

## **Transit Advisory Board**

### **Resolution: In Support of Transit-Specific Compensation and Labor Structure Reform to Address ABQ RIDE Staffing Shortages**

**WHEREAS**, the Transit Advisory Board (TAB) is charged with advising the City of Albuquerque's Transit Department and City Council in connection with the development and promotion of public transit services in the city; and

**WHEREAS**, ABQ RIDE has experienced persistently high vacancies among bus operators and mechanics since at least the end of the COVID-19 pandemic; and

**WHEREAS**, due to staffing shortages, ABQ Ride cut service in 2020 and 2021 and has not been able to increase service beyond 60% of pre-pandemic service.

**WHEREAS**, ABQ RIDE staff and leadership have undertaken numerous commendable recruitment and retention efforts, including accelerated onboarding processes, hiring events, career fairs, signing bonuses, and initiatives to improve morale and workplace culture; and

**WHEREAS**, while these efforts have positively impacted workplace culture and recruitment pipelines, vacancy levels remain high and service has not been restored to pre-pandemic levels; and

**WHEREAS**, the Rio Metro/ABQ Ride Consolidation Study identifies that ABQ RIDE employees "lack job classifications and compensation that meet the needs specifically required for transit agency employees, particularly with those who work in operations and maintenance"; and

**WHEREAS**, transit operators and mechanics face uniquely demanding working conditions, including non-standard schedules, required overtime, direct and frequent public interaction, safety concerns, and specialized vehicle maintenance responsibilities; and

**WHEREAS**, existing labor structures group transit operators and mechanics within broader citywide classifications that limit differentiation in compensation between transit-specific positions and similar roles in other city departments with less demanding working conditions; and

**WHEREAS**, the Consolidation Study goes as far as recommending restructuring ABQ RIDE's relationship to the City specifically to allow greater autonomy over hiring, staffing, and labor structures, and identifies the creation of transit-specific union tiers and pay levels as necessary to improve retention; and

**WHEREAS**, the ABQ RIDE Forward Network Plan seeks to restore service and ridership to pre-pandemic levels; and

**WHEREAS** ABQ Ride is implementing the ABQ Ride Forward plan in 16 phases over 4 years, due to staffing limitations, further delaying full network restoration; and

**WHEREAS**, addressing compensation and classification barriers is essential not only to restoring service levels, but to expanding transit service beyond pre-pandemic levels and building a stronger, more reliable, and future-oriented transit system for Albuquerque; and

**WHEREAS**, transit is a critical public investment that reduces traffic congestion, supports climate goals, lowers traffic fatalities, improves air quality, expands economic opportunity, and provides mobility for residents who cannot or choose not to drive; and

**WHEREAS**, this resolution does not preclude transit employees from union membership or representation;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Transit Advisory Board urges ABQ Ride, the Mayor and City Council to develop and implement a mechanism to establish transit-specific job classifications, differentiated compensation structures, and enhanced pay scales for ABQ RIDE operators and mechanics, commensurate with the demands and responsibilities of transit work;

**THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Transit Advisory Board urges the inclusion of the transit labor union in these negotiations with the city for these further differentiated job descriptions.

**PASSED AND APPROVED** this 9th day of April, 2026, by the Albuquerque Transit Advisory Board.