



Legislation Text

File #: R-17-177, Version: 4

CITY of ALBUQUERQUE
TWENTY SECOND COUNCIL

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

SPONSORED BY: Don Harris

RESOLUTION

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS; community members have stated that the Transit Department has not sufficiently responded to their concerns about pedestrian safety while crossing Central Avenue or accessing

A.R.T. stations in the median; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

Section 2. The actual performance of the A.R.T. project compared with the professional engineering design and models included in the Small Starts grant application and Categorical Exclusion shall be evaluated pursuant to Sections 1 and 2 above after the system has been in operation for the sixty-day period starting two years, per FTA standards, after project completion

compared with the same sixty-day period in 2015, the same sixty-day period in 2013, and the same sixty-day period in 2010. Should these measures vary significantly from the professional engineering design and models described in the FTA Small Starts grant application and Categorical Exclusion, the City shall create, in consultation with the adjacent communities, plans to improve the performance of the system and mitigate adverse traffic impacts that may include the following options: (1) to convert bus-only lanes back to general purpose traffic lanes, (2) to reinstate the left turns eliminated by the ART project, and (3) to work with the FTA to approve retrofit design modifications necessary to mitigate adverse impacts.