El Paso has an extensive road network that includes many high speed roads. Given the size of El Paso’s road network there needs to be a strategy for bicycle investments that utilizes low-cost bicycle lanes where appropriate and targeted areas for more intensive investments that can create neighborhood-scale networks that are safe and comfortable for people of all ages and abilities. In urban areas with high-speed and/or high-volume roads this may take the form of a “minimum grid” of separated bicycle lanes or similar high quality facilities. These neighborhood-scale networks can serve as nodes for a larger community-scale network.

Although El Paso has formally adopted the NACTO Urban Street Design Guide and Urban Bikeway Design Guide, it does not appear that designs from these guides have been implemented on high speed roads or in the downtown area. It is great to hear that the Capital Improvement Department is currently designing a Downtown Bicycle Network based on protected lanes, cycle tracks, and two-way cycle tracks and the implementation of that network is a potentially gamechanging development for El Paso.

When the Downtown Bicycle Network is implemented with facilities that are new to the community ensure that there is a public education campaign, potentially including ambassadors and events, that help the public understand the new facilities and how performance of the downtown road network changes for all users.

Increase the amount of staff time spent on improving conditions for people who bike and walk.

Consider offering a “Ciclovia,” or Open Streets type event.

Bicycle-safety education should be a routine part of education, for students of all ages, schools and the surrounding neighborhoods should be particularly safe and convenient for biking and walking. Work with local bicycle groups and interested parents to develop and implement a Safe Routes to School program for all schools.

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