

CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE

Planning Department
Alan Varela – Director



Mayor Timothy M. Keller

October 10, 2024

Jonathan Kruse, PE, PTOE
Lee Engineering
8220 San Pedro Dr NE Ste 150
Albuquerque, NM

**Re: QuikTrip Store #7001- 521 Unser Blvd NW
Traffic Impact Study (K10D071)**
Engineer's Stamp DRAFT dated September 2024
Via email jkruse@lee-eng.com

Dear Mr. Kruse,

The subject Traffic Impact Study (Study) received on October 4th, 2024 and the Traffic Study Comment and Access letter (Letter) dated September 18th, 2024, have been reviewed by the City of Albuquerque Planning Development Transportation Section. The City has the following comments/responses/discussion.

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To begin, a meeting was held on 7-26-24 with myself, Lee Engineering, QuikTrip and Matkin-Hoover to discuss the comment of removing the driveway on Unser Blvd. I did not wish to approve a driveway on Unser Blvd for this project as it will set a precedent and set access policy for all other development projects on this limited access corridor. The main conclusion of the meeting was for Lee Engineering to write a letter to the City supporting why the City should revise the access policy on Unser Blvd.

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Though not explicitly stated, the letter was expected prior to the submittal of the latest Traffic Study, submitted on October 4th, as removing the driveway on Unser Blvd will affect volumes at the driveways on Saul Bell Rd and Los Volcanes Rd, which will change the analysis and may change Conclusions and Recommendations.

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In addition, I am not the only reviewer to have comments on the proposed access on Unser Blvd. The NMDOT provided a comment "This development is proposing three access points and substandard deceleration lanes at its access points due to its proposed access spacing. The frontage along Los Volcanes and Unser has a high crash rate per the HFIN. For that reason, the development should consider reduction in access points..."

Overall, the issue appears to be this project does not fit the property well and that is the reason for the proposed driveway on Unser Blvd. This is not an acceptable reason to allow the driveway on Unser Blvd and to set access policy that allows driveways on Unser Blvd, wherever it may benefit a project.

In addition, due to the Above 2x Mean on HFIN for crashes at the intersection of Los Volcanes and Unser Blvd (161crashes in 5 years) and for crashes on Unser Blvd from Los Volcanes Rd to Bridge Blvd, is another good reason to not introduce more conflict with additional driveways on Unser Blvd.

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There are numerous inconsistencies in the Letter and Study and between the Letter and the Study concerning mixing of trucks and passenger cars. They are omitted from this comment letter for brevity. To prevent mixing of trucks from passenger cars there should be: a divider, curb or landscape island, or striping and signage. Currently, the site allows all users to drive everywhere.

The Conceptual Site Plan was approved for DHO and/or DFT submittal, which is not the same as approval of the Conceptual Site Plan. The wording is done this way on purpose. This just allows the project to be heard at the DFT.

Matthew Grush and I may have different views on attributes of projects. I realize the discontinuity in differing views may be frustrating and lead to delays, but it is never done lightly. As an Engineer, I cannot default to the views/approvals of a previous Engineer.

QuikTrip wishes to reduce the potential for onsite crashes, which is a good, however, adding the driveway on Unser Blvd increases the potential for roadway crashes on Unser Blvd. A slow speed crash on a site will be less severe and most likely result in only property damage, whereas a relatively high speed crash on Unser Blvd can result in property damage as well as injury/serious injury.

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Comments on the Study: Comments on the first submittal are listed with revised responses in purple.

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1. Unser Blvd is a Limited Access Roadway and therefore the driveway on Unser Blvd, Driveway 2, is not allowed. **Comment discussed, but not accepted and discussed above.**
2. Site access is to be provided via two driveways: one on Los Volcanes Rd and the other on Saul Bell Rd. **Comment discussed, but not accepted and discussed above.**
3. The driveway on Saul Bell Rd is to be located a minimum of 200 feet from Unser Blvd. It appears the west property line is approximately 285' from Unser Blvd. I am aware of the distances in DPM Table 7.4.45, however, per the Site Plan it appears the tractor trailer entrance is off of Saul Bell and the length of the tractor trailer combined with the reduced speed of leaving the roadway, queuing onto Unser Blvd may occur and should be prevented. **Site Plan not updated. Comment not addressed**
4. Provide a cleaner image of Figure 1: Site Plan. Please include dimensions from the driveway(s) to Unser Blvd. **Site Plan not clear and dimensions not provided. Include a clear Site Plan: minimum size of 11"x17". The Site Plan that was included in the Letter was clear and legible..**
5. On p. 10; the Study Intersections shown on Figure 2 don't match the listing in the paragraph below the Figure. **Still incorrect and comment not addressed.**
6. Please revise the description of Los Volcanes Rd on p. 11 as west of Unser Blvd it is a 2-lane undivided roadway. **Comment addressed. No further action required.**

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7. In case more northbound drivers wish to enter the site via the Saul Bell Rd entrance than predicted in the Study, it would be helpful to have 150' of storage in the left turn lane onto Saul Bell Rd. **Storage not increased. Comment not addressed.**

Comments on 2nd submittal:

8. Address unaddressed comments from the first submittal.
9. The Site Access Justification includes language that the NBL onto Saul Bell Rd is included in the MRCOG RACC Inventory, yet is silent that the proposed driveway on Unser Blvd is not on the RACC inventory. Revise the Study to include that the proposed driveway on Unser Blvd is not on the MRCOG RACC inventory.
10. If driveway 3 (Saul Bell Rd) was located per a previous comment, a minimum of 200 feet from Unser Blvd, then a right -turn lane can and should be constructed.
11. What is the reason the EBL queue from Los Volcanes to Unser Blvd decreases from 319.3 ft in the 2026 Background condition to 39.0 ft in the 2026 Full build Condition? If anything, the queue should be longer as this project is adding trips to it. Please review and revise as necessary.
12. The build volumes and analysis will change when the Unser Blvd driveway is removed. Additional comments may be provided.
13. Response to NMDOT comment #17 should be revised.
 - a. Adding the HFIN map requested is a simple task that does not take much time.
 - b. One of the goals of a project should be to attempt to reduce the potential for crashes or at least not increase the potential for crashes. Adding the driveway on Unser Blvd introduces conflict and increases the potential for crashes.
14. Submit NMDOT comment/approval letters.

If you have any questions, please contact me at ccherne@cabq.gov or (505) 924-3986.

Sincerely,

Curtis A Cherne

Curtis Cherne, P.E.
Senior Engineer, Planning Dept.
Development Review Services

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