



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

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Governor Bill Richardson Announces \$4.7 Million for Landscaping and Beautification of the Big I

SANTA FE-Governor Bill Richardson today announced at a news conference with Mayor Martin Chavez that the state is committing \$4.7 million in funding over the next two years to help the city landscape the Big I interchange.

“They call Times Square in New York City the ‘Crossroads of the World.’ I believe this interchange- the ‘Big I’ – should be called the ‘Crossroads of the Southwest,” said Governor Richardson. “Every day more than 300,000 cars pass through this interchange. Not too long ago it was choked with traffic- now it’s a free-flowing symbol of how our state is moving forward. I am looking forward to seeing the finished product, which I know will reflect our New Mexico culture, the beauty of the southwest, and the great city of Albuquerque.”

Governor Richardson has demonstrated his commitment to improving transportation throughout the state with his GRIP and Rail Runner commuter rail initiative. Mayor Chavez is doing the same thing in Albuquerque, with Rapid Ride, and his plans for a streetcar rail system.

“Mayor Chavez and I share a vision for the kind of transportation system that’s needed to take the city of Albuquerque, and the state of New Mexico into the future,” Governor Richardson said. “A system that will pay major dividends for the next generation, through increased economic growth and by creating high-wage jobs, by providing mass transit that offers relief from crowded streets and highways and high gas prices, and by helping our environment.”

The funding for this project comes from \$700,000 in capital outlay and \$4 million from the state road fund.