



**CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE BIKEWAYS & TRAILS
FACILITY PLAN: SNAPSHOT**

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OVERVIEW

The City of Albuquerque is updating the Bikeways & Trails Facility Plan to update, consolidate, and replace two City planning documents, the Trails & Bikeways Facility Plan, 1996 and the Comprehensive On-Street Bicycle Plan, 2000. The Plan represents a continuation of previous planning and implementation work that has been ongoing since 1972.

Combining these plans into one consolidated Plan will help the City better manage the growth of the bikeway and multi-use trail system. The Plan evaluates the existing and proposed facilities and provides a list of future projects. The overarching purpose is to ensure a well-connected and enjoyable non-motorized transportation and recreation system throughout the metropolitan area.

This plan proposes projects and programs that can be implemented over the next 50 years, at our current rates of funding for bikeways & trails activities. However, the plan recommends more frequent updates at 5 year intervals to allow the City to keep up with new best practices and to reflect our evolving understanding of the challenges facing the City in terms of walking and bicycling.

Staff from the Planning, Municipal Development, and Parks & Recreation Departments collaborated on this planning effort. Bicycle and trail advisory groups were consulted and the City hosted three public open house meetings to introduce the draft Plan.

Neighborhood representatives were notified via e-mail. Notice was published in the Albuquerque Journal, the Neighborhood News, and on the Planning Department's webpage.

The Plan is currently being reviewed by the Environmental Planning Commission (EPC). Staff supports a recommendation of approval to be forwarded to the City Council.

INTRODUCTION

PLANNING PURPOSE

The purpose of this planning process is to:

- Assess the current system
- Make recommendations for:
 - new facilities
 - management processes
- Education & outreach programs
- Connect Parks, Open Space and Trails for recreation
- Improve non-motorized transportation system (access & mobility)



WHAT THE PLAN DOES & DOES NOT DO

The proposed Bikeways & Trails Facility Plan is a Rank II Facility Plan, which means ...

- The *Bikeways & Trails Facility Plan* describes the existing system, policies, recommendations, and proposed projects. The plan will guide future investment in the bikeways & trails system, including facility improvements, new facilities, maintenance, and education/outreach programs.
- The plan does not allocate new funding or cause projects to be completed. It will serve as a guide for future planning efforts and funding requests to implement the recommendations.

The Plan includes a review of existing conditions and a needs analysis, which identified difficult or problematic locations as well as areas with the greatest potential for improvement. The plan includes design guidelines for both on-street bicycle facilities and multi-use trails. Key recommendations address education and outreach, closing gaps in the system, maintenance, and way-finding. There is a proposed facilities map and a detailed list of projects to improve the bicycle system and individual facilities.

The recommendations in this plan will guide future local investment in the bikeways and trails system, including new facilities, facility improvements, maintenance, and education/outreach/enforcement /evaluation programs. The City will also be better able to apply for state and federal funds to implement projects identified in the plan.

BENEFITS OF BIKEWAYS & TRAILS

Bikeways and trails benefit our community in several ways.

Economic benefits include community building, improved personal health, reduced vehicle expense and traffic congestion. Property values may be higher for homes and businesses near trails and bikeways.

Traffic Improvements. Designated facilities enhance cyclist security and comfort. Trails and bikeways provide improved traffic flow for motorists.

Social Equity in Mobility. One third of Americans do not drive, so trails & bikeways provide mobility options.

Public Health. Bikeways and trails facilitate physical activity, decrease obesity and chronic diseases and enhance mental health.

Environmental/Natural & Cultural Resource Protection. Bikeways and trails create ways to preserve open space, reduce fossil fuel consumption, reduce emissions and improve air quality.

Quality of Life. Bikeways and trails attract new businesses, reduce neighborhood traffic and offer a variety of options for travel.

WHERE WE'VE BEEN / WHERE WE ARE

Albuquerque's early accomplishments include the development of 24 Miles of Bike Lanes and 39 Miles of Trails. In recent years, the City has tripled the extent of the system, including the addition of three Bicycle Boulevards and major trail projects such as the Gail Ryba Bridge, Bear Canyon Arroyo Bridge, Alameda underpass and four new North Diversion Channel Trail Underpasses. The chart below shows the growth of our system over the past 40 years.

BIKEWAYS & TRAILS	1974	1993	2000	2010	2014	TOTAL PROPOSED SYSTEM
Multi-Use Trails	0	39	55	161	177	520
Unpaved Trails	-	-	-	-	100	100
Bike Boulevards	0	0	0	6	6	14
Bike Lanes	0	24	48	170	203	359
Bike Routes	0	0	56	134	134	212
Total System Length	0	63	159	471	520*	1105
Total System (incl. unpaved)	-	-	-	-	620	1205
Grade-Separated Crossings	0	10	15	26	31	46

*The total system length in 2014 excludes unpaved trails.

WHERE WE ARE TODAY

The City of Albuquerque’s bikeway and multi-use trail system is a combination of on-street facilities (bike routes, shared lanes, bike lanes, bicycle boulevards, and shoulders) and off-street facilities (paved multi-use trails, unpaved trails, and grade-separated crossings). **The mileage of official bikeways and trail facilities in the City grew by almost 200% between the years 2000 and 2010 alone.** As of 2014, there are over 620 miles of bikeways and trails, with approximately 55% on street bike facilities and 45% multi-use trails.

Generally speaking, the City’s bikeway and multi-use trail system is coordinated by a team of City Departments:

- On-street facilities – Department of Municipal Development (DMD)
- Off-street facilities – Parks and Recreation Department
- Coordination – Planning Department

PLAN ORGANIZATION

PART I

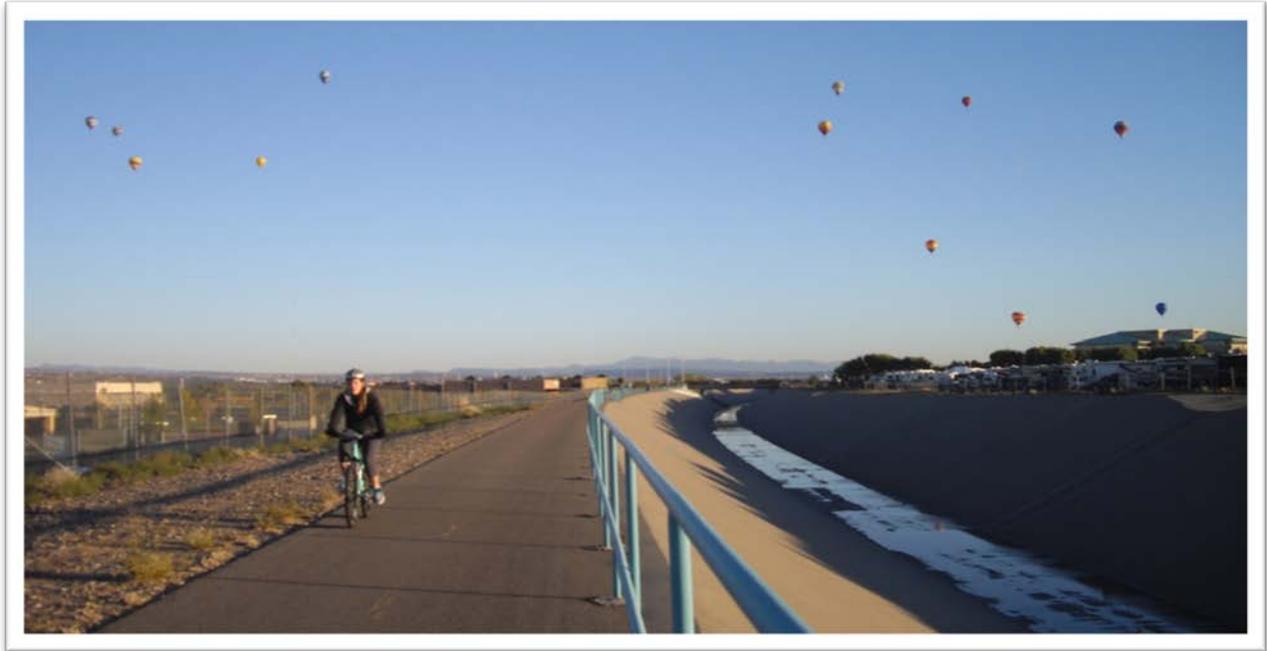
- **Chapter 1, Introduction**, provides a general orientation to the Plan, including its purpose, the benefits of investing in bikeways and trails, and an overview of the planning process.
- **Chapter 2, Planning and Policy Framework**, contains the Plan’s vision, goals, and policies, as well as how the plan fits into the broader Planning and policy context.
- **Chapter 3, Existing Conditions & Current Issues**, provides an assessment of user needs and considerations for developing the bikeway & trail system. It also provides an overview of some of the current issues seen in the City.



PART II

- **Chapter 4, Recommended Network**, recommends capital projects for new facilities and enhancements for existing facilities.
- **Chapter 5, Recommended Programs**, reviews current programs and projects and recommends new efforts as resources and staff time allow.
- **Chapter 6, Implementation Strategies**, details administrative processes, legislative change recommendations, maintenance and operations recommendations, and monitoring and evaluation recommendations.
- **Chapter 7, Design Manual**, provides guidance and standards for the development of bikeways, trails, and related facilities such as wayfinding, end-of-trip facilities, and amenities.
- The **Appendices** include a list of all the proposed facilities that are shown in the Plan maps and additional technical data that informed the Plan content and recommendations.

PLANNING & POLICY FRAMEWORK



VISION

Our vision for the City's Bikeways and Trails Facility Plan is to provide access for cyclists, pedestrians, and trail users to all areas of Albuquerque to encourage cycling and walking as a viable transportation options and to provide recreation opportunities, which result in an improved quality of life in the Albuquerque Metropolitan Area.

GOALS

1. IMPROVE THE CYCLIST AND PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE.
2. DEVELOP A CONTINUOUS, INTERCONNECTED, AND COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF BIKEWAYS AND TRAILS.
3. ENHANCE MAINTENANCE OF ALL BIKEWAYS AND TRAILS, AND IMPROVE MAINTENANCE STRATEGIES.
4. INCREASE USE OF THE BIKEWAY AND TRAILS NETWORK.
5. INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS AND EDUCATION RELATED TO BIKEWAYS AND TRAILS.
6. RECOGNIZE AND LEVERAGE THE BIKEWAY AND TRAIL NETWORK AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND QUALITY OF LIFE IN ALBUQUERQUE.
7. STREAMLINE ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES AND COORDINATION.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS

The Plan considers its relationship to other Plans, including city Plans & Policies, Regional and statewide Plans as well as Federal Policies & Programs

FUNDING

Projects and maintenance are provided by a variety of sources, including:

FEDERAL SOURCES

- Map-21

STATE SOURCES

- New Mexico Department of Transportation
- New Mexico Legislature

LOCAL SOURCES

- Capital Implementation Program (CIP)
- Gross Receipts Tax
- Land Development



NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The City's bikeways and trails, along with the grade-separated crossings, provide the City with a well-functioning recreation and non-motorized transportation system. However, the current system lacks continuity in some areas and has a number of barriers that are difficult to cross, such as the Rio Grande,

Downtown, the Big I, and major arterial streets.

Another major challenge of the system is the number of improvements needed to remedy facilities that are deficient in relation to the design criteria.

The Needs Assessment presents an overview of the needs of trail users and bicyclists in Albuquerque.

This analysis provides a summary of trail and bikeway user volumes and behaviors; discusses public input gathered through an online survey; and examines cyclist concerns by analyzing reported bicycle crash data. Currently, no comparable data is collected for trail users specifically. Three GIS-based, geographic analytical tools were used to determine the quality and

connectedness of the existing bikeway system. In total, three analytical methods were used to evaluate the existing bikeways and trails facilities, and five methods apply specifically to bicycle use.



This information was used in conjunction with field visits, input gathered at public meetings, stakeholder interviews, and analysis of the existing bikeways and multi-use trail system to form future project recommendations. Some of the data is being monitored and updated, for example, MRCOG updates the bikeway and trail user count data on an ongoing basis. Adequately understanding user needs enables system planners and policy-makers to develop cost-effective solutions for improving the region’s bikeway and trail system.

RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

The Bikeways & Trails Facility Plan provides three types of recommendations:

PROPOSED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS:

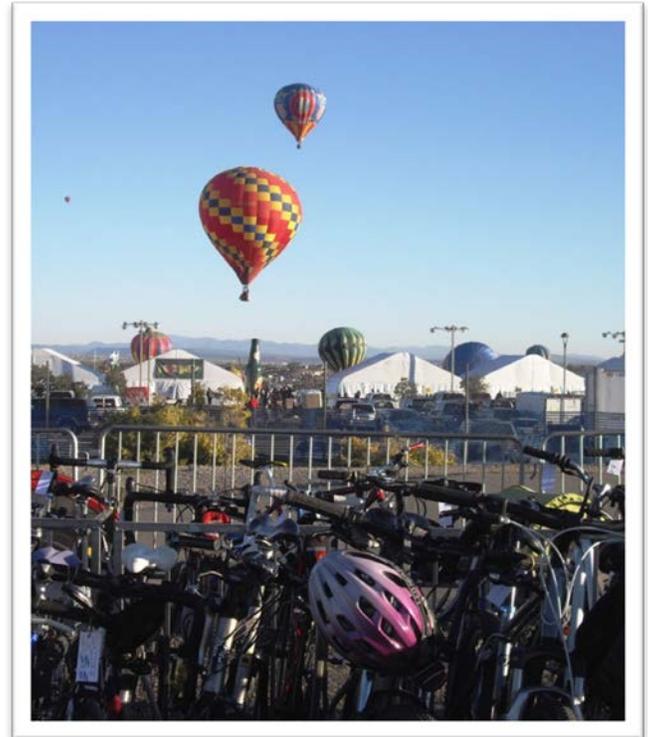
The bikeways and trail map guides future facility improvements. Recommendations are also made for end-of-trip facilities, intersection improvements, and specific gap closures that were identified as priority projects. It is anticipated that a major portion of the multi-use trails capital funding will be allocated to existing trail renovation: for basic upkeep; for implementation of accessibility improvements; to address areas of high use/user conflicts; and in projects that result in more well-maintained trail corridors.

PROGRAMS:

The plan provides a review of existing programs to expand and continue, as well as new programs recommended for additional outreach, education, training, and awareness. To address advisory committees concerns related to the effectiveness of how the City Departments responsible for developing and managing the system coordinate with each other, with other jurisdictions and agencies, and effectively utilize public input. This plan suggests changes to improve organization of these activities.

POLICY CHANGES:

The plan proposes changes to adopted state and local policy to improve the system network and law enforcement of on-street bicycling facilities. This plan also proposes design guidelines to address on-street facilities, multi-use trails, way-finding treatments, and end-of-trip facilities, as well as improved procedures for design review. Policy recommendations are made to incorporate improved maintenance of the facilities. Design guidelines address on-street facilities, multi-use trails, way-finding treatments, and end-of-trip facilities.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

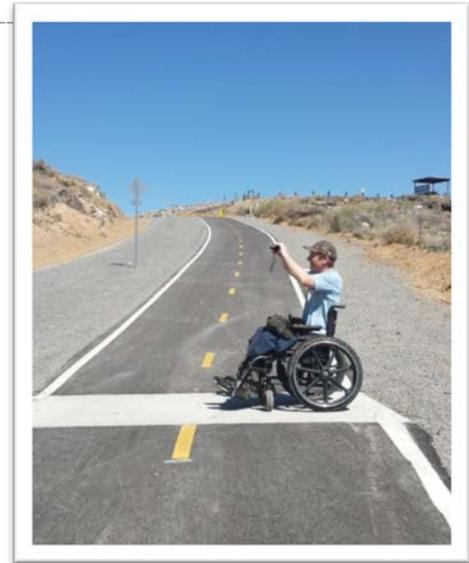
WHAT DOES THE PLAN SAY ABOUT IMPROVING CONDITIONS FOR CYCLISTS AND TRAIL USERS?

The League of American Bicyclist/Bicycle Friendly Community Program (BFC) has recognized Albuquerque as a city that welcomes cyclists by upgrading the accommodation for cyclists and encouraging people to bike for transportation and recreation.

In 2005 the City of Albuquerque was recognized with the Bronze level award and is one of three cities in New Mexico recognized as a Bicycle Friendly Community (Santa Fe—Silver, Las Cruces—Bronze). The City maintains the Bronze standing as of 2014.

To be considered a Bicycle Friendly Community the City had to submit an audit of the **five E's: engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement, and evaluation** efforts. This inquiry is designed to yield a comprehensive picture of the community's work to promote bicycling.

The City would like to become a Silver Level Bicycle Friendly Community and focuses on these same criteria to identify areas that Albuquerque can improve upon, or begin collecting data to improve our standing in future years. Chapter 3 of the Plan looks at existing conditions and current issues; Chapter 4 outlines the recommended network and Chapter 5 makes recommendations for Enhancement, Education, & Encouragement Programs.



WHAT DOES THE PLAN SAY ABOUT IMPROVING **MAINTENANCE** OF THESE FACILITIES?

Facilities are primarily maintained by the City's Parks and Recreation and Municipal Development Department staff, in conjunction with Bernalillo County crews. As the network of bikeways and trails grows, the need for funding for smart maintenance is needed.

Best management practices include:

- Yearly evaluation to address items such as crack repair, sign replacement, painting, repairs (fencing, gates, benches, etc.) drain clearing and facility evaluation.
- Regular maintenance: Weed control (spraying and manual), mowing, sweeping, pruning, trash removal, empty trash cans and dog waste dispensers.
- As needed: Flood or rain damage repair (silt clean-up, culvert clean out, etc.), bollard repair, graffiti removal, snow/ice removal, irrigation repairs, other immediate issues.

The Plan proposes pilot projects along the trails to maintain or **establish native vegetation to combat goat head weeds**; crack repairs and annual sweeping of all bicycle lanes as budgets allow.

Funding is always an issue, as our system grows and there aren't always the resources to maintain these facilities. Collaboration is important to make the best use of resources. Establishing a maintenance schedule for regular, periodic and occasional activities will help keep maintenance in check, as will

implementation of an automated work order system to track issues and serve users. Volunteers and other workers can be helpful for routine maintenance or preparing for special events.

WHAT DOES THE PLAN SAY ABOUT GETTING THE COMMUNITY MORE **INVOLVED** IN MAKING THE SYSTEM BETTER?

The Greater Albuquerque Cycling Advisory Committee (GABAC) and Greater Albuquerque Recreational Trails Committee (GARTC) are two advisory committees for the City who often weigh in on projects and provide other guidance to city staff.

Regularly check with the Mayor's Office to see if there are vacancies on these committees. In addition, there are opportunities to volunteer with the Parks & Recreation Department for "Adopt a trail", Open Space Volunteers programs and others.

As a user of the system, you are our eyes and ears. Please call 311 to report maintenance needs or visit the city website at www.cabq.gov to learn more.



WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS FOR ADVISORY GROUP STRUCTURE TO BEST ADVISE THE CITY ON BIKEWAYS AND TRAILS PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS?

In updating this Plan, the City considered the current structure of two advisory committees for bikeways and trails – the Greater Albuquerque Cycling Advisory Committee (GABAC) and the Greater Albuquerque Recreational Trails Committee (GARTC). While the two-committee structure allows multiple perspectives regarding the on-street vs. off-street system, there has been overlap in the committees, which requires both Parks & Recreation (P&R) and Department of Municipal Development (DMD) staff to be engaged in issues concerning the paved trails, which are of mutual interest to both committees.

The following options are discussed in the Plan:

- **Status quo - two Committees:** Continue with two committees – GABAC/GARTC – staffed by DMD/P&R. Ideas that may improve the process:
- **Albuquerque Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee:** Create one committee with representation by geographic regions that reflect the diversity of the community – age, gender, type of travel, and other special interest as appropriate.
- **City/County Bike, Pedestrian and Trails Advisory Committee:** Create one committee that represents the City/County or Albuquerque Metropolitan Planning Area. Work could be done by subcommittees, somewhat independently of staff, to address particular areas of emphasis and by a strong executive committee.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR MAKING THAT CHANGE? (AND WHY AREN'T WE DOING THAT NOW?)

The Plan considers options that might make the best use of city resources and also provide more clarity in the direction and function of the groups. The Plan considers these options but makes no changes to the committee structure. Such an action would require City Council direction.



HOW CAN THE COMMUNITY FIND OUT MORE ABOUT PROJECTS THAT ARE HAPPENING NOW AND PROVIDE EARLY INPUT INTO THE SELECTION OF FUTURE PROJECTS?

We have multiple departments working on bikeways and trails projects. We currently don't have a 'One-Stop Shop' for this information. We are currently considering other ways to get the word out, outreach to local bike clubs, newsletters or more frequent web updates.

In the meantime, check the GABAC/GARTC web pages for posted agendas and minutes. The public is welcome to attend these and other City open meetings. Public meetings are often advertised in the newspaper and also to stakeholders in a particular project area.

Other initiatives by the City Council (such as Jeff Speck) have many opportunities for the public to get involved. Please visit the Council website at <http://www.cabq.gov/council/> for periodic updates.

To provide input into the draft Bikeways & Trails Facility Plan please email Carrie Barkhurst at kcbarkhurst@cabq.gov visit an EPC, LUPZ or City Council hearing.

WHAT DOES THE PLAN SAY ABOUT MORE MODERN DESIGNS THAT ARE BEING BUILT IN OTHER CITIES – SUCH AS HAWK CROSSING LIGHTS, PROTECTED BIKE LANES, CYCLE TRACKS, ETC.?

The Plan does consider some of these newer designs and systems. In moving forward, future studies will be required. As a City we have to take a systematic city-wide approach to ensure that all of those concerns are addressed.

As emerging trends are identified and/or funding becomes available, we may consider pilot projects or temporary installations as tests before full investment in new facilities.

There is also a need to educate people about new measures and to evaluate installations of any innovative techniques to make sure they are acceptable and effective.

WILL THE CITY'S BIKEWAYS & TRAIL SYSTEM LOOK COMPLETELY DIFFERENT ONCE THE PLAN IS ADOPTED?

The plan proposes to maintain and selectively upgrade existing facilities over time and to complete gaps in the existing system that prevent people from getting where they want to go on a facility that meets their needs. For example, a trail connection can fill a gap in a route for a cyclist, but a bike lane is not a substitute facility for a gap in the trail network. Similarly, some cyclists may be comfortable using a bicycle lane, but are unsure how to navigate a stretch along a corridor where the bike lane disappears and becomes a bike route. The proposed plan identifies these locations that need investigation and investment to close the gaps in the system.

This plan sets policy direction for future investments in the system, but it does not allocate any additional funding to implement the proposed projects. The City will continue to build and maintain our bikeways and trails at a similar level to what has happened in the past.



NEXT STEPS

The Plan has been presented to the Environmental Planning Commission (EPC) on September 4, 2014, and will be heard again in October. If the EPC chooses to recommend the Plan for consideration by the City Council, those meetings will follow.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT WWW.CABQ.GOV/PLANNING