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1 WHEREAS, these services are a low-emissions and zero fare alternative
2 to automobiles for commuters, and are the primary means of transport for tens
3 of thousands of persons who qualify as “Transit Dependent’ in Bernalillo
4 County by the Federal Transit Administration of the United States Department
5 of Transportation; and

6 WHEREAS, the City of Albuquerque initiated a system wide free fare transit
7 Pilot Project January 1st, 2022 that will expire on December 31, 2022; and

8 WHEREAS, according to the free fare transit report produced by the City,
9 the free fare program appeared to have resulted in a 25% increase in calls for
10 security service at bus stops and on buses in just the first quarter of 2022; and

11 WHEREAS, New Mexico’s Attorney General’s office reported that
12 shoplifters utilized city buses as their get-away vehicle. The Attorney General
13 believes this misuse of the transit system is the result of the free fare pilot
14 program, stating in a press interview; “I think that the no fee for riders seemed
15 like a well-intentioned policy, but there has to be safety requirements in other
16 words, you can’t just let everyone on the bus with stolen equipment. “I’m very
17 concerned for families and the elderly that are doing no criminal activity but
18 now have to defend themselves’ those precautions need to include
19 protecting bus drivers who are faced with this kind of behavior daily”; and

20 WHEREAS, since the inception of free fares, some motor coach operators
21 have left employment with the City citing safety concerns which further
22 exacerbates the driver shortage; and

23 WHEREAS, though free fare programs have been successful for a number
24 of transit agencies, other transit systems have experienced security
25 challenges. Anecdotal and official data from the Capital Transit System in
26 Austin, Texas suggest that lacking additional and robust security programs on
27 these two transit systems that problem riders increased substantially and
28 drove away other riders including regular bus commuters; and

29 WHEREAS, as with other transit agencies throughout the United States,
30 security on board ABQ Ride Coaches, Sun Van Paratransit Vehicles, at bus
31 stops and at transit stations, is becoming of increasing concern, to both the
32 drivers of transit vehicles and passengers. These concerns, if left unattended,

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1 will overtime deter passengers from using transit and impede the recruitment
2 and retention of motor-coach and paratransit vehicle operators; and

3 WHEREAS, an important management tool of public safety is the
4 maintenance of high visibility facilities and equipment in prime condition to
5 encourage patrons to use the asset constructively and not in a destructive
6 manner. The Transit Department manages a large number of bus stops with
7 benches, and bus shelters and ART Bus Stations. Providing premium
8 maintenance for these stations is necessary to deter loitering and vandalism,
9 and to promote comfort and enjoyment by the public; and

10 WHEREAS, it is imperative that the City of Albuquerque develop and
11 implement a strategy to address security concerns on the transit system,
12 including, creating near term, action plans to improve responses to incidents
13 on transit vehicles, at bus stops and transit stations, better tracking and
14 analyzing individual security incidents, security incident trends, and developing
15 and implementing a long-term public transit safety strategy; and

16 WHEREAS, for these reasons the City should act proactively and the free
17 fare pilot program should sunset before the end of the fiscal year 2023 ; and

18 WHEREAS, the City of Albuquerque’s Transit Fare Schedule includes over
19 30 different fares. Simplifying the fare schedule to a few passes would improve
20 access to transit as an alternative to the City’s current walk-on free fare
21 system. There would be multiple benefits to a pass system that helps provide
22 accountability amongst riders while also offering the benefits of free fares; and

23 WHEREAS, for more than a decade the City Transit Department has been
24 unable to staff a full complement of motor coach and paratransit van operators
25 due to below market pay scales. In recent years the operator vacancy rate has
26 reached twenty five percent, requiring the department to reduce the number of
27 motor coaches serving bus routes, creating long wait times between bus
28 arrivals, and diminishing the quality of the City’s transit service; and

29 WHEREAS, for the success and long-term sustainability of the
30 Albuquerque Transit System it is imperative the City establish competitive pay
31 scales and a safe operating environment for motor-coach and paratransit van
32 operators.**BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL, THE GOVERNING BODY OF**
33 **THE CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE:**

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1 SECTION 1. Section 7-2-1-1 ROA 1994, "FARES AND PASSES," is amended
2 by deleting the existing language and inserting the following language:

3 "[+The following fares shall be charged by the City for transportation services
4 by the Albuquerque Transit System:

5 A) Regular Fare ABQ Ride, \$1.00.

6 B) Regular Fare Sun Van, \$2.00

7 (B) ABQ Ride and Sun Van Free Fare Pass: A unified Albuquerque Ride
8 Pass is created for all users of the City's ABQ Ride Transit System and Sun
9 Van Paratransit service. The pass shall provide free fare to the holder of the
10 card and shall have 36-month term. Sun Van patrons must qualify for the Sun
11 Van Program to be able to use the pass for that service. The pass shall not
12 apply for shuttle services the Transit Department provides for special events
13 unless the Director of the Transit Department determines the pass shall be
14 valid for the event. Additionally, the pass shall not apply to any future on-
15 demand or micro-transit services. The transit department has discretion to
16 charge a nominal fee for replacement cards during the 36-month term.

17 (C) Experimental Fares. For establishing revenue potential of new types of
18 transit services, experimental fares, products or changes may be implemented
19 for periods of up to 180 days by the city's Chief Administrative Officer, who
20 may establish the amount to be charged, as long as it does not adversely affect
21 the price paid by vulnerable populations as described above.

22 (D) Automatic Free Fare Riders:

- 23 (1) Children under the age of 10,
- 24 (2) Students who present a current photo school identification card,
- 25 (3) Seniors (62+) who provide a valid photo proof of age identification
26 card,
- 27 (4) Active Military, Veterans with a valid military ID or VA medical
28 card, and
- 29 (5) Medicare Card Holders with a Photo Identification Card.

30 (E) ABQ Ride and Sun Van Free Fare passes:

- 31 (1) A person acquiring a bus pass from the Department shall be required
32 to apply electronically or in person and provide their full name, date of birth
33 and a means of contact phone number or e-mail or location information for a

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1 social service provider. The application form may also request additional
2 information though it is not mandatory the applicant provide the additional
3 information to acquire the pass.

4 (2) The Transit Department shall develop a pass distribution program that
5 enables the applicant to acquire the pass either via an application on a
6 personal communication device that can store the pass on the device, through
7 a website that allows the applicant to print a temporary paper pass with a one
8 month term and to request a durable pass card via the United States Mail, or to
9 obtain a pass card in person from the Transit Department or an authorized
10 distributor. There shall be a nominal charge for any replacement durable card
11 passes”+]

12 SECTION 2. Section 7-2-1-2 ROA 1994, “VIOLATION,” is amended by
13 inserting the following language:

14 “It shall be a violation of § 7-2-1-1 for any person using the transit system
15 to fail to pay the applicable fare [+or present a valid fare pass registered in their
16 name or photo identification card that is authorized to be used as transit fare
17 +]. Any person in violation of § 7-2-1-1 is guilty of a misdemeanor and subject
18 to the penalty provisions set forth in § 1-1-99 ROA 1994. Enforcement of § 7-2-
19 1-3 is suspended during the implementation of a 18 calendar month Zero Fare
20 Pilot.”

21 SECTION3. A new Section §2-11-20 is created.

22 +”(1) A separate program strategy for Motor Coach and Para-Transit
23 Operator Salaries and benefits shall be created within the Transit Enterprise
24 fund to be used only to increase salaries and benefits for Transit Motor Coach
25 and Para-Transit Operators. The program strategy shall be funded with ABQ
26 Ride and Sun Van Fare Revenues in addition to general fund revenues and
27 other sources as is applicable.”+]

28 SECTION 3. The Free Fare Pilot Program established in §7-2-1-2, will
29 conclude June 30th 2023 and the fare schedule established in §7-2-1-1, as
30 amended herein, will be reinstated July 1st, 2023.

31 SECTION 4. The Administration shall by August 31, 2023, submit to
32 Council for its receipt an evaluation report on the “Free Fare Pilot Project”.
33 The document shall report on the impacts of the project on transit system

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1 security, ridership, rolling stock maintenance and operations, and operational
2 expenses. The report should evaluate whether other viable options for free
3 fares may exist that would better insulate against security issues.

4 SECTION 5. The Department shall as technology becomes available
5 identify the feasibility of developing a fare-box pass system, that includes user
6 photos on the pass, on fare box and pass card technology that enables the on
7 board farebox to record the time, date, route, transit vehicles, and boarding
8 location each time a pass is used to board an ABQ Ride motor-coach or Sun
9 Van paratransit vehicle.

10 SECTION 6. To address the increasing security issues on the City’s Transit
11 and Paratransit System the City Administration shall develop a short-range
12 tactical plan, a long-range security program and a security incident tracking
13 system to respond to security calls for service on ABQ Ride motor coaches,
14 Sun Van paratransit vehicles, and at bus stops and transit stations. This effort
15 shall be a collaborative effort amongst relevant City Departments, which may
16 include but is not limited to, the Albuquerque Police Department, the Metro
17 Security Division of the Department of General Services, the Albuquerque
18 Transit Department, the Albuquerque Community Safety Department. The
19 Bernalillo County Sheriff’s Department shall be invited to participate in this
20 initiative as the Transit Department operates routes in unincorporated
21 Bernalillo County.

- 22 A. Tactical Plan. The tactical plan shall:
 - 23 a. Address all levels of calls ranging from low priority incidences
 - 24 to higher priority situations where health and safety are at risk for
 - 25 motor coach and van operators and passengers.
 - 26 b. Develop a procedure, to prevent access to transit by individuals
 - 27 who have been abusive or dangerous toward drivers or the
 - 28 public, on an ABQ RIDE motor-coach, a Sun Van paratransit
 - 29 vehicle, at bus stop, or a transit station, by causing them to lose
 - 30 access to transit for an appropriate period of time via a trespass
 - 31 citation or other appropriate means. The procedure shall also
 - 32 include a process for:

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- i. Distributing to relevant Transit Department personnel a continually updated list of persons who have lost their access to the transit system.
 - ii. A program for training Transit Department personnel on the procedures to follow when they encounter attempted bus usage by an individual who has lost their access.
 - iii. A list of procedures for removing a person who has lost access from an ABQ Ride motor-coach, a Sun Van paratransit vehicle a bus stop or transit station or other facility.
- c. The plan shall layout a process to most effectively utilize video and communications technologies currently embedded on the motor-coach and paratransit fleet to improve communications between the motor-coach operators, the Transit Department’s Operations Center, and the Metro Security Division, the Albuquerque Police Department and Albuquerque Community Safety Department.

The tactical plan shall be communicated to the Director of the City Council Services Division through an Interoffice-Memo thirty days after the publishing of this Ordinance.

- B. Long Range Security Program.** The Albuquerque Transit Department, the Albuquerque Police Department, the Metro Security Division of the Department of General Services, and the Albuquerque Community Safety Department with the assistance for the City Council Services Department shall conduct a study to develop a security program for the ABQ Ride Route system and the Sun Van systems, and the Transit Department’s bus stops and transit stations. The study shall include the following objectives:
- a. Identify best practices for transit security systems recommended by the Federal Transit Administration.
 - b. Provide a list of best practices used by transit agencies throughout the United States.

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- c. Identify an organizational structure for a security organization that respects the culture and traditions of the Albuquerque community and provides an appropriate level of security for the ABQ Ride and Sun Van paratransit systems including:
 - 1) Recommending if security should be a component of the Transit Department or continue to be provided through the services of the Albuquerque Police Department, the Metropolitan Security Division, and the Albuquerque Community Safety Department.
 - 2) If Transit Security is recommended to be a stand-alone division within the Transit Department, the recommendation should include but is not limited to the following:
 - i. If the Division will be a transit security service, or transit police service, or community safety outreach service or a combination of the above,
 - ii. If the Division will include a training academy,
 - iii. The anticipated budget,
 - iv. The appropriate staffing level and pay schedule,
 - v. If there will be a civilian oversight board for the transit security or if it will come under the existing Civilian Police Oversight Agency, and
 - vi. If the Division will be subject to the CASA with the Department of Justice.
- d. An inventory of existing security technologies employed by the Transit Department, technology upgrades that would benefit the security and safety and the cost to implement the improvements.

This study shall be communicated to Council via Executive Communication or Official Communication by May 1st, of 2023.

C. The Albuquerque Police Department, the Metro Security Division of the Department of General Services, the Albuquerque Community Safety Department and the Albuquerque Transit Department shall, starting in

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1 the 2nd quarter of Fiscal Year 23, compile on a quarterly basis,
2 statistics on calls for security service to ABQ Ride motor-coaches,
3 Sun Van paratransit vehicles, and the bus stops and stations of the
4 Albuquerque Transit Department. The database shall include calls for
5 service made to the Metro Security Division, the Albuquerque Police
6 Department and the Albuquerque Community Safety Department. The
7 data shall be categorized by the total number of calls for services by
8 type of incident as classified in the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s
9 Uniform Crime Reporting System. The data shall also include the
10 number and types of calls for service by route, including on motor-
11 coaches, paratransit vans, bus stops and transit facilities. The data
12 shall be communicated to the City Council by Executive
13 Communication within 30 days of the conclusion of the quarterly
14 reporting period.

15 Section 7. The Administration as part of its social service programing is
16 directed to identify ways to assist social service agencies through funding
17 or other means, in providing clientele with transit passes.

18 SECTION8. That the following amounts are hereby adjusted to the
19 following programs and funds from fund balance, working capital balance,
20 and/or revenue for operating City government in Fiscal Year 2023:

21 General Fund-110
22 Transfer to Transit Operating Fund-661 250,000

23 \$150,000 is designated for the purpose of funding the development of a
24 fare pass distributors program as described in Section 3 of this Resolution, a
25 Fare Pass and Fare Box Management Study as described in Section 4 of this
26 Ordinance and a Transit Security Plan as described in Section 5 of this
27 Ordinance.

28 SECTION9. SEVERABILITY CLAUSE. If any section, paragraph, sentence,
29 clause, word or phrase of this ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid or
30 unenforceable by any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not
31 affect the validity of the remaining provisions of this ordinance. The Council
32 hereby declares that it would have passed this ordinance and each section,

1 paragraph, sentence, clause, word or phrase thereof irrespective of any
2 provision being declared unconstitutional or otherwise invalid.

3 SECTION10COMPILATION. Section 1 of this ordinance shall be
4 incorporated in and made part of the Revised Ordinances of Albuquerque,
5 New Mexico, 1994.

6 SECTION11. EFFECTIVE DATE. This ordinance takes effect five days after
7 publication by title and general summary.

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