

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

DELEGATION OFFICE
STATE OF NEW MEXICO
HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

April 4, 2022

Peter Buttigieg
Secretary
US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590-0001

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

The New Mexico Congressional Delegation writes in support of the grant application submitted by the City of Albuquerque (CABQ) for the FY2022 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) application as funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). The grant, DTOS59-22-RA-RAISE, will help the construction of the Albuquerque Rail Trail through Downtown Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Albuquerque is a unique multicultural region filled with a diverse history and heritage. It is the largest metropolitan area in New Mexico with a population of roughly 564,000. In the greater Albuquerque metro, the population is just over 900,000. Downtown Albuquerque runs along Central Avenue (former Route 66), home to the historic KiMo Theatre, and provides shopping, dining, arts, and activities.¹

If awarded, the CABQ will construct a 1-mile multi-use trail going North-South through the heart of Downtown Albuquerque. The trail will run along excess state-owned property directly adjacent to the rail tracks. In one section, the trail will be a multi-use path (shared by bicyclists and pedestrians) completely separate from vehicle traffic. This will increase the efforts to provide safe access to regional transportation options such as Amtrak, the Albuquerque - Santa Fe regional

¹ <https://www.visitalbuquerque.org/about-abq/neighborhoods/downtown/>

commuter train (the Rail Runner), the Albuquerque Rapid Transit (ART) Bus, and the Alvarado Transportation Center, which will be made to coincide with safer pedestrian and cyclist connectivity. Access to regional transportation will help reduce parking demands and decrease greenhouse gas emissions.²

In another trail section, the project aims to improve access to green space for Downtown-adjacent neighborhoods and reduce the urban heat island by adding 165 trees to the Downtown area. The trail will separate into a 14-foot enhanced sidewalk and a two-way cycle track that is separated from vehicular traffic using an on-street landscaping buffer allowing for local residents to enjoy revitalized regions of Downtown that are more accessible by walking or cycling.

The New Mexico Congressional Delegation proudly supports the application submitted by CABQ for their FY2022 RAISE application as funded by DOT and we request that you give their application thorough consideration within your agency's guidelines.

Sincerely,

/s/ Martin Heinrich
United States Senator

/s/ Teresa Leger Fernández
United States Representative

/s/ Ben Ray Luján
United States Senator

/s/ Melanie Stansbury
United States Representative

² <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/04/22/fact-sheet-president-biden-sets-2030-greenhouse-gas-pollution-reduction-target-aimed-at-creating-good-paying-union-jobs-and-securing-u-s-leadership-on-clean-energy-technologies/>