

## **1) The Southwest Chief:**

Our train has received, if not full exoneration, a good long stay of execution. Amtrak has announced that they will no longer impose their End-Of-2015 deadline for re-routing or terminating the Chief. They, along with the BNSF Railway, Colorado and Kansas have stepped up to do their part to upgrade the tracks to something resembling passenger rail standards. Our own state is still the hang-up.

And Amtrak is sitting down with Herzog ( the company that operates the Rail Runner for the Council Of Governments) to come up with a cost figure for upgrading the Raton Pass-Lamy track segment. This is good news, but we can't declare Victory just yet.

Please keep after your friends, our political leaders, and whoever else, expressing your support for the Chief.

## **2) The Long View:**

We've been thinking about these never-ending passenger Rail struggles, trying to figure out how to get past them, to be able to count on what passenger trains we now have, and to plan for more and faster in the future. We think the long-term answers for passenger Rail are:

- 1) Publicly owned infrastructure,
- 2) Both public and private moving parts,
- 3) Plenty of room for competition among said parts.

In case this doesn't sound American enough; hell, it can't be more American. It's the way we operate every other mode of transportation. Crudely expressed, subsidize the tracks, not the trains. For more, go to <https://nmrails.org>, click "Hot Topics", the last article.

### **3) Rail Transit For Albuquerque:**

The Yard Bird:

This is what we call our fantasy starter Modern Streetcar line, which would run the short distance between the Alvarado Transportation Center to the old Blacksmith Building in the Rail Yards.

BRT:

We don't hate Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), like the proposal in the works for East Central, BUT: 1) They need to do it right, like concrete instead of asphalt for the BRT lanes, and 2) The system needs to be designed for easy future conversion to Light Rail or Rapid Streetcar. Tell "em so.

### **4) Wanna Go Modern?**

We'll be happy to continue serving those of you on our postal mailing list, but if you want to send us your e-mail address, it will save us time and money. Remember that nobody gets your information from us. Nobody, no matter how much we may like and respect them. Did we say Nobody?

### **5) Other Good Train Groups:**

If you're interested in these, go to <http://nmrails.org>, click Links, click "Our Favorites". The Rail Users Network (RUN) is a kind of national version of us (very loosely speaking) and "Our Train Station: Our Project" is a good opportunity for activism without actually joining a group.

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