



# **FTA SECTION 5310 PROJECT JUSTIFICATION ELECTRIC DEMAND RESPONSE VANS (2 VEHICLES) LAS CRUCES SERVICE AREA – FY2027**

## **1. PROJECT OVERVIEW**

The South Central Regional Transit District (SCRTD) proposes acquiring two (2) battery-electric demand-response vans under the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 program to expand accessible mobility services in the Las Cruces service area, beginning in Fiscal Year 2027. These vehicles will support seniors, individuals with disabilities, and transit-dependent populations by enhancing first- and last-mile connectivity to the fixed-route network.

## **2. STATEMENT OF NEED**

SCRTD continues to experience sustained ridership growth and increased demand for accessible transportation services. The Las Cruces service area includes expanding residential zones and underserved populations that require flexible, demand-response mobility solutions. Fixed-route services alone cannot fully address the door-to-door transportation needs required for ADA compliance and equitable access.

Existing demand-response capacity is limited, resulting in longer wait times, constrained scheduling flexibility, and unmet trip requests. The addition of two electric vans will directly address these gaps and improve overall service reliability.

## **3. PROJECT PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of this project is to expand accessible transportation services and improve system integration. Key objectives include increasing demand-response capacity, improving mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities, enhancing connectivity to fixed routes, and supporting equitable access to essential services such as healthcare, employment, and education.

## **4. SERVICE INTEGRATION**

The proposed vehicles will support and integrate with SCRTD's fixed-route network, including the Green, Copper, Magenta, and Red routes. These vans will provide feeder service to key corridors, bridge service gaps in low-density areas, and strengthen overall network connectivity and reliability.

## **5. TARGET POPULATION AND EQUITY IMPACT**

The project directly benefits seniors, individuals with disabilities, low-income residents, and transit-dependent populations. It supports access to healthcare facilities, employment centers, and



educational institutions, including Doña Ana Community College. The project aligns with Title VI and Environmental Justice goals and supports SCRTD’s fare-free policy through December 31, 2026.

## **6. ZERO-EMISSION BENEFITS**

The procurement of battery-electric vans aligns with SCRTD’s transition to a zero-emission fleet. These vehicles will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, lower fuel costs, and support sustainable operations. The project leverages existing charging infrastructure at the Sunland Park Transit and Training Center.

## **7. OPERATIONS PLAN**

The vehicles will operate Monday through Saturday, providing ADA-compliant paratransit and general demand-response service as capacity allows. Operations will be integrated with existing dispatch systems and coordinated with fixed-route schedules.

## **8. PROJECT READINESS**

SCRTD has established procurement and grant management processes in compliance with FTA Circular 4220.1F and 2 CFR Part 200. The agency has demonstrated experience deploying electric vehicles and has the operational and maintenance capacity to support this project.

## **9. FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

Item	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total
Electric Demand Response Vans	2	\$120,000 – \$150,000	\$240,000 – \$300,000
Total Project Cost			\$250,000 – \$320,000

Funding is anticipated at an 80 percent federal share and a 20 percent local match.

Operational funding for this service will be supported through a pending request for Mesilla Valley MPO urbanized area funding. As a planning-level placeholder, monthly operating costs are estimated at \$8,000 to \$12,000, inclusive of transportation service delivery and maintenance. On an annual basis, this represents an estimated operating cost range of \$96,000 to \$144,000. ADA complementary paratransit services provided under this project are eligible for reimbursement through urbanized area funding sources, further strengthening the financial sustainability of the proposed service.

## **10. OPERATING AND FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY**

SCRTD has developed a sustainable operating framework for the proposed demand-response service. Operational funding will be supported through a pending request for Mesilla Valley MPO urbanized area funding. As a planning-level estimate, monthly operating costs are projected to



range from \$8,000 to \$12,000, including transportation service delivery and vehicle maintenance. On an annual basis, this equates to an estimated operating cost range of \$96,000 to \$144,000.

The service model is structured to align with available federal and regional funding sources, including urbanized area (Section 5307) funding administered through the MPO. ADA-complementary paratransit services delivered under this project are eligible for reimbursement through urbanized area funding, thereby supporting cost recovery and long-term financial viability.

SCRTD's integration of demand-response service with its fixed-route network improves efficiency, maximizes vehicle utilization, and reduces overall system costs. The use of battery-electric vehicles further reduces fuel and lifecycle maintenance costs, strengthening the program's financial sustainability over time.

## 11. PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

The project will increase demand-response capacity, reduce wait times, improve service reliability, and enhance connectivity to the fixed-route network. It is expected to increase ridership among seniors and individuals with disabilities while improving overall system efficiency.

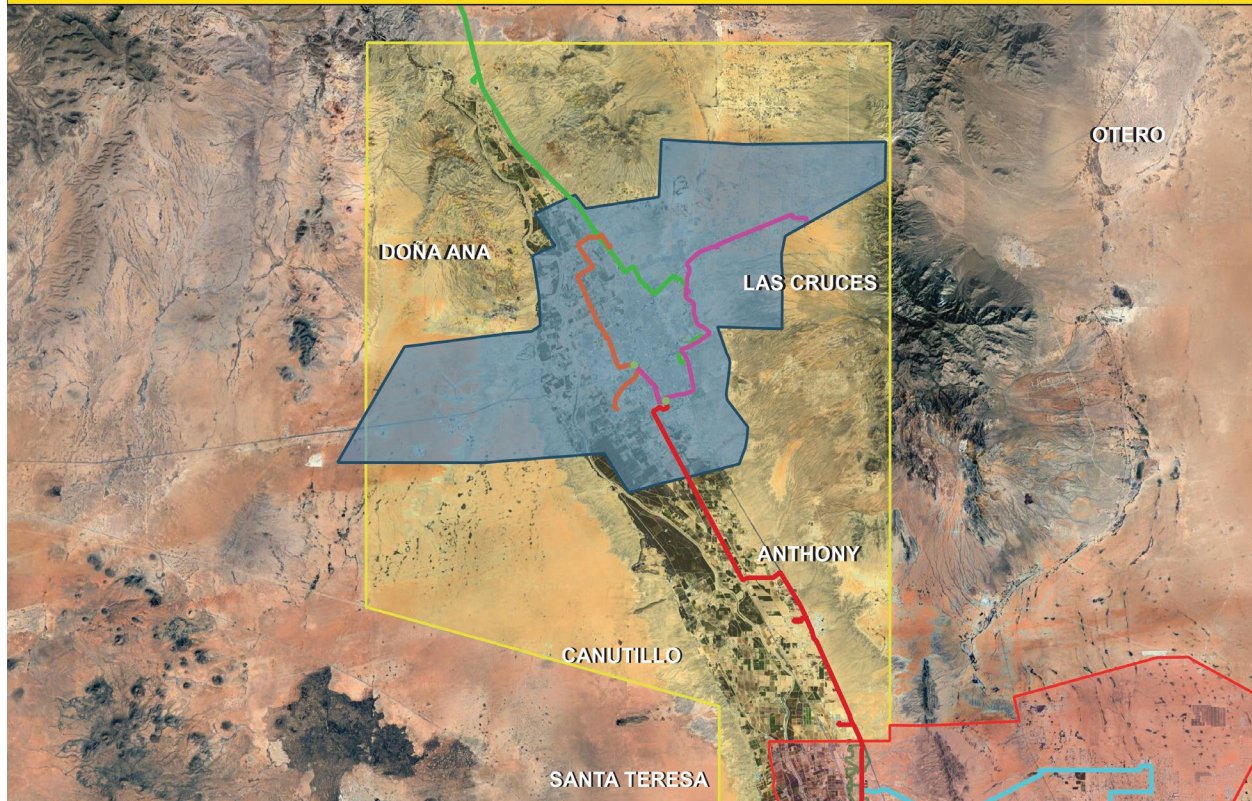
## 12. PROJECT LOCATION AND SERVICE AREA (MESILLA VALLEY MPO AREA)

The proposed project is located within the Mesilla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) planning boundary, which encompasses the urbanized and surrounding service areas of Las Cruces, Doña Ana County, and southern regional connections extending toward Anthony and Santa Teresa, New Mexico.

As illustrated in the attached map exhibit:

- The **highlighted MPO boundary (yellow outline)** defines the federally recognized urbanized planning area eligible for **Section 5307 urban funding**, which is critical to supporting ongoing operations for this project.
- The **shaded service area (blue polygon)** represents SCRTD's primary transit service coverage within Las Cruces and adjacent communities.
- The **fixed-route network (color-coded lines)** demonstrates existing transit corridors that will be supported by the proposed demand-response service, including:
  - **Green Route** (north-south regional connectivity)
  - **Red Route** (primary corridor extending south toward Anthony)
  - **Copper Route** (central service distribution)
  - **Magenta Route** (East Mesa service expansion area)

## Mesilla Valley MPO Area



The map further illustrates key regional connections:

- **Las Cruces Urban Core** – Primary service hub with the highest ridership demand and transfer activity
- **Anthony Corridor** – Critical regional linkage between New Mexico and El Paso County, **Santa Teresa and Canutillo Areas** – Emerging employment and economic development zones requiring improved mobility access
- **Doña Ana County** – Broader service area with rural-to-urban connectivity needs

### Service Area Relevance to Project

The proposed **electric demand-response vans** will operate within this MPO-defined boundary, too:

- Provide **first-mile/last-mile connections** to fixed-route services shown on the map
- Serve **low-density and underserved areas** not efficiently covered by fixed routes
- Enhance access to **medical facilities, employment centers, education (including Doña Ana Community College), and regional services**
- Support **ADA-compliant paratransit obligations** within the defined service corridors



## Funding and Planning Alignment

This project is fully consistent with:

- **Mesilla Valley MPO planning framework and urbanized area designation**
- **Eligibility for FTA Section 5307 urban operating assistance**
- **Integration with SCRTD's regional transit network and ten-year service plan**

The MPO boundary shown in the exhibit directly supports the project's **operating and financial sustainability strategy**, as urbanized area funding will be utilized to support ongoing service delivery, including ADA paratransit reimbursement.

## 13. Conclusion

The Mesilla Valley MPO Area map demonstrates that the proposed project is:

- Strategically located within a **federally recognized urbanized area**
- Fully integrated with existing **fixed-route transit infrastructure**
- Positioned to maximize **mobility, equity, and regional connectivity outcomes**