
TECHNICAL SUPPLEMENT 5: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Albuquerque Rapid Transit Project

Prepared for:



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1.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

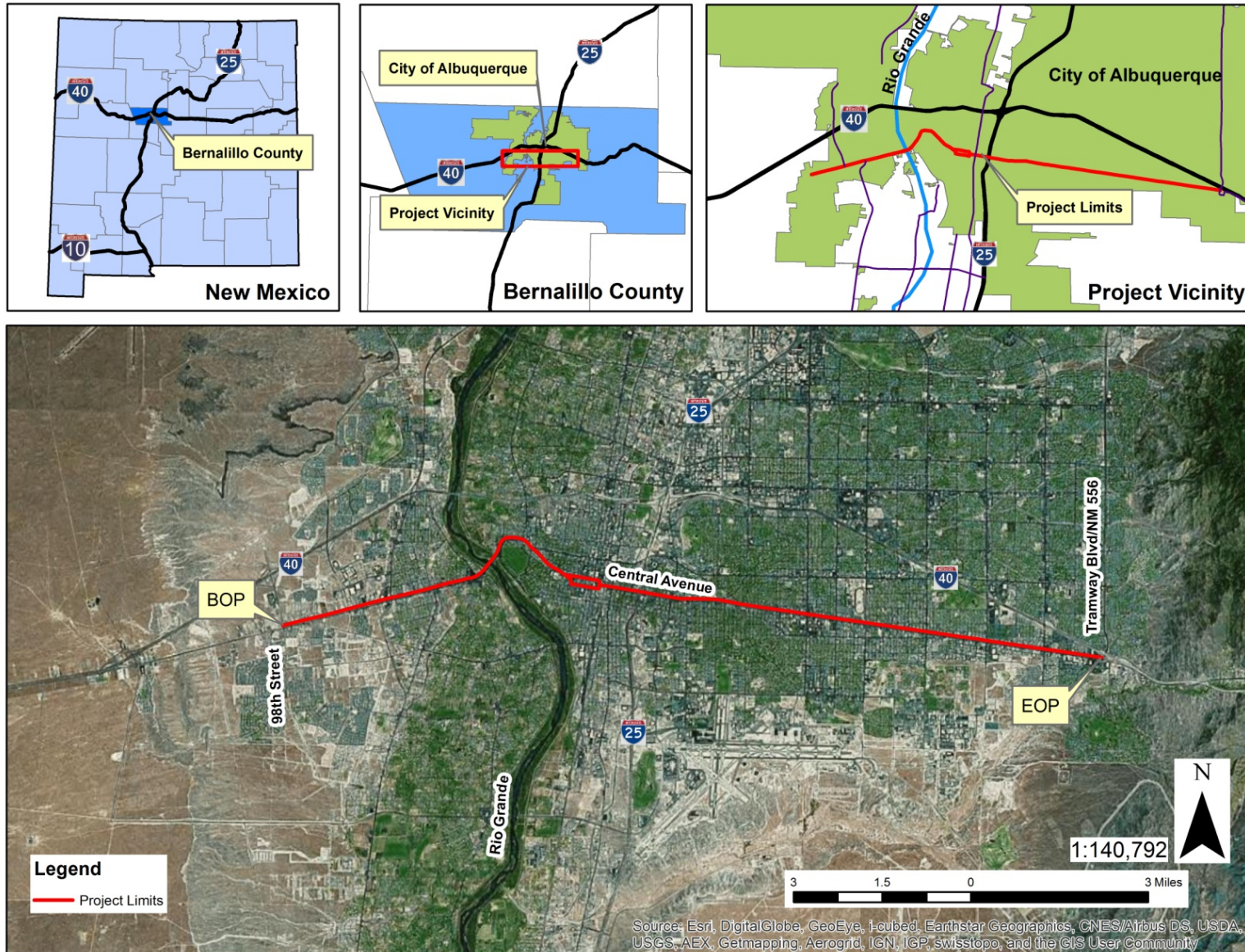
The City of Albuquerque Transit Department (ABQ RIDE), in cooperation with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), is proposing a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project along Central Avenue in Albuquerque, New Mexico. This project is referred to as the Albuquerque Rapid Transit (ART) Project. While the elements of BRT systems are highly variable and depend on the needs of each specific area, the primary features proposed for the ART include: (1) modern articulated rapid vehicles; (2) rapid vehicle lanes (lanes reserved for buses only), as described below; (3) rapid vehicle stations, as described below, spaced at approximately ½ to 1 mile intervals and with off-board fare collection; and, (4) modifications to the traffic signal system to provide rapid vehicle priority.

The proposed project would extend from 98th Street on the west side of the Albuquerque metropolitan area to Tramway Boulevard on the east side (See Figure 1). The overall route length is approximately 15 miles and generally follows the alignment of Central Avenue, except through Downtown Albuquerque. In the Downtown area, the route would split with westbound service located on Copper Avenue between 10th Street and 1st Street, and eastbound service following Gold Avenue from 1st Street to 8th Street.

The major design and operational features of the proposed project include:

- Construction of two dedicated rapid vehicle lanes within the existing operational right-of-way of Central Avenue from Coors Boulevard east to Louisiana Boulevard (approximately 8.75 miles). In general, the rapid vehicle lanes will occupy the existing median of the street and will include one westbound lane and one eastbound lane. This concept will be used in all locations except as follows:
 - From San Pasquale Avenue to 10th Street (0.75 miles), the rapid vehicles will operate in a single reversible lane with the rapid vehicle operating in the off-peak direction traveling in mixed flow traffic lanes.
 - In the Albuquerque Downtown area, the rapid vehicles will operate in mixed flow traffic on Copper Avenue (westbound from 1st Street to 10th Street), Gold Avenue (eastbound from 8th Street to 1st Street), and Central Avenue from Broadway Boulevard to 1st Street. No major reconstruction to the streets will occur in this area.
- Rapid vehicles will operate in the inside traffic lane in mixed flow from 98th Street to Coors Boulevard, and from Louisiana Boulevard to Tramway Boulevard. Queue jumps will be provided at signalized intersections in these segments.
- Construction of stations within the roadway median and/or street curbside. Stations will consist of concrete platforms approximately 65 feet long and 10 to 14 feet wide. The platforms will be elevated 6 to 14 inches above the pavement to allow for level boarding from the ART station to the rapid vehicle. In addition to the platform, stations will include a ticket vending machine and an overhead canopy to shield passengers from sun and precipitation. Other passenger amenities such as benches, an information kiosk, trash receptacles, and security lighting may also be provided.
- Rapid vehicles will operate at approximate 5 to 10 minute headways depending on time of day. Hours of operation have not been determined but are likely to be from 5:00 am until midnight.

Figure 1 – Project Vicinity



2.0 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Environmental justice and civil rights protect minority, low-income, and other special status populations from discrimination and from bearing disproportionate adverse impacts of transportation improvements. This is consistent with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Executive order (EO) 12898 for public notification and involvement in the assessment of project impacts. To determine the presence and locations of relevant populations and groups, demographic data from 2010 decennial census and the 2011 American Community Survey were reviewed. Figure 2 shows the census tracts in proximity of the project corridor and where analysis was conducted to assess impact.

Figure 2 – US Census Tracts in Proximity to the Project Area

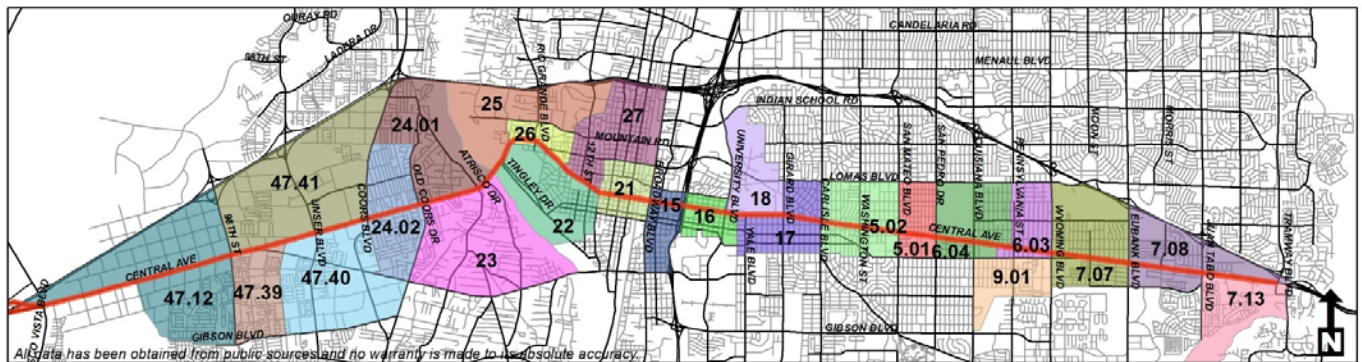


Table 1 summarizes relevant data for the 24 census tracts shown in Figure 2. When compared to statewide and countywide averages, the project area has a similar distribution of age groups and unemployment levels. However, some census tracts have much higher percentages of households with incomes below poverty level and tracts with higher percentages of minority populations. Notable differences in project area demographics in comparison with state and county statistics are discussed below.

Table 1 – Select Demographic Data for Census Tracts Proximate to the Project Area

	New Mexico	Bernalillo County	Project Area	Tract 6.01	Tract 5.02	Tract 6.03	Tract 6.04	Tract 7.07	Tract 7.08	Tract 7.13	Tract 7.14	Tract 9.01	Tract 9.03	Tract 9.04	Tract 11.01	Tract 15	Tract 16	Tract 17	Tract 18
Total Population*	2,059,179	662,564	138,344	2,645	4,754	5,150	4,361	6,152	5,858	5,961	4,669	7,471	5,987	4,311	5,113	2,646	2,529	4,932	2,931
Minority Race & Ethnicity*																			
Minority Race	31.7%	30.6%	35.8%	31.5%	22.3%	45.5%	38.9%	43.5%	38.0%	42.5%	35.3%	40.3%	46.3%	41.3%	21.9%	35.2%	33.8%	23.4%	25.0%
Hispanic Ethnicity	46.3%	47.9%	55.2%	37.9%	26.2%	72.6%	62.6%	63.1%	44.5%	40.5%	35.7%	73.3%	47.4%	48.0%	24.5%	55.6%	28.7%	22.7%	34.3%
Age*																			
Ages 10-14	3.5%	6.9%	6.0%	2.9%	2.1%	7.9%	5.3%	7.3%	5.5%	6.0%	6.2%	6.9%	4.9%	6.2%	4.3%	4.6%	1.4%	2.6%	20.0%
Ages 15-19	3.7%	7.3%	7.7%	5.1%	3.0%	7.3%	6.9%	6.9%	5.6%	6.8%	5.2%	8.2%	5.5%	6.4%	3.6%	5.9%	6.0%	5.1%	51.9%
65 and over	13.2%	12.2%	11.0%	21.0%	16.7%	5.0%	12.6%	12.0%	14.0%	11.0%	9.9%	5.7%	8.5%	13.5%	13.4%	8.4%	5.9%	6.7%	5.1%
Economic Characteristics**																			
Median Household Income	\$44,631	\$48,231	\$34,662	\$27,500	\$40,194	\$26,173	\$20,614	\$27,753	\$29,775	\$34,313	\$50,000	\$25,956	\$21,585	\$30,928	\$52,733	\$31,574	\$18,325	\$28,618	\$33,162
Per Capita Income	\$23,537	\$26,638	\$20,761	\$20,757	\$31,951	\$14,913	\$13,225	\$14,600	\$25,308	\$19,539	\$27,817	\$13,007	\$13,956	\$20,319	\$34,313	\$19,498	\$20,233	\$23,422	\$11,519
Unemployed	5.0%	4.7%	4.8%	1.1%	3.7%	5.6%	3.8%	3.8%	5.7%	12.5%	3.8%	2.7%	7.4%	6.6%	4.2%	8.9%	2.9%	2.3%	2.2%
Below Poverty Level	14.4%	12.5%	21.3%	7.7%	14.2%	29.3%	55.0%	20.7%	13.9%	28.0%	19.5%	32.8%	34.4%	14.7%	13.8%	30.3%	18.9%	8.2%	8.0%
Transportation**																			
No Vehicle Available (workers age 16 and over)	2.1%	2.6%	5.3%	9.2%	2.3%	6.6%	13.0%	1.6%	1.9%	3.4%	0.0%	11.0%	16.5%	6.7%	1.4%	5.2%	19.5%	13.4%	0.0%
Take Public Transportation to Work (workers age 16 and over)	0.45%	0.84%	1.48%	1.8%	0.4%	1.0%	3.2%	1.2%	1.8%	2.2%	no data	1.3%	2.0%	1.0%	1.3%	2.1%	1.5%	0.5%	1.4%
No Vehicle Available Households	5.6%	6.2%	11.4%	21.2%	9.2%	15.3%	20.7%	4.2%	10.5%	9.0%	4.1%	15.9%	27.1%	13.9%	5.9%	6.0%	25.4%	15.5%	25.0%

*Source: U.S. Census 2010

**Source: American Community Survey (ACS) 2011 5-yr estimate (2007-2011)

Table 1 continued – Select Demographic Data for Census Tracts Proximate to the Project Area

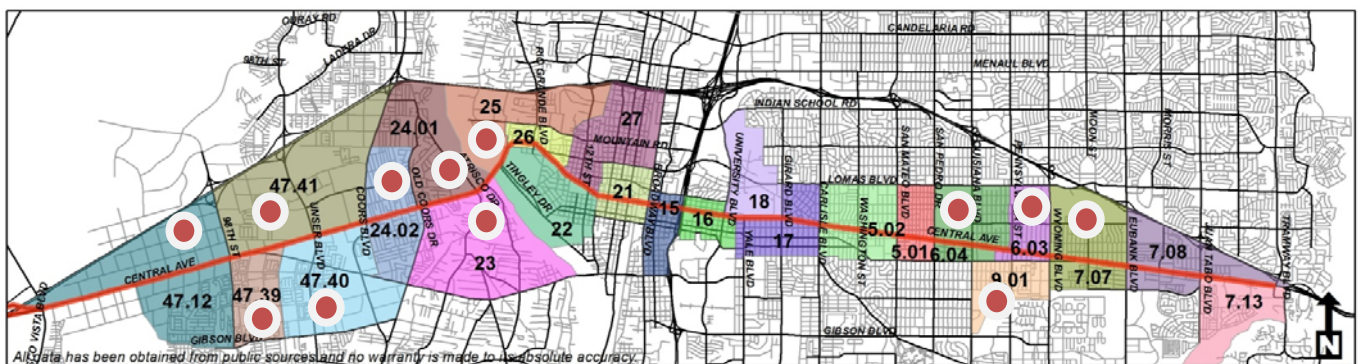
	New Mexico	Bernalillo County	Project Area	Tract 21	Tract 22	Tract 23	Tract 24.01	Tract 24.02	Tract 25	Tract 26	Tract 27	Tract 47.12	Tract 47.39	Tract 47.40	Tract 47.41
Total Population*	2,059,179	662,564	138,344	1,887	3,259	8,842	5,272	8,270	2,361	1,024	3,598	7,147	6,745	7,313	7,156
Minority Race & Ethnicity*															
Minority Race	31.7%	30.6%	35.8%	33.8%	23.8%	46.3%	35.5%	44.3%	31.1%	26.4%	27.4%	45.3%	43.0%	38.8%	42.8%
Hispanic Ethnicity	46.3%	47.9%	55.2%	46.7%	40.4%	87.0%	80.8%	85.9%	65.8%	55.9%	52.6%	78.9%	80.5%	79.4%	75.4%
Age*															
Ages 10-14	3.5%	6.9%	6.0%	0.6%	3.0%	7.8%	6.6%	8.1%	6.4%	3.4%	3.4%	9.4%	9.3%	9.1%	8.0%
Ages 15-19	3.7%	7.3%	7.7%	2.9%	3.4%	7.6%	7.7%	8.2%	6.9%	3.2%	4.0%	8.6%	8.1%	7.9%	7.2%
65 and over	13.2%	12.2%	11.0%	4.6%	14.2%	10.6%	20.7%	11.5%	12.9%	18.6%	27.4%	3.6%	3.5%	5.4%	7.0%
Economic Characteristics**															
Median Household Income	\$44,631	\$48,231	\$34,662	\$30,172	\$31,114	\$31,460	\$48,617	\$33,446	\$46,500	\$36,563	\$37,058	\$51,826	\$46,128	\$43,843	\$34,611
Per Capita Income	\$23,537	\$26,638	\$20,761	\$21,068	\$31,716	\$16,206	\$21,284	\$13,955	\$28,006	\$32,071	\$24,909	\$18,697	\$16,038	\$16,050	\$16,940
Unemployed	5.0%	4.7%	4.8%	0.3%	5.2%	6.2%	3.2%	10.1%	4.0%	2.0%	3.0%	6.7%	8.8%	3.2%	4.0%
Below Poverty Level	14.4%	12.5%	21.3%	50.0%	28.7%	26.4%	11.6%	22.8%	19.5%	9.4%	13.5%	8.0%	16.8%	17.1%	23.9%
Transportation**															
No Vehicle Available (workers age 16 and over)	2.1%	2.6%	5.3%	1.5%	10.7%	5.6%	4.8%	3.0%	0.0%	3.4%	3.1%	0.0%	3.6%	0.0%	0.8%
Take Public Transportation to Work (workers age 16 and over)	0.45%	0.84%	1.48%	1.6%	4.8%	0.4%	1.2%	2.2%	0.2%	no data	1.6%	0.5%	0.4%	0.5%	2.2%
No Vehicle Available Households	5.6%	6.2%	11.4%	8.2%	11.0%	8.0%	7.1%	9.1%	5.3%	15.4%	8.4%	0.0%	2.9%	2.4%	11.6%

*Source: U.S. Census 2010
 **Source: American Community Survey (ACS) 2011 5-yr estimate (2007-2011)

2.1 Minority Populations

Within New Mexico, 46.3% of the population is of Hispanic ethnicity, and within Bernalillo County, 47.9% of the population is of Hispanic ethnicity. A review of the project area shows 12 of the 24 census tracts evaluated have populations of Hispanic ethnicity greater than 58% (10 percentage points higher than the county average). Tracts with higher than average percentages of Hispanic populations include almost all of the tracts to the west of the Rio Grande (tracts: 23, 24.01, 24.02, 25, 47.12, 47.39, 47.40, and 47.41), as well as tracts to the east between San Pedro Drive and Eubank Boulevard (tracts: 6.03, 6.04, 7.07, and 9.01). Figure 3 shows the affected census tracts.

Figure 3 – Census Tracts with Higher than Average Hispanic Populations



2.2 Populations below Poverty Level

Within New Mexico, 14.4% of the population has a household income below poverty in 2010, and within Bernalillo County, 12.5% of the population has a household income below poverty. A review of the project area shows 13 of the 24 census tracts evaluated have a substantially higher percentage of household incomes below poverty when compared to the county average. For the purposes of this analysis, “substantially higher” are the tracts with a percentage of households below poverty greater than 18.75% (1.5 times the county average of 12.5%). These include census tracts 6.03, 6.04, 7.7., 7.13, and 9.01 in the eastern half of the project area, tracts 15 and 16 in the east downtown area, and tracts 21, 22, 23, 24.02, 25, and 47.41 in the western half of the project area (see Figure 4).

Figure 4 – Census Tracts with a Higher than Average Number of Households below Poverty

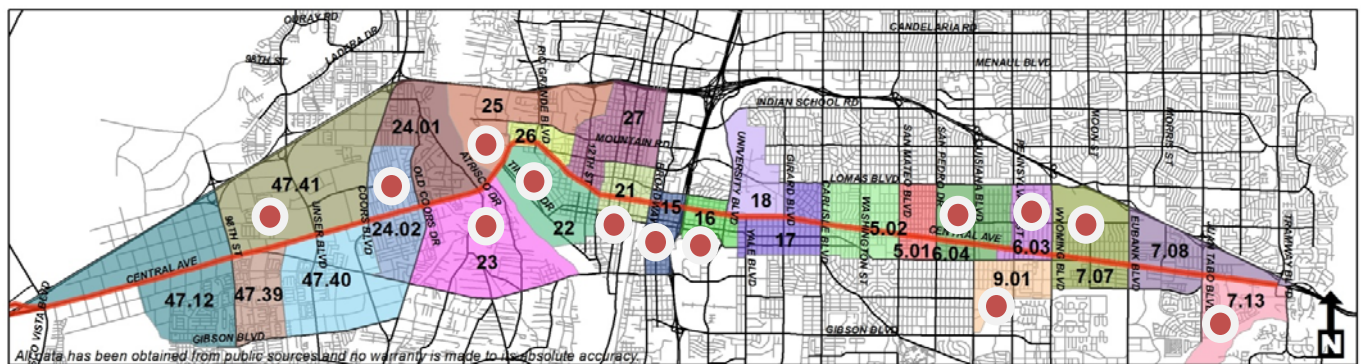


Table 1 also provides data for the percentage of workers and households in each tract that do not have a vehicle available. Eighteen of the 24 census tracts evaluated have a higher percentage of households without access to a vehicle, 8 of which are greater than 15%. This indicates a significant portion of the households within the project area would benefit from efficient transit service to access jobs, school, and services.

2.3 Conclusion

The project area has a high number of minority, low income, and transit dependent populations. These groups will benefit from the enhanced transit service provided by the proposed project. The proposed project will provide improved access to jobs, school, and services which is a benefit to the populations that reside in proximity to Central Avenue. Because the project requires minimal property acquisition that is limited to small slivers of land at several major intersections, these groups will not be adversely impacted by project implementation. Thus, the project will not have disproportionate adverse impacts on minority, low income, and transit dependent populations.