



Transit Advisory Board
Thursday, November 10, 2022
4:00pm-5:30 pm

In Person Meeting at
Alvarado Transportation Center
100 1st St SW
2nd Floor, Santa Fe Training/Conference Room
Albuquerque, NM 87102

Virtual Meeting (Online) Via ZOOM
Meeting ID: 860 3740 9514
Phone#: 1 669 900 6833 or 1 253 215 8782

Members Present

Christopher Ramirez, Chair (ZOOM); Steve Pilon, Vice-Chair (ZOOM); Harris Balkin (ABSENT); Jennifer Layne Frederick (ZOOM); Ryan Lee Haack (ABSENT); Jennifer Jackson (ZOOM); Samuel Jensen, (ATC/ZOOM); Jett Metcalf (ATC/ZOOM); Don McIver (ZOOM); Rikk Murphy (ZOOM); Patricia Salisbury, (ABSENT); Hal Simons (ABSENT); Jacqueline Smith, PTAB (ABSENT)

Staff Members Present

Mike Davis, Deputy Director (ZOOM); Megan Holcomb, Marketing & Communications Specialist (ZOOM); Leslie Keener, Director (ZOOM@ 4:54pm); Margaret Lucero, Executive Assistant (ATC/ZOOM), Bobby Sisneros, Deputy Director (ZOOM)

Visitors Present

Charles Davis (ZOOM); Ben Garland (ZOOM); Patrick Martin (ZOOM) Peter Rice, Downtown Albuquerque News (ZOOM), Albert Lee (ZOOM); Theresa, TAS (ZOOM); Althea Atherton (ZOOM); Sayid Hossaini (ZOOM); Sarah Kelly (ATC/ZOOM); Steven Pan (ZOOM); Daniel Manzano (ZOOM); Galaxy A32 5G (ZOOM)

Land Acknowledgement

Chair Ramirez started meeting with a land acknowledgement. The City of Albuquerque is on indigenous land and referred to as Tiwa land. That is currently represented by Sandia and Isleta pueblos. We ask for permission and blessing for us to be here and serve the community.

Call to Order

Christopher Ramirez, Chair, began the meeting at 4:04pm.

Approval of Agenda or Additions

Chair Ramirez asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Jett Metcalf motioned to approve the agenda, Don McIver 2nd the motion. The motion was voice approved by Jennifer Layne Frederick, Jennifer Jackson, Samuel Jensen, Don McIver, Jett Metcalf, Rikk Murphy and Steve Pilon

Approval of Minutes

Chair Ramirez asked for a motion to approve the October 13 minutes. Rikk Murphy motioned to approve the meeting minutes, Samuel Jensen 2nd the motion. The motion was voice approved by. The motion was voice approved by Jennifer Layne Frederick, Jennifer Jackson, Samuel Jensen, Jett Metcalf, Rikk Murphy and Steve Pilon. Don McIver- abstained.

Public Comment – *Reminder there is a 2 minute limit on Public Comment(s).*

Althea Atherton- Encourages TAB to pass resolution to continue Zero Fares.

Patrick Martin: How is cost of zero fares being computed?

Ben Garland: I will become a TAB member when City Council approves me. I come from a transportation equity perspective. I've done a lot of disability and bike advocacy. I'm ready to jump in feet first.

Steve Pilon: I want to thank everyone that is running the Focus Groups and public meetings. Public turnout was great.

Sayid Hossaini: I'm with Together for Brothers. We surveyed some bus riders at facilities and riders mentioned zero fares helps them get around to purchase things that they need to take of themselves.

Sarah Kelly: Bus needs maintenance, signs need updating and communication with passengers needs work.

TAB Chairperson's Report – Christopher Ramirez, Chair

Christopher Ramirez shared his story, gratitude and thoughts as a bus rider and serving on TAB the past 5 years. "There is so much happening right now. But I want to start and say I am a bus rider, member and current chair of the city's Transit Advisory Board and one of the leadership of Together for Brothers (T4B) and community organizer for transit equity for the past five years in Albuquerque. And five years ago no one was talking about transit equity in Albuquerque.

I am concerned about what I see from the leadership of the city reflects covert racism and also actions that criminalize people experiencing homelessness and/or addiction. Hearing from a city councilor who told a reporter from the Source NM, "Our bus system is not intended for everybody." Not only is it a possible Title VI violation of federal law but it's just bad visioning and values to try and exclude some bus riders.

And just so everyone knows I became a life long bus rider at ten when my parents allowed me to access a summer science program on my own. I took two buses, including transferring downtown, to the community college. Like many others public transit was a connector to opportunities like the summer science program and others for me and my family. Since moving to Albuquerque in 1998 I have not owned a car and currently I ride the bus, bike and walk to get around the community.

80% of bus riders support Zero Fares. Four resolutions have passed since 2019 by the Transit Advisory Board to support affordable and ideally free transit. And council has voted for three years in support of free transit in 2020, 2021 and 2022. In fact talking today with bus riders at ATC about Zero Fares makes me even want to advocate more for Zero Fares. Bus riders were upset when they heard city council is trying to change or end Zero Fares because it helps them out so much. And it reminds me that the majority of bus riders in Albuquerque are low income. Surveys administered on weekdays show that passengers' households are forty-six percent single person, thirty-one percent have one household employee, sixty-three percent do not have any household vehicles, and seventy-six percent of households make less than \$25,000 annually (low income).

I am concerned with community safety on buses and bus stops as a priority. T4B and many others in the Zero Fares Coalition and other community partners also prioritize community safety. But there are narratives of security connected to Zero Fares that are just not true. Safety incidents were not reported and shared by Transit or Metro Security until October of last year. Data from the city's metro security shows safety incidents have increased with ridership but the rate of safety incidents has not increased and is less than 0.12% riders report safety incidents. That means 99.88% of bus riders are doing just that - riding the bus. And ¾ of those incidents are not on the bus but at bus stops as a result of bus stops being one of the last public spaces in our community. The data we don't includes the profile of those who are impacted by safety checks. Other departments actually report monthly the race and gender of those involved in safety checks to prevent racial profiling of individuals. And anecdotally we have heard from Black and Native bus riders and those experiencing homelessness that they feel more targeted and even

harassed by bus drivers or security. I need and want authentic solutions to safety including better cleaning and lighting (including working monitors and bus information), social workers at bus stop, de-escalation training and community partners like T4B and others to be at the table to come up with solutions from our most impacted communities and not only highlighting law enforcement. I also agree with Director Keener that written and audio information about a code of conduct on buses and at bus stops would also help remind all of us what is expected and acceptable community behavior. Last month we passed a resolution calling on the city to co-create a community safety plan with bus riders and community partners. To date no response has been made by the mayor, city council or Transit.

Also like 60% of bus riders I have lived in Albuquerque without a driver's license or photo ID. I am happy that it appears requiring a pass or photo ID for a pass seems to have been defeated and it would be a unnecessary barrier for transit dependent bus riders. But so would passes. In 2018 and 2019 T4B worked with Transit to distribute summer youth passes. When we asked about year round passes we were told it would be cost and capacity prohibitive to issue IDs or passes. It seems Transit has not communicated the same fact to city council. And other solutions requiring students, seniors or veterans to show an ID are also barriers. In fact T4B heard in 2020 and 2021, when students were riding free during COVID, that bus drivers refused at least three Black students we know of who were told they look "too old" even when presenting their student ID. And passes don't make sense for keeping us safe because those who want to avoid being "tracked" by a pass can simply pay fares. And one last reminder that there are apparently more than 2,500 cameras on buses and bus stops to help identify those who would violate policies or commit security issues.

Keeping Zero Fares makes sense because Zero Fare works. But we need to work together with the leadership of Transit as well as the city council and mayor. I want TAB and Transit leadership to be leading on transit equity and advocating for Zero Fares which is why we will be voting on the Zero Fares resolution today that we were unable to hear last month. And we need to address the historic and current ways racism and other oppression impact every institution in our communities including public transit. We also need to be working hard to have most impacted communities, transit dependent bus riders, be at the center of what we do as Transit. That includes asking why on TAB there are only two people of color and some of the board are not even bus riders. understand we cannot make the city make people come to table or invite community partners or bus riders but it makes sense that we have the best solutions to actual problems on buses and bus stops. This includes inviting others to join T4B and community partners at the Albuquerque Bus Riders Union (ABRU) monthly meetings. We have been meeting monthly since last October after attempts between May and September to be invited to the meetings the city was hosting about Zero Fares implementation. Join us next Friday from 3:30-5:00pm here at Alvarado Transit Center. And I am thankful to Margaret, Bobby and Transit for helping ABRU to host our first hybrid, in person and online, meeting."

Christopher Ramirez: There are many issues around under funding for our Transit Department. *Shared a set of questions in chat, see below 00:31:52, around funding and routes.*

Transit is doing an equity analysis as a result of first draft of proposed ordinance O-22-47. Is there a way Transit can share the equity analysis or a way community can give input and feedback in report?

Director's Report: Bobby Sisneros, Deputy Director

Bobby Sisneros: Transit's hired a Safety Compliance Specialist, we will introduce him at our next meeting. SW Quadrant Park-and-Ride Feasibility Study Public meeting Tuesday, November 15 at 6pm, virtual meeting. *Shared screen, September 2022 zero fares report on ridership, maintenance, operating, marketing costs and updates.* <https://www.cabq.gov/transit/our-department/reports>

ABQRide Forward just wrapped up public engagement, still another 7 months to complete study.

Christopher Ramirez: *shared screen Transit Fiscal Year Appropriations spreadsheet he created from <https://www.transit.dot.gov/ntd/transit-agency-profiles/city-albuquerque> website.* We should be asking city council, with the 30 million dollars awarded from federal funds to subsidize the cost of public transit, why those funds weren't directed towards pay rates if they would have cut less money from Transit budget?

Samuel Jensen: What is the fare boxes recovery rate?

Steven Pilon: \$0.37 represents amount of per rider.

Bobby Sisneros: *responding to Rikk Murphy message in chat 01:01:15*
\$460,000-\$575,000 a large portion of that comes from our Lamar contracts with the bus wraps.

Information Items:

Bobby Sisneros: Commuter Routes 6, 13, 37, 98, 217, 250 have been suspended due to driver shortage. Posted on Transit website.

Action Items

Christopher Ramirez asked for a motion to hear Zero Fares Resolution. Don McIver motioned, Jett Metcalf, 2nd the motion. *Christopher Ramirez shared screen Zero Fares Resolution. TAB members reviewed and made changes during meeting.*

***WHEREAS** transit is a human right and public good, and unequal access to public transit based on age, disability, gender, housing status, income and race have persisted to this day; and*

***WHEREAS** public transit connects communities to education, employment, food, healthcare, recreation and other opportunities that promote the health equity of communities; and*

***WHEREAS** public transit promotes climate and environmental justice and economic justice for communities; and*

***WHEREAS** the City of Albuquerque Transit Advisory Board (TAB) has passed resolutions in support of transit equity and fare free transit since 2018 and acknowledges community safety must include collaboration of Transit and other city departments as well as bus riders, Transit staff, community organizations and other stakeholders; and*

WHEREAS 76% of weekday riders and 79% of weekend riders report living in households making less than \$25,000 annually (ABQ Ride Onboarding Survey, 2022); and*

WHEREAS 61% of weekday passengers and 57% of weekend riders report that they do not possess a valid driver's license (ABQ Ride Onboarding Survey, 2022); and*

***WHEREAS** bus passes, even free, are still a barrier for bus riders; and*

WHEREAS transit equity is identified as communities most impacted, transit dependent riders, having access to transportation they need and deserve and informing or leading decisions about public transit including access to affordable and ideally free transit – over 77% of weekday and 80% of weekend bus riders ranked keeping the bus free as Most Value or Valuable when asked*

about preferred improvements to bus service (ABQ Ride Onboarding Survey, 2022).

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Albuquerque Transit Advisory Board (TAB) supports the City of Albuquerque to continue Zero Fares; and

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the City of Albuquerque Transit Advisory Board (TAB) certifies this resolution and will share the resolution with the mayor and city councilors.

*ABQ Ride Onboarding Survey 2022:

<https://abqrideforward.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/ABQ-Ride-On-Board-Survey-Final-Report-20220707.pdf>

Jett Metcalf moved to vote on resolution. Zero Fares Resolution-TAB vote

Jennifer Frederick- yes
Jenny Jackson- yes
Samuel Jensen- yes
Don McIver-yes

Jett Metcalf-yes
Rikk Murphy-yes
Steve Pilon- no

Second Round of Public Comment (Reminder there is a 2 minute limit on Public Comment(s)).

Sarah Kelly: Signs need replacing, maintenance has not been approached as much as it should, windows and ventilation are important in small spaces. In regards to ad revenue, perhaps we can reduce fees for banners on bus and incorporate local businesses.

Adjournment

Meeting ended at 5:32 pm

Next Meeting: Thursday, December 8, 2022; 4:00 PM via online (ZOOM) or in person

Below are the chat messages exchanged during the ZOOM Meeting

00:08:26 Charles Davis: Charles Davis, Assistant City Attorney (Transit
00:08:27 Althea May Atherton: Althea Atherton- bus rider, Victory Hills Neighborhood Association, District 6 Transportation Committee
00:08:28 Peter Rice / Downtown Albuquerque News: Peter Rice, Downtown Albuquerque News
00:08:29 Patrick Martin: Patrick Martin - bus, bike, and bus+bike rider :)
00:08:29 Jennifer Frederick - ECHO Admin Support: Jennifer Frederick - Transit Board Member and Bus Rider
00:08:30 Margaret Lucero, Executive Assistant: Jett Metcalf @ ATC
00:08:36 Margaret Lucero, Executive Assistant: Samuel Jensen @ ATC
00:08:37 Ben Garland: I'm the new member of TAB after city council approves the appointment at their next meeting
00:08:40 Mike Davis (ABQ Ride): Mike Davis - ABQ - Ride
00:08:44 Margaret Lucero, Executive Assistant: Margaret Lucero @ ATC
00:08:52 Sayid M Hossaini: Sayid Hossaini with together for brothers
00:08:53 Bobby Sisneros (ABQ RIDE): Bobby Sisneros, ABQ RIDE
00:08:57 Megan Holcomb: Megan Holcomb, ABQ RIDE
00:09:26 Albert Lee (he/him), City of Albuquerque: Albert Lee, Sustainable Transportation Specialist, Environmental Health Department
00:16:21 Christopher (they or he) - TAB Chair: www.abqrideforward.com
00:30:59 Althea May Atherton: Is that November 18th 3:30-5:30? I'd love to join

00:31:52 Christopher (they or he) - TAB Chair: Expansion & Frequency Questions

How much would it cost to increase frequency on routes in most impacted communities?

16: Broadway/University/Gibson

51: Atrisco/Rio Bravo

53: Isleta

54: Bridge

97: Zuni

198: 98th/Dennis Chavez

Have all the COVID funds been spent?

Any update on the federal infrastructure funds for public transit?

Any plans for additional county, state or federal operating funding?

How can we expand or create new routes to:

Gateway Center

Westgate Community Center

CNM Westside (evenings)

Valle del Oro

Balloon Fiesta Park

Finally I want to express concern and question why there is planning for Park & Rides when we cannot staff basic routes and frequency. How are we planning for new projects that have never been shared with the TAB?

00:41:30 Patrick Martin: My question is more that, for example, the "Fixed Route Operating Costs" is \$1.5 million right now, but even without ZF the fixed route would still cost \$1.5 million right? So that's not really a ZF cost?

00:42:01 Don McIver: Good question Patrick.

00:43:09 Don McIver: Not a question about the report but some discussion about replacing the farebox revenue.

00:43:31 Patrick Martin: I mean the 1.5 million on the September report, is that a farebox replacement or an operating cost?

00:43:46 Christopher (they or he) - TAB Chair: [**https://www.transit.dot.gov/ntd/transit-agency-profiles/city-albuquerque](https://www.transit.dot.gov/ntd/transit-agency-profiles/city-albuquerque)

00:43:55 Patrick Martin: (\$1,589,663.57)

00:44:32 Patrick Martin: oh that's some great data there Christopher, thanks

00:46:32 Don McIver: Has any transit department looked at a model that is similar to how public radio is funded? Thus...people could donate to the transit department if they felt it was service worth supporting and could support it and yet it could still be free? I don't like the narrative that we could make the buses safer by charging a fair...

00:47:01 Don McIver: *fare

00:52:33 Ben Garland: What's the general cause of ridership decline from 2014-2019?

00:52:39 Christopher (they or he) - TAB Chair: Google Drive - https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1arR_7dqy9o0CsHc1iSDu50LXVmhmu9eePRfr-r-qD3U/edit?usp=sharing

00:53:19 Patrick Martin: yup!

00:54:34 Patrick Martin: Ok that makes a lot more sense Bobby, thanks!

00:58:53 Patrick Martin: farebox recovery ratio should be column F divided by column B, right?

01:01:15 rikk: Just curious, how much is our Advertising revenue?

01:01:33 Christopher (they or he) - TAB Chair: I think that comes close to the rate Patrick.

01:02:14 tas: A 501 c3 donation thing for ABQ RIDE is a good idea

01:03:06 Steve Pilon: Yes Column f divided by column b should be farebox recovery ratio

01:03:13 tas: I would donate at least the amount I paid for my ABQ RIDE monthly passes

01:07:00 tas: Issue (probably electric scooter thing): I didn't see exactly what the person tried to take on the bus, but I suspect it was an electric scooter. The bus driver said something about federal regulations and wouldn't allow the person on....

01:07:15 Christopher (they or he) - TAB Chair: Zero Fares resolution --
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1GAhuddM8vTjuIbqu7WIRjvTLdz5PRXP-MICrBUzClhk/edit?usp=sharing>

01:07:49 Patrick Martin: re:electric scooters and buses, I heard from Margaret a month ago that abqride operations is reviewing their policy (that currently bans them)

01:08:03 Patrick Martin: (and ebikes)

01:08:23 Althea May Atherton: Thank you- I hear from a lot of people that the reason they don't take the bus is that they can't bring their e-bikes

01:08:50 Christopher (they or he) - TAB Chair: <https://sourcenm.com/2022/11/07/councilors-albuquerque-hop-on-and-go-bus-program-made-it-too-easy-for-the-wrong-kind-of-riders/>

01:09:43 tas: Have the bus drivers been surveyed about the Zero Fares Program. Do the bus drivers like the zero fares thing? Do they hate it? Thank you.

01:10:33 Megan Holcomb: Commuter Routes Suspended: 6, 13, 37, 98, 217, 250

01:11:56 Althea May Atherton: The Jarrett Walker focus groups at least did not poll Yes or No on Zero Fare, but as a priority on top of route coverage, frequency, and span (which are also highly popular)

01:14:39 Patrick Martin: That's right Althea, the survey asked "What improvements do you wish could be made to ABQ Ride bus service?"; the response "Keeping the fare free" has 74.5% responding "most valuable" compared to the other options

01:14:57 Christopher (they or he) - TAB Chair: <https://abqrideforward.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/ABQ-Ride-On-Board-Survey-Final-Report-20220707.pdf>

01:15:24 Patrick Martin: it appears from the survey that people could select "most valuable" for multiple options, somehow

01:15:35 tas: The question regarding valid driver's license. Do Identification cards issued by the DMV count as Drivers' licenses for this question? Or not?

01:16:55 Patrick Martin: (sorry, 74.5% is the weekday survey, the weekend survey had a larger number)

01:20:02 Patrick Martin: Yeah, I think there's an important distinction between considering something "valuable" and "worth it"

01:20:36 Ben Garland: I have to get going, thanks everyone! I'll try to make it to the ATC event next Fri that Christopher mentioned, otherwise I'll see you all at the next TAB meeting.

01:23:14 Megan Holcomb: <https://www.cabq.gov/transit/events>

01:29:21 Steve Pilon: Christopher, Thanks for all your hard work. Sorry that you won't be with us anymore

01:30:26 Patrick Martin: IIRC transit is in the process of replacing all the signs?

01:30:40 tas: Some Signs for the bus stops do look terrible.

01:30:51 Christopher (they or he) - TAB Chair: Yes, there was a pilot and plan for replacing all bus stop signs.

01:32:08 tas: There are also bus stop signs where no buses stop now. The ones I've seen are on or near KAFB

01:33:11 tas: Thank you

01:33:38 Patrick Martin: Thank you!

01:33:55 Jennifer Frederick - ECHO Admin Support: Thank you Christopher - you are a rock star

01:34:04 Althea May Atherton: Thanks, Christopher!