

PROJECT OVERVIEW & OBJECTIVES

Project Background

The Silver Avenue Bike Boulevard was designated in 2009 following Resolution F/SR 07-268 which called for the creation of bicycle boulevards to serve all levels of cyclists. These bike boulevards were designed to utilize local streets to provide low-traffic routes with infrequent stops and detours for cyclists. The initial bicycle boulevard route ran from the Paseo Del Bosque Trail connection on Mountain Rd to San Mateo Blvd SE, connecting Old Town, the Bio Park, Downtown, CNM, UNM, Nob Hill and the Highland area.

Recently, the City of Albuquerque undertook improvements to the Silver Ave and Fair Heights Bike Blvds, applying a series of techniques to increase motorist awareness, slow down vehicle traffic, and improve the comfort level and experience for bicyclists. The result is unique “branding” that clearly identifies these routes as safe places for bicyclists.

This study will examine opportunities to apply similar techniques to the already-designated bike boulevards along Silver Ave and 14th St. The study will also develop design concepts to address major challenges along the study area, including the I-25 underpass and the Railroad crossing.



Purpose of Project

The purpose of this project is to provide an evaluation of and recommendations for the portion of the Silver Ave Bike Boulevard that runs from Yale Boulevard SE west to the Paseo Del Bosque Trail. Since the Silver Ave Bicycle Boulevard was first designed and built there have been a number of changes in the general area, including the construction along Central Ave associated with the ART bus line, improvements to Lead Ave and Coal Ave, and new residential development in the area. Improvements to the Silver Ave Bike Blvd can compliment nearby developments and provide connections between Old Town, Downtown, and UNM, while providing a low-stress, low-traffic option for riders from age 8 to 80.

Project Objectives

- ***Provide recommendations and design concepts to address the issues identified for the corridor.***
- ***Review and consider portions of the Silver Ave Bike Blvd from Yale Blvd to 14th St and the 14th St Bike Blvd from Silver Ave to Mountain Rd for improvements.***
- ***Apply techniques that have been developed along other Bike Blvd segments***
- ***Qualitative evaluation of Mountain Rd. as a Bike Blvd***



BIKE BLVD CHARACTERISTICS

While experienced cyclists seek direct routes on major roadways, casual, concerned, and low-speed recreational cyclists often favor quieter streets and bike trails. Through bike boulevards, the City of Albuquerque has attempted to provide routes that are attractive to all cycling levels. Bike boulevards utilize infrastructure improvements and various traffic calming devices designed to control motor vehicle speeds and discourage vehicle through trips.

The following street elements characterize bike boulevards in the City of Albuquerque. These definitions are adapted from the 2009 resolution creating bike boulevards, the Bikeways & Trails Facilities Plan, and from the set of techniques that have been applied to the Silver Ave and Fair Heights Bike Boulevards.



Signage & Street Markings

The purple color and logo of street signs are unique to the bike boulevards, provide “branding,” and alert motorists to the unique character and operations of the facility. Pavement markings on bike boulevards include “sharrows” and bicycle stencils and are generally applied every block.



Neighborhood Streets

Bike boulevards transform a residential or local street into a “bike expressway” that also accommodates motor traffic. Neighborhood streets typically feature low speeds, limited through traffic, and on-street parking. The designation of a neighborhood street as a bike boulevard is accompanied by the introduction of additional street elements to calm traffic and encourage cycling.



Bicyclist Accommodation at Busy Intersections

Where bike boulevards cross or intersect with major roads, design techniques are applied to increase motorist awareness and provide protection for bicyclists. Intersection treatments include median refuges that allow pedestrians and bicyclists to cross one direction of traffic at a time, barriers or cycle tracks, and the use of HAWK signals.



Traffic Calming

Traffic calming techniques slow vehicle traffic and discourage vehicle through trips via stop sign placement and the use of barriers. Other techniques found on bike boulevards include diverters, speed humps, and mini-roundabouts, as well as the removal of center striping and the delineation of on-street parking in order to narrow the shared space of the roadway.



Wayfinding

Wayfinding signage for bike boulevards provides directions and distances to key destinations, while pavement markings provide additional guidance for bicyclists when the bike boulevard turns or changes direction along its route. Wayfinding signage utilizes a purple color and bicycle logo to reinforce the route as a bike boulevard.



Shared-Use Facility

Bike boulevards are roadways in which bicyclists share the pavement with motor vehicles, but the facility is optimized in favor of the bicycle. While many roadways have cyclists ride alongside of traffic in dedicated bike lanes, bike boulevards are typically narrow and designed to ensure low vehicle speeds, allowing bicyclists to ride with the flow of traffic.



Low Speed

Bicycle boulevards feature posted speed limits of 18 MPH (vs. 25 MPH for most local streets). The non-typical speed limit is intended to call attention to the increased presence of bicyclists. A lower design speed (i.e. safe operating level for motorists) and target speed (i.e. intended speed of motorists) is a result of traffic calming measures – and allows bicyclists to more comfortably ride with the flow of traffic.

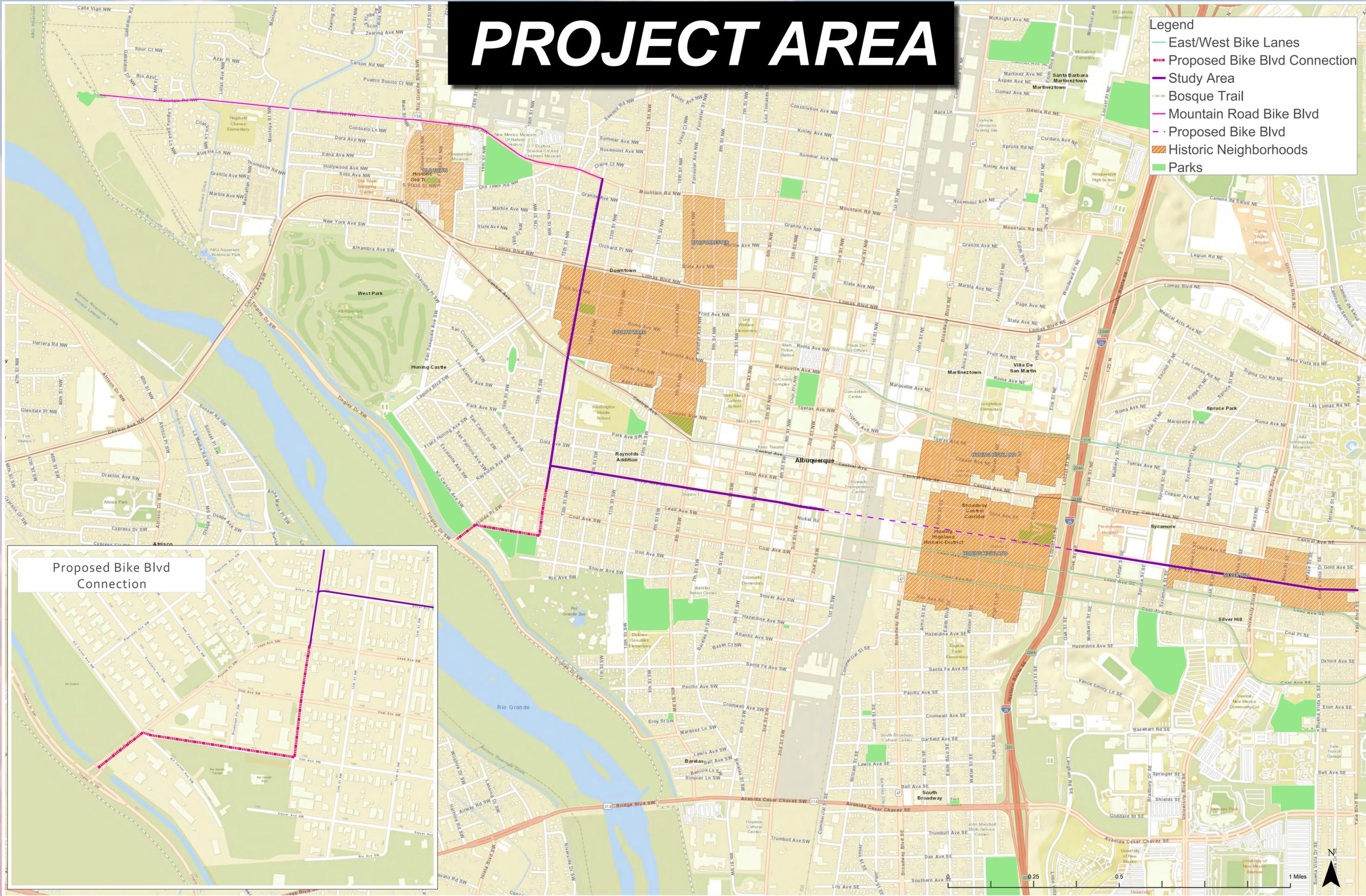


Low Traffic Volumes

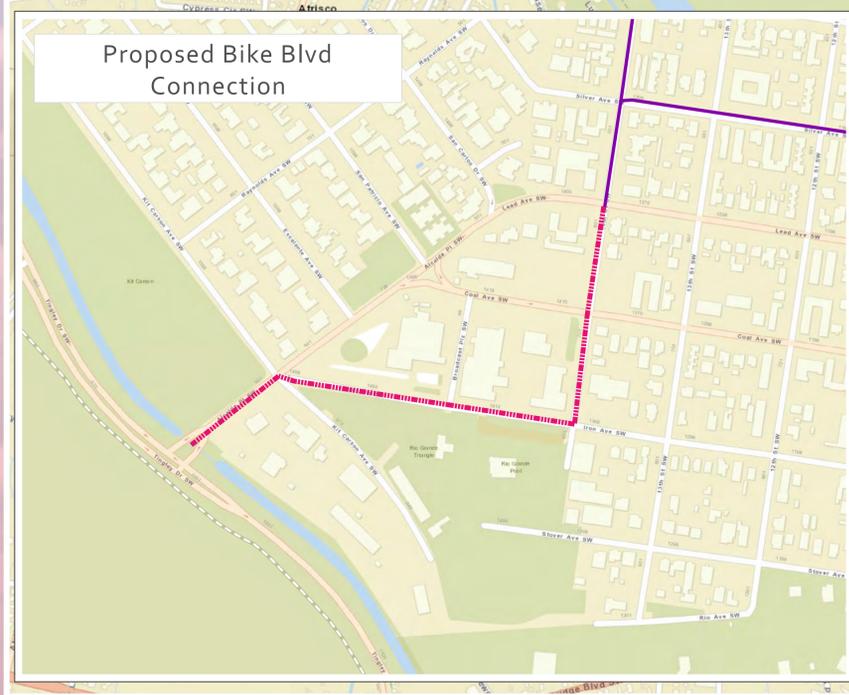
Low levels of vehicle traffic make bike boulevards appealing to bicyclists of all experience levels. The use of “sharrows” to indicate a shared-use facility, as characterized by bike boulevards, is most appropriate when traffic volumes are below 3,000 vehicles per day. In practice, most bike boulevards in the City of Albuquerque have traffic volumes below 1,000 vehicles per day.

PROJECT AREA

- Legend**
-  East/West Bike Lanes
 -  Proposed Bike Blvd Connection
 -  Study Area
 -  Bosque Trail
 -  Mountain Road Bike Blvd
 -  Proposed Bike Blvd
 -  Historic Neighborhoods
 -  Parks



Proposed Bike Blvd Connection



SILVER AVE. BIKE BOULEVARD REVIEW