

# ***Grant County Bicycle Advisory Group***

*c/o Grant County Public Health Office  
2610 N. Silver Street, Silver City, NM 88061  
575-538-8573 (121)*

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Melanie Bishop, Planner, Traffic and Transportation  
Bohannon Huston  
7500 Jefferson St. NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87109

We, Grant County Bicycle Advisory Group (BAG), are pleased that the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) is conducting a statewide survey regarding bicycle infrastructure improvements. As part of this survey and planning efforts, we ask that the department consider incorporating the following recommendations:

- 1) US Bike Routes designations in New Mexico
- 2) Work with cities and towns in our state regarding the implementation of their Bicycle Master Plans
- 3) Improve bicycle safety by eliminating drop-offs and rumble strips on road shoulders.

## **I. US Bike Route System Designations**

Currently, three national / international routes pass-through Silver City.

- Adventure Cycling's Great Divide Mountain Bike Route (GDMBR) begins in Banff, Alberta Canada and terminates in Antelope Wells, New Mexico totaling 2,768 miles.
- The Continental Divide National Scenic Trail, (CDT) 3,100 miles, is used by thousands of hikers from Canada to Mexico.
- Adventure Cycling's Southern Tier Bicycle Route begins in San Diego, California and terminates in San Augustine, Florida totaling 3,055 miles.

Due to the proven economic benefits in the form of bicycle tourism that these routes provide to our communities, it is hoped the department will officially designate [Proposed NM USBR90](#); [Proposed NM USBR75](#); and [USBR66](#) for bicycle tourism. USBR90 is particularly important to our area if it is laid out to run through both Silver City and Las Cruces thereby maximizing the investments already made in these communities to serve bicycle travelers.

## **II. Town of Silver City Bicycle Master Plan**

In addition to the importance of designating / recognizing national and international bicycle routes, BAG is requesting information regarding NMDOT implementation of State Highway improvements within the Town of Silver City's Bicycle Master Plan, August 23, 2016. The first-priority recommendations in the plan mainly address restriping with minimum construction to be completed within one to three years. Below are four priorities requiring implementation on state highways:

- 1)–Hudson (NM 90) to Broadway, distance 0.80 mile
  - Widen bike lanes to a minimum of-four feet in next restriping (narrow travel lanes and/or center turn lane)
- 2)–US180 from Hudson Street to Swan, distance 0.27 mile
  - Widen bike lanes to minimum of four feet in next restriping (narrow travel lanes and/or center turn lane)

- 3)–US180 Little Walnut- crosswalk and ramp- In conjunction with trail along skate park
  - Restripe high visibility crosswalk and consider improved ramp to accommodate cyclists.
- 4)–US180 from Mississippi to Alabama
  - Consider gateway treatment / speed feedback / traffic calming

### **III. Bicycle Safety**

BAG has concerns regarding the safety of bicyclists riding on state highways, particularly state highways with dangerous road shoulders that have rough paving and sudden dangerous pavement drop-offs. AASHTO Guidelines recommend the following standards regarding bicycle lanes:

- Shoulders: A width of 1.5 m (5 feet) or greater is preferable and additional widths are desirable where substantial truck traffic is present, or where motor vehicle speeds exceed 80 km/h (50 mph).
- Bike lanes should be provided with adequate drainage to prevent ponding, washouts, debris accumulation and other potentially hazardous situations for bicyclists.

BAG recommends that these standards be applied to road shoulders, including the elimination of drop-offs and rough paving practices, to promote safety and facilitate bicycle travel.

In closing, we look forward to hearing from you regarding the three recommendations above and to work with NMDOT on future bicycle infrastructure projects in Grant County.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Summer, Chair, Grant County Bicycle Advocacy Group

Michele Giese, Health Promotion Specialist, SW Region Health Promotion Team

CC:

*Charlene Webb, Grant County Manager*

*Jolene Herrera, NMDOT*

*Commissioner Brett Kasten, Chairman*

*Commissioner Alicia Edwards*

*Commissioner Harry Brown*

*Commissioner Gabriel Ramos*

*Mayor Ladner, Town of Silver City*

*James Marshall, Assistant Town Manager*

*Jamie Embick, Director, Town of Silver City Community Development Department*

*Linda Aiman-Smith, Councilor, Town of Silver City*

*Cynthia Ann Bettison, Councilor, Town of Silver City*

*Guadalupe “Lupe” Cano, Councilor, Town of Silver City*

*Jose A. Ray, Councilor, Town of Silver City*