

DOWNTOWN/UTEP DISTRICT

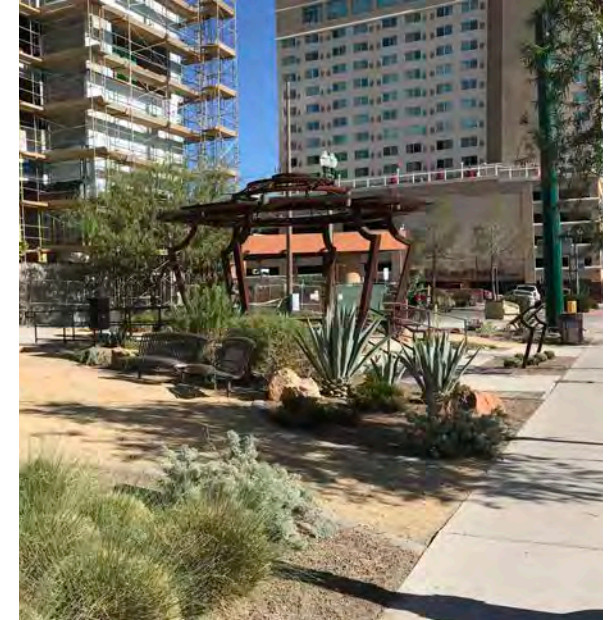
DOWNTOWN SUB-DISTRICT

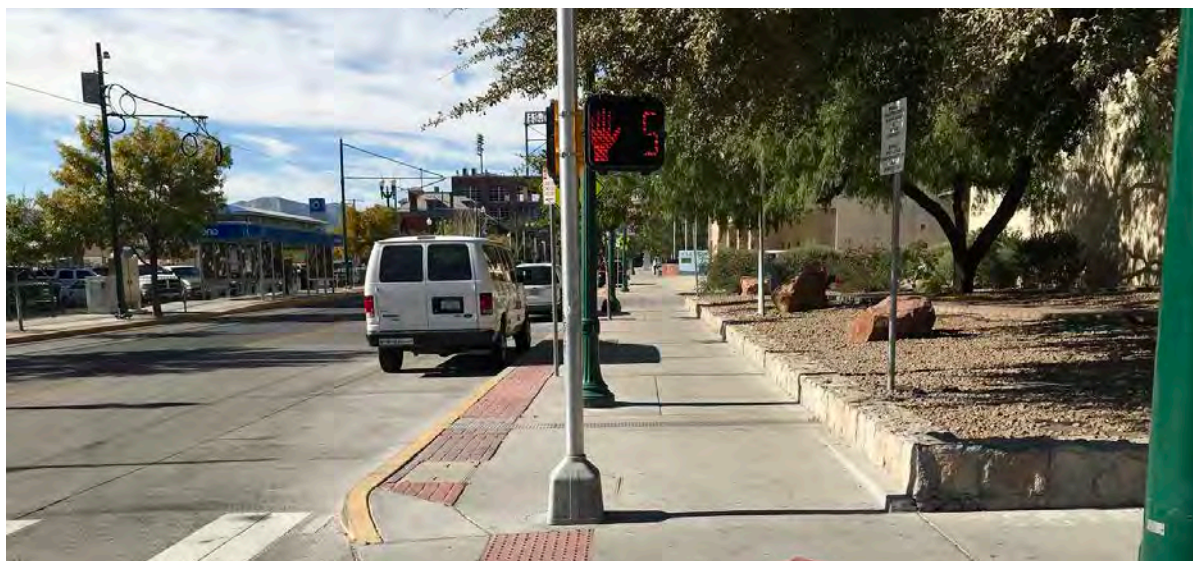
CHARACTER

The Downtown area is characterized primarily by a highly urban context as it transitions from the UTEP campus toward the Downtown core. Gridded street patterns, compact neighborhoods, and a dense urban environment, as well as an array of attractions and amenities like museums, international marketplaces, iconic plazas, and vibrant murals, make this area the heart of the PDN Trail. Although the dense fabric also precludes development of any new off-street trail facilities, the very urban nature of the area invites passersby to experience it at the street level. To that end, several options for different loops are presented, to provide users with opportunities to experience the city and its International District at a variety of levels. Wayfinding will be critical to direct trail users to and through the various loops and options available to them.



El Paso's Downtown offers many pedestrian amenities.





The Downtown alignment will utilize existing streets and sidewalks.



Downtown's International District has an active street front.



Downtown has many transit connections.



As the trail leaves the Downtown core, it will follow ditch roads again.



POINTS OF INTEREST - DOWNTOWN

MURALS



The Downtown area offers an array of attractions, museums, and cultural sites within a small area. Famous for its historic neighborhoods, plazas, marketplaces, and murals, the Downtown core is a major anchor for the PDN Trail. The walking trail proposed in this section will link several of El Paso's most famous murals.

SOUTHWEST UNIVERSITY PARK



This baseball stadium home to the El Paso Chihuahuas is located in the heart of Downtown. The PDN Trail will provide pedestrian and bicycle access to the games and events held here.

EL PASO MUSEUM OF HISTORY DIGITAL WALL



Located at the entrance of the El Paso Museum of History, the 3-D Digital Wall is a vast collection of images and videos exploring El Paso's past and present. It showcases El Paso's people and its many cultures on giant 3-D touch-sensitive screens.

SAN JACINTO PLAZA



This historic park is located on the corner of Oregon Street and Mills Avenue at the center of Downtown. A fiberglass sculpture by Luis Jiménez honors the city's colorful past when real alligators graced San Jacinto Plaza.

SEGUNDO BARRIO MARKETS



El Segundo Barrio is among the oldest neighborhoods in El Paso County, and is considered the birthplace of the Chicano movement in West Texas. Historic murals decorate local businesses and residences throughout the barrio and recount the neighborhood's history— from agrarian past to urban present.





IL International Loop

The International Loop is intended to become a unique tourist attraction allowing visitors to visit both sides of the border between the United States and Mexico and creating an international trail experience. This loop will be comprised of alignments on both sides of the border—the Downtown El Paso Loop on the United State's side and the Juárez Loop on Mexico's side.

The loop will link the Chamizal monuments in both Texas and Mexico, commemorating the Chamizal border agreement at its eastern edge. The loop will also connect many other attractions making it easy to walk to numerous destinations (see Map 22). On the Mexican side, it will pass Gran Plaza Juan Gabriel, Campo Don Guillermo "Chucus" Olascoaga sports complex, Benito Juárez Stadium, and connections to various plazas and markets. On the American side, it will overlap with segments of the Downtown/Chihuahuita Walking Loop (described on page 82) and pass El Paso Museum of History, El Paso Museum of Art, Southwest University Park stadium, and El Paso Convention and Performing Arts Center.

The International Loop will provide opportunities for trail users to cross the border at two points—the Santa Fe Bridge and the Bridge of the Americas. The Santa Fe Bridge, no longer located on Santa Fe Street, connects El Paso Street in El Paso to Avenida Benito Juárez in Juárez. Together these streets combine to form the Paseo de las Luces corridor. The loop then follows Avenida Ingeniero David Herrera Jordan into Ciudad Juárez, Mexico and follows the Rio Grande corridor south through the Parque el Chamizal. It then crosses back over the border into the United States via the Bridge of the Americas, where it passes through the Chamizal National Memorial in El Paso and next to Magoffin Home State Historic Site.

MAP 22. INTERNATIONAL LOOP MAP

POINTS OF INTEREST - INTERNATIONAL LOOP

CHAMIZAL NATIONAL MEMORIAL (U.S.)



This 55-acre memorial park honors the peaceful resolution of the Chamizal Dispute—a century-long border dispute between the United States and Mexico that arose when flooding caused the Rio Grande to change its course between the cities of El Paso and Ciudad Juárez. The site serves as a cultural center containing a museum, art galleries, an indoor theater, an outdoor amphitheater, and soft-surfaced hike and bike trails throughout the park.

PARQUE EL CHAMIZAL (MEXICO)



Also in honor of the resolution of the Chamizal Dispute, a 220-acre memorial park, Parque Público Federal 'El Chamizal,' was created on the Mexican side of the international boundary.

MAGOFFIN HOME STATE HISTORIC SITE (U.S.)



Magoffin Home State Historic Site explores the stories of a multicultural family who actively participated in United States expansion and settlement, military service, trade on the Santa Fe–Chihuahua Trail, Civil War turmoil and United States–Mexico relations. The 1875 home is a prime example of Territorial style architecture.

LA EQUIS (MEXICO)



The International Loop will run through Parque El Chamizal in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico and provide a view of "La Equis" or 'The X', a sculpture representing the integration of Spanish and Aztec cultures.

PASEO DE LAS LUCES 'PROMENADE OF THE LIGHTS' (U.S.)



Based on a concept dating from the 1980s, this corridor intended to create closer ties between the Downtown areas of El Paso and Juárez and celebrate the area's heritage. It is moving closer to fulfilling its original intent. Currently marked with blue signs denoting the corridor, it received new life in the form of a \$6.4 million investment approved by the El Paso City Council in early 2018.

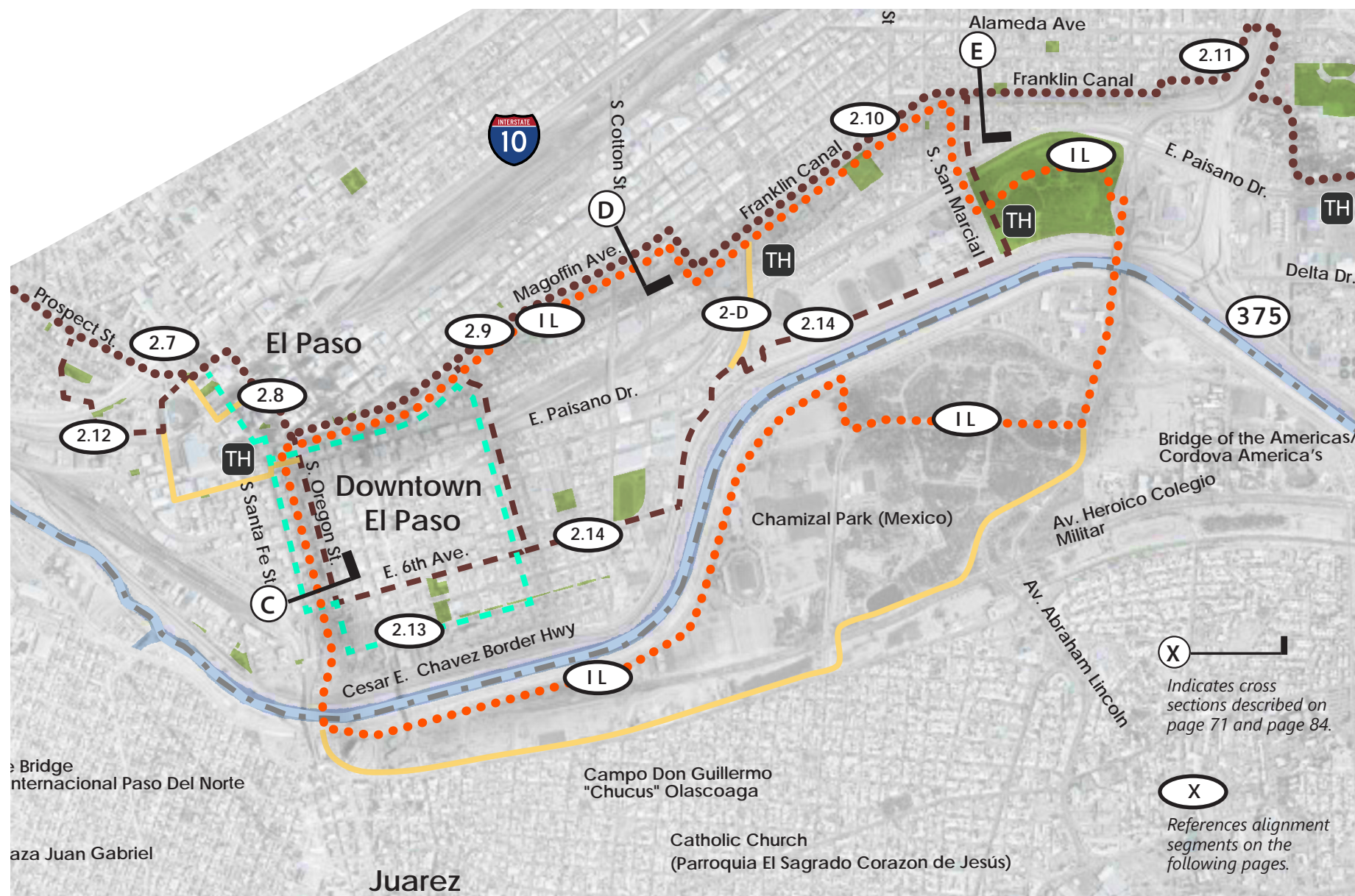
ESTADIO OLIMPICO BENITO JUAREZ SOCCER STADIUM (MEXICO)



Estadio Olímpico Benito Juárez Soccer Stadium in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico is a multi-purpose stadium home of Fútbol Club Juárez and is used mostly for soccer matches and concerts. This popular destination will be accessed via the International Loop to serve both Juárez and El Paso.



See Map 21 for overall region alignments and legend.



MAP 23. DOWNTOWN SUB-DISTRICT KEY MAP

TRAIL CONNECTIVITY

PRIMARY ALIGNMENTS

2.7 Prospect Street – Interstate 10 to Santa Fe Street (Existing On-Street)

Continuing from the UTEP sub-district, this existing on-street facility crosses Interstate 10 and continues to the intersection with North Santa Fe Street across from Cavalryman Triangle Park. Both sides of the two-way street have existing striped bike lanes. An important consideration for this segment is the unknown future for the bridge crossing Interstate 10. TxDOT is currently considering removal of the of the bridge as one of several options for reconfiguring roadways in the area. If removed, this may be an opportunity to construct a new (and potentially noteworthy) pedestrian bridge that spans Interstate 10 at that same location. Additionally, if the current bridge remains, there is opportunity to add signage or additional graphic enhancements to identity it as part of the PDN Trail.

2.8 Missouri Avenue – Oregon Street Segment (Proposed On-Street)

Beginning at the intersection of Prospect and Santa Fe streets, the trail will jog south along Santa Fe Street approximately 150 feet to Missouri Avenue, where it will turn east for two blocks to Oregon Street. It will then follow Oregon Street south, passing San Jacinto Plaza, until it intersects with San Antonio Avenue. The Prospect/Santa Fe intersection is somewhat tricky, given the odd angle and the proximity to the Missouri Avenue intersection just to the south. Given that complexity, rather than directing cyclists through those intersections on the roadway, it might be

preferable to utilize the wide (approximately 15 feet) sidewalk on the west side of Santa Fe Street to make the short connection to Missouri Avenue. This area has been upgraded for heavy pedestrian use due to its proximity to Southwest University Park, the stadium where the El Paso Chihuahuas play.

Missouri Avenue presents another challenge, in that it is a one-way street with westbound traffic, only. The roadway currently accommodates two travel lanes and parallel parking on both sides. The preferred configuration for accommodating the RGT would be to eliminate the parking on one side of the street and add a buffered **two-way cycle track** on the south side of the road. If the addition of the cycle track option is not approved, the alternative would be to create a one-way bike lane loop using Santa Fe Street and Main Drive as the southbound and eastbound legs, and Oregon Street and Missouri Avenue as the northbound and westbound legs.

2.9 San Antonio Avenue – Magoffin Avenue Segment (Proposed On-Street)

From Oregon Street, the alignment would turn east on San Antonio Avenue, jog south for five blocks, and then angle northeast onto the less heavily trafficked Magoffin Avenue. It would follow Magoffin Avenue for another ten blocks, passing the Magoffin Home State Historical Park and crossing an abandoned railroad spur just before jogging south for two block on Lee Street to rejoin on San Antonio Avenue. The paved portion of San Antonio Avenue ends after one block at Dallas Street; however, the trail would continue through the San Antonio right-of-way until intersection with another set of railroad tracks and the Franklin Canal.

2.10 Franklin Canal - Dallas Street to US Route 54 (Proposed Shared-Use Trail)

Beginning at the convergence of the San Antonio right-of-way, Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad track, and the Franklin Canal, the trail will run east along the north bank of the Franklin Canal approximately one and a quarter-mile to the point where the canal dives underground at the US Route 54 (Patriot Freeway) interchange. This reach of the canal is highly urbanized and confined on both sides by fences with residential lots just beyond. It is also elevated above the surrounding land through most of the reach, and has multiple ramped road crossings that will complicate construction of the trail.

2.11 Franklin Canal Detour – US Route 54 Undercrossing (Proposed Shared-Use Trail)

Since the Franklin Canal passes under US Route 54 in a culvert, the trail will follow the freeway embankment around the edge of the Zavala Elementary School property (which will require coordination with the school to reconfigure a corner of their parking lot) to Alameda Avenue, where it will cross under the highway, and then follow the east side of Gateway Boulevard back to the Franklin Canal. This alignment continues in the Zoo/Playa Drain District.



LOOP ALIGNMENTS

2.12 **Sunset Heights Loop (Proposed On-Street)**

This route will serve as both a loop and an alternate route or shortcut to get across Interstate 10, especially in the event that the Prospect Street freeway crossing is removed. The alignment diverges from Prospect Street at Los Angeles Drive, passes John Karr Park, and crosses Interstate 10 via an underpass on Missouri Avenue/Franklin Avenue to connect directly with the Downtown core west of the Southwest University Park stadium. At that point it turns south to follow the colorful pedestrian path along Durango Street, and then east along Overland Avenue to reconnect with the primary alignment on Oregon Street. The loop runs through the Sunset Heights neighborhood and will serve as a connection to this area.

2.13 **Downtown/Chihuahueta Walking Loop (Existing Pedestrian Paths/On-Street Sidewalks)**

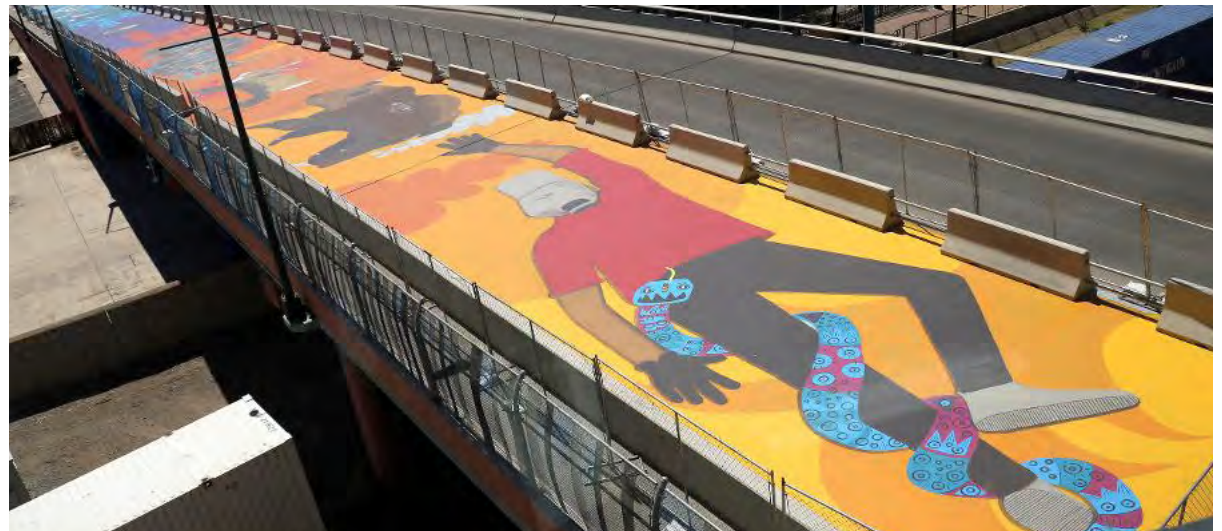
In order to better showcase El Paso's vibrant Downtown, a separate walking trail has been proposed that will provide linkages to numerous parks, schools, and cultural centers, as well as offer visitors a sampling of many of the historic neighborhoods in Downtown. Beginning at the intersection of Missouri Avenue and El Paso Street, the walking loop would take advantage of the mid-block pedestrian path that winds between the Main Library and the History Museum, passing Cleveland Square Park before rejoining El Paso Street for a block and crossing over the depressed Union Pacific Railroad tracks. At Main Drive the route again becomes an off-street pedestrian corridor that passes the El Paso Museum of Art, the Plaza Theater, and Pioneer Plaza. The route rejoins El Paso Street yet again, and continues

south through an area rich with classic border shops and markets, before turning east on 6th Avenue, just before the Santa Fe International Bridge. From 6th Avenue the walking trail jogs south two blocks to Olivas V Aoy Avenue/8th Avenue, at which point it heads east past Armijo Park, Library, and Recreation Center, and through the Avenue's medians—a linear park containing the Paseo de los Heros Park. At Saint Vrain Street, the route turns north for nine blocks, crossing the BNSF rail yards before jogging west at San Antonio Avenue to Virginia Street, where it rejoins the primary alignment along Magoffin Avenue.

2.14 **6th Avenue – Border Highway Loop (Proposed On-Street/Funded Shared-Use Trail)**

From the Oregon Street/San Antonio Avenue intersection, an alternate loop route can take trail users deeper into the international district, while providing access to more schools. It takes

advantage of a shared-use trail that is being planned by TxDOT. The loop continues south along Oregon Street as an on-street/sidewalk facility, and turns east on 6th Avenue, passing the La Fe Preparatory School and the Boys & Girls Club of El Paso to the Cotton Street/Nino Aguilera Street intersection. The trail would continue past the track and soccer field at Guillen Middle School along the west side of the Cesar Chavez Border Highway. Here TxDOT has planned a new shared-use trail in conjunction with the construction of a new grade-separated roadway bridge at Delta Drive and the BNSF railroad tracks, which will connect Guillen Middle School to Bowie High School and Chamizal National Memorial. From the Chamizal Memorial, the alignment would again become an on-street facility following San Marcial Street north to join the primary alignment along the Franklin Canal. A small existing pedestrian bridge would facilitate crossing of the canal to join the trail on the north side of the canal.



Durango Street Bridge Walkway

Source: El Paso Chihuahuas



SPUR TRAILS

2-D Rail Trail Spur (Proposed Shared-Use Trail)

A proposed trail would follow the existing railway line from the planned TxDOT Border Highway Trail along the BNSF railroad corridor west of Bowie High School north to the primary alignment along Alameda Avenue. Future extensions could take it through the Union Pacific yards south of Interstate 10 and all the way north to Memorial Park. This would be a long-term connection, as these railroad tracks are still used by the railroads.

TRAILHEADS AND PUBLIC TRANSIT

Downtown/San Jacinto Plaza Trailhead (Proposed)

Although parking options would be limited, a potential trailhead located adjacent to the plaza or in adjacent Downtown parking garages could provide bicycle parking for users of the PDN Trail and provide an opportunity to visit to Downtown or to attend events in the plaza. Signage and information kiosks would enhance its usability for this purpose.

San Antonio Trailhead at Franklin Canal (Proposed)

Although currently being used for trailer storage related to the recycling operation next door, there appears to be adequate room for a potential trailhead where Franklin Canal crosses the San Antonio Avenue right-of-way.

San Antonio Avenue/Stevens Street Trailhead (Proposed)

An empty lot on the south side of the Franklin

Canal at the Stevens Street on-ramp to the Interstate 110 frontage road could provide another opportunity for a trailhead parking area. Although Stevens Street becomes one-way southbound at the canal, the lot is also accessible from the east end of San Antonio Avenue, just before it dead-ends at the freeway embankment.

Chamizal National Memorial Trailhead (Existing Parking Lot)

The existing parking area in the park provides ready access to the trails within Chamizal National Memorial, which in turn connect to the proposed loop route along San Marcial Street. Information kiosks with trail signage and border crossing information could be added to facilitate the International Loop.

Bus Stops

Several bus stops are located at regular intervals along Oregon Street, San Antonio Avenue, and Magoffin Avenue. Although no stops are located along the Franklin Canal, there are two stops near the east end of this trail section's reach—one near the proposed San Antonio Avenue/Stevens Street trailhead, and one along the trail detour up to Alameda Avenue. Other bus stops are located throughout Downtown within easy walking distance of the various loop trail alignments.

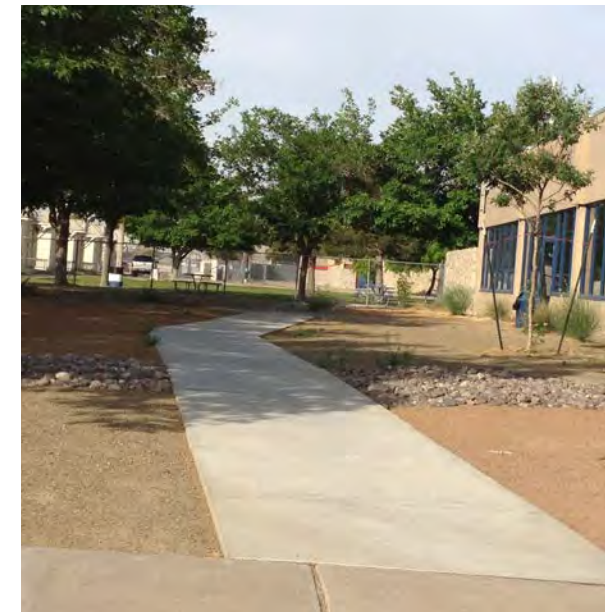
Bert Williams Downtown Santa Fe Transfer Center

Located on Santa Fe Street between 3rd and 4th avenues, this public transportation hub serves Downtown and is just a block from the proposed Downtown/Chihuahueta Walking Loop.

NEARBY SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTIONS

Schools in walking distance include:

- Texas Tech College of Architecture
- La Fe Preparatory School
- Aoy Elementary School
- Hart Elementary School
- Vista Hills Elementary School
- San Jacinto Adult Learning Center
- Guillen Middle School
- Douglass Elementary School
- Beall Elementary School
- Bowie High School
- Zavala Elementary School
- Lydia Patterson Institute



Bowie High School



TYOLOGIES – DOWNTOWN

Two-way Street with Designated Bike Lanes and Parallel Parking: Conventional bike lanes provide a striped lane for bicycle traffic while maintaining existing vehicle movement and parking. For a higher level of safety, these lanes can be widened and/or a buffer can be added to provide additional distance or physical barriers between bicycles and moving vehicles. Buffers can be in the form of flexible bollards or raised curbs; however, these buffers would not be possible in conjunction with on-street parking, such as along Prospect Street. Pedestrian access is accommodated through the use of adjacent sidewalks, which may require some improvements to meet ADA accessibility requirements.

Two-way Protected Cycle Track: A two-way cycle track is a physically separated on-street path that allows bicycle movement in both directions along one side of a road. Two-way cycle tracks share some of the same design characteristics as one-way bike lanes, but may require additional considerations at driveway and side street crossings, where drivers turning onto the street may only be looking in one direction. As with bike lanes, sidewalks typically provide pedestrian access along streets with cycle tracks.

Shared-Use Path on Urban Canal: As with other shared-use paths, a ten- to twelve-foot wide paved trail can accommodate multiple uses comfortably. Since the ditch banks are also used by maintenance vehicles, coordination with the maintaining agency would be required to determine whether maintenance can be done from one side of the ditch, reserving the other side for trail use, or whether the paved trail surface will also need to be able to withstand maintenance vehicular traffic. In either case, the unpaved ditch bank opposite the trail can provide an alternative for runners or other trail users who prefer a softer surface.

Typical cross sections indicated by letters on previous maps.

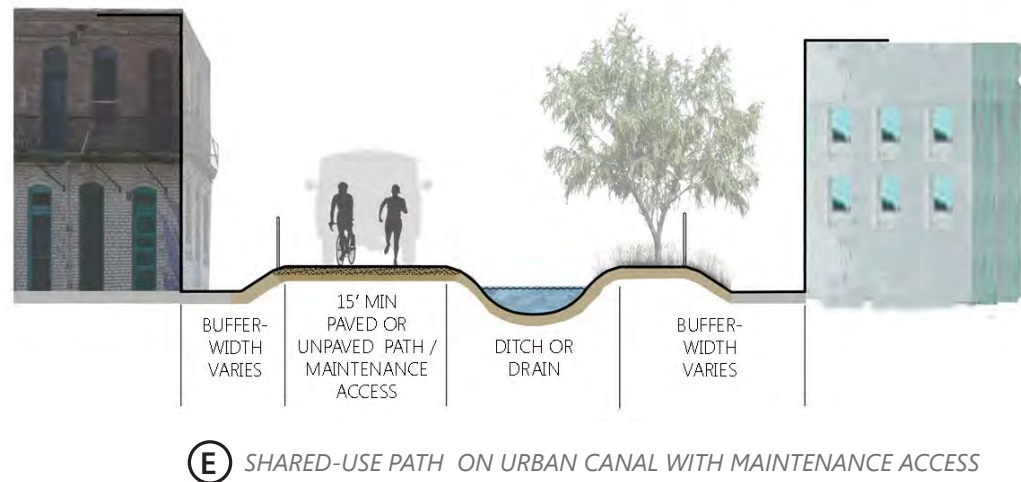
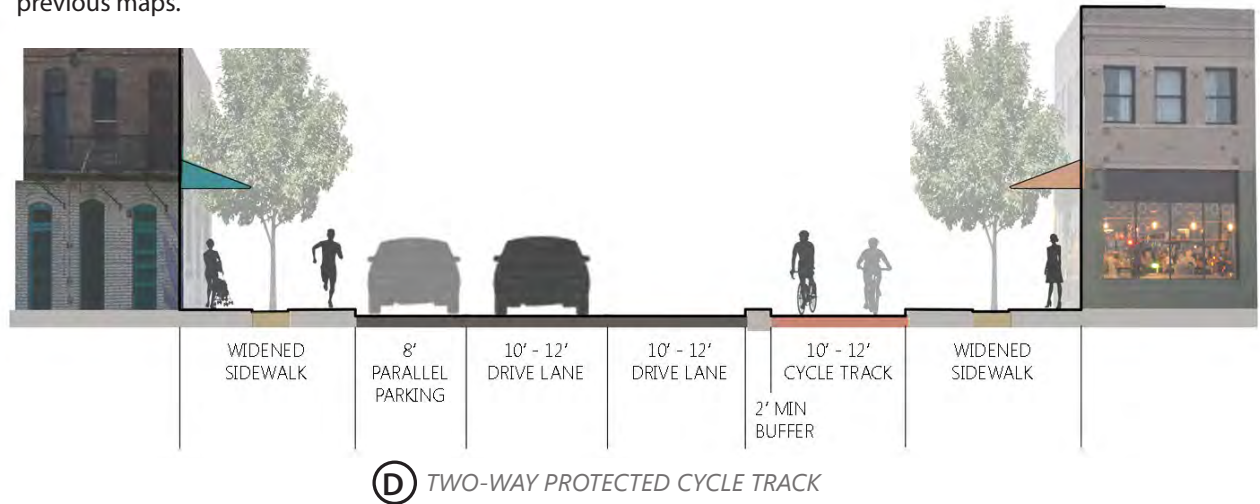


FIGURE 16. TYPICAL CROSS SECTIONS D & E – DOWNTOWN



TRAIL ENHANCEMENTS



Crosswalks and pedestrian paths offer opportunities for local artistic expression.



Colorful overlays call attention to bike lanes.



A Downtown Walking Loop will provide a taste of El Paso's international flavor.



Murals can add to the local character.



There will be opportunities for parklets along the trail.

