

# New El Prado parking for Blue Bus riders

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**The new Blue Bus facility in El Prado is now a paved parking lot, replacing the notorious dirt lot many employees of and visitors to Taos Ski Valley utilize in the winter. Blue Bus riders now have a new facility to park at thanks to a \$1 million federal transportation grant.**

North Central Regional Transit District officials met Monday (Dec. 16) to celebrate the new El Prado parking facility and a stop for the RTD Blue Bus line operated by the district near KTAOS Solar Center at U.S. 64 and State Road 150. The facility accommodates 83 parking spaces and has a new shelter for those waiting to catch a ride on the bus.

“It’s always been a dirt lot and it’s always been pretty haphazard where people just pretty much parked wherever,” said NCRTD information officer Jim Nagle.

The new lot will serve as a park and ride facility for riders of the Blue Bus who have been using the lot for several years to catch rides to Taos Ski Valley and other areas.

New pavement and parking spaces will alleviate the muddy mess that accumulates when winter weather or summer rain hit the area, and a new concrete bus platform has been installed for easier bus boarding.



JESSE MOYA/Taos News

**Taos Mayor Dan Barrone said the new Blue Bus facility in El Prado was a combined effort between several partners to benefit the region.**

“Upgrading RTD bus stops and facilities to be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act has long been one of the primary goals of the district and we’re proud to be expanding the program to Taos and Taos County,” Taos Mayor Dan Barrone said in a press release.

The El Prado station is one part of a several phase project, which includes a number of improvements to bus stops along the RTD routes. Another notable location is the new bus pullout that has recently been installed near Cid’s Food Market on Paseo del Pueblo Norte.

The new structures and parking will be more accommodating to passengers with disabilities and bus access will be made easier at the identified stops, according to Nagle. A new lighted shelter will greet riders at the El Prado location where passengers can catch the green ski valley, night riders and Questa routes.

“I’m glad to see we’re working here in Taos and that we’re making things happen here in Taos,” Barrone said.

The NCRTD applied for federal grants in order to make the improvements to the bus stops and Nagle said the improvements will continue to be seen in the future.

Parking will be allowed from 5 a.m. to 11 p.m. at the El Prado facility and no overnight stays will be allowed in the lot. The parking lot is free, but NCRTD officials said it is strictly for parking, and vendors will not be tolerated in the spaces.