

RESOLUTION NO. 08-2021

**A RESOLUTION STATING THE CITY OF MOAB'S POSITION ON HIGHWAY 191
BYPASS ALIGNMENT(S), AND SUPPORT FOR PURSUING ALTERNATE TOOLS
FOR DOWNTOWN
MAIN STREET TRAFFIC MITIGATION**

WHEREAS, Chapter 9a of Title 10 of the Utah Code authorizes the City of Moab to provide for the health, safety, and welfare of its residents; improve the peace and good order, comfort, convenience, and aesthetics of the City; promote the orderly development of urban and nonurban areas; provide fundamental fairness in land use regulation; facilitate orderly growth and allow growth in a variety of housing types; protect property values; enact resolutions it considers necessary or appropriate for the use and development of land within the municipality governing air quality and transportation; and

WHEREAS, U.S. Highway 191 is under the jurisdiction of the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT), bisects the City of Moab, the downtown portion of Highway 191 is also known as Main Street, is a major north/south transportation corridor which serves Main Street businesses, and the combined volume of resident, visitor, and commercial local and through traffic leads to congestion, safety, and noise impacts adjacent to Highway 191;¹ and

WHEREAS, in 2018 UDOT published a study (Study) of a Highway 191 bypass around downtown Moab's Main Street, which projected pass-through travel time impacts and fiscal benefits to the trucking industry. The Study identified two preferred alignments, both of which pass through and by residential areas, are at most 300 feet from the Mountain View neighborhood, and are within 1000 feet of approximately 200 residences. The Study forecast that bypass Alignment Alt. (Alternative) 1A would result in 2030 peak hour traffic volume on Main Street equal to that in 2018, and that Alt. 1D could result in 50% of trucks using the bypass;² and

WHEREAS, the Study focused on consequences to downtown Moab and the trucking industry, and not on impacts to residential areas along the Study's preferred alignments. It did not include and did not conduct a thorough analysis of the transportation, fiscal, housing, environmental, and public health impacts of different transportation management alternatives; and

WHEREAS, the magnitude, causality, and contributing factors of induced demand created by road capacity increase (i.e. building roads leads to more vehicle miles travelled) has been an ongoing topic of research for decades, many researchers conclude that congestion relief from expanding highway capacity may be temporary or limited, and while expanding highway

¹ *City of Moab General Plan*, (2017), available at <https://moabcity.org/DocumentCenter/View/1528>

² The online story-map is the sole documentation of the process, analysis, and conclusions of the UDOT study. Main Street (US-191) Moab Bypass Planning Study Story Map, available at: <https://uplan.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=03b200018428482388a1c0a46955dc2a>

capacity increases total traffic volume, which improves some measures of well-being, it is unlikely to be an efficient solution to highway congestion issues;³ and

WHEREAS, numerous studies have found noise pollution increases anxiety, depression, high blood pressure, heart disease, and stroke; small increases in unwanted ambient sound have significant health effects;⁴ and noise aggravates health conditions by inducing higher levels of stress;^{5,6} and

WHEREAS, numerous epidemiologic studies have consistently demonstrated that living close to major roads is associated with adverse health effects, including asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and other respiratory symptoms (11–15); cardiovascular disease risk and outcomes (16–20); adverse reproductive outcomes (21,22); and mortality (23–25);^{7,8} as did a major review of over 700 studies, which concluded the area most affected was the band within 0.2 to 0.3 miles of a highway;⁹ and even in an area with good regional air quality, proximity to traffic is associated with adverse respiratory health effects in children;¹⁰ and

WHEREAS, mobility of people and goods is inextricably linked to economic activity and personal work and leisure, many of Moab’s residential neighborhoods are subject to unusual or excessive vehicle noise, the City of Moab has prioritized protecting and preserving neighborhoods from avoidable noise impacts as well as maintaining and developing its transportation systems; and

WHEREAS, transportation noise increases proportionately to vehicle speed, at higher speeds most noise is created by tires and wind resistance, Highway 191 traffic noise currently disturbs the peace throughout Spanish Valley, and relocating and accelerating some of current traffic in Moab is expected to increase the negative noise impacts throughout town; and

³ Krol, R., *Can We Build Our Way Out of Urban Traffic Congestion?*, Policy Paper 2019.001, The Center for Growth and Opportunity at Utah State University (2019), available at: <https://www.thecgo.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Can-We-Build-Our-Way-Out-of-Urban-Traffic-Congestion.pdf>

⁴ Jariwala, Noise Pollution and Human Health: A Review,

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/319329633_Noise_Pollution_Human_Health_A_Review

⁵ Floud, Medication use in relation to noise from aircraft and road traffic in six European countries: results of the HYENA study, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/21084328/>; Schmidt, Effect of nighttime aircraft noise exposure on endothelial function and stress hormone release in healthy adults

<https://academic.oup.com/eurheartj/article/34/45/3508/435199>; Hahad, Annoyance to Different Noise Sources is Associated With Atrial Fibrillation, [https://www.internationaljournalofcardiology.com/article/S0167-5273\(17\)37174-7/fulltext](https://www.internationaljournalofcardiology.com/article/S0167-5273(17)37174-7/fulltext)

⁶ Orban, Residential Road Traffic Noise and High Depressive Symptoms after Five Years of Follow-up: Results from the Heinz Nixdorf Recall Study, <https://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/doi/10.1289/ehp.1409400>

⁷ Citations referenced can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/su6203a8.htm>

⁸ Yuchi, W., Sbihi, H., Davies, H., Tamburic, L., & Brauer, M. (2020). Road proximity, air pollution, noise, green space and neurologic disease incidence: a population-based cohort study. *Environmental Health*, 19(1), 8.

⁹ Health Effects Institute Panel on the Health Effects of Traffic-Related Air Pollution: A Critical Review of the Literature on Emissions, Exposure, and Health Effects. Health Effects Institute: Boston, (2010). Available at www.healtheffects.org

¹⁰ Kim, J. J., Huen, K., Adams, S., Smorodinsky, S., Hoats, A., Malig, B., ... & Ostro, B. (2008). Residential traffic and children’s respiratory health. *Environmental health perspectives*, 116(9), 1274-1279.

WHEREAS, providing an adequate supply of affordable and moderate-income housing is one of the most significant challenges to Moab’s economic and community development, high density rental housing is a priority for existing and projected housing needs,¹¹ a proposed bypass alignment is adjacent to the second largest concentration of affordable apartments in Moab, and historically highway construction has disproportionately burdened low-income neighborhoods;¹² and

WHEREAS, home equity is the largest component of homeowners’ net worth, equal to all other non-retirement account assets combined;¹³ and new highway development has a positive impact on housing value when it improves access, and a negative impact on housing value within 500-1000 feet of highways;¹⁴ and

WHEREAS, the City of Moab has zoned the corridor along Highway 191 for commercial uses in response to historical development patterns and business preference for visibility and access from major travel corridors, and residential zones have been established and developed away from Highway 191 per historic local, and common, preference for quiet and healthy residential areas; and

WHEREAS, many potential above and below ground Highway 191 bypass alignments have been proposed in the City of Moab, Grand County, and outside Grand County, and most have been dismissed in the Study, or consultants and UDOT have declined to consider them, except for two variations on an alignment in the southwest corner of Moab, and there is no potential above-ground alignment for a Highway 191 bypass in the Moab Valley which does not impose significant impacts on existing residential development; and

WHEREAS, there is desire by visitors and residents for pedestrian-friendly commercial areas, and outdoor dining and shopping within the City of Moab; and

WHEREAS, neither the Study nor other public information forecast that a bypass will result in pre-2018 traffic volumes on Main Street, and a bypass would effectively exchange economic benefits to mostly external freight businesses for decreased health, well-being, and property values of city residents and homeowners; and

WHEREAS, in the Study a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Environmental Impact Study (EIS) was identified as step two of two next steps in developing a bypass, and an EIS does not prohibit an agency or permittee from harming the natural or human environment, but only

¹¹ Levine, Z., Interlocal Housing Task Force, *Moab Area Affordable Housing Plan*, (adopted by Moab City and Grand County 2017), available at: <http://www.moabhousingplan.com/index.html>

¹² Osborne and Laska, *Community Replenishment: Undoing the Damage of “Urban Renewal”*, available at: <https://www.thirdway.org/memo/community-replenishment-undoing-the-damage-of-urban-renewal>

¹³ Jonathan Eggleston, Donald Hays, Robert Munk, and Briana Sullivan, *The Wealth of Households: 2017*, United States Census Bureau Report Number P70br-170, (August 28, 2020), available at: <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2020/demo/p70br-170.html>

¹⁴ Levkovich, O., Rouwendal, J. & van Marwijk, R. The effects of highway development on housing prices. *Transportation* 43, 379–405 (2016), available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11116-015-9580-7>

requires that the prospective impacts be understood and disclosed in advance, and possibly mitigated while maintaining the project cost and schedule; and

WHEREAS, at their March 16, 2021 meeting, the Grand County Commission voted 6-1 to establish a position that the Commission does not support continued feasibility studies concerning the Highway 191 bypass, and to repurpose their \$30,000 bypass budget for transportation-related studies and public engagement including - but not limited to - options for creating pedestrian-friendly spaces near Main Street; and

WHEREAS, UDOT and consultants have repeatedly stated they will not pursue/support projects/routes that local residents and their elected officials oppose.

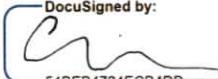
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MOAB, UTAH THAT:

- 1) The City Council of Moab opposes bypass routes 1A and 1D as identified in Fehr & Peers' 2018 Study, and opposes the inclusion of a bypass in: the UDOT 2021 Southeastern Utah Regional Transportation Plan (aka Moab and Spanish Valley Regional Transportation Plan) project list; UDOT's Statewide Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan; or the pending Moab City-Grand County Interlocal Agreement (ILA) and local/integrated transportation plan.
- 2) The City Council supports tools other than a bypass to reduce the negative impacts of traffic on downtown Moab and Moab residents, and hereby directs City staff to initiate discussions with Council about committing staff and financial resources in the City's 2021-2022 budget process that advance development and redevelopment in commercial zones along Main Street that provide a pleasant shopping, dining, and working environment, with a 'typical' downtown noise level, and active transportation, while similarly advancing low-impact, neighborhood-oriented dining, shopping, services, and offices in off-Main Street commercial zones.

PASSED AND ADOPTED in open Council by a majority vote of the Governing Body of the City of Moab this 23rd day of March, 2021.

SIGNED:

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Emily S. Niehaus, Mayor

ATTEST:



Sommar Johnson, City Recorder