

18 November 2012

There are plans afoot to improve the transportation and land use picture for the part of Albuquerque bounded by Carlisle on the East, UNM's North Campus on the North, I-25 on the West, and Gibson SE (and the Sunport) on the South. As with the Rail Yard redevelopment process, there's a lot of good news and some significant bad news. And as with the Rail Yard process, the bad news concerns transit.

The planners are rightly paying attention to parking structures, bus service and bike paths. But at this writing they are not making provision for Rail transit of any kind—Light Rail, Modern Streetcar or Rapid Streetcar. They're working the Rail Runner into the plans, which thankfully means they figure it's here to stay, but the Rail Runner trunk needs some Rail limbs. We think our bus budget should be more devoted to Neighborhood Transit, ie, lots of little busses and vans that go just about everywhere, Scheduled and On-Demand.

We think the biggest improvements to this neighborhood would be to

- 1) Build a network of true separated bike paths—not painted lines on the street,*
- 2) Convert 2 lanes of University Blvd between Lomas and Gibson to the exclusive use of transit; preferably Rail transit. If Rail transit is not in the financial or political cards, operate Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in these transit lanes and work like hell to raise money and public consciousness while the busses wear out.*

Most other Western cities, of all political persuasions, understand what a great long-term bargain Rail transit is. We need to join the parade. To get involved in this process, contact :

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The phone number (at the Mid-Region Council Of Governments) is:

(505) 247-1750

Also click LR55 under "Major Studies" on this Web site for an interesting Urban Rail

possibility.

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