



# *A Recovery Network and the Future of Transit in Albuquerque*

Urban Land Institute – New Mexico

*Routes to the Future*

August 13, 2024

---

# What kinds of transit routes do you think are better?

Routes that are farther away, but buses are always coming soon?

**OR**

Routes that are close by, but you might need to wait a long time?

# Basic Transit Service Design Questions

---

What goals are we trying to accomplish through transit service?

---

Should we provide the same quality of service for everyone?

---

Should we carry as many people as possible?

---

Or should we provide service to as wide an area as possible?

---

# Purpose & Benefits of Public Transit

- Increase transportation options
- Provide basic opportunity to travel around a city or region
- Equitable access to jobs, labor, and services
- Transportation cost savings
- Alternative to congestion
- Environmental benefits
- Shape urban form/promote specific development outcomes
- Promote sustainable lifestyles/public health

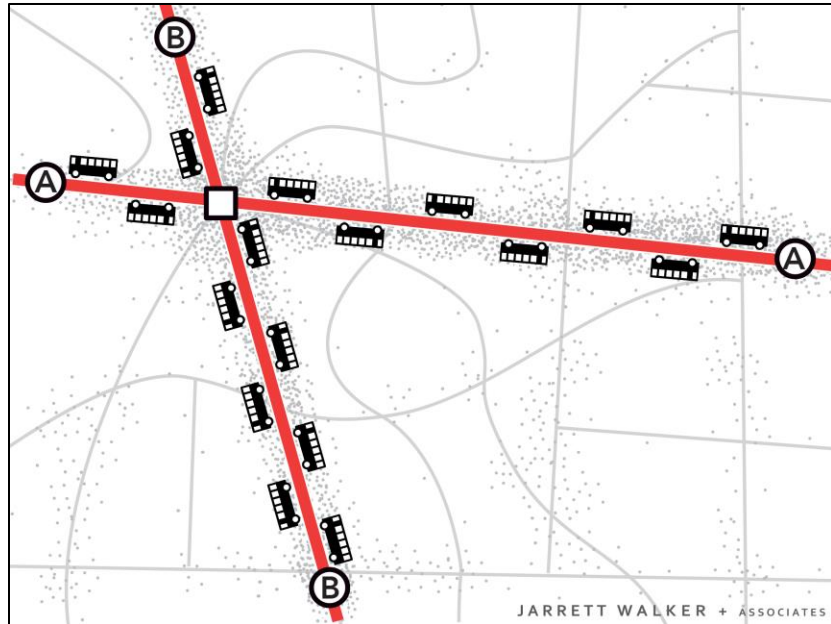
# How should a transit provider allocate service?



Imagine you had 18 buses to serve this fictional town.

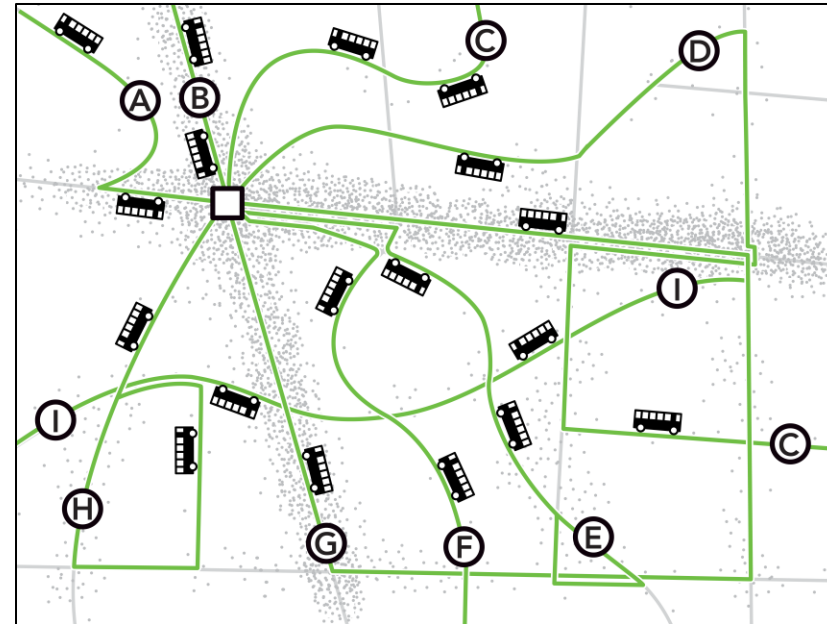
Dots are the locations of residents and jobs.

# Ridership versus Coverage



## High Ridership means...

- Allocate resources based on population and demand
- Maximum access to opportunity
- Supports dense and walkable development
- Lower emissions and fewer vehicle miles travelled



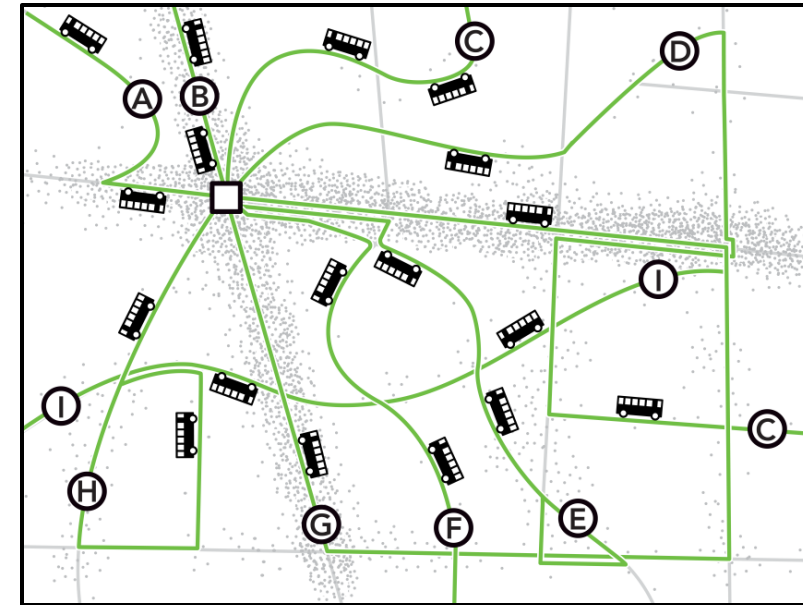
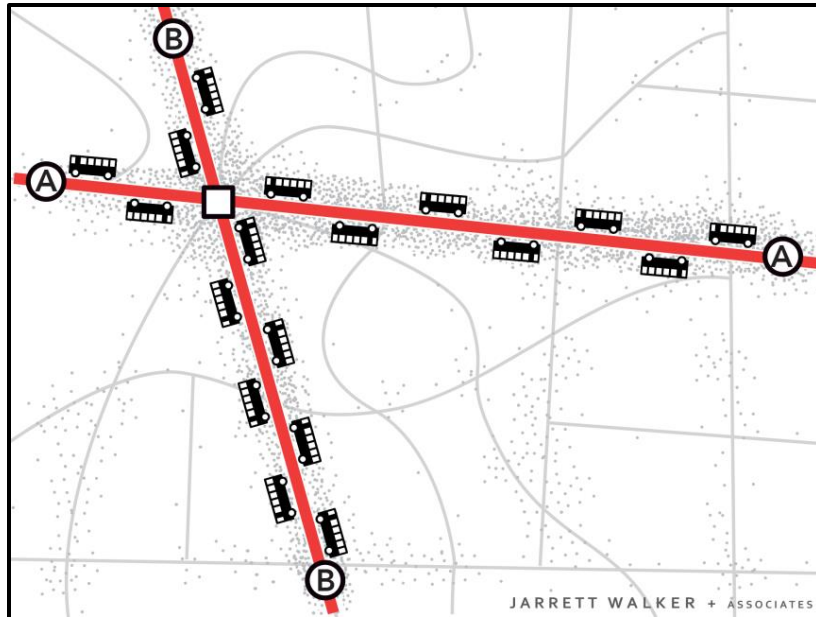
## High Coverage means...

- Provide some level of service to everyone and every job, regardless of the number of users
- Insurance against isolation for people in need, everywhere
- Service near every taxpayer / council district

# Budgets are constrained, so some level of tradeoff is necessary

But a city CAN choose a deliberate balance point on the spectrum. Transit planners can then optimize how a network performs based on where a city decides to be on the spectrum.

Ridership



Coverage



# Network Plan Purpose

## Context:

- Decades since the network has been reviewed holistically
- Significant service cuts during and since the onset of the pandemic in 2020
- Changes in travel patterns since the pandemic
- Multiple phases of outreach to understand transit service-related priorities

## Goals:

- Inform future decisions about where bus routes go, at what times of day they run, and how frequently
- The *Recovery Network* proposes returning to 2019 service levels in a way that aligns with public feedback
- Utilize final phase of public engagement in Summer 2024 to refine the Recovery Network



# Project Phases

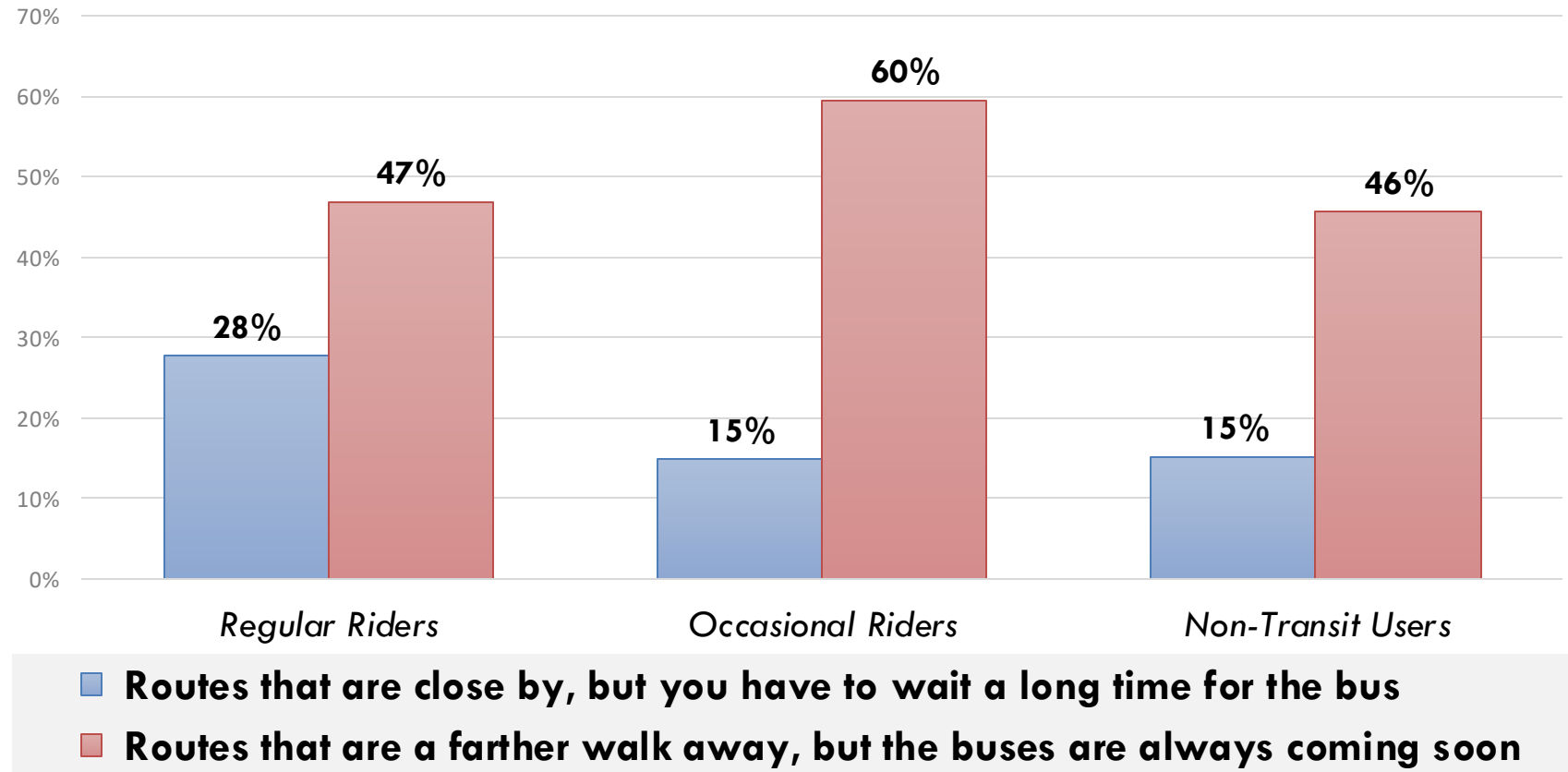
- **Phase I:** Existing conditions and general transit priorities (Do you prefer routes that are farther away but are always coming soon, or routes that are close by but come less frequently?)
- **Phase II:** Consider and contrast “budget-neutral” network concepts for Albuquerque (High Ridership and High Coverage)
- **Phase III:** Proposed Recovery Network

# Phase I Outreach: What Did Community Members Have to Say?

1. In the abstract, riders of all types and income levels say they prefer frequent routes, even if they are farther away.

2. Regular transit riders and lower-income respondents want more evening and weekend service.

## What kind of transit routes do you think are better?



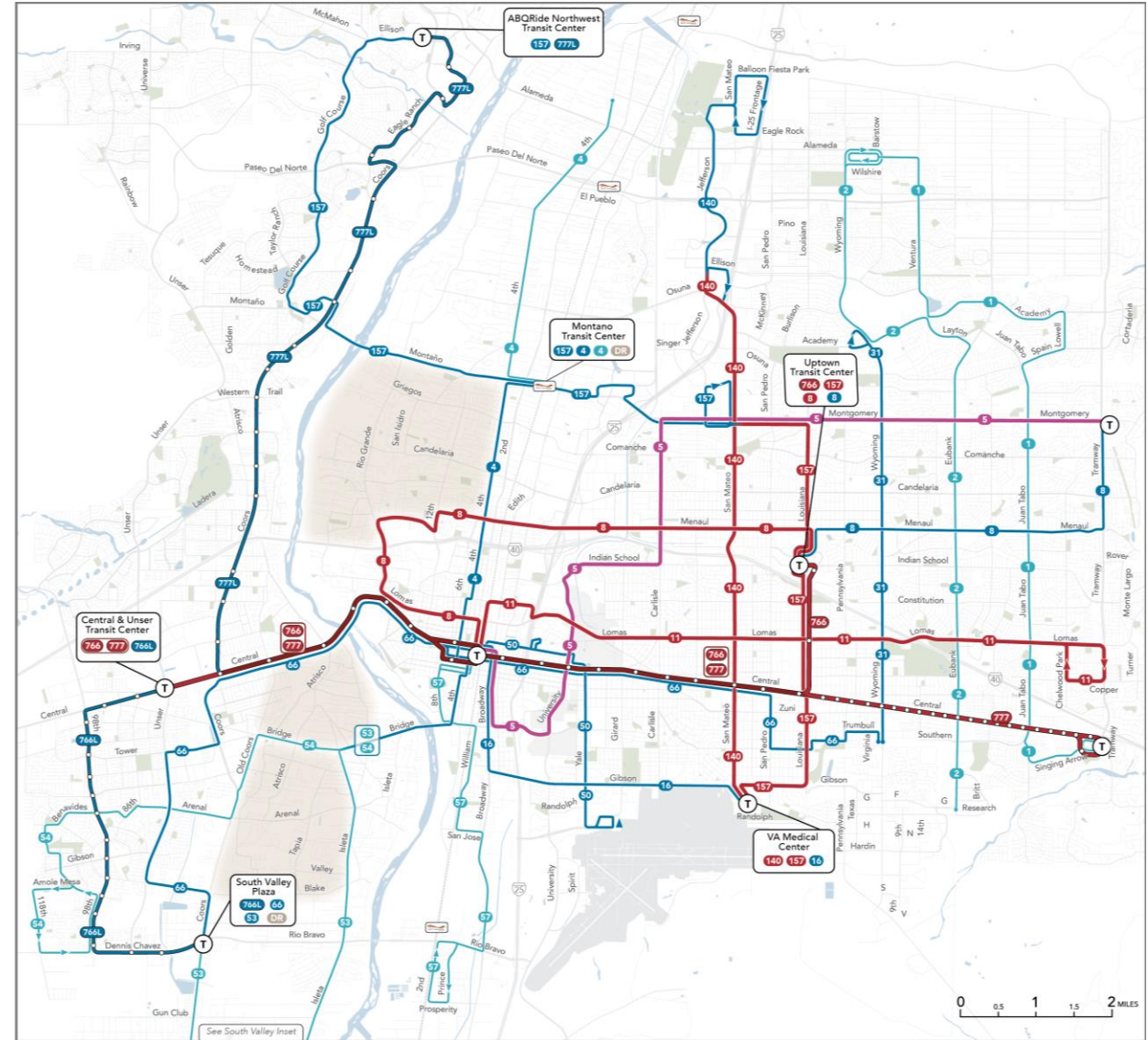
# Public Input on Network Concepts

When asked about “budget-neutral” *concepts for Albuquerque*:

1. **Overall:** Slight preference for ridership.
2. **Lowest-income respondents:** Slight preference for coverage.
3. **Regular transit riders:** Evenly split between the High Ridership and the High Coverage concepts.
4. **Most engaged participants:** Strong interest in evening and weekend service

# Draft Recovery Network

- Blends High-Ridership and High-Coverage concepts based on Phase II public feedback
- A proposal, not a concept
- “Budget-neutral” approach restores the 2019 systemwide level of service
- Detailed report available at [www.abqrideforward.com](http://www.abqrideforward.com)



# Why a Recovery Network?

ABQ RIDE has cut service due to a shortage of bus drivers and maintenance workers since the pandemic, but *ridership is bouncing back*.

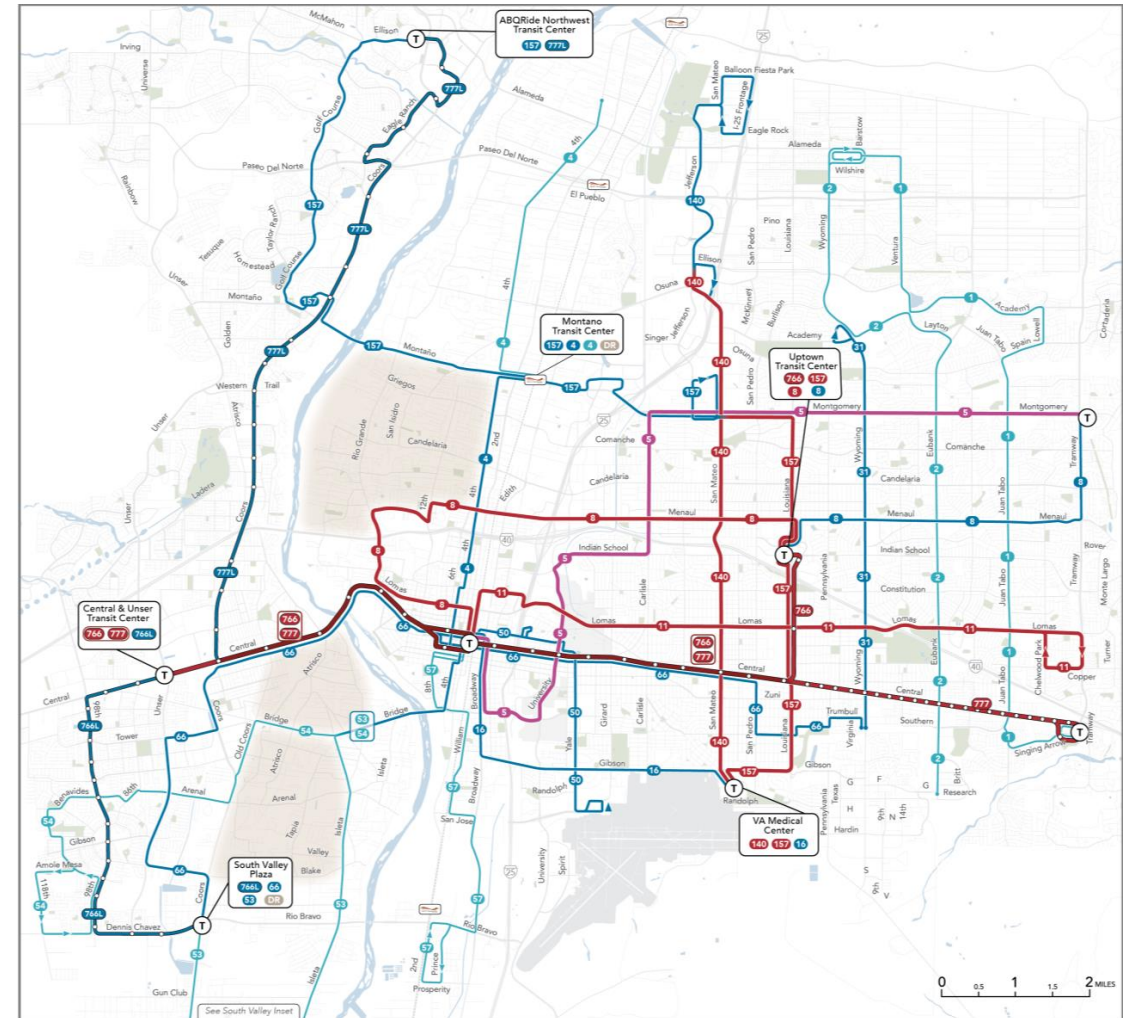
Ongoing labor shortages mean *it will take time* to return to pre-pandemic service levels.

Higher labor costs also mean that pre-pandemic service will cost more than it did, so *ABQ RIDE's budget will also need to grow*.



# Draft Recovery Network: Key Principles

1. More frequent routes
2. More service on evenings and weekends (and less emphasis on weekday peaks)
3. Restructuring and reconfiguration of routes in select areas
  - *The Recovery Network is a budget-constrained plan*
  - *#3 helps “pay for” #1 and #2*
  - *#3 may negatively impact a limited number of existing riders*

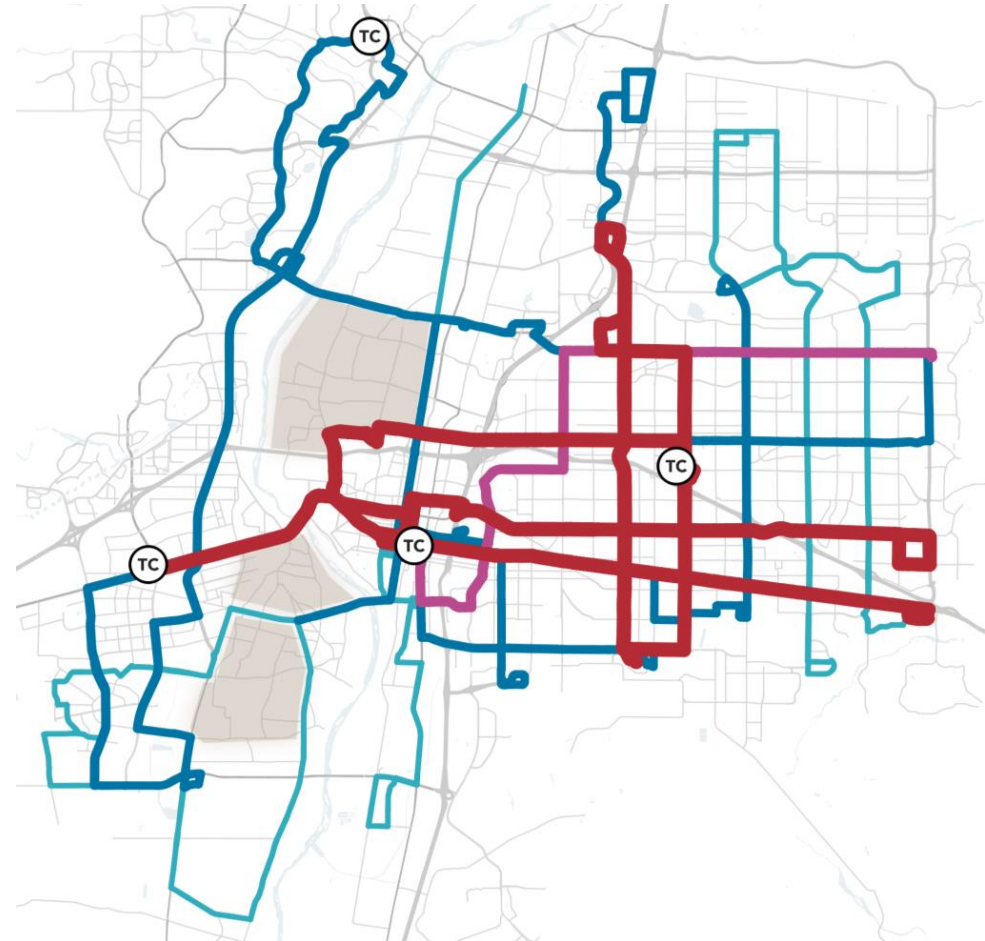


# Draft Recovery Network: Weekdays at Midday

## 2024 Existing Network



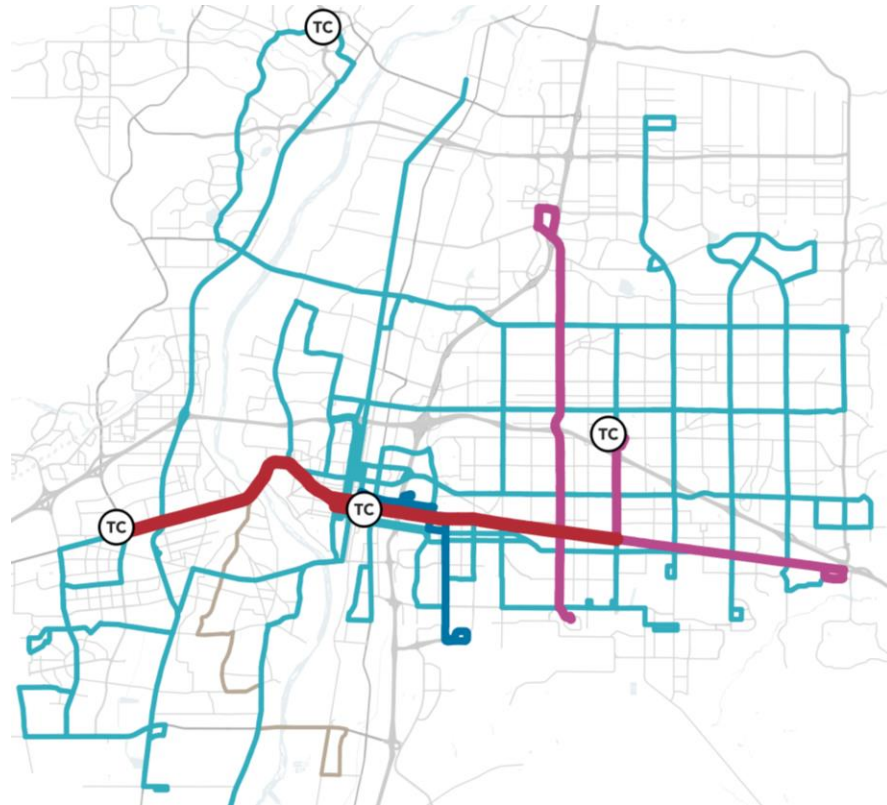
## Recovery Network



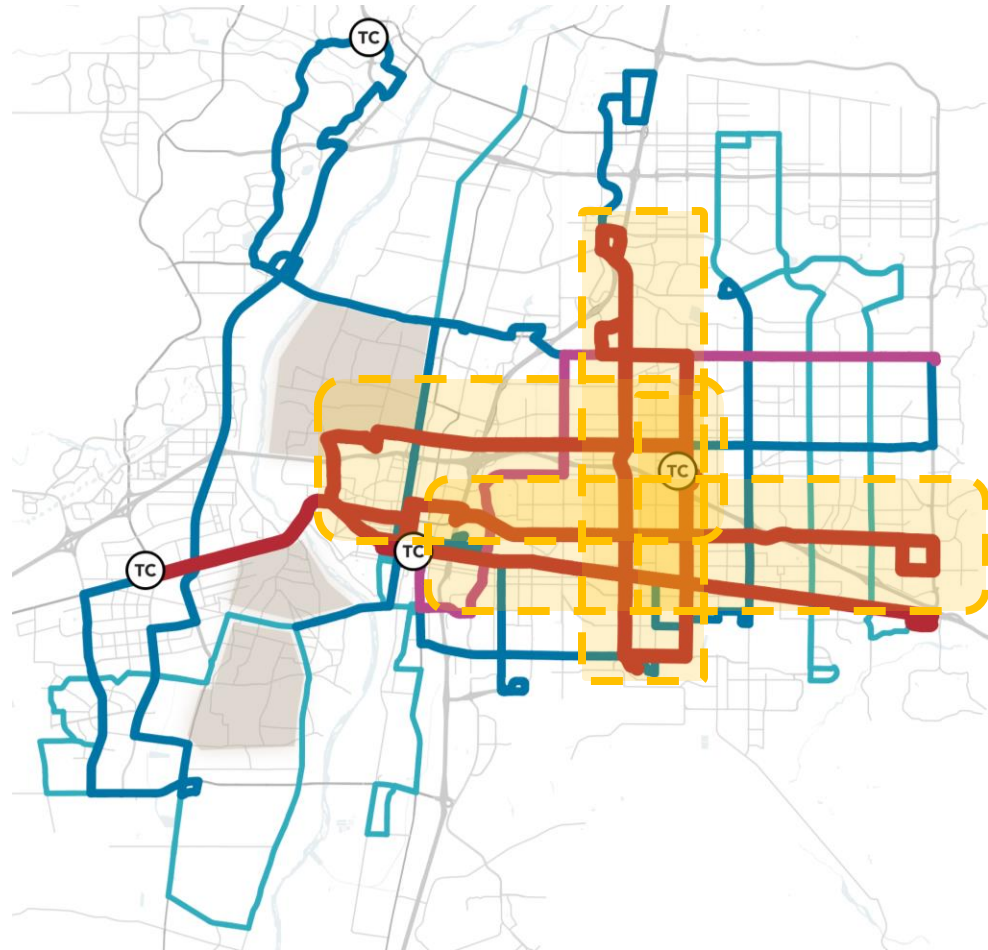


# Draft Recovery Network: Weekdays at Midday

## 2024 Existing Network



## Recovery Network

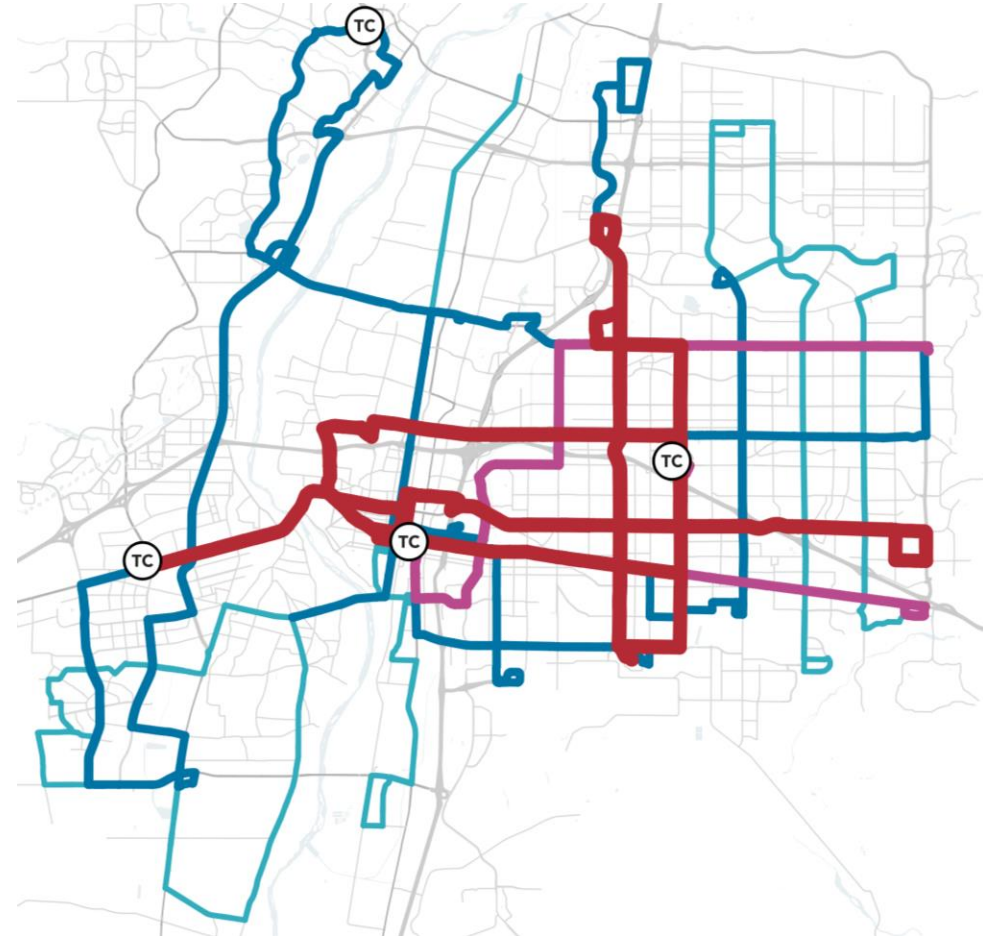


# Draft Recovery Network: Saturdays at Midday

## 2024 Existing Network



## Recovery Network

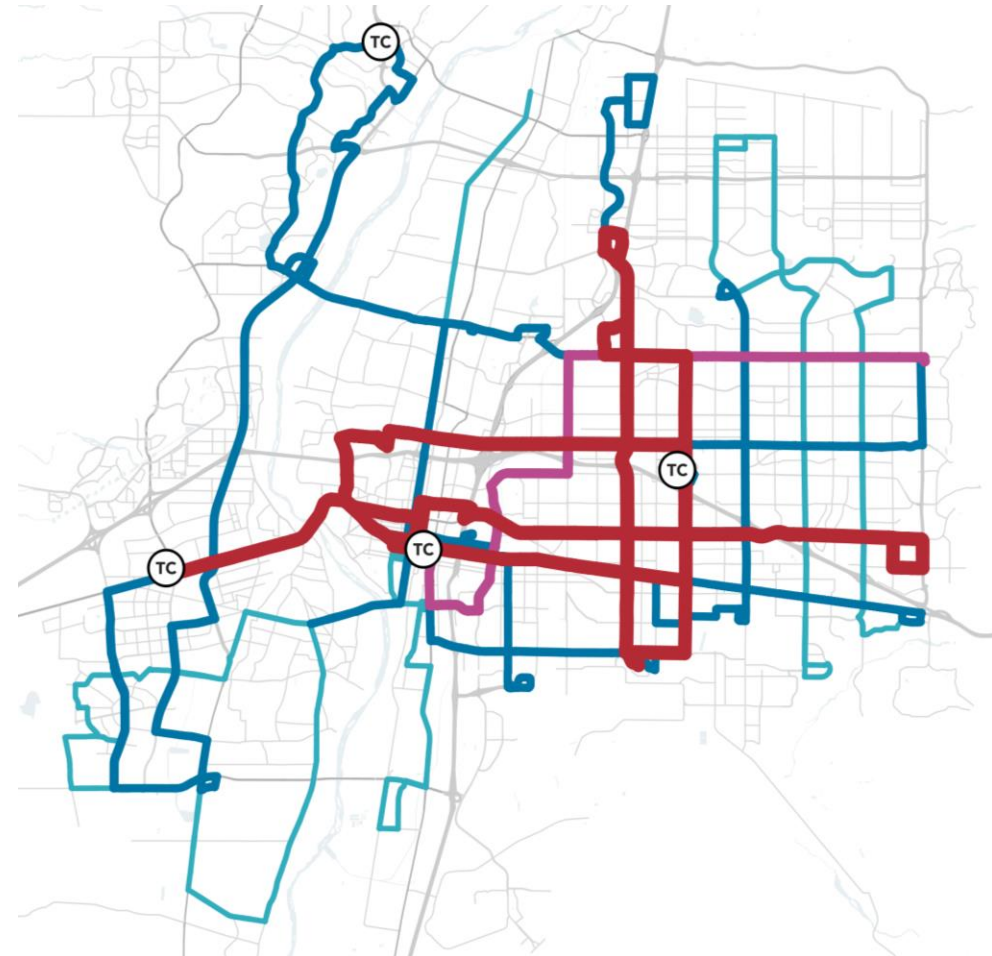


# Draft Recovery Network: Sundays at Midday

## 2024 Existing Network



## Recovery Network

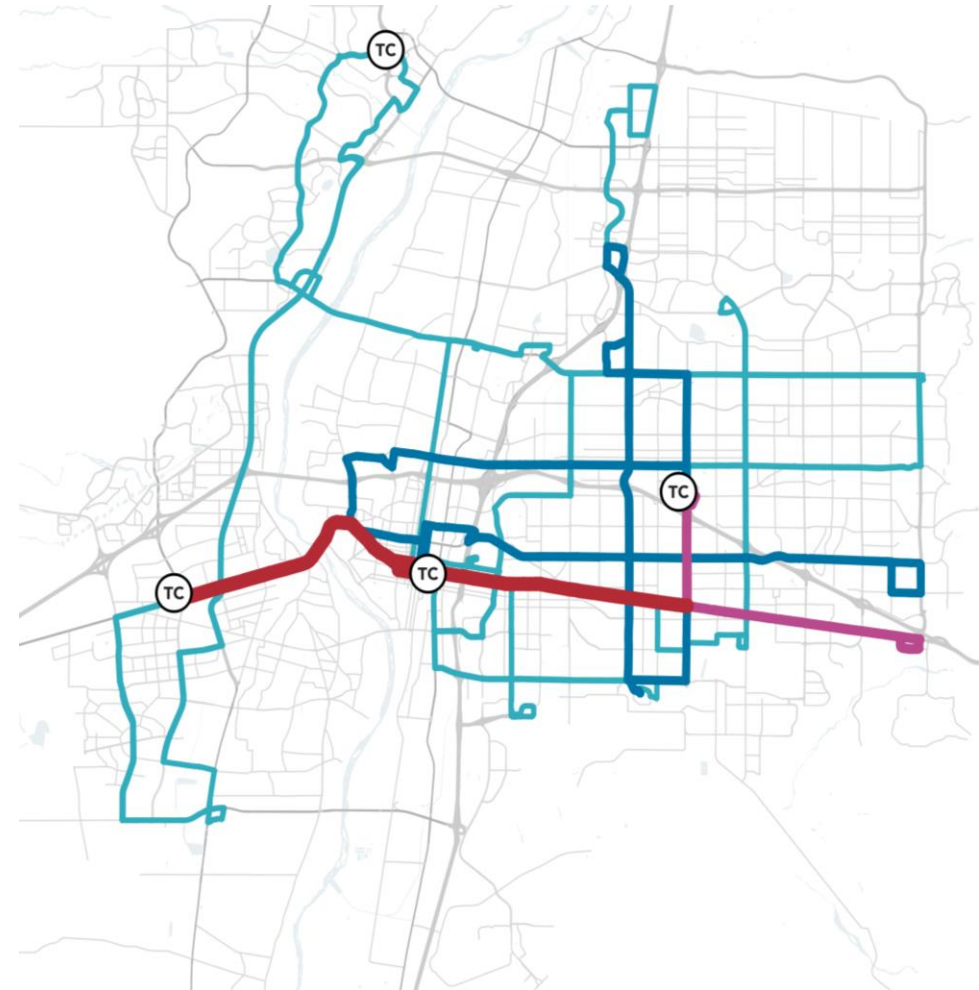


# Draft Recovery Network: Saturdays at 9pm

## 2024 Existing Network



## Recovery Network



# Service Changes: Southwest Albuquerque

## ABQRide Forward Draft Recovery Network

On weekdays around noon,  
the bus comes every...

- 8 minutes or less
- 15 minutes
- 20 minutes
- 30 minutes
- 60 minutes

Demand Response Zone

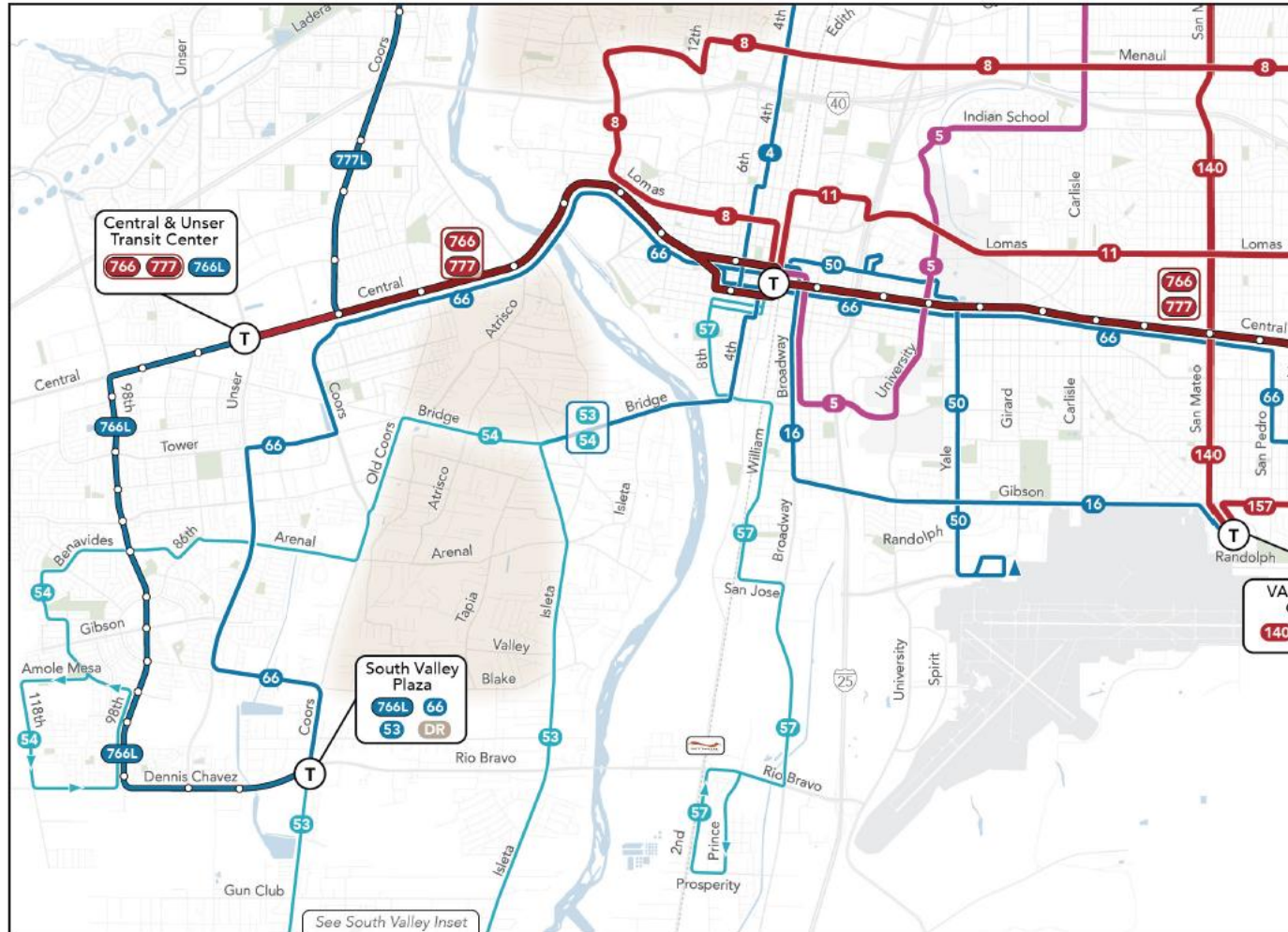
Bus Rapid Transit route and station

Corridor with many routes

Route branches continue at lower frequency

Transit Center

Rail Runner Station

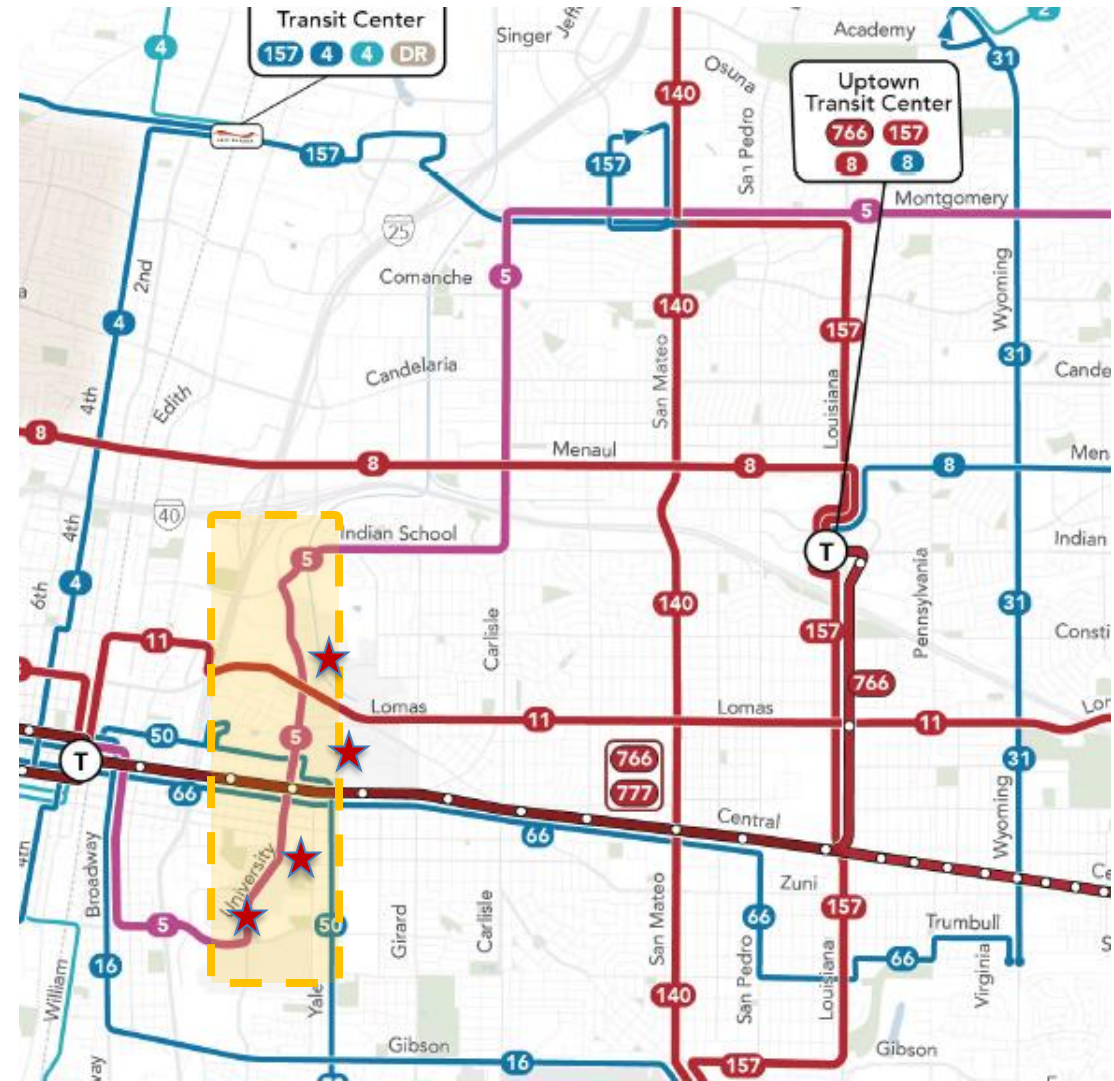


## Notable Service Changes

- Every other ART 777 north on Coors Blvd
- Every other ART 766 south on 98<sup>th</sup> ST
- Route 66 continues south from Coors Blvd
- Demand response zone
- Isleta Blvd
  - Does not travel as far south
  - But...service ties into South Valley Plaza

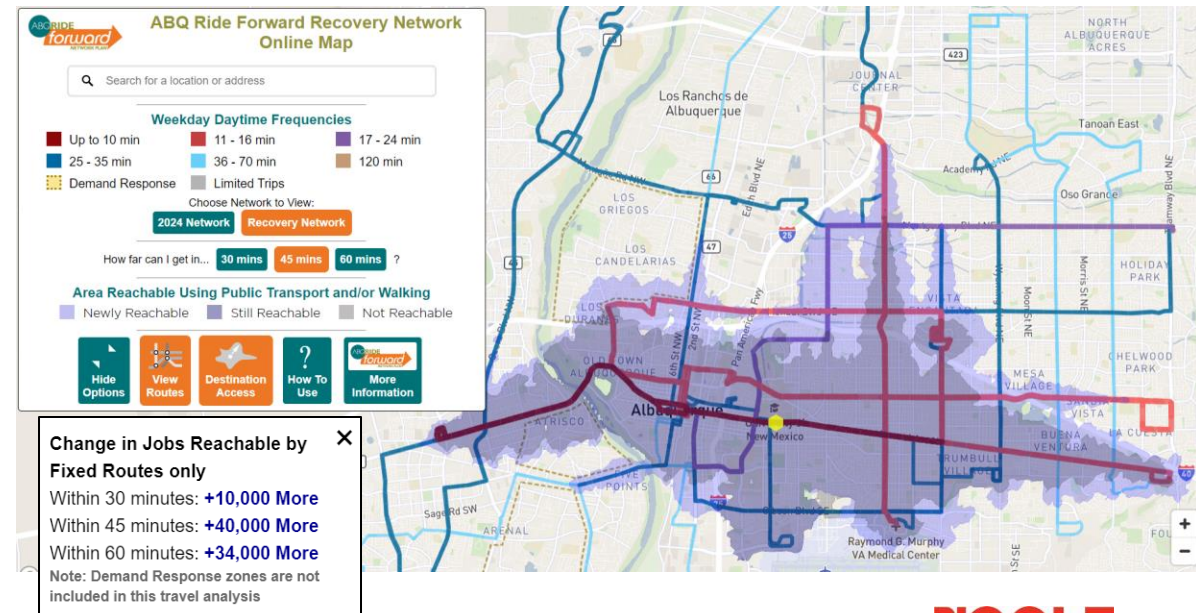
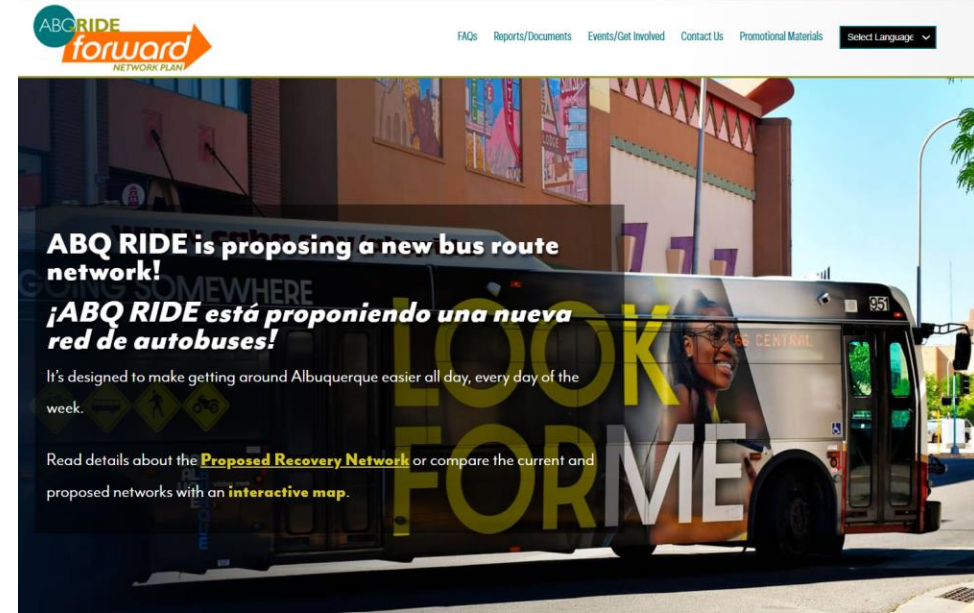
# Service Changes: University Blvd

- High priority transit corridor in recent plans and studies
- Major destinations – CNM Main Campus, UNM Main Campus, UNM South Campus + sports facilities, UNM Hospital
- Limited existing service to CNM in particular
- Reconfiguration of Route 5 → Direct service to corridor from Downtown and Northeast Albuquerque
- Improved opportunities for transfers from ART along Central Ave to University Blvd



# Take the survey!

- Survey open through September 15
- Desired feedback:
  - Impacts of Recovery Network
  - Thoughts on individual routes (optional)
- Check out reports and interactive map on the project website:  
**[www.abqrideforward.com](http://www.abqrideforward.com)**



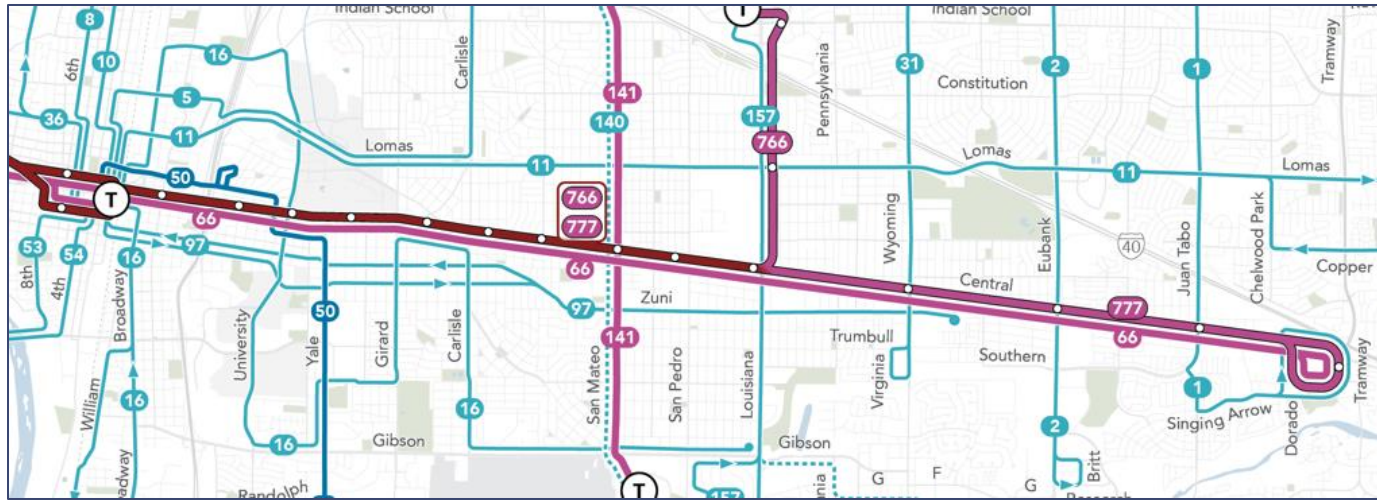
# Questions

- Andrew de Garmo - ABQ RIDE  
[adegarmo@cabq.gov](mailto:adegarmo@cabq.gov)
- Aaron Sussman – Toole Design  
[asussman@tooledesign.com](mailto:asussman@tooledesign.com)
- Kelsey Walker – Toole Design  
[kwalker@tooledesign.com](mailto:kwalker@tooledesign.com)
- General project email:  
[info@abqrideforward.com](mailto:info@abqrideforward.com)



# Service Changes: East Central Ave

## 2024 Network



## Recovery Network



## Notable Service Changes

- More corridors with frequent service (i.e., one bus every 15 minutes or less)
- ART 777 (Green Line) becomes local service east of Louisiana Blvd with shorter stop spacing
- Route 66 travels through International District; terminates at Wyoming Blvd
- Some discontinued or simplified routes

**ABQRide Forward  
Draft Recovery Network**

On weekdays around noon, the bus comes every...

- 707** 8 minutes or less
- 707** 15 minutes
- 707** 20 minutes
- 707** 30 minutes
- 707** 60 minutes

■ Demand Response Zone

○ Bus Rapid Transit route and station

— Corridor with many routes

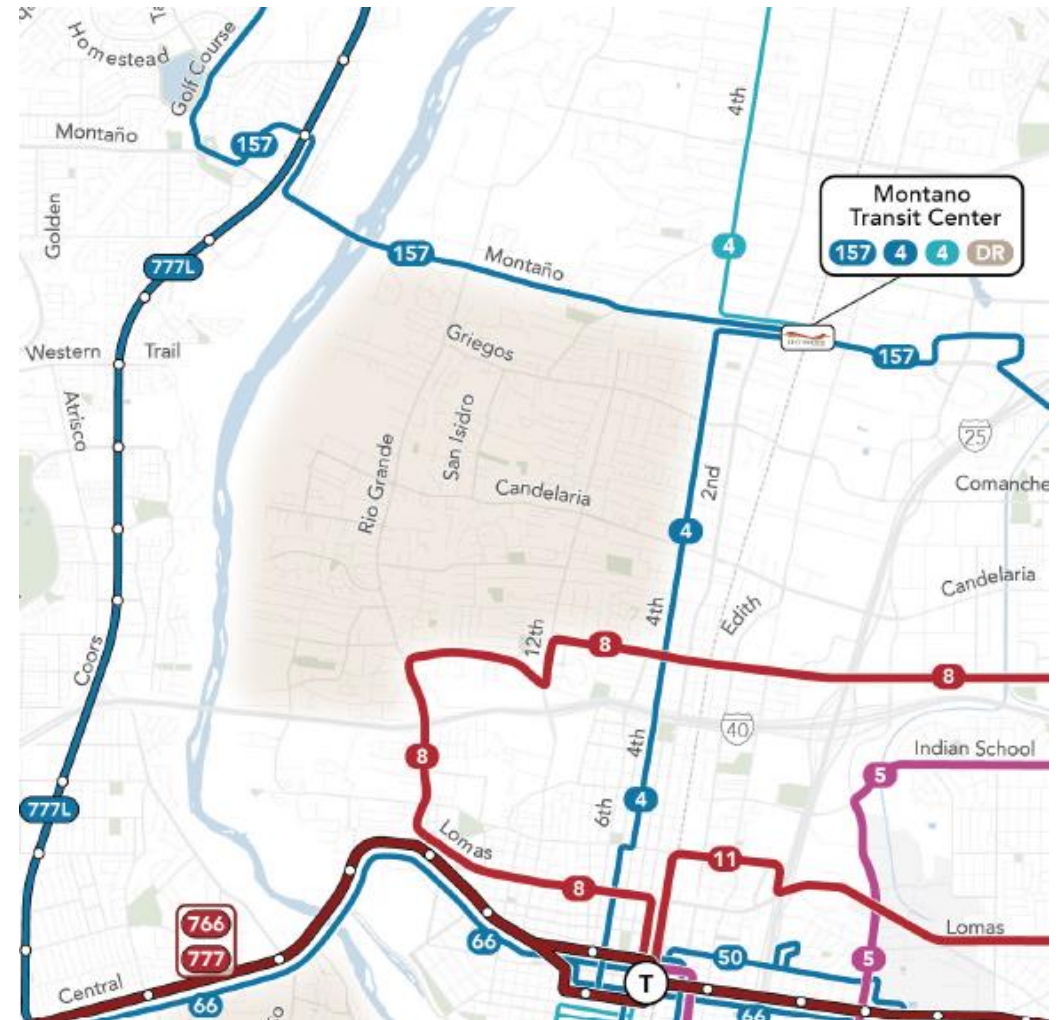
● Route branches continue at lower frequency

⊕ Transit Center

Ⓜ Rail Runner Station

# Service Changes: Demand Response Zones

- Areas where fixed route service would be replaced by an on-demand service
- Most appropriate in locations with **low ridership** but small numbers of people with a high needs for transit
- Passengers can request a trip to a fixed set of transfer points and connect to the rest of the transit network (e.g., park-and-ride facilities)
- Expand model of existing ABQ RIDE Connect program; additional details to be refined



# Changes in Access

- **+32% more jobs** reachable, on average, within **45 minutes** of travel on a weekday at midday

## Notes:

- *These data do not mean that destinations are not reachable; rather, some destinations are not reachable as quickly or as easily for some residents.*
- *Maps do not account for demand response zones.*

