

September 9, 2001

Dear Mr.

We of RAILS Inc. have some observations and comments regarding the Mayoral Candidate Forum sponsored by 1000 Friends on September 5th.

We are glad to note how high public transportation issues stand in the public mind. We are, however, disappointed to hear the same tired old myths and misconceptions about passenger Rail voiced by many of the candidates. Please allow us to correct these:

(1) You CANNOT equate trains (light, regional or commuter) with buses. They are different modes with different purposes in the overall transportation scheme. For many reasons (see enclosures) Rail is the anchor, the keystone, of a truly worthwhile "multi-modal" transportation system. People *will* ride Rail in large numbers who *will not ride buses*. A system anchored by passenger Rail has been shown to ENCOURAGE the use of feeder buses, park-and-rides, bicycles, and just plain walking.

(2) What's this time worn ploy about Rail not being self-supporting? NO MODE of transportation in America is: *especially* not cars and trucks. Subsidy, like obscenity, is truly in the eye of the beholder.

(3) Lght rail is a whole lot cheaper and quicker to install than most people (even many experts) think.

(4) The casting of public transportation as being for the "transit dependent" is not only wrong and self-defeating, but actually offensive. Poor people deserve good transportation as much as anybody else, and a good system will attract all economic classes, as proven in 38 other states including those surrounding New Mexico.

We are well aware that the mayor of one city cannot do all that needs to be done in a region as complex as the Socorro-Santa Fe corridor. However, a strong leader of

our state's largest metro area can get the ball rolling in many ways, such as publicly pointing out the obstructionism and possible conflict of interest operating at state level. Win or lose, any candidate who champions this issue will be fondly remembered for his/her foresight.

If you need applicable studies or more information, please contact us. We are a purely volunteer, grass roots operation, but we've done our homework.

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Encs.

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