

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE STATE HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT TO DEVELOP A NEW MODEL FOR WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES BASED ON FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION GUIDELINES ON FLEXIBILITY IN HIGHWAY DESIGN AND PROMOTION OF CONTEXT-SENSITIVE DESIGN.

WHEREAS, the United States highway 285 coalition represents all member associations in matters of health, safety, welfare and the preservation of the rural character of the greater community along the seven-mile corridor from the intersection of Old Las Vegas highway to New Mexico route 41; and

WHEREAS, the coalition has been working with the state highway and transportation department for the past six months to modify planned roadway lighting along the first one and one-half miles of United States highway 285 south that goes through rural subdivisions; and

WHEREAS, the coalition has endorsed a federal highway administration recommendation for eighteen luminaries; and

WHEREAS, the state highway and transportation department is planning to install thirty-three luminaries; and

WHEREAS, this is a rural community that until recently has had little or no roadway lighting with strict subdivision covenants to preserve its rural character; and

WHEREAS, the community has expressed its concerns to the state highway and transportation department about the proposed number of lights and their detrimental effect on

the rural character of the area; and

WHEREAS, the department refuses to reduce the number of lights below thirty-three and has stated to the coalition that "this is not your highway"; and

WHEREAS, the state highway and transportation department has been insensitive to the fact that the highway is a major defining element of the community in that it provides the only entrance and exit to all the subdivisions and the village of Lamy; and

WHEREAS, the state highway and transportation department has refused the coalition's request to postpone installation of the lighting until the controversy is resolved; and

WHEREAS, numerous other communities have had difficulty in getting the department to adequately address their concerns in the planning and design process of highway projects;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the state highway and transportation department be requested to develop a new model for working with communities based on federal highway administration guidelines on flexibility in highway design and promotion of context-sensitive design; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the state highway and transportation department specifically modify its model to:

(1) identify representative groups in the community to work with;

(2) interact with the community during both the

planning and implementation stages of roadway projects;

(3) emphasize and fully address the environmental and community impact up front;

(4) acknowledge that highways are often an integral part of communities and do not belong solely to the department;

(5) improve response time to community inquiries; and

(6) reach a balanced decision that is context- and community-sensitive; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be transmitted to the state highway and transportation department. _____