



Tim Keller, Mayor

## Greater Albuquerque Active Transportation Committee (GAATC) – Minutes

Monday, August 9 2021 | 4:00 – 6:00 PM



### Committee Members Present

Richard Meadows (Chair), Dan Jensen, Nevarez Encinias, Josiah Hooten, Robin Allen

### Committee Members Absent

Raul Chavira, Lanny Tanning

### Staff Members Present

Terra Reed (DMD), Tim Brown (DMD), Petra Morris (Council Services), Whitney Phelan (Parks + Recreation), Cheryl Somerfeldt (Parks + Recreation), Hugh Hulse (Parks + Recreation), Carrie Barkhurst (Planning), Julie Luna (Bernalillo County), Jill Mosher (NMDOT)

### Visitors Present

Councilor Isaac Benton, Mike Worrall (Horrocks), Beau Hunter (Horrocks), Aaron Sussman (BHI), Bradyn Hopkins (BHI), Karen Aspelin (Max Green), Peter Rice (Downtown Albuquerque News), Theresa Dunn (BikeABQ), Steve Pilon (BikeABQ), Dianne Cress (BikeABQ),

### Richard Meadows called the meeting to order at 4:02 PM

### Approval of January Meeting Agenda

- *Dan J (motion); Nevarez E (second) – approved unanimously*

### Approval of December Meeting Minutes

- *Josiah H (motion); Dan J (second) – approved unanimously*

### General Announcements / Meeting Format

### Public Comments (2 minute limit per audience member)

- None

### Presentations

I-25 Improved – Comanche & Montgomery Project (Jill Mosher, NMDOT; Mike Worrall, Horrocks; Beau Hunter, Horrocks)

- Visit [I-25 Improved project webpage](#) for more information and to sign up for updates.
- I-25 north corridor was studied 10+ years ago. A couple of years ago, NMDOT started a project to update the Montgomery interchange. Over the past year or so, NMDOT decided to include Comanche in the project scope and include design-build process to promote innovation in the project (have a basic configuration, but design-build includes opportunities to adjust design throughout project more if needed).
  - Horrocks is designing and helping NMDOT prepare the project. RFP is expected to be released in June 2022. Expect construction in early 2023. Estimate ~2 year project.
- Both overpasses will be reconstructed with new bridges, which will likely have to be raised.



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- Comanche interchange will include additional turn lanes, including double left turn lanes.
  - Following the City's BTFP, bike lanes will be included and sidewalks will be expanded.
  - Distance between the two interchanges is rather small, so there will be braided ramps.
- Montgomery overpass will be wider – added turn lanes.
  - Adding connection to North Diversion Channel trail.
- Adding Texas Turnarounds on both bridges.
- Need to maintain connectivity and access throughout construction.
- Public meetings this week:
  - Virtual: Weds 8/11 6 pm – presentation + Q&A
  - In person: Thurs 8/12 6pm at District 3 offices. RSVP required (see project website)
- Discussion:
  - Richard M: How wide are the bike lanes and sidewalks?
    - Mike W: Follows DPM for a street cross section.
    - Richard M: Is there any separation between sidewalks or bike lanes and traffic?
    - Mike W: Not in the current design.
    - Steve P: At a previous GABAC meeting, there was a recommendation to combine bike lanes and sidewalks to create grade separated bike lanes (bike lane at same/similar height as the sidewalk to provide additional protection for bicyclists from traffic). Physical barriers between the pedestrian/bicyclist realm and vehicle lanes would also be good.
    - Terra R: past discussions at GABAC noted that, because of the speed and volume of traffic, there were concerns about the minimum bike lane width being too narrow to be safe for bicyclists. Raising the bike lane to the level of the sidewalk would provide additional protection. The other concern was about the space between the sidewalk and the Texas turnaround lane, where vehicles are traveling in an unexpected direction.
  - Christopher R: Is this only a project for areas on I-25 north of I-40?
    - Jill M: Future projects planned for Gibson and Cesar Chavez based on South I-25 Corridor Plan.

### Project Prioritization (Aaron Sussman, BHI)

- See attached presentation and scoring tables.
- Discussion
  - Richard M: Would be good to share this with GARTC and Parks + Recreation staff since they handle multi-use paths.
  - Isaac B: Isn't the Guadalupe Overpass (Cesar Chavez) very restricted as to adding proper bike lanes?
    - Yes – that was taken into consideration in the scoring – some segments have more opportunities than others, so the scoring represents the corridor as a whole. We are also assessing Cesar Chavez/Bridge currently for improvements as part of a separate project.
  - Christopher R: How do we promote equity in the decision making process?
    - Aaron S: Transportation equity was weighted as one of the highest criterion.



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- Terra R: This framework can be applied to other lists of projects that might address some of the inequity in terms of facilities in different parts of the City.
- Christopher R: Would be good to see more departments adopting similar frameworks for project prioritization that include equity considerations.

### Bicycle Boulevards

- Terra R: BikeABQ sent a letter [see attachment] to Councilor Benton and other City leaders after a news story highlighted issues with bicycle boulevard design and speed limits and the potential for the City to revisit bicycle boulevard design
- Tim B: Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) defines what cities can do in terms of signs and striping to ensure uniformity across the country.
  - One of the rules in the MUTCD is that speed limits have to be in multiples of 5 (15, 20, 25) – doesn't allow 18 MPH.
  - Per City Code, the signs are unenforceable because the signs do not meet MUTCD.
  - Do not want the City to continue to be in violation, but it is very expensive to replace all of the signs. As we need to replace those signs, I will replace with MUTCD-compliant signs. Then the question is what speed limit to set. Roads were designed for 20-25 MPH. Bicycles can travel up to 20 MPH, so it seems appropriate to set the posted speed to 20 MPH.
  - Agree that we need to control vehicle speeds on streets with bicycle traffic, but putting up a unique speed limit sign (18 MPH). You need to engineer the road to slow traffic – add traffic calming elements that slow motor vehicles. Future bicycle boulevard projects should include real traffic calming through design, not just signage, to ensure safe driving speeds.
- Discussion:
  - Ike B: Posted speed limit should depend on the context. In the Downtown and Nob Hill areas, there is more going on and 15 MPH might be more appropriate than in some other areas, where 20 could be appropriate.
    - Tim B: Could consider flexibility for context.
  - Petra M: Recently completed a review of the Silver Ave. Bicycle Boulevard between Yale and the River. One of the recommendations from that study is to re-evaluate how the bicycle boulevard should connect in the Mountain Road area – Mountain isn't necessarily a good bicycle boulevard due to design, traffic, context.
  - Christopher R: T4B did 2 community bike audits in the International District and in Westgate. There are no bicycle boulevards in either of those neighborhoods and it would be really great to see those kinds of facilities.
  - Dan J: Don't want to see the idea of bicycle boulevards go away. Agree that artificially low speed limits is not effective – need to re-engineer the roads to be safer. Support the idea that re-engineering the streets would be better for all users. But also don't want to lose this type of facility.
  - Theresa D: Would like to see 15 MPH. Some bicyclists can ride at 15 or 20 MPH, but many can't. 15 MPH speed limits are used in school zones, where there are vulnerable children. Agree that the engineering needs to be there to help enforce the speed limits, but we should keep these places as low speed and comfortable.



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- Steve P: Agree that better engineering for traffic calming is needed. The current process to get traffic calming projects in neighborhoods is complicated, so hopefully bike boulevard projects don't get caught up in that.
- [See the Silver Avenue Bicycle Boulevard study](#) (Yale to Bosque Trail) for additional guidance on how bicycle boulevards should be designed.
  - Terra R: As part of Complete Streets review for annual street maintenance program, we generally added striped parking to streets that are listed as proposed bicycle boulevards to support future projects in those areas.
- Theresa D: If you need to replace one or multiple speed limit signs along an existing bicycle boulevard, who makes that decision?
  - Tim B: Would reach out to GAATC to solicit feedback before making a determination.

### Staff Reports

- Municipal Development (DMD)
  - Engineering (Tim Brown)
    - Alexander Blvd road diet (near Renaissance).
    - East Central project that was presented at a previous meeting will happen in the spring.
    - New HAWK Signals: County project at Central/Texas complete. By spring 2022, City will be installing additional HAWKs at Central and Conchas, San Pablo, San Pedro, and Tulane.
  - Vision Zero (Terra Reed)
    - This week is Terra's last week at the City. Working with colleagues and other members of the Vision Zero Task Force to keep projects moving forward until the position can be posted and filled. Vision Zero Coordinator position as well as the M15 Planner position (Josef Jansen's old position, which should staff this committee) should be posted in the next couple of weeks.
    - Louisiana RSA project will include some pilot projects in the fall – Aaron S and Amy Bell will provide an update at September meeting.
- Council Services (Petra Morris)
  - No updates. Will continue to follow the discussion about bicycle boulevards on behalf of Council.
- Parks and Recreation (Whitney Phelan)
  - At their last meeting, GARTC voted to not continue with joint GAATC/GARTC meetings. Open to collaborating when there is something that needs to be discussed, but do not want to continue with the quarterly meetings.
  - Propose to change the meeting schedule for September and December to be consistent with other GAATC meetings, as opposed to following the revised schedule for joint GAATC/GARTC meetings. This would change to September 13 and December 13.
    - *Dan J (motion); Nevarez E (second) – approved unanimously.*
- Planning (Carrie Barkhurst)
  - No updates.
- Bernalillo County (Julie Luna)



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- East Central (east of Juan Tabo) road diet is completed [City project]; HAWK signal at Central and Texas is operational.
- Studying a road diet on 4<sup>th</sup> street north of Ortega.
- Isleta Drain Trail project moving forward on planning.
- RSA on Coors between Rio Bravo and Gun Club was approved by NMDOT – moving forward.
- MRCOG
  - No staff member present
- NMDOT District (Jill Mosher)
  - Rio Bravo (Isleta to 2<sup>nd</sup> St., not including those intersections: Finishing up design and incorporating comments from recent public input meetings.
  - Tramway Bridges going to construction in November/December.
  - I-25 project – Encourage everyone to provide input in the upcoming meetings. We especially want input on how to maintain pedestrian and bicycle movements throughout construction.

### Discussion / Action Items

None discussed – handled ongoing business during staff updates.

### Public Comment

- Christopher R:
  - Transit Department is working on reviewing proposals for a project to review and make recommendations for improvements for bus routes/the transit system as a whole.
  - Zero fares represents important opportunities for active transportation. Kansas City say 39% fewer public safety incidents on buses.

**Meeting adjourned at 6:01 PM**

**Next Meeting: Monday, September**