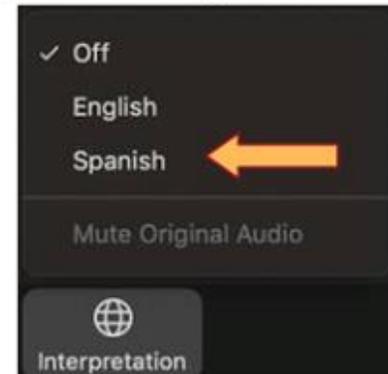
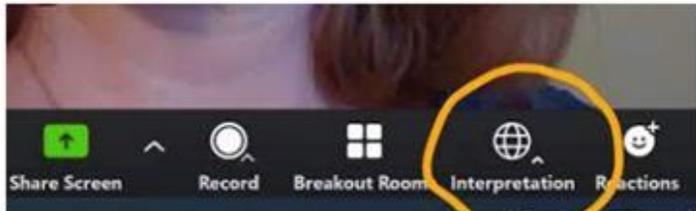
# NM 109 (Jarales Rd) Railroad Grade Separation

CN A302220



## Para Escuchar esta Presentación en Español

1. Haga clic en el icono de "interpretación."
2. Haga clic "Spanish"

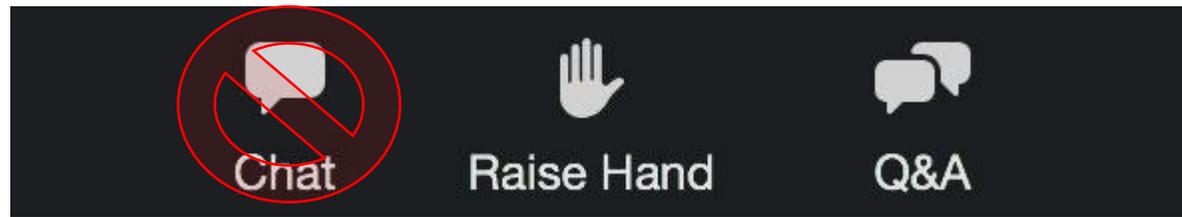


3. Para escuchar solo en español, debe hacer clic en "Mute Original Audio"

# Your Meeting Controls

## How to use your meeting controls to ask a question or provide your comments:

- Use the raise your hand button to raise your hand
- If you are on the phone press \*9 to raise your hand
- Use the Q&A button to type in your question
- Or email your question to [jtaschek@ecosphere-services.com](mailto:jtaschek@ecosphere-services.com)



# Agenda

## 6:30 – 7:00 Presentation

- Welcome: Project Team and Introductions
- Project Location, Background, and Existing Operations
- Purpose and Need
- NMDOT Study/Design Process and Project Timeline
- Proposed Improvements
- Environmental Impacts
- Public Input Opportunities
- Next Steps

## 7:00 – 8:00 Question and Answer

# Introductions

- **NMDOT**

- Sandra Chavez – NMDOT Project Development Engineer
- Justin Gibson – NMDOT D3 District Engineer
- Jill Mosher – NMDOT D3 Assistant District Engineer

- **BNSF**

- Lindsay Mullins – Executive Director of Government Affairs, BNSF

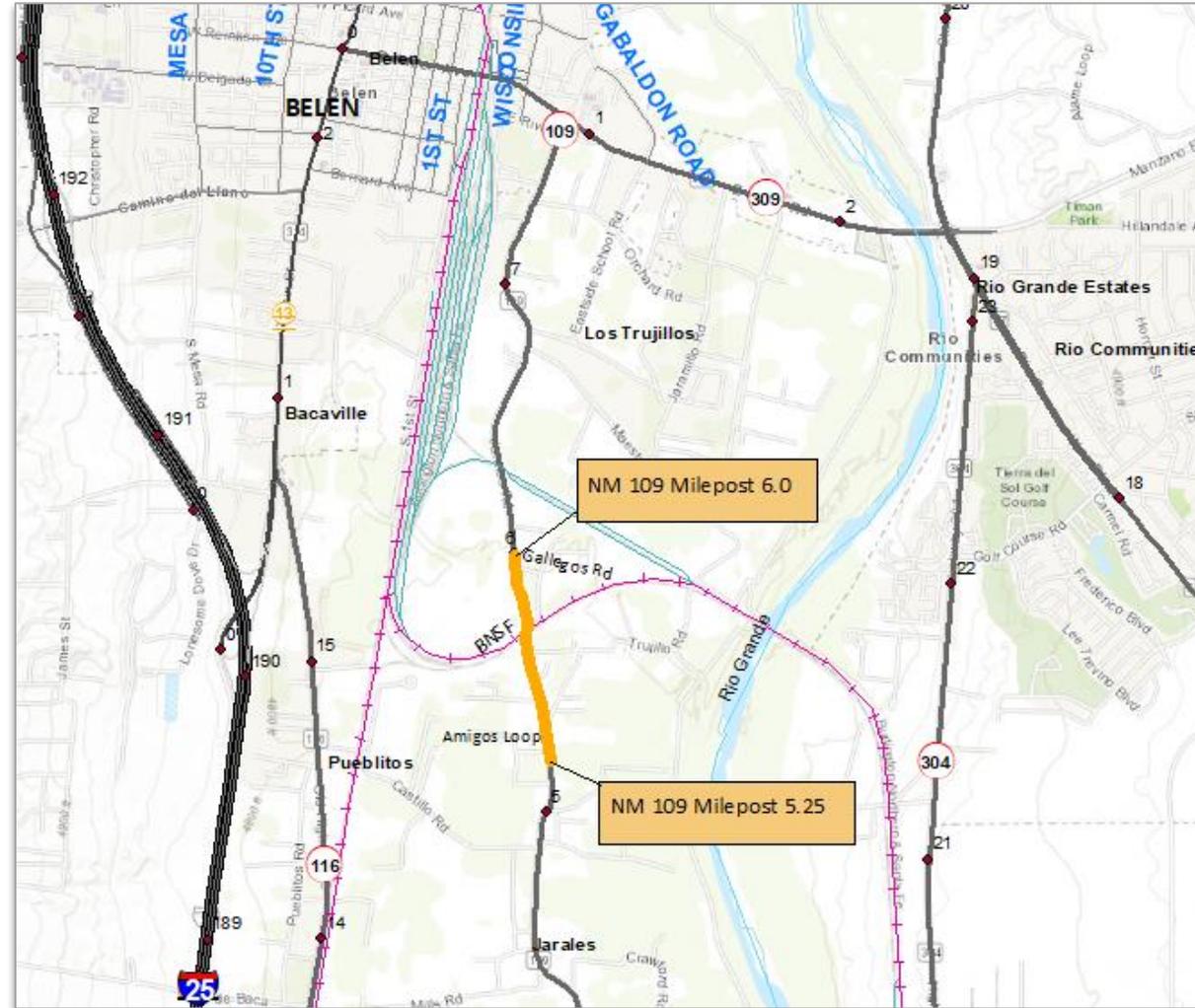
- **Wilson & Company**

- Edward Cordova – Principal Engineer
- Kelly Heath – Structural Engineer

- **Ecosphere**

- John Taschek – Environmental Planner

# Project Location



# Background

- Jarales Road currently crosses three BNSF railway tracks as an undivided at-grade signalized crossing.
- NM 109 is the main north/south corridor between Belen and Jarales.
- On average, 90 trains per day move in both directions at this crossing. Some trains are nearly 2 miles long.
- Realignment of NM 109 70-feet (+/-) east with a new bridge over the railroad tracks.



## Purpose & Need

The purpose of the project is to provide a safe, uninterrupted route for Jarales Road traffic across the railroad corridor that accommodates current and future rail operations.

The project is needed to address several critical conditions identified for the current at-grade crossings. These conditions include physical deficiencies, safety, travel congestion, and system connectivity.

These needs are addressed with the introduction of a grade-separated intersection.

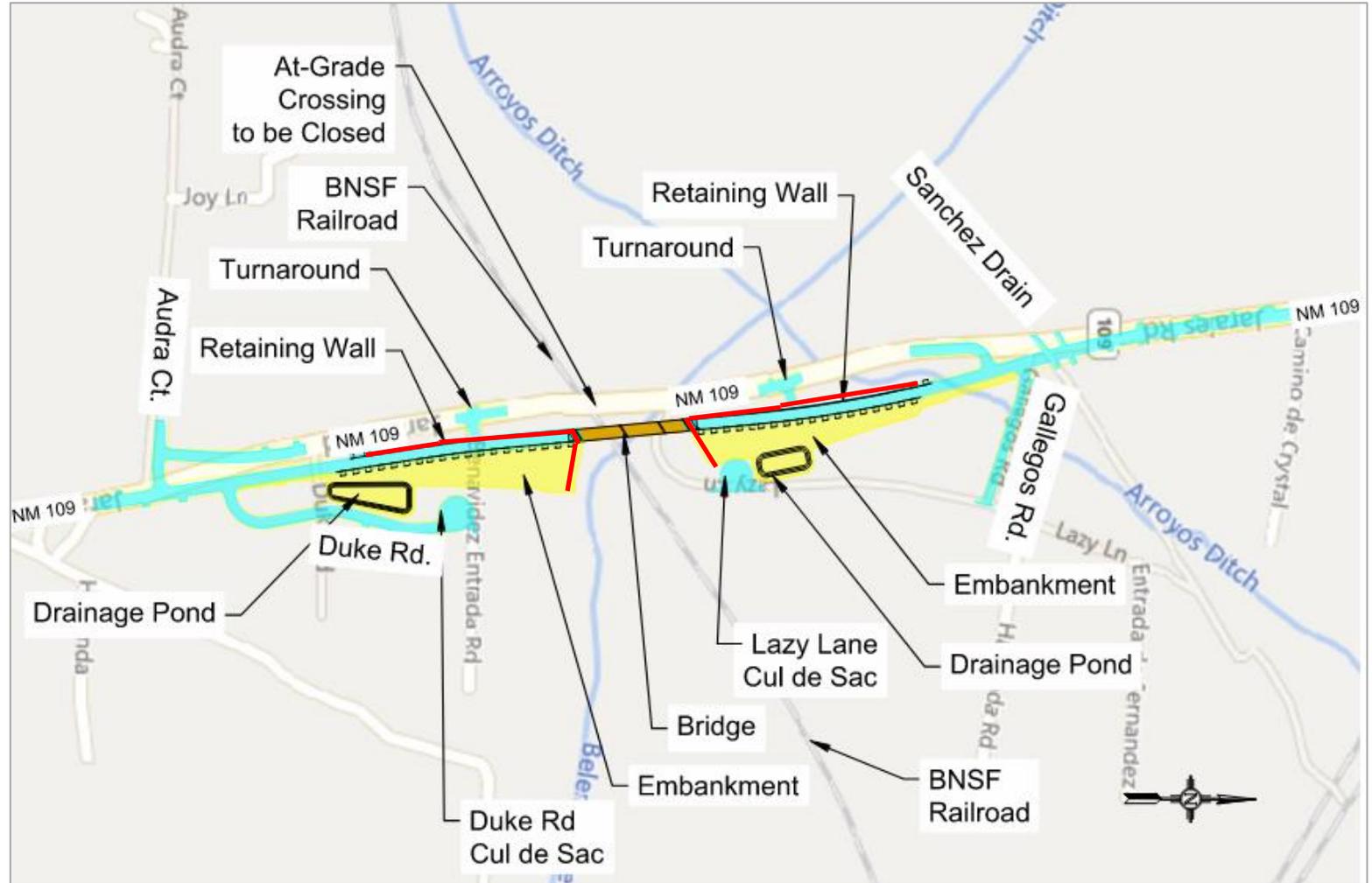
# Project Timeline

PRELIMINARY DESIGN	APRIL 2021
GEOTECHNICAL INVESTIGATIONS	JULY 2021
RIGHT-OF-WAY ACQUISITIONS	JULY 2021 – MARCH 2022
ENVIRONMENTAL	OCTOBER 2021 ( <i>DRAFT</i> )
60% DESIGN	OCTOBER 2021
FINAL	MARCH 2022
<hr/>	
BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION	SUMMER/FALL 2022

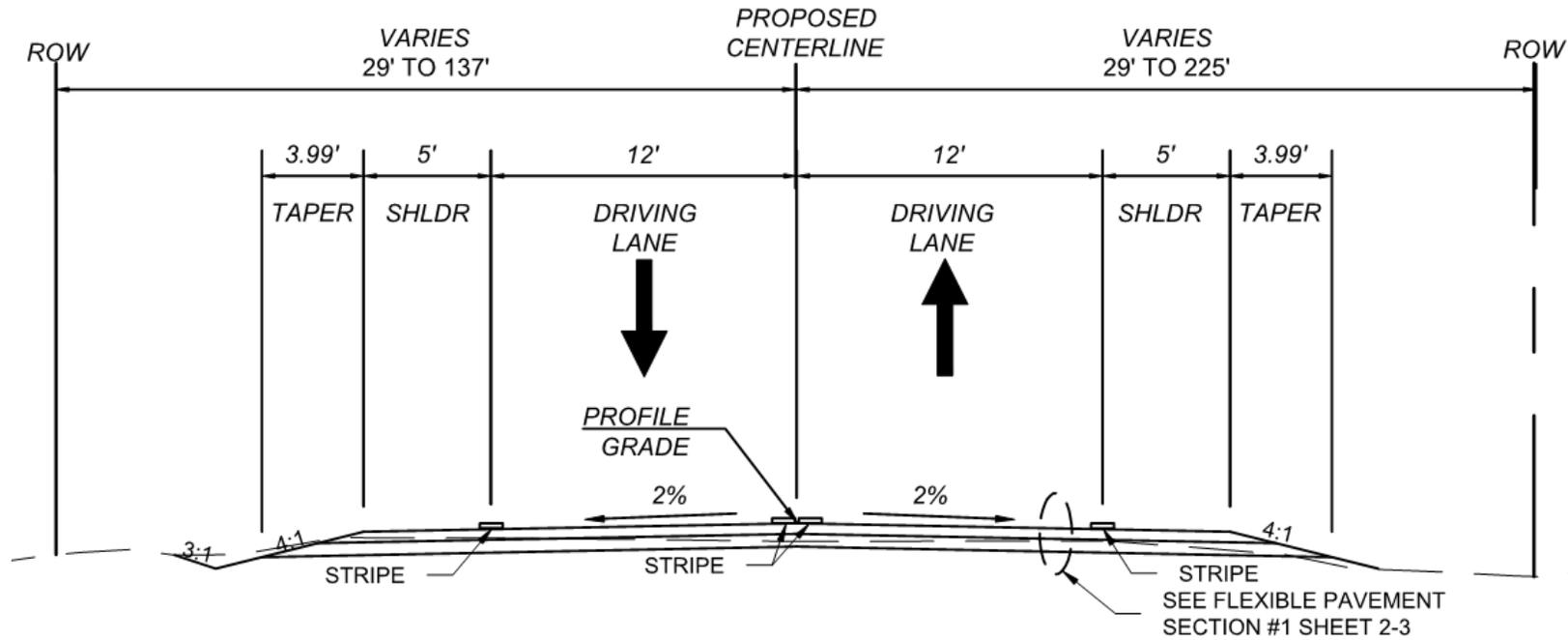
# Proposed Improvements Layout

**KEY**

-  ROAD IMPROVEMENTS
-  EMBANKMENT
-  BRIDGE
-  RETAINING WALL

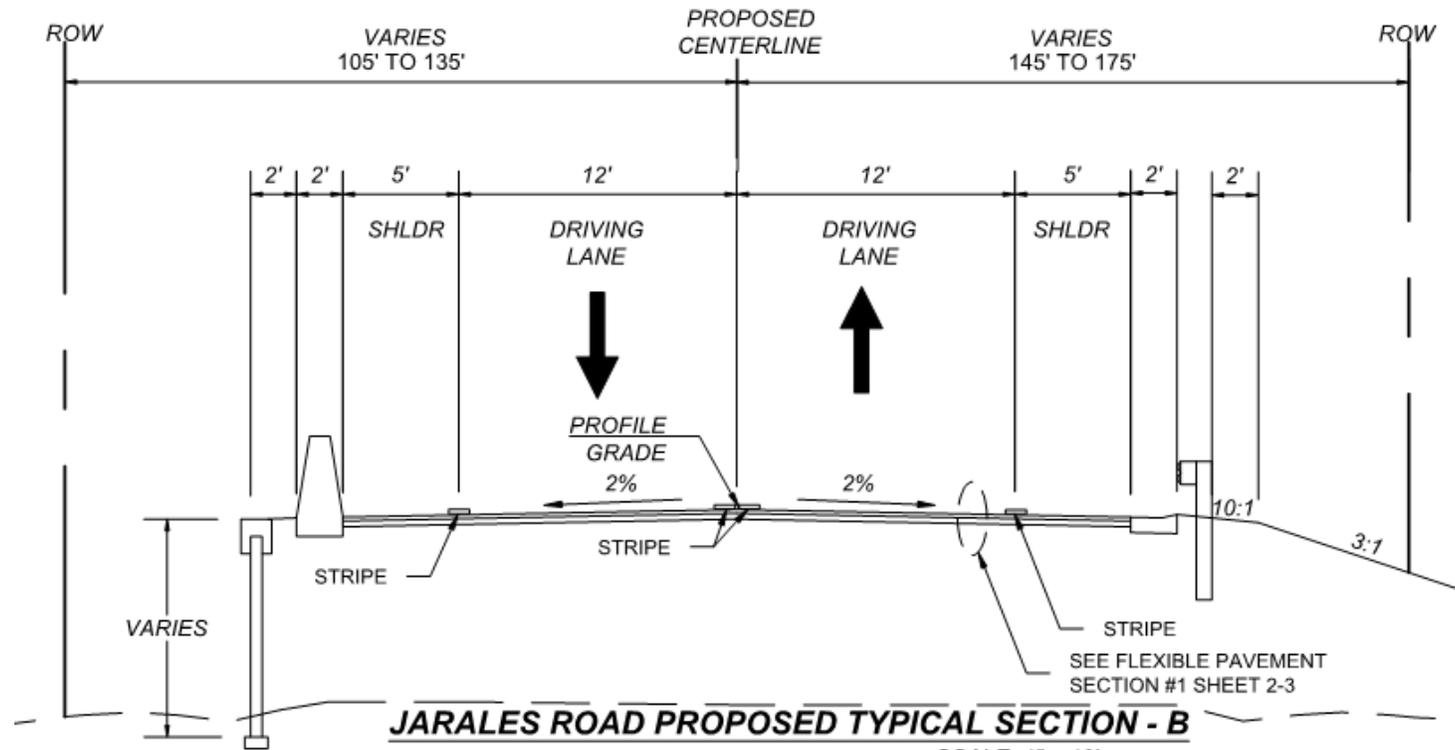


# Proposed Roadway Typical Sections



**JARALES ROAD PROPOSED TYPICAL SECTION - A**

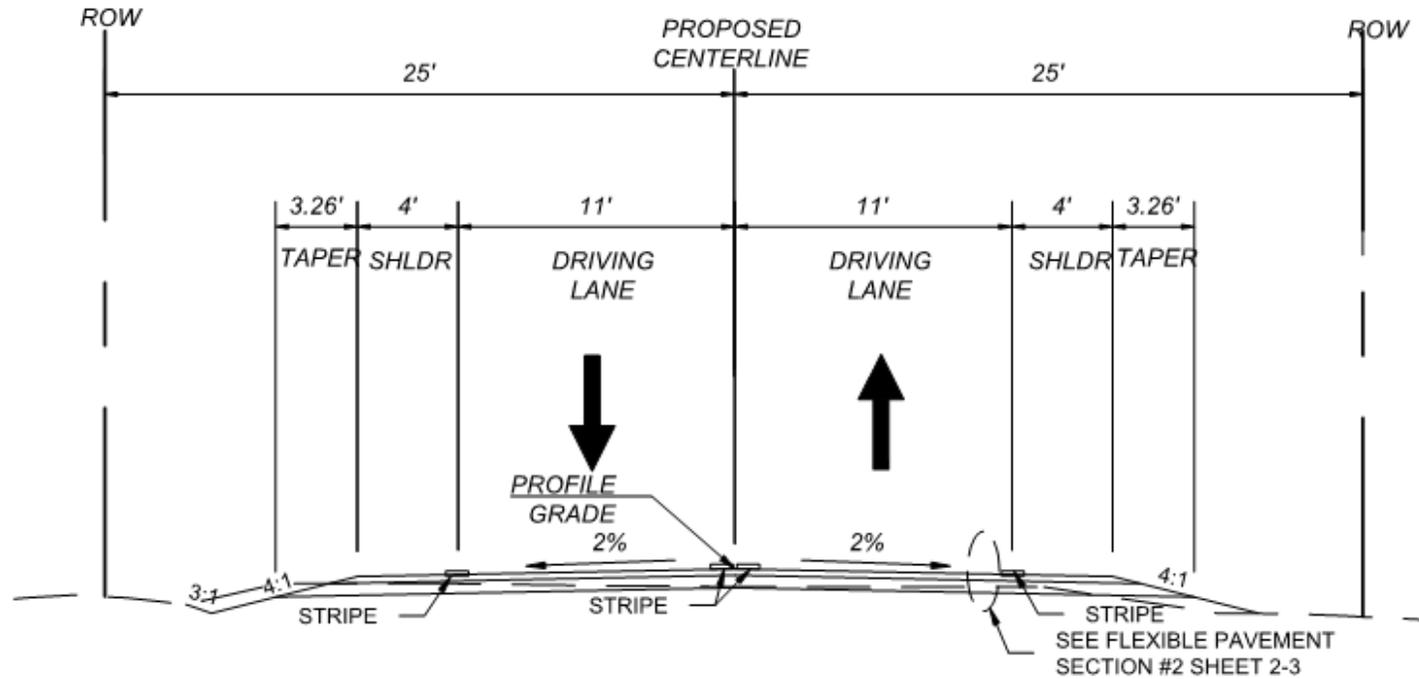
# Proposed Roadway Typical Sections



Roadway climbs to proposed bridge

West Side -Concrete Wall Barrier, MSE Wall East Side- Guardrail

# Proposed Roadway Typical Sections



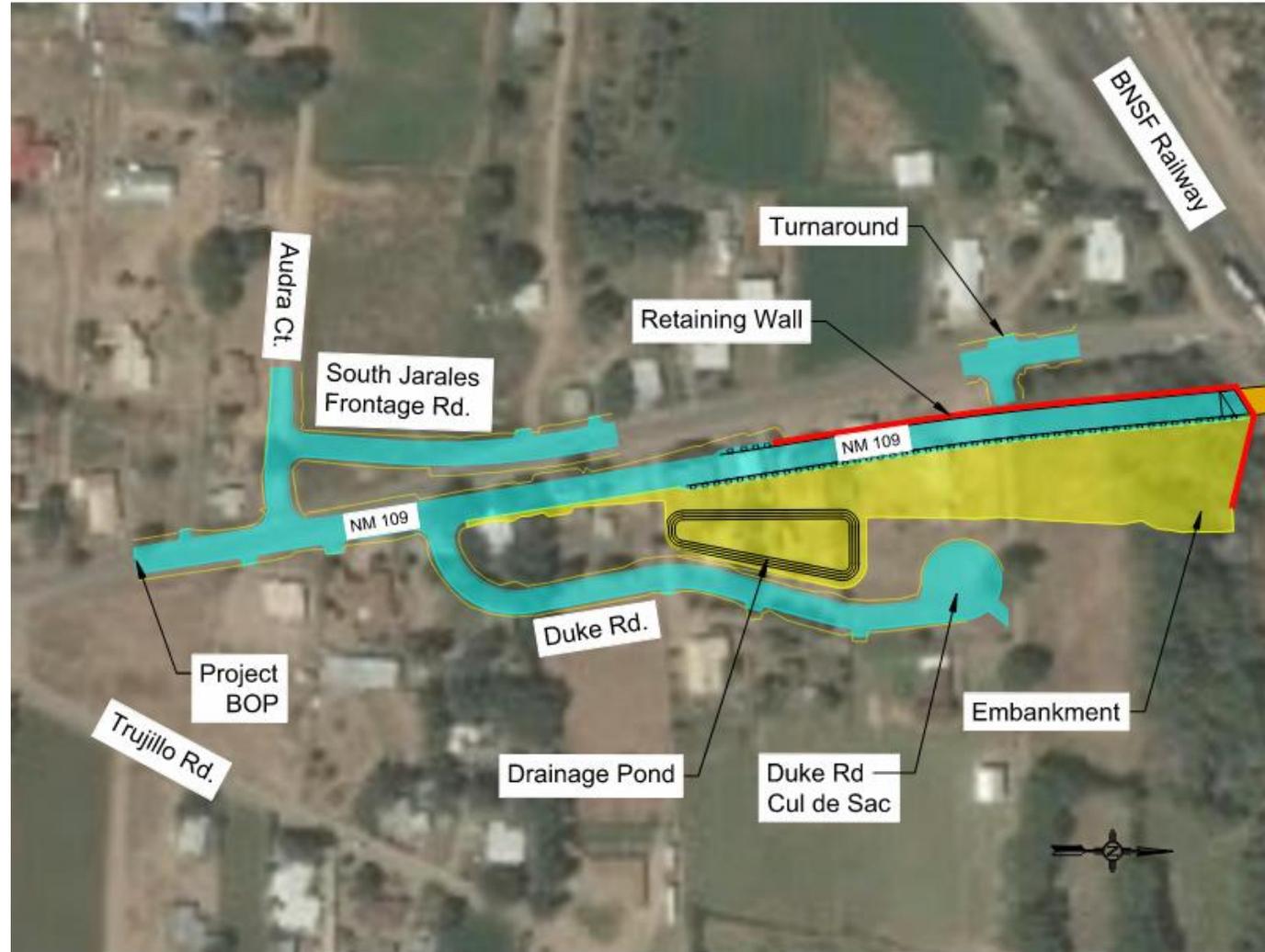
Side Roads – Two 11-ft lanes & 4-ft shoulders\*  
North/South Jarales Frontage Roads, Audra Ct, Duke Rd

\*Gallegos Rd will have 2-ft shoulders

# South End Project Details

**KEY**

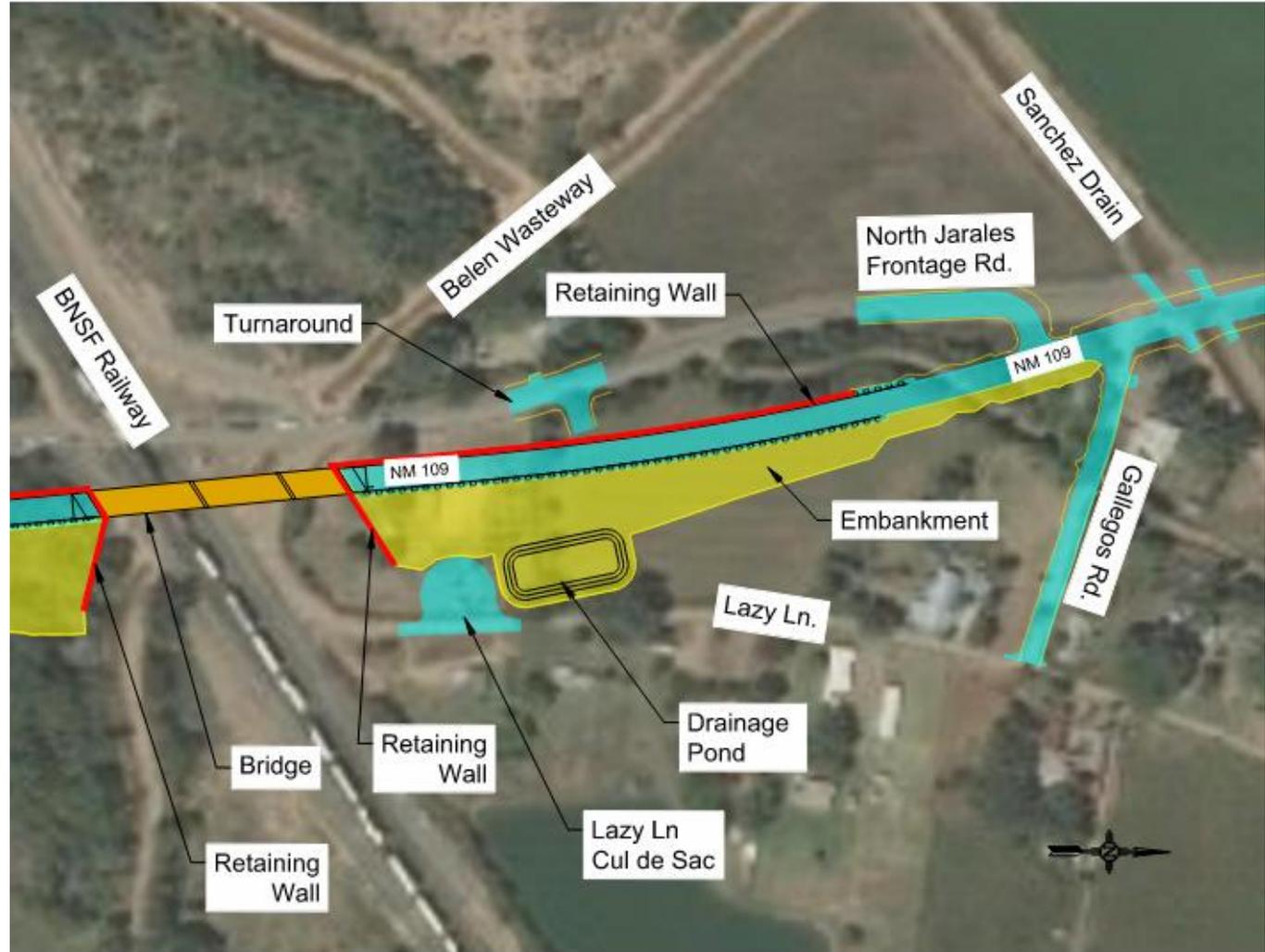
-  ROAD IMPROVEMENTS
-  EMBANKMENT
-  BRIDGE
-  RETAINING WALL



# Middle Project Details

**KEY**

-  ROAD IMPROVEMENTS
-  EMBANKMENT
-  BRIDGE
-  RETAINING WALL



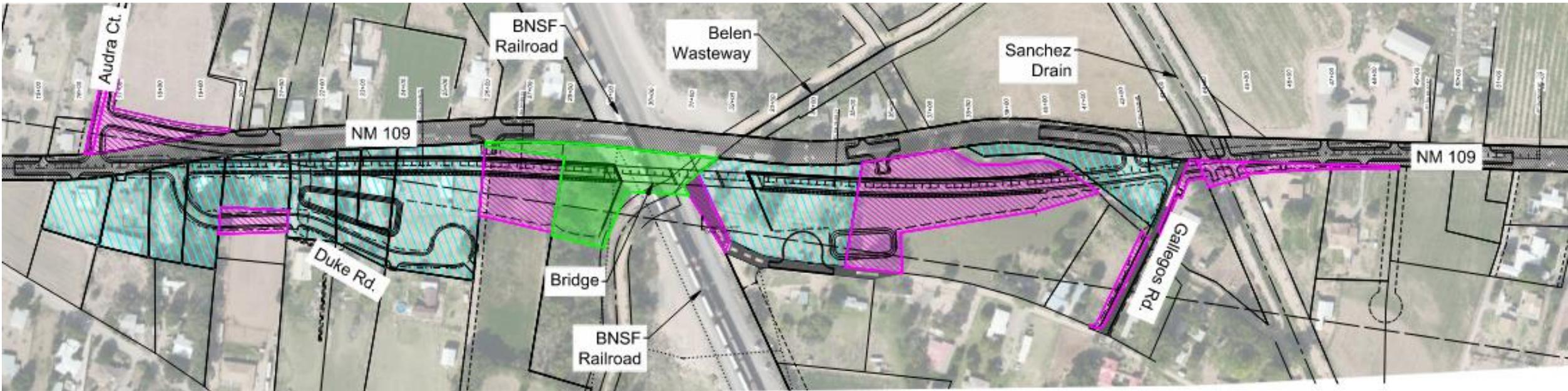
# North End Project Details

**KEY**

-  ROAD IMPROVEMENTS
-  EMBANKMENT
-  BRIDGE
-  RETAINING WALL



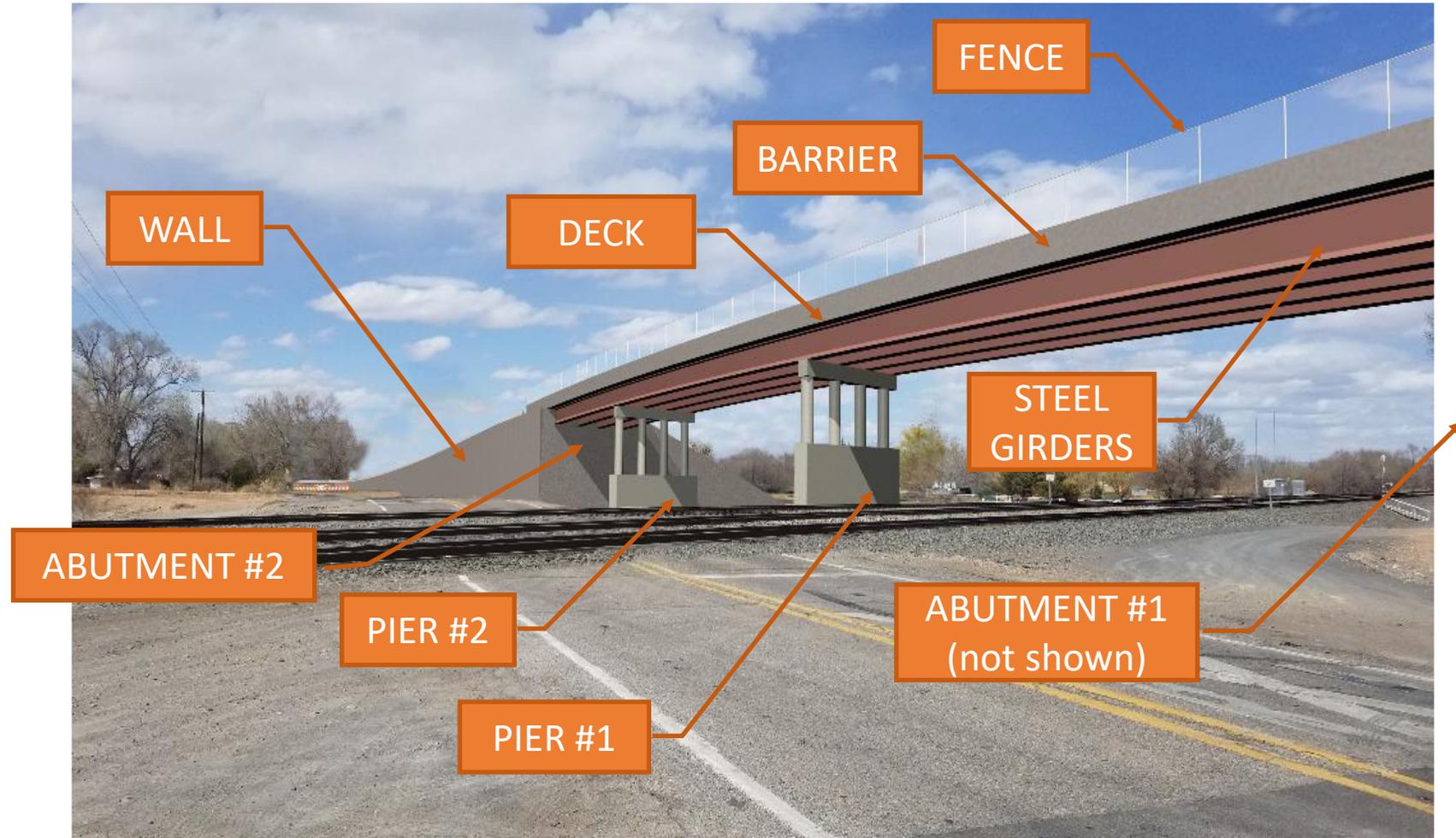
# Right-of-Way



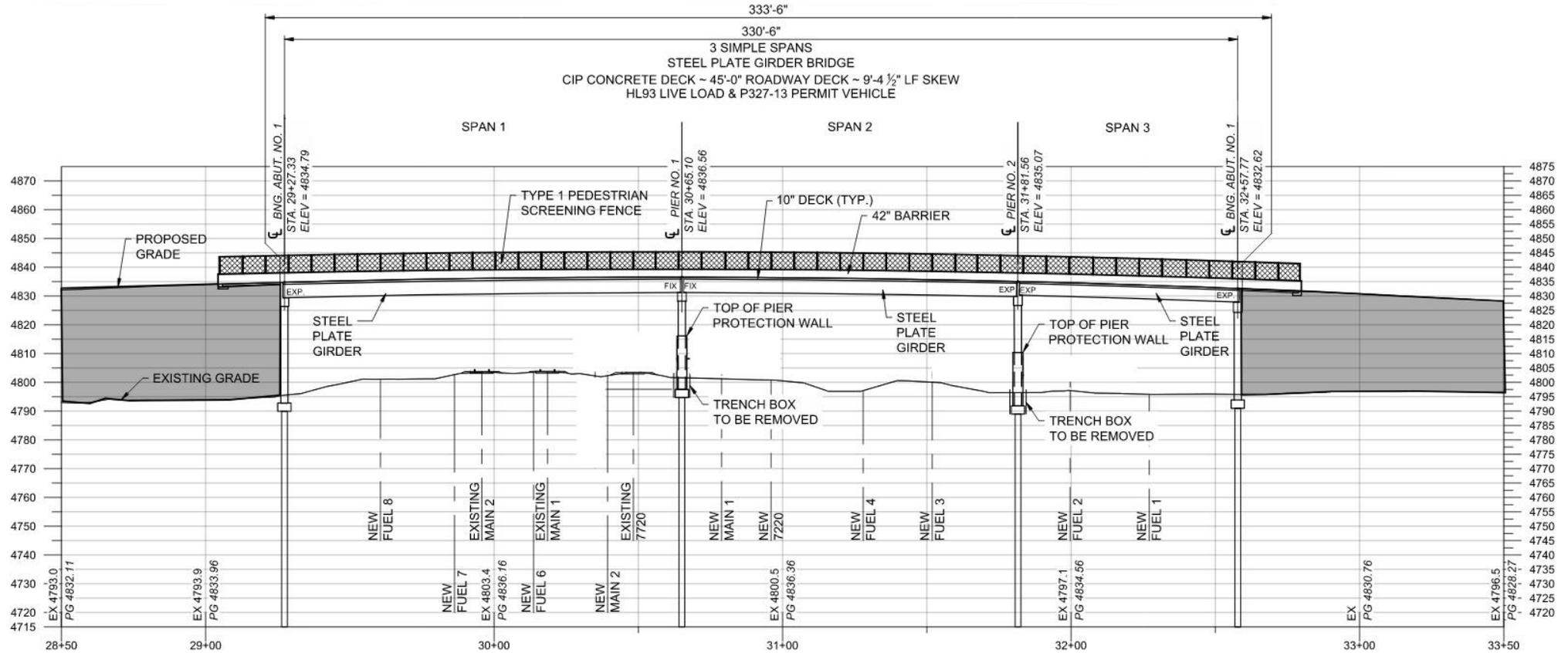
## KEY

-  FULL ROW TAKE
-  PARTIAL TAKE
-  BNSF EASEMENT

# Bridge



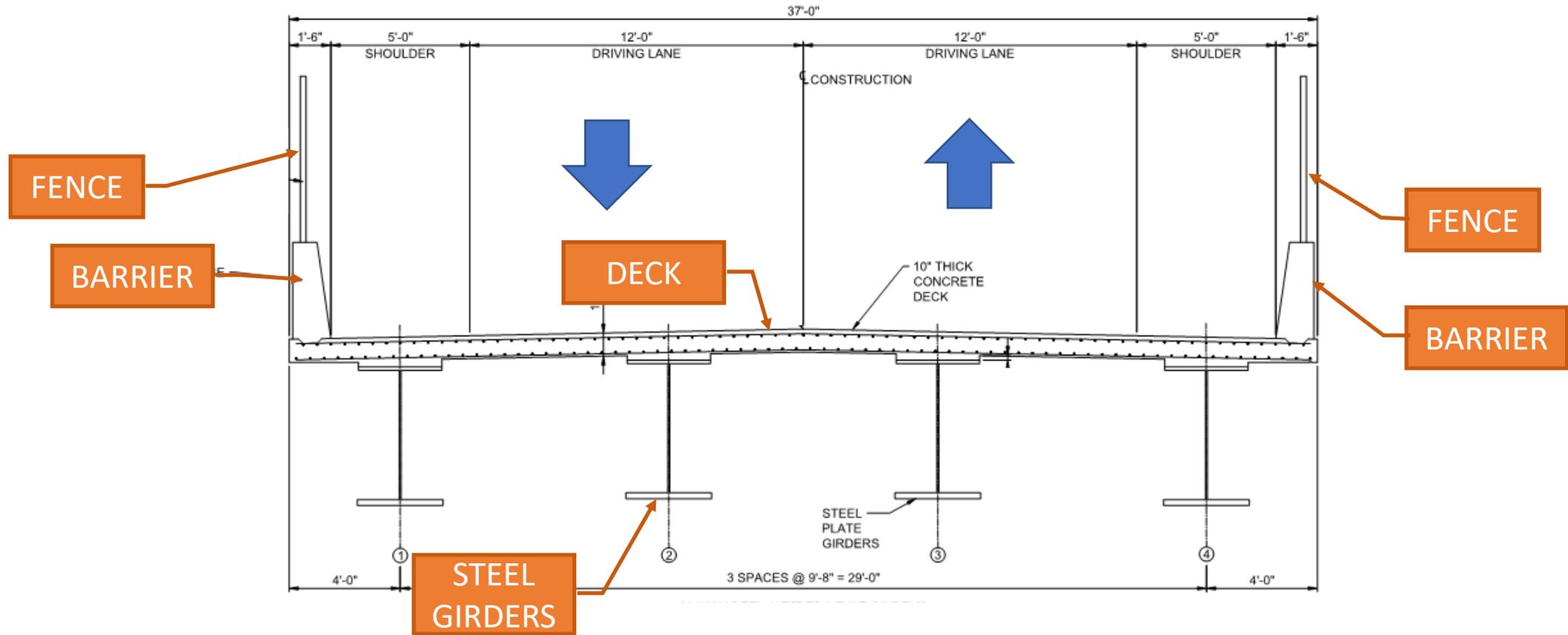
# Proposed Bridge Elevation



**STRUCTURE ELEVATION**

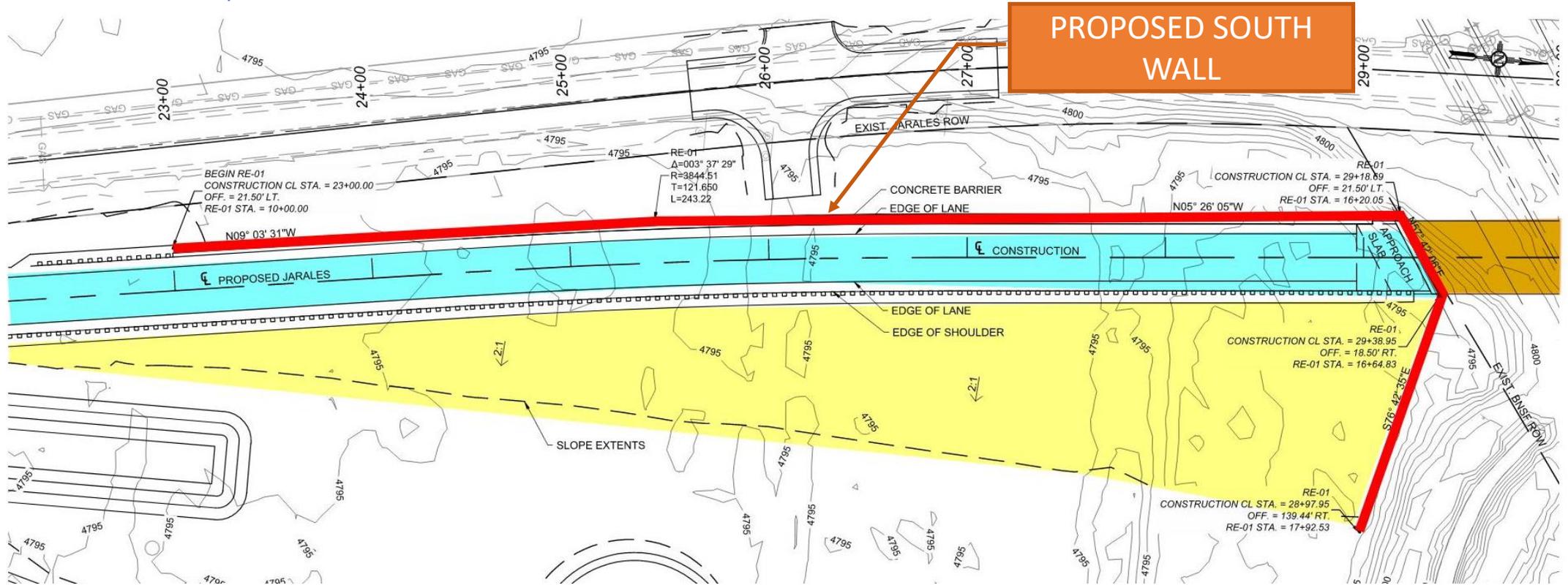
SCALE = 1:40  
 \*MEASURED PERPENDICULAR TO PIER.

# Proposed Bridge Typical Sections



Two 12-ft lanes & 5-ft shoulders

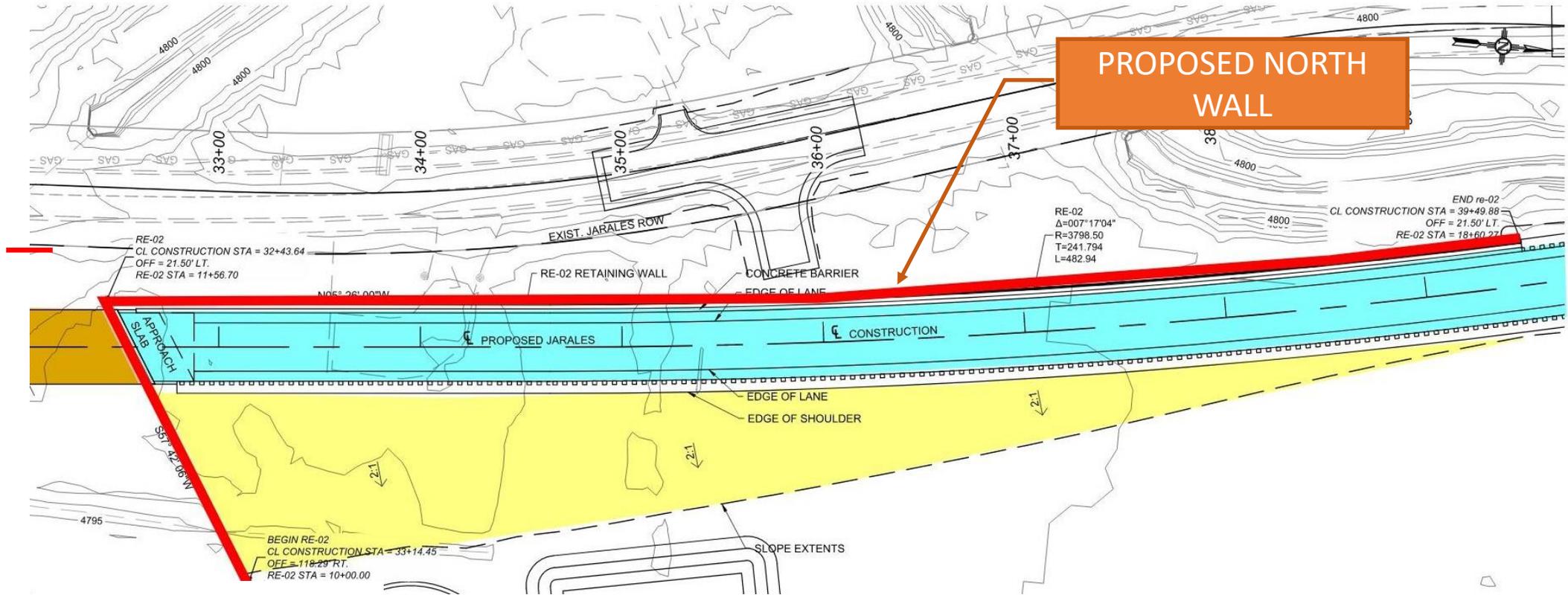
# Proposed Walls



**KEY**

- NEW JARALES RD.
- EMBANKMENT
- BRIDGE
- RETAINING WALL

# Proposed Walls



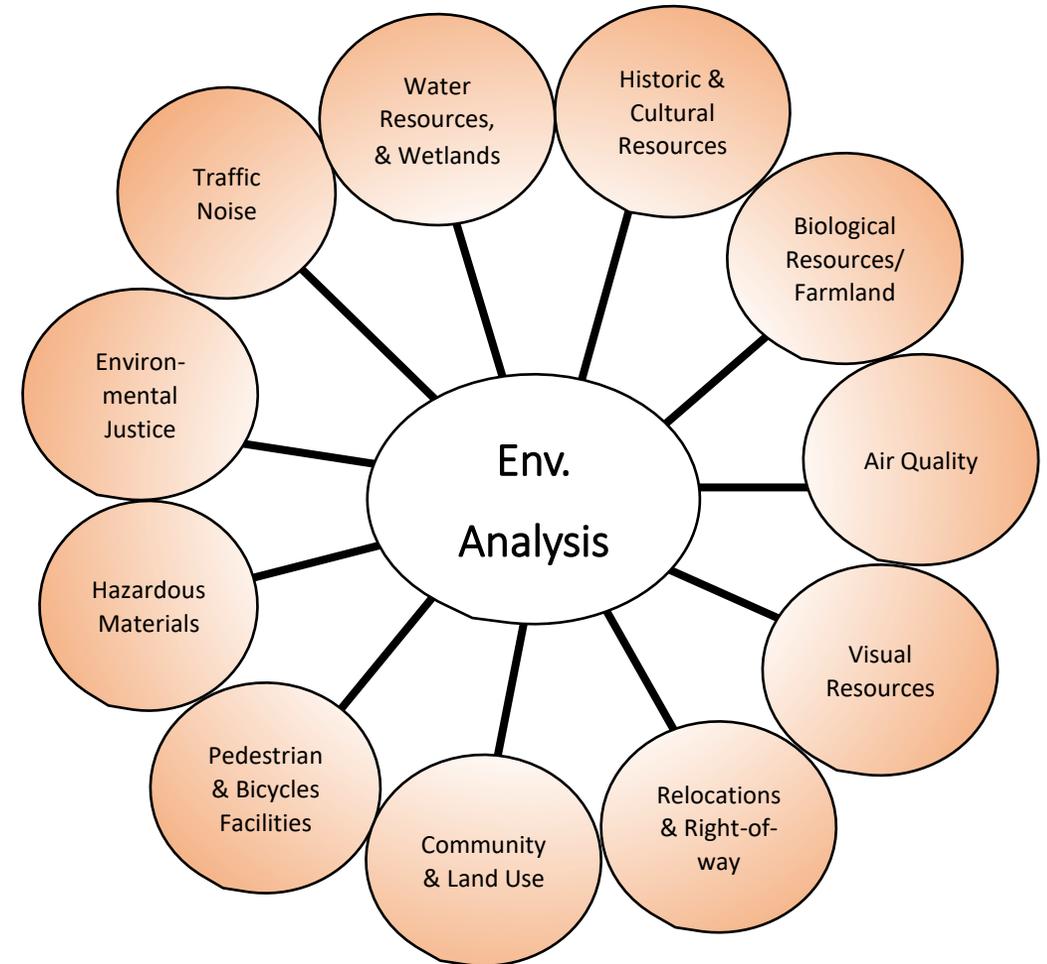
**KEY**

- NEW JARALES RD.
- BRIDGE
- EMBANKMENT
- RETAINING WALL

# Environmental Considerations

## Process:

- NMDOT is preparing a categorical exclusion for the project.
- Environmental factors are being considered in the project decision-making process.
- A wide range of environmental factors are considered as shown here, but only those relevant to the project are studied in detail.



# Key Issues for this Project

## NATURAL RESOURCES

- Minor impacts to vegetation, resulting in loss of wildlife and bird nesting habitat.
- Preconstruction surveys for migratory bird nests will be conducted if construction cannot be scheduled outside of the migratory bird nesting season (March 15 to September 15).
- Some loss of farmland, but access for equipment and irrigation facilities maintained.
- Disturbed, previously vegetated areas will be reseeded/planted.



# Cultural Resources

- A Class III pedestrian survey identified:
  - 3 isolated occurrences,
  - 28 historic buildings,
  - 3 irrigation ditches,
  - the railroad alignment, and
  - El Camino Real (Jarales Road).



- The historic buildings present in the corridor were not recommended as eligible for listing on the National Register due to modifications and condition issues that impact their historic integrity.
- Extensions/modifications of irrigation ditches but use/functions will remain intact.
- Pending agency review, *no adverse effects* to eligible properties are anticipated because their function and character-defining features will be retained.

# Noise

- Expected changes in road noise from bridge elevation, but overall noise increase is expected to be minimal.
- Rail noise will increase from additional tracks and train operations.

# Community/Land Use

- Beneficial effects to safety, regional mobility, and emergency services responsiveness.
- Impacts to local access and neighborhood character.
- Residential relocations and right-of-way acquisition.

# Visual Resources

The bridge would be a major, new element in the landscape.

The bridge would create shadows during certain times of the day and year.

WE INVITE YOUR  
INPUT ON POSSIBLE  
AESTHETIC  
TREATMENTS FOR  
THE BRIDGE.



# How to Participate

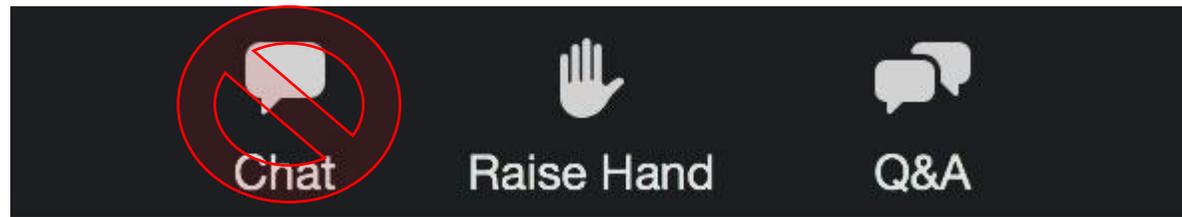
- Visit the Project Website, <https://nm109.nmdotprojects.org/>, and complete the Comment Form.
- A record of the Virtual Meeting will be Posted on the Website
- E-mail Comments to: [jtaschek@ecosphere-services.com](mailto:jtaschek@ecosphere-services.com).
- Mail Comments to:  
Attn: NM 109 RR Grade Separation  
Ecosphere Environmental Services, Inc.  
320 Osuna Road NE, Suite C-1  
Albuquerque, NM 87107

Please submit your comments no later than September 3, 2021

# Your Meeting Controls

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NM 109 (Jarales Rd)  
RR Grade Separation  
CN A302220  
Virtual Public Meeting



## **Appendix C: Written Comments**