



Tim Keller, Mayor

Greater Albuquerque Active Transportation Committee (GAATC) – AGENDA

April 11, 2022 | 4:00 – 6:00 PM



Meeting will be held virtually.

Due to current public health considerations, no in-person option will be provided this month.

Zoom meetings will be recorded and the chat will be saved for notetaking purposes.

*6 mute/unmute | *9 raise/lower hand

Zoom Meeting Info: <https://cabq.zoom.us/j/88461619655>

Join by Phone: +1 346 248 7799 (*6 mute/unmute | *9 raise/lower hand)

Meeting ID: 884 6161 9655

Welcome and Introductions

[] Vacant
NE Quadrant

[] Vacant
SE Quadrant

[] Dan Jensen
NW Quadrant

[] Nevarez Encinias
SW Quadrant

[] Richard Meadows (chair)
Pedestrians + Transit Users

[] Josiah Hooten
Bicyclists

[] Vacant
Individuals w/a Disability

[] Vacant
Youth (Under 24)

[] Lanny Toning
Older Adults (over 60)

Approval of April Meeting Agenda

Approval of March Meeting Minutes

Public Comments (2 minute limit per audience member)

- Please email comments to Valerie Hermanson (vhermanson@cabq.gov) prior to the meeting or use the virtual raise hand feature during the meeting.

Discussion / Action Items

Presentations

- **City of Albuquerque RAISE grant for construction of Albuquerque Rail Trail – Ciaran Lithgow, Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency**

Website: <https://www.cabq.gov/mra/rail-trail>

Executive Summary: <https://www.cabq.gov/mra/documents/part-i-rail-trail-executive-summary.pdf>

Action Item: Request for letter of support from GAATC (draft letter attached)

Next Meeting: Monday, May 9, 2022



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Staff Reports

- Municipal Development (DMD)
 - Engineering
 - Vision Zero
- Council Services
- Parks and Recreation
- Planning
- ABQ RIDE
- Bernalillo County
- MRCOG
- NMDOT District 3

Public Comments (2 minute limit per audience member)

Adjourn

Next Meeting: Monday, May 9, 2022



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Greater Albuquerque Active Transportation Committee (GAATC) – Minutes

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Committee Members Present

Richard Meadows (Chair)
Nevarez Encinias
Dan Jensen
Lanny Tinning

Committee Members Absent

Josiah Hooten

Staff Members Present

Carrie Barkhurst (ABQ RIDE)
Tim Brown (DMD)
Tara Cok (MRCOG/MRMPO)
Valerie Hermanson (DMD)
Ciaran Lithgow (MRA)
Julie Luna (Bernalillo County)
Whitney Phelan (Parks and Rec)
Seth Tinkle (Planning)
Shanna Schultz (Council Services)
Cheryl Somerfeldt (Parks and Rec)

Visitors Present

Dianne Cress (Bike ABQ)
Susan Hering (Bike ABQ)
Steve Pilon (Bike ABQ)
Peter Rice (Downtown ABQ News)

Richard Meadows called the meeting to order at 4:01 PM

Approval of March Meeting Agenda

Dan Jensen (*motion*); Lanny Tinning (*second*) – *approved unanimously*

Approval of March Meeting Minutes

Dan Jensen (*motion*); Lanny Tinning (*second*) – *approved unanimously*



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Public Comments (2-minute limit per audience member)

- No public comments

Discussion / Action Items

Presentations

- **City of Albuquerque RAISE grant for construction of Albuquerque Rail Trail – Ciaran Lithgow, Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency (MRA)**

Website: <https://www.cabq.gov/mra/rail-trail>

Executive Summary: <https://www.cabq.gov/mra/documents/part-i-rail-trail-executive-summary.pdf>

Action Item: Request for letter of support from GAATC

Requesting \$11.4M grant from the US Department of Transportation (USDOT) to construct the Albuquerque Rail Trail. Total cost with grant request amount and City match is: \$14M to construct most of the rail trail, but there are parts that are planned to be a public park, which would not be eligible to receive these funds for construction.

Multi-modal path that runs along a rail corridor in downtown Albuquerque. Vision of Albuquerque's past, present, and future. Tool to improve safety for people walking or biking and it's also an economic development tool.

MRA started working on this in early 2020 and it included a lot of community outreach:

- Two public surveys, which received almost 700 responses
- Open House (Summer 2021) with community input on the plan
- Steering Committee – property owners along rail trail, community members, and advocates
- Public Working Group – advising strategies ensuring alignment with USDOT

Lead with Equity + Inclusion – not only designing trail for community that lives there now, but also potential future trail oriented development. MRA convening Rail Trail Corridor Equitable Steering Committee.

Trail goes from Lomas within railroad corridor (bike/ped) to Tijeras

Then at Tijeras – pedestrians will continue to use the existing Central underpass, which will be improved. Bicyclists will go under Tijeras and then on a proposed cycle track from Tijeras to Rail Yards. Sidewalks will be widened and enhanced along 1st Street to the Rail Yards.

One of the biggest things they heard from the community was a need for more trees to address urban heat island effect and create more shade/comfort on the trail.

Cycle track – considering designating one lane of traffic to cyclists and creating physical barrier – could be temporary to test it out or permanent. This is currently in engineering and design right now.



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No traffic lane removal on 2nd street.

Look and feel is eco, Nuevo, industrial – representative of downtown

Plan to hire an artist as part of the construction design team, so physical pavers, fencing, or other elements are created with some artistic flair.

There are a lot of opportunities to install public art on different surfaces such as behind the Convention Center, on utility boxes, underneath the over passes, for example.

Many trail oriented development opportunities to activate underutilized part of downtown Albuquerque and to create better flow between east and west downtown. For example, the Fusion Theater created a new patio structure and added a door, so that it opens directly onto the trail.

There is also a broader vision to connect this to a larger seven mile loop, which would connect to Old Town and Sawmill and downtown.

Public art department received a grant to install temporary art along the trail to bring people to the site even before it is built – activate the space and generated excitement.

Identify funding source. Team requested Capital Outlay funding, but did not receive for this funding round, which is why MRA looking to apply for this RAISE grant.

Marquette Crossing is a new crossing that will add additional connectivity for cars, bikes, pedestrians.

Request for letter of support to accompany RAISE grant application.

Discussion

- Richard Meadows: Are there phases or sections that can be funded now?
 - Ciaran: Could do in phases but need match for federal grant funding. The City will have to match at least 20% of the federal grant amount, so this limits the ability to be able to construct things now. If construction were to happen now, it would be very small pieces whereas with the federal funding, it would be a more comprehensive approach.
- Steve Pilon: There was one cross-section shown where there were trees between the pedestrian walkway and the bikeway. Thinks it is better when the trees are to the west of the walkway and bikeway because the sun is hottest in the afternoon. For the section on 1st Street, thinks the trees would be better placed between the vehicle lane and bikeway.
 - Ciaran: Great point. The mock ups are using existing conditions and the plan is not take these trees out since they're already established. But it's a good point where trees are needed and to add them to the correct side for shade.
 - Steve: Are there any zoning changes to reduce parking minimums? Is there any value capture zone anticipated? For example, property values increasing or there is more public value because of these improvements.



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- Ciaran: In downtown, believes that parking minimums are already zero for new residential development. We don't currently have a way to capture that value add you're talking about, but a great point. Staff are currently working on this to be able to capture that and reinvest it to continue the momentum and investing smaller businesses and bring dilapidated properties up to date.
- Steve P: If there's a way to capture that land value add without penalizing the land that's adjacent would be ideal.
- Ciaran: Value capture mechanisms are only on the increased property value, so it's not taking funding away from existing services and rather capturing the increase because of the investments that were made.
- Susan Hering: Disappointed to hear about the denial of state funding to implement this program. Contrary to Steve's comments about the shade trees, thinks that cars don't need the shade and that the bicyclists/pedestrians will need the shade. Big advocate for protected bike lanes and also likes the native grasses, but doesn't think that grass is an adequate protection for the cycle track. Important to also consider the creation of a bike share or a scooter share and incorporating that here because people coming into the city from other places need transportation too. Also, secure bike parking is important. Didn't see anything about that in the plans and it's an important consideration especially with the increase of e-bikes. There will be a lot of new people on bikes. Wondering where scooters do fit into this since they are so popular with young people. Do they go in the bike lane or the sidewalk?
 - Ciaran: There are secure bike parking and storage facilities at Alvarado Transit Center. Also, exploring other options for secure bike facilities on the north end near Lomas, so that there is one on each end. The scooter questions are interesting and other cities have had a lot of problems with them, so we will look to other cities on best practices to manage scooters and signage on where they can be ridden.
- Dianne Cress: How will you keep unhoused people from taking over the benches?
 - Ciaran: The benches are a concern, but there is a group of private property owners who are exploring creating a Friends of the ABQ Rail Trail. They have similar concerns and want to keep the area safe and accessible. We also don't want to create hostile architecture that is not comfortable to sit on but not too comfortable to encourage people to sleep on this facility. People should be sleeping in a home and not on a trail. They are considering these items as part of the project and restrictions from obstructing the right of way, so should encampments occur, they will be able to remove them as they occur.
- Richard: Who would be maintaining these facilities?
 - Ciaran: The determination has not been made yet and whether it would be DMD or Parks and Recreation or both. I should note that the Friends of the ABQ Rail Trail have interest in providing enhanced maintenance. Whichever department ends up managing it, they will have some support through the Friends of the ABQ Rail Trail.



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- Richard: Ciaran is presenting tonight because they would like a letter of support from GAATC to accompany the funding application. Request for input from Committee Members.
 - Dan J: Thinks that GAATC should vote on this item. Personally thinks this is a good amenity and will be an asset to downtown. Only comment –I want to make sure the long term vision for Albuquerque is to move toward more integrated approaches to active transportation rather than segregated approaches such as pedestrians go here, bicyclists go here, and cars go here. Understand it's a big challenge and will take time.
 - Richard: Certainly understands. Thinks in areas where there are more slow zones like downtown there can be more of an integrated approach, but not sure how well people are following the speed zone. Other committee comments?
 - Lanny T: As a committee, thinks if GAATC likes a project then it is important for GAATC to send a letter and make this position known to the people who make the decisions upstairs.

Action: Lanny Tanning (*motion for GAATC to provide a letter of support for the City of Albuquerque's Rail Trail Project grant application*); Dan Jensen (*second*) – *approved unanimously*

Staff Reports

- Municipal Development (DMD) (Tim B)
No updates.
- Vision Zero (Val)
 - Bike to Wherever Day is on May 20, 2022. This year it will be a mix of virtual participation opportunities and in person pop ups. There will be approximately 4-5 pop ups set up in the morning on the 20th where riders can stop by to pick up the new bike map and other free bicycle safety giveaways on their way to work or wherever. Commit to Riding at the website here and also enter the raffle for prizes: <https://bikethruburque.com/>
We also need volunteers to assist with set up and passing out of freebies. If you're interested, please let me know and I can link you to the folks managing volunteers.
 - New GAATC Members: Two new members were approved at City Council's April 4th meeting. One for the SE & one for the NE quadrants. They are currently going through the Boards & Committees process and we hope their first meeting to be the May 9 meeting.
- Council Services (Shanna)
 - No updates, but will continue to monitor whether there is any legislation or projects that would be of interest to this group.
 - Susan H: Has been documenting situations in which people park their cars in bike lanes or when fire hydrants or utility/light poles blocking the sidewalk and sending them to City Councilors if it's in their district. Very concerned about the alleged bike lane on San Mateo near Gibson that is approximately 15 inches wide and essentially no wider than the gutter plan and also has sewer grates in the same direction as bike tires. Stated that it is marked



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with signage. Wondering if there is a better way to use this documentation? Or if there is a way to push these grievances addressed by City Council?

- Shanna: There's a lot of unpack here and first I can start with the ADA compliance piece. This is an issue citywide. In the last few years, the City completed a citywide study on ADA compliance and the report outlines that it's hundreds of millions of dollars of remediation that would need to occur to bring all sidewalks up to ADA standards. Understands that the City does somewhat go in piecemeal approach to bring sidewalks/curb ramps up to standard. It's a widespread problem and the funding required is so significant that even if the City were able to fix everything tomorrow, it's not feasible. If there are particular areas that you are concerned with and that you travel along a lot, encourage you to send to your City Councilor. City Councilors can sometimes fund smaller projects to address these issues. Sounds like you've already begun to do this. Also, recommends the same approach for the San Mateo bike lanes, which would be Councilor Davis. Can also send directly to the Councilor or to their Policy Analyst.
- Susan: Thank you for the information. Also, feels there should be some type of resolution, so there are no 15 inch bike lanes.
- Shanna: There are regulations in place now that would not allow for a substandard bike lane like that to happen now or in the future. The City does have some substandard facilities that were put in the past, but would not put in a three or four foot bike lane now if a roadway was not wide enough to accommodate a bike facility. The City is incrementally addressing substandard bike facilities where there is right of way to fix those instances, but again, it is an iterative process and typically is fixed when there is street maintenance or repaving on a roadway.
- Tim: What road is Susan referring to with the narrow bike lane?
- Susan: Both sides of San Mateo on the block just north of Gibson.
- Tim: Shanna hit on most of the information and of course, we would not design something like that today. In the past, the City may have put in these types of facilities and may have also included the gutter pan as part of the four or five feet bike lane area. However, the City follows current best practice. Anytime the City repaves a road like this and we cannot fit in the appropriate bike facility then we would not put in a substandard facility.
- There are places Griegos that Councilor Benton is looking at a project to redo striping on section west of 4th Street – curious hybrid bike lane/parking lane – 4' bike lane/4' parking lane. Councilor Benton looking at funding to look at new design for that. Most of those project will happen as a street rehab program.
- Shana – I also wanted to loop back around. I pulled up the bike map and google street view of that area you were talking about at San Mateo north of Gibson. This is not a bike lane. That white stripe on the outside of the travel lane is only marking the travel lane and not establishing a bike lane.
- Susan: If it's not a bike lane then why are there yellow signs marking it as a bike lane?
- Richard: Pulled up Google Street View so everyone can see. This yellow bike sign looks like it's marking a bike crossing across San Mateo and not a bike lane.
- Tim: You are correct, Richard. This is a bike warning sign and not the regulatory sign marking a true bike lane, which is a black print on a white background to sign a bike lane. Each sign has a specific meaning and this yellow bike warning sign is meant to alert



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roadway users that bicyclists may be present or for unexpected entries into the roadway by bicyclists. The signs are at Eastern, which is designated as a bike route, so bicyclists may be crossing San Mateo at Eastern here. The City may have also received a request from a constituent to place this sign here, but that could have been 15 or more years ago because we do not use these signs anymore and we also don't use the sign post with this sign anymore.

- Richard: Is there a better way to let people know this is a bike crossing?
- Tim: We could mark this as an official crossing with the downward arrow and post a second warning sign a few hundred feet in advance to let people know that there's a crossing ahead. Similar to what a school zone design looks like today. Would also want to verify Eastern is a bike route. It might be that these signs are extraneous and should be removed. Speaking personally, I would not ride my bike on San Mateo and if there are signs that seem like they are encouraging riding on San Mateo, I would recommend removal and encourage people to use parallel routes.
- Lanny: If they take these signs down, can we put them at Galbadon where the I-40 trail crosses because a driver recently took out some existing signs there? There have been a few cyclists injured here.
- Richard: This area is the County, so we will bring this up again.
- Steve: The crossing at Galbadon is a problem for me too and thinks it should be a four-way stop. If that sign is removed on San Mateo, it would help with the ADA compliance here.
- Parks and Recreation (Whitney)
 - Softly launching mobile Outerspatial mobile app. GIS data will be uploaded toward the end of April, which includes multi-use trails, open spaces, and parks. Also working with Bernalillo County to have their data uploaded as well.
 - Partnering with the Rails to Trails Conservancy on the Celebrate Trails Day, which is Saturday, April 23. There will be trail decals, signs, and social media around this event.
 - In the Meadows Neighborhood, there is a small paved trail near Mathew, which has major tree root damage and it was repaved 8-10 years ago. The Neighborhood would like to save the trees and the Assistant City Forester agreed. Next steps are to remove this asphalt and replace with paved crusher fine. Project will take 2 -3 weeks.
 - Will be adding asphalt to complete an existing trail gap between Ventana Ranch Road and Rainbow Road. Will take 2 – 3 weeks.
 - Received NOO and have a contractor ready to work on the Copper Trail Landscaping. This trail goes from Copper & Eubank to Daniel Webster Park. Anticipated start: end July/early August.
 - Starting the planning process for the Calabacillas Arroyo Trail. As soon as she has info will share.
 - East Side of Bear Bridge has been repaired and next will be the western side.



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- Planning (Seth)
 - Long range working on three community planning area assessments:
 - Near Heights – second draft should be posted soon (between April 11 – May 9) second revision based on comments received in the first draft.
 - SW Mesa – has their first draft posted online
 - Central ABQ – beginning stages
 - near heights – second draft posted soon (between now and May 9) – based on comments from first draft
 - CPA website: <https://cpa.abc-zone.com/>
- ABQ RIDE (Carrie):

Recently received ridership numbers from January, February, and March. Almost 1.3 million riders this year – up 40% from first three months of last year. Keep this in context – last year, the whole fiscal year was just under 4 million. In the 2014, the peak of ABQ RIDE’s ridership, it was 13 million, so it has been a long and steady decline over time. Then COVID hit and it went flat, but now we are starting to climb up with the Zero Fare Program.
- Bernalillo County (Julie)

One the County’s largest projects is extending Sunport and the County worked extensively with this Committee and some current members were on the Committee at that time. Reviewed a small section of the Sunport extension project that connects the Riverside Trail/Bosque Trail to Williams Street, which is a City of Albuquerque designated route. Hope the Committee likes it because it makes a great loop if you’re out for a ride. Williams Street is due to repaved soon. If you continue on Williams toward Avenida Cesar Chavez you’ll see the nice sharrrows. And at Broadway near Avenida Cesar Chavez, a few years ago, the City of Albuquerque added buffered bike lanes, so there is some nice redundancy. There’s a great access to adjacent businesses and this South Broadway area is coming together. There is also the County’s El Camino Real Project, which will go to City Council and Bernalillo County Commission soon. Will have a project list next month.
- MRCOG/MRMPO (Tara C)

No updates.

Public Comment:

- Steve P: Can NMDOT come back to GAATC to provide an update on the Montgomery overpass at I-25?
- Richard: NMDOT did come back and provide an update to GAATC probably in October or November. GAATC passed a resolution on one of the options to do a separated/combined bike/ped facility rather than putting the bicyclists on the street.
- Steve: Question for Tim Brown – can we close the gap between I-25 and the bike path along the North Diversion Channel? There are a lot of curb cuts into the gas stations/convenient stores and both have access to side streets. It would be nice to close the curb cuts and have patrons access the businesses through the side streets.



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- Tim B: Good point and Tim will looking into this, but cannot guarantee and unsure if this section is outside of NMDOT ROW. The project may not be able to impact access to the gas stations. Will look to see what they have planned in those sections.
- Richard: Val, can we post the Resolutions on the GAATC website?
- Val: Past GAATC Resolutions are posted in the meeting minutes of the GAATC website: <https://www.cabq.gov/municipaldevelopment/our-department/engineering/greater-albuquerque-active-transportation-committee/minutes-from-greater-albuquerque-bicycling-advisory-committee-meetings>
Val will confirm they are all posted.
- Lanny: Learned a lesson in persistence when a bicycle was taken from their house. Had security cameras and was able to capture a picture of the person that stole their bicycle and made a poster. Told the police who took notes and then sent out emails to their neighbors. Several neighbors had photos of this person on their properties and knew where he lived. Drove past his house and saw his bike in the front yard, so he called the police and Lanny got their stolen bike back.

Meeting adjourned at 5:17 PM

Next Meeting: May 9, 4:00pm – 6:00pm



Tim Keller, Mayor

Greater Albuquerque Active Transportation Committee (GAATC)



TO: Secretary Pete Buttigieg
Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington DC, 20590

April 12, 2022

Dear Secretary Pete Buttigieg and the RAISE Grant Merit Review Committee:

I am writing to express our sincere support of the Albuquerque Rail Trail. As the City of Albuquerque revitalizes our Downtown in the wake of COVID-19, it is vital to provide outdoor amenities, sustainable transportation alternatives, and increased connectivity to historic, cultural, recreational, and employment activities.

This project will enable the city to construct a multi-use trail that would add considerable value to the public and our community by:

- Increasing quality of life by creating a world class urban amenity and improving access to green space for Downtown communities and adjacent neighborhoods;
- Reducing the urban heat island effect by adding 165 trees to the Downtown core;
- Providing safe access to transit alternatives, such as Amtrak, the Albuquerque - Santa Fe regional commuter train (the Rail Runner), Albuquerque Rapid Transit (ART), and the Alvarado Transit Center; and,
- Increasing safe pedestrian and cyclist connectivity in and around Downtown, which will expand access to jobs, reduce parking demands as the region expands, decrease greenhouse gas emissions by promoting transportation alternatives, and improve community health.

Innovative, well-planned rail projects have proven to serve as an economic catalyst for other cities. This can provide the missing piece for Albuquerque's economic revival. Our organization wholeheartedly supports the City's grant application.

Respectfully,

Richard Meadows

Chair, Greater Albuquerque Active Transportation Committee (GAATC)