

Greater Albuquerque Active Transportation Committee (GAATC) Meeting Minutes



Tim Keller, Mayor

December 9, 2024 | 4:00 – 6:00 PM



Committee Members Present

Alex Applegate

Frank Horine

Luciana Roça

Committee Members Absent

Ryan Mast (Vice Chair)

Josiah Hooten

Staff Members Present

Tara Cok (MRMPO/MRCOG)

Albert Lee (Sustainability)

Alonzo Martinez (Horrocks)

Jessica Sapunar-Jursich (DMD)

Cheryl Somerfeldt (Parks and Rec)

Julie Luna (BernCo)

Tom Menicucci (Council Services)

Robert Messenger (CABQ Planning)

Paul Olson (DMD)

Gabriel Sanchez-Ramos (NMDOT)

Jenae Robertson (TYLin)

Courtney Winans (Horrocks)

Visitors Present

David C'De Baca

Eli, Casa Esperanza

Dianne Cress, Bike ABQ

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Scot Key

Carlos A. Michelén Ströfer, Board of Neighborhood Association, Transit Advisory Board

Brandi Thompson, Strong Towns Albuquerque

Alex Applegate called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm.

- **Approval of December 9, 2024, Meeting Agenda**
Luciana Roça (motion); Frank Horine (second)
Yes: Frank Horine, Luciana Roça, Alex Applegate
- **Approval of November 18, 2024, Meeting Minutes**
Frank Horine (motion); Luciana Roça (second)
Yes: Frank Horine, Luciana Roça, Alex Applegate
- **Public Comments** (Public comment is limited to two (2) minutes per audience member)
 - Please email comments to Jessica Sapunar-Jursich (jessica@cabq.gov) before the meeting **(must be received by 4 pm on December 9, 2024)** OR use the virtual raise hand feature during the meeting.
 - Emailed Comments
 - Carlos A. Michelén Ströfer:
“Hi Jessica,
I would like to give public comment at the upcoming GAATC meeting on December 9th on the topic of the I-25 S-curve redesign. If possible I would like to share the following image.
Thanks,
Carlos
--
Carlos A. Michelén Ströfer, PhD (he | él)”
(see photo on page 3)

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Public Comments

- Carlos A. Michelén Ströfer: (Birdseye image of I-25 overpass and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Ave NE shared) I walk and bike a lot in this neighborhood. Walking across the highway requires to travel 430 feet along with 5 lanes of traffic on Locust Street, and 3 lanes on Oak Street. The turns also have very large radius', allowing cars to turn right at regular speed, rarely stopping completely. I have brought this up with Horrocks back in April of 2024 and was disappointed to see them move forward with 2 different proposals: increasing the number of lanes at Coal Road, Lead Road, Central Avenue, MLK, and Cesar Chavez. Locust Street is now proposed to extend to 6 lanes instead of 5, I was hoping it would be reduced to 2 or 3 lanes. When the highway was first constructed, it eliminated an entire block of housing, adding in dead zones, such as parking lots. Because of increasing the number of lanes, it makes this area more dangerous part of walking and biking. Being that it is dangerous, no one will use it.
- Scot Key: Looking at alternatives for the I-25 S-Curve for "J" and "L", I would encourage GAATC members to review the "L" because it cuts off access to I-25 at Coal Avenue, going southbound on the west side of I-25. As a cyclist, it has a lot

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of good outcomes for us and people downtown.

- Brandi Tompson: Echo what Scot Key mentioned. I agree that making access roads to biking more amendable. I don't feel it is necessary to implement the I-25 S-Curve project when there are other ways to achieve these goals without spending billions of dollars and widening access roads.

- **Presentation**

1. **New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) I-25 S-Curve Area Study – Nonmotorized Transportation Update**, Mike Worrall (Consultant Project Manager), Courtney Winans, Alonzo Martinez

- a. **Schedule Update:**

- i. Kick off began about 1 year ago
- ii. 3rd Public meeting completed for public feedback and alternatives
- iii. **Comment period closes on January 6, 2025****
- iv. Remaining: draft documents, state and federal review, then finalize documentation

- b. **Build Alternatives:**

- i. *Not chosen:*

1. Non-motorized transportation facilities; ped bridge or ped underpass
2. Alternative-E; shifts interchange to the west, creating new frontage roads and access to downtown, widening main line and relocating ramps

- ii. *Chosen alternatives:*

1. Cross-section refined (implemented); concrete wall barrier/separated shared use path:
 - a. Oak and Locust Road will be shared use paths
2. Alternative-J; *least impactful*, moves main line east, additional lanes, extending frontage road from Central to Lead, replacing ramps

- iii. *Other possible alternatives:*

1. Alternative-G; *least impactful*, new advanced U-turn at Central Avenue
2. Alternative-L; East interchange configuration, ramp to I-25 southbound replaced

- c. More analysis and alternative information provided**:

1. website: i25scurve.com
2. Email: study@i25scurve.com
3. Phone: (505)600-2232
4. Mailing address: I-25 S-Curve Area Study, c/o Horrocks, 6001 Indian School Road NE, Suite 250, Albuquerque, NM 87110

- **Q&A, Comments for S-Curve Presentation**

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- Luciana Roça : Will we have more options after the closing period?
 - Courtney Winans: Although these are the options we've narrowed down to, there is room for refinement before decisions are made. There will also be opportunities for input on non-motorized transportation.
 - Luciana Roça: Will a "no turn on red" be considered for peds and cyclists?
 - Gabriel Sanchez-Ramos: I'm not sure if a decision has been made yet, but it is being considered.
- Alex Applegate: Why isn't there a build option with bike/ped improvements?
 - Alonzo Martinez: NMDOT identifies project limits, we [Horrocks] develop a purpose and need, then FHWA sets the guidelines on what can be included based on its purpose. There could be other opportunities to improve those but not on this project.
 - Alex Applegate: There was a section-M, that has a build of bike infrastructure with no changes to the interstate.
 - Courtney Winans: It doesn't fit into the purpose and need for the project. But what we have does include safety for all transportation modes, but we will look into that more too. If you could also include it in your comment to the project, it will help.
 - Alonzo Martinez: The task of the project gets lumped into all modes of transportation, including operating under FHWA guidelines.
 - Alex Applegate: Will there be leading pedestrian indicators?
 - Alonzo Martinez: Once the preferred alternative gets selected, all of the details will be provided.
- Alex Applegate: I don't see why the intersections with the wide radius' can't be fixed, to not be so dangerous. I think they should be removed. Are you considering that?
 - Courtney Winans: This is great to include in the comment form.
- Carlos A. Michelén Ströfer: The reduction was only done with motor vehicles in mind, which none are good for pedestrians in mind. I would encourage Horrocks to be open to new design options.
- David C'De Baca: After speaking with Horrocks and others involved in this project, I feel that they only want to consider highway widening and not thinking of the safety of those crossing it.
- Scot Key: I ride the road on Lead and Coal, going down the hill. Right turn on red is not going to work because of the backup and drivers don't always follow these rules. Have you thought of anything more robust to address this highly dangerous situation?
 - Alonzo Martinez: We are still considering this with 2 alternatives on the table. When we do select one, we will be able to refine this.
- Alex Applegate: What is the need to expand the highway on I-25?
 - Alonzo Martinez: We are coordinating with MRCOG and using their traffic

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demand model, projected at 20/50. We've analyzed this with our alternatives, and they operate at the desired level of service. We are using data from MRCOG, as they do see increase in traffic demand and population.

- Luciana Roça: Do these traffic demand models consider other options such as public transit?
 - Alonzo Martinez: We can look more into this and get back to you after communicating with our traffic engineer. It is very specialized and I don't want to answer incorrectly, but it should be included in that model.

• Discussion / Action Items

1. **Discussion/Action:** Discuss and vote on a letter of support for Idaho Stop legislation anticipated at the State Legislature 2025 session (draft attached)
 - A letter was written (read aloud) to Senate Health and Public Affairs Committee, Senate Judiciary Committee, House Transportation Committee and Public Works & Capital Improvements Committee members expressing support for the Idaho Stop (stop-as-yield). The 11 states that have implemented this has had intersection collisions by 14-23.5%. Below the written letter are research links provided for reference.

Approval of Idaho Stop Letter

Luciana Roça (motion); Frank Hornie (second)

Yes: Frank Horine, Luciana Roça, Alex Applegate

• Staff Reports

- Municipal Development (DMD)
 - Traffic Engineering, Tim Brown:
 - No Updates
 - Transportation Engineering/Transportation Planning/Vision Zero, Jessica Sapunar-Jursich:
 - GAATC DMD Staff Liaisons attended the City of Albuquerque Office of the City Clerk Boards and Commissions training last week
 - GAATC Members will be required to take training as well, more information to come later
 - 3 GAATC appointments are waiting in the queue for approval
 - Vacant seat is available for Youth (age 24 and under)
 - Final approval is awaiting approval for 2 of the 3 appointments during City Councils December 16th meeting
- Council Services, Tom Menicucci:
 - Adrian Carver, Naomi George, and one other are up for approval at next meeting
- Parks and Recreation, Cheryl Somerfeldt or Whitney Phelan:
 - No Updates
- Planning, Robert Messenger:

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- No Updates
 - ABQ RIDE, Andrew De Garmo:
 - No Updates
 - Sustainability, Albert Lee:
 - Sustainability office has kicked off the Comprehensive Climate Action Plan for the Albuquerque Metro Region, activities will be starting in 2025:
 - Resilientfuturesnm.org
 - Bernalillo County, Julie Luna:
 - November 20th public meeting materials (transit, speeding, design) are available on the Bernalillo County website
 - MRCOG, Tara Cok:
 - MRMPO produced Long Range Transportation Plan draft – “Transitions 2045 MTP” available on website below for public review, until January 10, 2025:
 - <https://www.mrcog-nm.gov/264/Metropolitan-Transportation-Plan>
 - Final draft Plan to be released in February 2025 for second public review
 - NMDOT District 3 (Vacant)
 - No Updates
-
- **Next Meeting:** January 13, 2025, 4 – 6 pm
 - **Adjourn 5:30 pm**

Subject: Support for Idaho Stop (Stop-as-Yield) Law

Dear [Senate Health and Public Affairs Committee Member, Senate Judiciary Committee Member/ House Transportation, Public Works & Capital Improvements Committee Member],

We, the members of the Greater Albuquerque Active Transportation Committee (GAATC), are writing to express our strong support for the proposed Idaho Stop (also known as the stop-as-yield) law, which will be considered by your committee this legislative session.

As an active transportation committee, we support this law because research has shown that it significantly improves safety for cyclists. In the 11 states that have already implemented versions of the Idaho Stop, the number of cyclists injured in intersection collisions has decreased by 14% to 23.5% (1). It is also recommended in Albuquerque's Bikeway and Trail Facilities Plan (2).

An Idaho Stop law is an effective way to reduce traffic collisions involving cyclists, with minimal cost to the state, limited to updating traffic regulations. This aligns with New Mexico's Vision Zero and Complete Streets goals, which aim to eliminate pedestrian and cyclist fatalities. Given the high cost and complexity of many transportation projects, a simple and cost-effective measure like the Idaho Stop can help save lives without requiring significant expenditure.

Additionally, 11 other states are working to pass similar legislation, and we hope that New Mexico will join them in this life-saving effort.

We strongly urge you to support this measure and move it forward for approval.

Sincerely,

On behalf of the Greater Albuquerque Active Transportation Committee (GAATC)

- 1) <https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.gov/files/2022-03/Bicyclist-Yield-As-Stop-Fact-Sheet-032422-v3-tag.pdf>
- 2) <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/640617a49a97bb2acabde9cd/t/66848bcc5b422f187f10a564/1719962594276/2024+Bikeway+and+Trail+Facilities+Plan+-+July+2024.pdf> (page 116).