

MISSION VALLEY DISTRICT

CHARACTER

Considered to be the oldest part of the El Paso urban area, the Mission Valley District is characterized primarily by a semi-rural context with scattered neighborhoods centered around the three historic missions at Ysleta, Socorro, and San Elizario. The PDN Trail will run primarily along drains and canals, with spur trails connecting to the three missions and the many neighborhoods, schools, and parks. It also will connect several small towns to each other. For the purposes of this plan, the Mission Valley District extends roughly from Zaragoza Road to San Elizario Road (east of the Franklin Canal) and Chicken Ranch Road (west of the Franklin Canal).



San Elizario Mission Chapel





Ditches and canals provide connections to and through communities in the Mission Valley District.



A street corner shows the local character of the Mission Valley.



Mission-style architecture is evident in both older (above) and newer (right) buildings in the Mission Valley.





KEY MAP

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Historic Missions
- Rio Bosque Park
- Capistrano Park

LEGEND

- PDN Spine Alignment (Existing or Funded)
- PDN Spine Alignment (Proposed)
- PDN Loop Alignment
- PDN Spur Trail
- Historic Camino Real
- Transportation Transfer Center
- Point of Interest
- School
- Trail Head
- El Paso City Limits
- Parks
- Rio Grande



MAP 27. MISSION VALLEY DISTRICT OVERVIEW

POINTS OF INTEREST

HISTORIC EL PASO MISSION TRAIL



Located in El Paso's Mission Valley, this trail is rich in history dating back more than 300 years. Largely supplanted by paved roads today, the trail connects the three adobe churches (missions) established by Spaniards who came north from Mexico to share their faith with the indigenous communities in the area. The Ysleta Mission, established in 1682, is the cornerstone of the Ysleta del Sur Indian Pueblo. Two miles southeast of Ysleta lies the Socorro Mission, which was established in 1691. Flooding in the 1830, which also left these communities on an island in the middle of the riverbed, destroyed both of the original church buildings, so Socorro's current mission structure, with its six-foot-thick adobe walls and massive wood roof supports (vigas), was rebuilt in 1843. While only nine years separates the settlements of Ysleta and Socorro, San Elizario was established much later, in 1789, five miles southeast of Socorro as a Spanish presidio (military garrison) originally named "San Elceario" after a French patron saint. The current San Elizario Chapel, rebuilt in 1877, is a notable example of late adobe church architecture in West Texas and New Mexico.

PAVO REAL PARK AND RECREATION CENTER



Situated along Alameda Avenue across from the Franklin Canal one-half mile north of Loop 375 Expressway, the 19-acre Pavo Real Park includes a variety of facilities offering many activities. In addition to sports fields, basketball courts, and a covered playground, the site also is home to the Ysleta Library, Farther Martinez Senior Center, an outdoor pool, with spray park options for both people and their pets, and an indoor recreation center. The park also abuts both Camino Real Middle School and Presa Elementary School.

RIO BOSQUE PARK



The 372-acre city park is managed by the UTEP Center for Environmental Resource Management (CERM) to preserve and enhance a tract of wetlands and riverside forest (bosque) that serves as a remnant of the ecosystems that were once prevalent along the Rio Grande through the border region. Home to over 200 species of birds, the park also offers excellent displays of spring colors when its wildflower blooms hit their peak.



See Map 27 for overall region alignments and legend.



MAP 28. MISSION VALLEY DISTRICT KEY MAP 1

TRAIL CONNECTIVITY

PRIMARY ALIGNMENTS

4.0

Socorro Road to Alameda Avenue Connector (Proposed On-Street/Shared-Use Path)

Continuing this on-street link between the Playa Drain and the Franklin Canal which began in the Zoo/Playa Drain District, the route would cross Zaragoza Road on Socorro Road and turn north along the Southside Feeder Lateral ditch, where a short shared-use trail segment is recommended, passing the Ysleta Pueblo del Sur between Socorro and Alameda roads. At Alameda Avenue, the route would turn east, continuing for several blocks to Presa Place, where Alameda Avenue crosses the Franklin Canal. As noted earlier, Socorro Road has adequate sidewalks and is wide enough to be for striped bike lanes. Alameda Avenue has intermittent curbs and only short stretches of sidewalk in this area, so improvements are recommended for both bicycle and pedestrian use.

4.1

Franklin Canal – Pavo Real Park to San Elizario Road (Proposed Shared-Use Path)

At Presa Place and the Pavo Real Park, the alignment rejoins the Franklin Canal, which runs along the west side of Alameda Avenue, for approximately 5.6 miles. At that point the canal alignment diverges from the roadway and travels south another 2.8 miles to San Elizario Road. This alignment continues into the Rio Grande Agricultural District, and will be further described in the next section. Ditch maintenance roads are fairly wide on both sides of the canal, so local preference (and concurrence of the ditch authority) should determine which side the trail is located. The only significant constraint is the point at which

the Franklin Canal diverges from Alameda Avenue, just south of Ernesto Serna Elementary School. The canal merges with the Dolan Drain on the west side, so a new bridge would be required over the Dolan Drain, if the trail were to continue on the west side of the canal beyond that point. There is an existing maintenance bridge over the Franklin Canal, which could be used to take the trail from the west to east side, if a west side alignment is desirable to the north.

LOOP ALIGNMENTS

4.2

Juan de Herrera Lateral Loop (Existing/Proposed Shared-Use Path with On-Street Connections)

This loop alignment begins near Ascarate Park within the Zoo/Playa Drain District (referenced as 3.8) and follows the Franklin Canal, Juan de Herrera Main Lateral, and Pueblo Viejo Linear Park to Zaragoza Road, where it crosses into the Mission Valley District. The existing path through Pueblo Viejo Park ends at Presa Place, at which point the route would head southwest via an on-street connection, past the Presa Elementary School and the Pavo Real Recreation Center, to rejoin the primary alignment along the Franklin Canal at Alameda Avenue.

SPUR TRAILS

4-A

Mount Carmel Cemetery Spur

This proposed trail loop would continue south from Capistrano Park along the Playa Drain, then along the Border Highway/Americas Avenue, and tie back into the primary trail through the cemetery.

4-B

Socorro Spur (Proposed Shared-Use Trails)

Members of the Tigua tribal community have proposed development of a spur trail network that loops west from the Franklin Canal, providing connection opportunities into the community of Socorro, with additional spurs to Rio Bosque Park, and south to the San Elizario Mission. The primary loop would follow the Socorro Lateral Canal from its turnout from the Franklin Canal approximately a half-mile southeast of Loop 375 Expressway where it would rejoin the Franklin Canal at Place Road, 2.5 miles farther south. This loop passes less than a quarter-mile from the Socorro Mission, providing relatively easy access on-street along Socorro Drive. The other proposed connections from the Socorro Lateral to Rio Bosque Park would follow existing roads, and/or travel cross country, as there are no existing facilities that would enable such a connection.

4-C

Socorro – San Elizario Connector (Proposed Shared-Use Trail)

A proposed connection between the Rio Bosque Park at Socorro and the community of San Elizario would follow the San Elizario Lateral from the southeast corner of Rio Bosque along the west side of Socorro Road and ending at Glorietta Road in San Elizario, very close to the mission there. An intermediate connection between the San Elizario Lateral and the primary alignment along the Franklin Canal, via the Franklin Feeder Canal, would serve to create shorter loop options from each community.



See Map 27 for overall region alignments and legend.



MAP 29. MISSION VALLEY DISTRICT KEY MAP 2

4-D

Tigua Spur (Proposed Shared-Use Trail)

A proposed spur would link the proposed trail along Rio Bosque (4-C) and the Tigua Skate Plaza to the primary alignment via the Franklin Feeder Canal.

4-E

San Elizario Spur (Proposed Shared-Use Trail)

The City of San Elizario has been coordinating with the El Paso County Water Improvement District No. 1 to develop a loop trail around their historic city center utilizing the District's ditches. An additional connection is proposed to the primary alignment on the Franklin Canal via an on-street or sidepath facility along San Elizario Road.

TRAILHEADS AND PUBLIC TRANSIT

San Elizario/Franklin Canal Trailheads (Proposed)

Two trailheads could be located at the upper and lower connections between the San Elizario Lateral and Franklin Canal. At the upstream connection, a triangle of vacant land just south of the ditch turnout on the west side of the Franklin Canal would require a bridge across the Franklin to provide access from Alameda Avenue. At the south end of the San Elizario Lateral Loop, a similar triangular tract sits at the intersection of Place Road and Melinda Street. Ownership and right-of-way would need to be verified for both tracts.

Bus Stops

Periodic County Transit bus stops are located along Alameda Avenue for the full length that the Franklin Canal runs alongside it, as well as within the communities of Socorro and San Elizario.

NEARBY SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTIONS

Schools in walking distance include:

- South Loop Elementary School
- Presa Elementary School
- Camino Real Middle School
- Western Technical Collage – East
- Socorro High School
- Salvador H. Sanchez Middle School
- Hueco Elementary School
- Escontrias Elementary School
- Keys Academy
- Rio Vista Education Center
- Socorro Middle School
- Ernesto Serna Elementary School
- Clint Middle School
- William David Surrat Elementary School



South Loop Elementary School

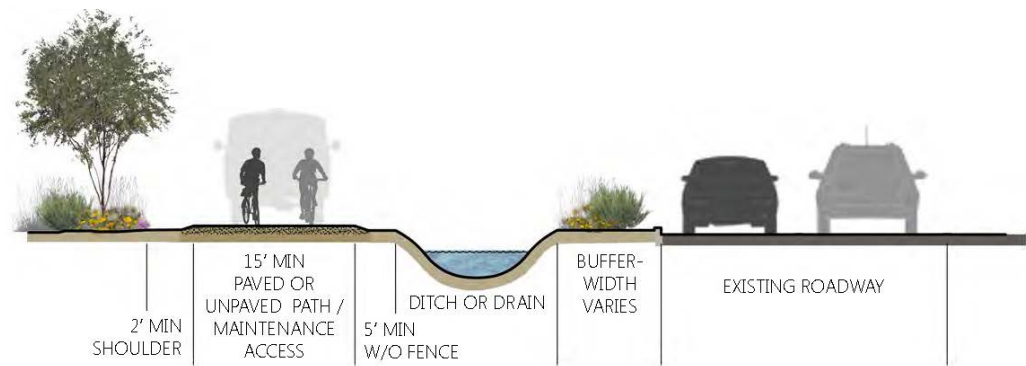


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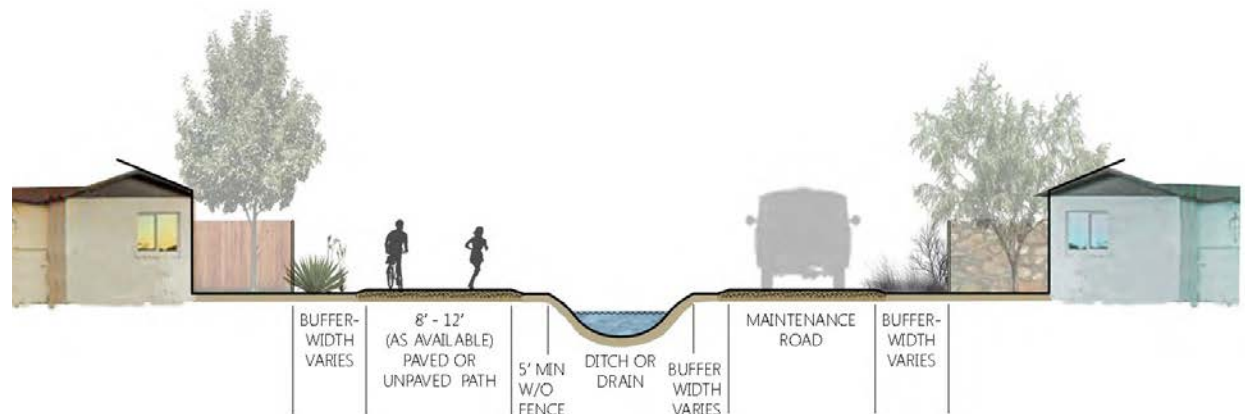
Shared-Use Path along Canal: A ten- to twelve-foot wide trail can accommodate multiple uses comfortably. Paved trails are generally preferred for shared-use facilities, but in more rural areas paved trails may not be cost effective, or necessary. Many long-distance trails (e.g. rail trails) have successfully used materials such as chat, screenings, decomposed granite, compacted crusher fines, brick or rock dust, or stabilized natural ground to provide a relatively stable and weather-resistant surface. Since the ditch banks are also used by maintenance vehicles, such materials may be able to support trail traffic and withstand heavier maintenance vehicular traffic without damage to the trail surface.

On-Street Bike Lanes or Shared Routes with Sidewalks: In several locations, existing conditions require on-street facilities for at least the short term. At a minimum, such routes should be marked for shared lanes intended to accommodate both cars and bicycles. Striped lanes would be preferable and are recommended wherever possible. If bike lanes or sharrows are used, sidewalks should be evaluated for ADA accessibility, and improved as necessary.

Typical cross sections indicated by letters on previous maps.



(A) SHARED-USE PATH ALONG CANAL AT ROADWAYS



(B) SHARED-USE PATH ALONG SUBURBAN CANALS WITH SEPARATE MAINTENANCE ACCESS

FIGURE 18. TYPICAL CROSS SECTIONS A & B – MISSION VALLEY



TRAIL ENHANCEMENTS



Regionally influenced site furnishings add character.



An example of a trailside seating area.



Wayfinding and informational signage can be formal or informal.

