



# State of New Mexico

## *Office of the Governor*

**Bill Richardson**  
Governor

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### **Governor Richardson Kicks Off Significant Improvements to U.S. 64/87 Between Raton and Clayton**

(Raton, N.M.) – Gov. Bill Richardson on Thursday joined local and state officials to break ground on improvements to U.S. 64/87 between Raton and Clayton.

This is a Governor Richardson's Investment Partnership (GRIP) project that involves widening an 81-mile stretch of highway from two lanes to four lanes. Governor Richardson named the highway in honor of the late New Mexico State Sen. John L. Morrow in 2004.

"We are making this huge investment here because Northeastern New Mexico is a vital part of our economic future," said Governor Richardson. "We are working to take what was once part of the Santa Fe Trail into the 21<sup>st</sup> century."

"Commercial truck traffic on this highway carries between \$60 billion and \$90 billion worth of goods a year," said New Mexico Department of Transportation Secretary Rhonda Faught. "Our highways are an important link between major commercial centers in California and Texas. This highway links Colorado, New Mexico, Texas and Mexico traffic."

The \$100 million project, which will begin next month, is divided into seven phases. The first phase of the project, which will begin in Raton and head east about 11 miles, will cost about \$21 million. The final phase of the project is scheduled to end in 2010.

The state awarded the first phase of the construction contract to WWC Inc. of Albuquerque. WWC will hire about six subcontractors – five of which are from New

Mexico -- for the project. Other phases of the project have not been awarded to contractors.

The goals of the GRIP initiative are to build safer highways and implement alternate forms of transportation while at the same time creating jobs for New Mexicans.

For more information on this GRIP project, contact Marissa Stone at (505) 490-0492.

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