

CITY of ALBUQUERQUE

TWENTY SECOND COUNCIL

COUNCIL BILL NO. F/S R-17-177 ENACTMENT NO. _____

SPONSORED BY: Don Harris

1 RESOLUTION

2 F/S Directing The City Administration To Evaluate The Performance Of The
3 Albuquerque Rapid Transit (A.R.T.) Project As It Impacts Traffic Along Central
4 Avenue, Changes In Transit Ridership, And Changes In Traffic On Specified
5 Alternative Routes After It Has Been In Operation For The Sixty-Day Period
6 Starting Two Years, Per FTA Standards, After Project Completion Compared
7 With The Same Sixty-Day Period In 2015, The Same Sixty-Day Period In 2013,
8 And The Same Sixty-Day Period In 2010; And To Work With Adjacent
9 Communities To Mitigate Any Negative Impacts Identified By Those
10 Assessments, To Include An Option To Re-Open Dedicated Transit Lanes To
11 General Traffic. The Results Of The Assessments Outlined Below Are To Be
12 Evaluated By A Third Party That Is Independent Of Both The City Transit
13 Department And MRCOG (Harris)

14 WHEREAS; the reduction of general vehicle traffic lanes along Central
15 Avenue during A.R.T. construction has limited accessibility to stores,
16 restaurants and other businesses along the corridor, leading to potential loss
17 of revenue; and

18 WHEREAS; residents in neighborhoods along Central Avenue have
19 reported increased traffic, associated vehicle noise, illegal transit of
20 overweight trucks, and collisions on parallel and connecting streets as a
21 result of traffic diverted from Central Avenue; and

22 WHEREAS; A.R.T.'s current design will make the reduction to single lanes
23 of traffic permanent in Nob Hill and East Downtown, and;

24 WHEREAS; community members have stated that the Transit Department
25 has not sufficiently responded to their concerns about pedestrian safety while
26 crossing Central Avenue or accessing A.R.T. stations in the median; and

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1 WHEREAS; while the A.R.T. project team has conducted 24 full public
2 meetings and had more than 8,000 one-on-one citizen contacts, many
3 business owners and members of the community feel that the public process
4 to develop the A.R.T. project did not adequately consult or collaborate on
5 major design decisions with business owners, commercial and residential
6 property owners, and neighborhood representatives in the crucial early stages
7 of the project; and

8 WHEREAS; after the project had already begun, 76.47% of Albuquerque
9 voters voted in favor of the following advisory question placed on the
10 November 8, 2016 election ballot by the County of Bernalillo: “Are you in favor
11 of giving voters residing in the City of Albuquerque municipal limits the
12 chance to vote in support of or opposition to the proposed Albuquerque Rapid
13 Transit Project?”; and

14 WHEREAS; in federal court testimony and in public meetings, the Transit
15 Department has indicated that A.R.T.’s “bus only” lanes could be re-converted
16 to general purpose traffic lanes if Central’s businesses and adjoining
17 neighborhoods were being significantly harmed by the reduction in traffic
18 lanes caused by A.R.T.’s current design; and

19 WHEREAS, the ART project was developed under the FTA Small Starts
20 program using MAP-21 procedures and is therefore not subject to the general
21 FTA requirement that sponsors of Bus Rapid Transit projects conduct a
22 before-and-after study to document the project’s outcome, though the FTA
23 does encourage project sponsors to complete such a study,

24 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL, THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF
25 ALBUQUERQUE:

26 Section 1. That the City shall measure the A.R.T. project’s post-
27 construction traffic to evaluate and compare to the professional engineering
28 design and models as included in the FTA Small Starts grant application and
29 Categorical Exclusion. The study shall measure changes in traffic on Central
30 Avenue to include speed data, traffic counts, and crash data; changes in
31 transit ridership on Central Avenue, and transit service levels, as suggested
32 by the FTA; and changes in traffic on Coal Avenue, Lead Avenue, and Lomas
33 Boulevard to be measured by speed data, traffic counts, and crash data.

1 Section 2. The actual performance of the A.R.T. project compared with the
2 professional engineering design and models included in the Small Starts grant
3 application and Categorical Exclusion shall be evaluated pursuant to Sections
4 1 and 2 above after the system has been in operation for the sixty-day period
5 starting two years, per FTA standards, after project completion compared with
6 the same sixty-day period in 2015, the same sixty-day period in 2013, and the
7 same sixty-day period in 2010. Should these measures vary significantly from
8 the professional engineering design and models described in the FTA Small
9 Starts grant application and Categorical Exclusion, the City shall create, in
10 consultation with the adjacent communities, plans to improve the performance
11 of the system and mitigate adverse traffic impacts that may include the
12 following options: (1) to convert bus-only lanes back to general purpose traffic
13 lanes, (2) to reinstate the left turns eliminated by the ART project, and (3) to
14 work with the FTA to approve retrofit design modifications necessary to
15 mitigate adverse impacts.

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