

## Gallup Council accepts land deed

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent  
Friday, 07 October 2016 06:07

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### Matter related to Allison Crossing

The Gallup City Council unanimously accepted a quitclaim deed from Gallup Land Partners, LLC, at an Oct. 4 special meeting at Gallup City Hall. The deed is connected to a 1.2-acre property donated to the city by GLP for the new alignment of Allison Road and the soon-to-be-constructed Allison Road bridge and I-40 interchange.

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City Attorney George Kozeliski introduced the matter to council members. The meeting lasted about seven minutes and was called specifically to deal with the deed component.

No one on the panel spoke about the matter aside from Kozeliski and Mayor Jackie McKinney, and there were no members of the general public in attendance.

“This is the last step in order to go to bid on the Allison Bridge,” Kozeliski explained. “That, essentially, is what this is. [GLP] expedited this.”

Kozeliski said the property is part of a right-of-way that must be owned by the city before the New Mexico Department of Transportation can allow the project to go out to bid for actual bridge construction.

### **Who is Gallup Land Partners?**

GLP is based in Chicago and purchased all of the Gamerco Associates Ltd. land some four years ago, Kozeliski said.

“We used to have a lot of dealings with [Gamerco Associates] because they owned all of the land around Gallup, and now GLP owns the land around Gallup and we deal with them,” he said. “I understand that they own about 30,000 acres of land in and around Gallup.”

A quitclaim deed is a legal means of transferring interest in real property. Kozeliski said GLP is donating the land near the Allison Road underpass so the city can realign the road and the approaches to the new bridge, which will be built in the spring of 2017.

The bridge is a shortcut of sorts for folks headed from Gallup’s west end to northern locations, including the Navajo Nation.

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“Over the years, Gamarco Associates, and now Gallup Land Partners, has given us property for water line easements and such,” Kozeliski said. “Once [we] get outside the city limits, they own large tracts of land and we have to deal with them to get things done.”

### **The Bridge**

Replacement of the timber-frame-style bridge, which runs north and south, costs approximately \$4.5 million, city officials have said.

The bridge was built in 1940 and travels across the Puerco River off Historic Highway 66. It’s been deemed structurally deficient by civil engineers and has been identified for replacement since 1992.

The bridge replacement is part of the bigger \$40-million Allison Crossing Project that stands to speed up traffic traveling U.S. 491, heading toward the west side of the city. It’s the first step that must be completed in order for the larger Allison corridor project to become a reality.

Additionally, the replacement will aid in economic development for passages along 491, as well as the west side, State Rep. Patricia Lundstrom has said. Specifically, the bigger Allison Crossing Project includes an interchange and frontage roads between exits 16 and 20 off Interstate 40 as it empties into Gallup.

The city has contracted with Bohannon Huston Inc. of Albuquerque for bid tabulation, construction advertisement, and traffic-control services.

City Public Works Director Stan Henderson has estimated the BHI contractual cost to be no higher than \$470,000. Henderson has said the final BHI amount is contingent on the time it takes to complete the bridge project and whether the Federal Highway Administration and the state Department of Transportation take a reasonable approach in its completion.

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In past city council meetings, Henderson has said that once the right-of-way matter is taken care of, a contract can be advertised in November and awarded in December. The funds to replace the bridge come from a state grant, and Allison Road will likely be closed for about 180 days once construction begins.

Gov. Susana Martinez was in Gallup in June of 2015 for an Allison Bridge-replacement groundbreaking ceremony.

“It’s great to see this project get rolling,” McKinney said at the Oct. 4 special meeting.

***By Bernie Dotson  
Sun Correspondent***