

# ABQ CiQlovía: A Brief Synopsis and Analysis of the First Open Streets Event in Albuquerque, New Mexico



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Bernalillo County

Harwood Art Center

Bike ABQ

New Mexico Complete Streets Coalition

Acción

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## **I. Introduction**

On Sunday, September 21, 2014, Albuquerque successfully hosted its first open streets event, lovingly branded as ABQ CiQlovía. The event was combined with the existing Carnuel Road Parade and Fiesta, a project of the Harwood Art Center. Together, the parade and ABQ CiQlovía attracted over 4,700 people who walked, biked and played in the streets of downtown Albuquerque. People not only walked and biked, but also participated in yoga, listened to live bands, watched acrobats perform, ate from local food trucks and rubbed elbows with their neighbors.

ABQ CiQlovía achieved all of the goals set out by the ABQ CiQlovía Planning Committee (Committee). These goals included language about health and wellness, increased awareness of cycling and walking and attracting a wide variety of sponsors and partners to the event. In each of these categories, ABQ CiQlovía exceeded expectations and the participant response was overwhelmingly positive.

This report will discuss how ABQ CiQlovía came to be and will provide a brief overview about the event's strengths and weaknesses as well as findings and recommendations to continue this event.

### **A. What are Open Streets?**

Open streets are streets closed off to vehicular traffic and opened up to people on foot and bicycle to walk, bike and play. An open streets event is held at a designated time in which street(s) are closed and opened up for these types of activities. Open streets events began in the 1960s and 1970s in both South and North America. In the 1960s, Seattle, Washington, began closing a three-mile stretch of Lake Washington Boulevard to vehicles and opening it up for bicyclists to enjoy riding every Sunday. This three-mile stretch connects three parks and skirts Lake Washington. These "Seattle Bicycle Sunday" events inspired other North American cities to do the same around their parks and parkways and were among the earliest "Open Streets" events.

Not long after Seattle had success with its open streets initiative, Bogota, Columbia, independently began its own version of open streets. In the 1970s, Bogota, was a major city overrun with traffic congestion, poverty and pollution. In an effort to address these major concerns, the mayor during that era, Enrique Peñalosa, decided several miles of city streets could be closed to motor vehicles every Sunday to allow all citizens the opportunity to walk, bike and play freely in the streets. This event was known as ciclovía, which translates to "bicycle path" in Spanish. Bogota's ciclovía continues on today and is held weekly.

While these events continuously reoccurred, the movement stagnated for several years until the last few decades when open streets became very popular throughout North and South America. Several different cities led this movement and put their own spin on what to call it. For example, Los Angeles created CicLAvia, an incredibly successful open streets event that attracts an average of 100,000 people<sup>i</sup>. Cyclovia Tucson attracted over 20,000 people to its April 2014 event, which marked continued growth in attendance and economic impact for the city<sup>ii</sup>. This large expansion of open streets events across the world led to the creation of the Open Streets Project, which catalogues open streets efforts and events. It also provides guidebooks, case studies and information about how to implement and create an open streets event. Here is the open streets event project website:

<http://openstreetsproject.org/about/about-benefits-of-open-streets/>. This website provided the Committee with very valuable tools and recommendations throughout the planning process of ABQ CiQlovía.

Today, there are over 100 open streets events or ciclovías across the world and cities are using these events to highlight the need to reprioritize bicycle and pedestrian needs in our built environments.

## B. How do Open Streets fit in with Albuquerque, NM?



*Figure 1: An image of sprawling development on the west side of the Rio Grande in New Mexico. Image: Wikimedia Commons photo by Brady Salazar.*

Albuquerque is the most populous city in New Mexico. The metro area contains almost one million people, which makes the city a dominant regional power. Like many other American cities, Albuquerque was historically small, but around World War II, the population increased dramatically. Between 1940 and 1950, the population of Albuquerque increased by almost 200 percent (US Census). As a result of the timing of this rapid population increase, a significant portion of city development centered on auto-oriented design, which created low-density, sprawling patterns that are by and large only accessible by vehicle<sup>iii</sup>. Due to this development pattern, walking and biking as viable modes of transportation in

Albuquerque are generally impractical because of the vast distances between activity and employment centers and low density, single-use developments.

In the past few decades, national trends are creating stronger demand for neighborhoods where people can live, work and play without having to drive<sup>iv</sup>. A large component of these types of communities is livability, quality of life, and importantly viable and attractive transportation options. Providing transportation options plays a critical piece in not only creating great new places, but also improving existing communities. And so, there has been a shift in the United States to looking at active modes of transportation to improve community health, creating a greater sense of place, improving air quality, and importantly attracting new business and growing local economies. Even the United States Department of Transportation, Housing and Urban Development and Environmental Protection Agency partnered in 2009, in an effort to break government silos and work together to create the Partnership for Livable Communities. This initiative focuses on six livability principles that target creating neighborhoods and communities where people can live, work and play without necessarily having to drive.



*Figure 2: Nob Hill, Albuquerque- during Summerfest, an annual street party. Image from Albuquerque Journal*

In recent years, the City of Albuquerque acknowledged the importance of improved walking, cycling and transit infrastructure to attract economic development opportunities. These assets are also important to allow Baby Boomers to safely and comfortably age in place and also to attract young educated Millennials. Currently, there are a number of exciting projects being cultivated in Albuquerque, which will only elevate Albuquerque as a place where it's possible to live in neighborhoods where you can live, work and play without having to drive.

For example, the creative and potentially transformative Innovate ABQ project will reimagine a neglected portion of Downtown Albuquerque into a major activity, employment and residential hub. Additionally, the City is working toward implementing Albuquerque Rapid Transit (ART), Albuquerque's version of bus rapid transit (BRT)<sup>v</sup>. It's also important to note that the City of Albuquerque is currently finalizing a Complete Streets ordinance. It has received broad support from organizations such as the Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce, the Mid-Region Council of Governments and the New Mexico Chapter of the Association of Landscape Architects among other organizations. Complete streets have similar goals as ABQ CiQlovía. In addition, 2015 will see the launch of a small pilot bike share system in downtown Albuquerque. Other local entities are working on a large scale regional bike share system as well. All of these major projects and several others will lead to major improvements for pedestrians, cyclists and transit users city-wide.

### **C. Cycling and Walking in Albuquerque Today**

Since the 1970s, the City of Albuquerque has been incrementally developing a network of sidewalks, bike lanes, bike routes and multiuse paths. As of 2014, there are over 620 miles of bikeways and multiuse trails (55 percent on-street bike facilities and 45 percent multi-use trails) in our city<sup>vi</sup> (See figure 3 for a map of existing facilities). While Albuquerque ranks highly among other US cities with its bicycle facilities, many of our facilities do not effectively connect with each other or with prominent local destinations.



Figure 3: A portion of the extensive bikeway and trail network found in Albuquerque.

BikeABQ, Bike Burque, the Duke City Wheelmen, the Greater Albuquerque Recreational Trails Committee (GARTC) and the Greater Albuquerque Bicycling Advisory Committee (GABAC) lead cycling advocacy in Albuquerque. Currently, these organizations have limited influence and unfortunately do not communicate effectively with each other. Also, Albuquerque recently dropped in the national standings of bicycle friendliness. Over 53 American cities have been moving forward rapidly with “European style” infrastructure, such as protected bicycle lanes or cycle tracks, while Albuquerque has yet to join this movement<sup>vii</sup>. For example, Tucson, AZ, recently implemented its first bollard protected bicycle lane. Denver, CO, has built many miles of protected, green painted cycling infrastructure through its downtown and Austin, TX, has followed suit.

On street cycling facilities connect multiuse trail networks and neighborhoods to important destinations, which are most often found on major arterials. They are an important part of a comprehensive cycling network. If Albuquerque wants to move back to the top ranks for bicycle friendliness, it must build more cycling infrastructure and better connections between on street and multi-use facilities and key destinations.

## Four Types of Cyclists By Proportion of Population



Source - Portland, OR DOT

Figure 4: Four Types of Cyclists by Proportion of Population

While the length of Albuquerque's network is impressive, its design does not facilitate the bicycle as a viable mode of transportation for the average person. For example, research from Portland, Oregon, (Figure 4) found that 60 percent of the population is interested in bicycling, but intimidated for a number of reasons. This 60 percent will likely never be comfortable riding in a bike lane next to fast moving traffic, so bike infrastructure needs to identify other types of bicycle facilities such as protected bike lanes to entice this 60 percent to consider bicycling as a mode of transportation.

### D. How did ABQ CiQlovía Happen?

While Albuquerque's bike infrastructures needs improvement, there are still a significant percentage of people who commute and travel by bicycle, but additional energy and momentum will be needed to improve existing conditions. An event like a ciclovía can help to catalyze groups toward efforts to improve the multimodal transportation system.

One group working toward these efforts is the New Mexico Complete Streets Leadership Team (NMCSLT). This organization is composed of public health and transportation planning professionals as well as interested and passionate citizens throughout the state advocating for safer pedestrian and bicycling environments. Complete Streets are designed to safely and conveniently accommodate all street users: bicyclists, people on foot, transit users and motorists<sup>viii</sup>. NMCSLT developed an action plan for implementing Complete Streets throughout New Mexico. The action plan includes four focus areas:

- Education
- Policy
- Funding
- Plan, Design and Construct

NMCSLT's activities are guided by these areas of the action plan. Planning and implementing a ciclovía in Albuquerque was a critical component to the education task in the action plan. In November 2013, NMCSLT member Dan Majewski came forward as an interested event organizer. After presenting his vision of the event to the NMCSLT, Dan was encouraged to move forward with ABQ CiQlovía. NMCSLT members Valerie Hermanson and Tara Cok stepped up to assist Dan with planning and implementing ABQ CiQlovía and so, the ABQ CiQlovía Planning Committee was born.

While the main members of the Committee consisted of Dan, Valerie and Tara, throughout the planning process other interested professionals and volunteers assisted in realizing the event and helped where

they could. Since no one in the group had planned an event like this before, the process was filled with many challenges including but not limited to:

- A complex city permitting process
- Funding
- Fundraising
- Marketing
- Coordinating with over 100 different entities and organizations

However, the process was also very rewarding and the event itself was a huge success. The ABQ CiQlovía Planning Committee developed strong partnerships with a myriad of different individuals and organizations.

#### E. ABQ CiQlovía Route Location



Figure 5: The final 2014 ABQ CiQlovía route

There were several different iterations of the ABQ CiQlovía route. The final ABQ CiQlovía went through Old Town, Downtown, Wells Park, the Country Club and Raynolds Addition neighborhoods. This route was chosen for a number of reasons:

**1) Existing support** –Streets in these neighborhoods are frequently closed for citywide events. These neighborhoods, according to Walk Score, are generally more walkable and bikable than other neighborhoods in Albuquerque. People in these neighborhoods are open to an event that featured walking and biking.

**2) Potential partners** – The success of ABQ CiQlovía can be credited, partially, to the Carnuel Road Parade and Fiesta. This existing event, which includes a parade down Mountain Rd, combined forces with CiQlovía to create one massive event. The parade organizers programmed a significant portion of the route, making the whole planning process easier. The Harwood Art Center was very involved with this event and they were vital to the event's success. Other partners which emerged along the route included the Downtown Neighborhood Association, Levitated Toy Factory, the Downtown Action Team and many more shown below.



Figure 6: ABQ CiQlovía 2014 partners

**3) Existing city plans and infrastructure** – The 2014 ABQ CiQlovía route primarily followed two existing bicycle boulevards along Mountain Road and 14<sup>th</sup> Street. Closing the streets to vehicular traffic provided an opportunity to demonstrate how bicycle friendly facility design can create safer environments for both pedestrians and cyclists.

In addition, these bicycle boulevards are part of the proposed 50 Mile Loop, which is Mayor Berry's plan to connect existing multi-use facilities in Albuquerque in a 50-mile long facility. This plan would include improvements to existing facilities as well as some new crossings and trails. Another critical component of the ABQ CiQlovía route included a direct connection to the Bosque Trail, which is a heavily used bicycle facility in the region. This connection attracted people to the event who might not have otherwise heard about it.

**4) City support** – The ABQ CiQlovía route went through several different drafts and iterations. The final route had to be signed off by multiple City departments, resulting in some unexpected last minute changes. The final route received approval from the City, the neighborhood organizations and all other partners.

**5) Manageable length** – The original route was four miles long, but the final route was two miles. Four miles would have been an overwhelming distance to not only coordinate, but also to fill with programming. Since this was an inaugural event, the Committee wanted to ensure its success so that it could continue into future years. Additionally, two miles is a distance that could be easily cycled and/or walked.

## II. Methodology

### A. Goals, Objectives & Performance Measures

This section provides the goals, objectives and performance measures developed to assess success of Albuquerque's first open streets event. The ABQ CiQlovía Planning Committee developed achievable, measurable goals and objectives that could be transferable to future ABQ CiQlovía events in other neighborhoods.

Table 1: ABQ CiQlovía Planning Committee's Goals, Objectives and Performance Measures

Goal 1: Identify project partners and sponsors to be engaged in planning CiQlovía	
Objective	Secure a minimum of one of each: advocacy group, city representative, local business and community representative
Performance Measure	Securing one of each in objective
Goal 2: Provide a free public event affordable for all Burqueños	
Objective	Plan, develop and promote a free CiQlovía event for a minimum of 1,000 people
Performance Measure	Field counts observation
Goal 3: Promote and increase awareness for cycling and walking as an acceptable and safe mode of travel on Albuquerque's streets	
Objective	At the end of CiQlovía, at least 100 people will report increasing their awareness of active transportation opportunities
Performance Measures	Survey, testimonials, reactions during and after event
Goal 4: Increase the health and activity of Albuquerque residents	
Objective	At least 100 people walking and biking
Performance Measure	Field counts, survey, testimonials, reactions during and after event

### B. ABQ CiQlovía Attendance Counts

Accurately capturing the total number of participants at the ABQ CiQlovía was a difficult task because event participants are constantly moving. In addition, not all event participants arrived or departed from the same location since there were several event entry and exit points. These difficulties were not only faced by ABQ CiQlovía, but also by other ciclovías around the world. Understanding this difficulty ahead of time, the ABQ CiQlovía Planning Committee coordinated with the Mid-Region Council of Governments (MRCOG) in Albuquerque, NM, to identify the best method to collect bicycle and pedestrian counts. Since MRCOG serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Albuquerque metropolitan region, the organization already has access to traffic counting techniques. The ABQ CiQlovía Planning Committee and MRCOG decided that traffic cameras mounted at different points along the route would serve as the most reliable and efficient way to track the number of pedestrians and bicyclists at the event.

There were two primary nodes of activity at the event where programming occurred. The Mary Fox Park was one node and the Tiguex Park area was the second node, so it was decided two cameras would be best to track participant movement near each activity node. Since the route is shaped like an "L," two cameras, one on each leg, could monitor participant movement.



*Figure 7: Aerial view of camera one.*

MRCOG installed two (2) traffic cameras mounted on roadway signage along the event route on Friday, September 19, 2014. One camera was installed looking north on 14<sup>th</sup> Street (Figure 7). This camera tracked all vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists that moved along 14<sup>th</sup> Street north to south and south to north.

The second camera was installed looking east on Mountain Road (Figure 8). This camera tracked all vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists that moved along Mountain east to west and west to east.



*Figure 8: Aerial view of camera two.*

After the event, recorded videos were downloaded onto computers. Team members reviewed the video recordings of the event and manually tabulated pedestrians, bicyclists, rollerbladers, scooters or other modes seen within the video on a spreadsheet. However, the number manually collected through the videos does not necessarily represent unique individuals because pedestrians and bicyclists could have passed in front of the cameras multiple times. Thus, in some counting methodologies, the numbers take into account this potential "double counting."

The ABQ CiQlovía Planning Committee decided to not to reduce the number of cyclists by a specific percentage to account for double counting since there is no agreed upon percentage reduction commonly used in event counting methodologies. Since traveling the route on foot is time consuming, pedestrian counts were not reduced either.

#### C. Surveys

The ABQ Planning Committee designed and administered an 11-question survey after the September 21, 2014, event to collect relevant information to evaluate how the ciclovía was received. There were a total of 78 survey respondents.

#### D. Carnuel Road Parade & Buddy Walk

As mentioned previously, the ABQ CiQlovía partnered with the Carnuel Road Parade and Buddy Walk. The Carnuel Road Parade made estimates of the number of people in the parade based on the number of volunteers, staff, floats and others who signed up to be part of the parade portion of the event. Also, a buddy walk was part of the parade and participants had to register to participate in this portion. Based on these two events within ABQ CiQlovía, the Team was able to better create an estimate of the total number of people present at the event.

#### E. Facebook feedback

The ABQ CiQlovía Planning Committee tracked Facebook feedback that was left on the ABQ CiQlovía Facebook page and the event page. Comments left on the CiQlovía Facebook page or posted independently on the page were copied and pasted into an Excel spreadsheet.

#### F. Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats (SWOT) analysis

After the event, the Committee convened volunteers and other participants who played a critical role in planning and coordinating the event. The Committee led the meeting to conduct an analysis about the event's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, which is also known as a SWOT analysis. Information for the SWOT analysis enabled the team to identify what worked at the event and areas for improvement at future events.



Figure 9: Installing camera one.

Table 2: SWOT Analysis

Internal	Strengths	Weaknesses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smiles, happy people</li> <li>• People felt safe (barriers and flaggers, volunteers along route were good)</li> <li>• Combining with the Carnuel Road Parade was a huge asset</li> <li>• Branding – great logo</li> <li>• Anchor points – activity in the parks</li> <li>• Pop-up bike lane demonstration</li> <li>• Great volunteer support</li> <li>• Positive use of law enforcement – created warm fuzzies</li> <li>• People from variety of areas helping at the event</li> <li>• A lot of people signed up for more information and when this will happen again</li> <li>• People enthusiastic</li> <li>• Great bands and artists</li> <li>• It happened</li> <li>• Tons of support – excited partners</li> <li>• Drones</li> <li>• Outreach</li> <li>• Zumba/yoga</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area with no barricades led to a lot of confusion</li> <li>• Lack of buy in with flaggers</li> <li>• Cars on the route</li> <li>• Signage was way far out and it upset drivers. Idea: Flaggers stations at other locations to direct traffic may have been more helpful</li> <li>• More volunteers</li> <li>• Volunteers didn't read packet – future do a video training</li> <li>• Lack of outreach/posting information about the event and how to get information out everywhere about the event</li> <li>• How do you bring in other cycling and advocacy groups and others</li> <li>• Bring in groups earlier on in planning process. Who are the overlooked partners?</li> <li>• More people to help with the planning of the event</li> <li>• Aggressive driver on the route</li> <li>• Treats for APD</li> <li>• Gaps in programming</li> <li>• Lack of programming at Kit Carson</li> <li>• Release programming earlier</li> <li>• More signs with programming – directional</li> <li>• Plaza/bike lane – move closer to activities</li> <li>• Rock wall, circus and other activities could have been in the middle of the street</li> </ul>
External	Opportunities	Threats
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential future routes are Constitution, Alvarado, Mountain in District 7 (D7)</li> <li>• Anchor event with parks at the ends of route. Ideas included: Existing route good, Downtown, Bridge, Zuni, Girard, Silver, central ½ bridge, Summer Fest use streets in the AM before summer fest</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty permitting</li> <li>• Continuous outreach to different people, groups and organizations</li> <li>• Who is going to keep the event going? An organization, a person?</li> <li>• Cost</li> <li>• Funding</li> <li>• Weather</li> <li>• Vehicles on the route</li> <li>• Competitive nature</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combine with other events</li> <li>• More vendors</li> <li>• More outreach to businesses/neighbors</li> <li>• More commercial street for future route</li> <li>• Bike shops at event</li> <li>• Rent bikes at event</li> <li>• APD on bikes – donate a few hours</li> <li>• More City involvement</li> <li>• Bike Share – coordinate with unrolling of bike share</li> <li>• Health Fairs at the event</li> <li>• “Look for me” banners/program partners</li> <li>• Coordinate more with BRT</li> <li>• Announcer of programming at the event ‘Yoga will start in 10 minutes...’</li> <li>• Junkadoo</li> <li>• Activities</li> <li>• More kids activities</li> <li>• More physical activities for all</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Summer Fest” ABQ CiQlovía is not this event, but people assume it is</li> </ul>
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### III. Results

The ABQ CiQlovía Planning Committee achieved all four of its goals.

Table 3: Goal 1 Results

Goal 1: Identify project partners and sponsors to be engaged in planning CiQlovía	
Objective	Secure a minimum of one of each: advocacy group, city representative, local business and community representative
Performance Measure	Securing one of each in objective
Results: The Committee achieved this goal by securing a partnership and/or sponsorship with BikeABQ, a local bicycle advocacy group. The City of Albuquerque was incredibly supportive of the event and especially Mayor Richard J. Berry and Councilors Isaac Benton, Diane Gibson and Rey Garduño. The Committee was able to receive sponsorships from a number of local businesses. Local neighborhood associations were involved in the planning of the event and also volunteered on the day of the event. The Team had about 60 volunteers total to help put on the event.	

Table 4: Goal 2 Results

Goal 2: Provide a free public event affordable for all Burqueños	
Objective	Plan, develop and promote a free CiQlovía event for a minimum of 1,000 people

Performance Measure	Field counts observation
Results: The Committee was able to put on this event at no cost for the participants. People of all ages and abilities were invited to attend this event. About 4,700 (our final count) attended the event.	

Table 5: Goal 3 Results

Goal 3: Promote and increase awareness for cycling and walking as an acceptable and safe mode of travel on Albuquerque's streets	
Objective	At the end of CiQlovía, at least 100 people will report increasing their awareness of active transportation opportunities
Performance Measures	Survey, testimonials, reactions during and after event
Results: Of the survey respondents, Facebook comments and other comments from participants of the event, a significant number reported how great it felt to be able to walk and bike safely with their families in the street.	

Table 6: Goal 4 Results

Goal 4: Increase the health and activity of Albuquerque residents	
Objective	At least 100 people walking and biking
Performance Measure	Field counts, survey, testimonials, reactions during and after event
Results: The Committee overwhelmingly achieved this goal. Approximately 4,700 attendees were walking, biking and playing in the streets.	

#### A. How many people were at ABQ CiQlovía?

- An estimated 4,700 people attended the inaugural ABQ CiQlovía
  - 2,304 bicyclists +
  - 1,150 pedestrians +
  - 1,000 buddy walkers +
  - 300 parade
  - = 4,700
- The segment between Mary Fox Park and Lomas Blvd. on 14<sup>th</sup> Street was observed to have more people than the other leg: 1833 vs. 1509
- 66.7% of people were observed biking
- 33.2% of people were observed walking

#### B. Survey Results

78 people completed the post-event survey.

### Q8 How much time did you spend at ABQ CiQlovía?

Answered: 71 Skipped: 7

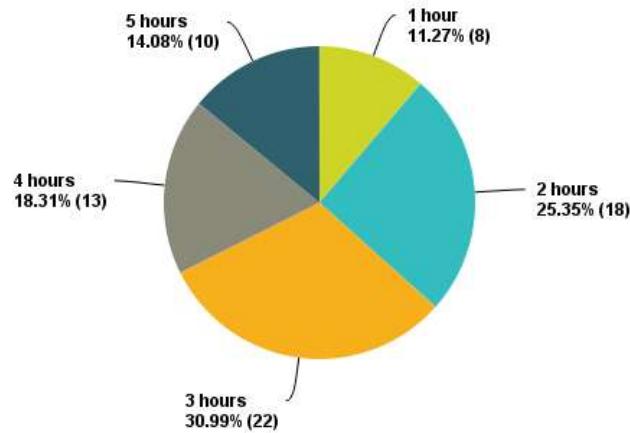


Figure 10: How much time did you spend at ABQ CiQlovía?

Where did ABQ CiQlovía participants live?

- Survey respondents who attended the event came from across the Albuquerque Metropolitan Area. A majority of participants lived in the 87102 zip code, which is the zip code in which the event occurred.

According to Figure 11, a majority of participants that completed the survey said they heard about the event through a friend and the second highest was Facebook.

### Q5 How did you hear about the event?

Answered: 62 Skipped: 16

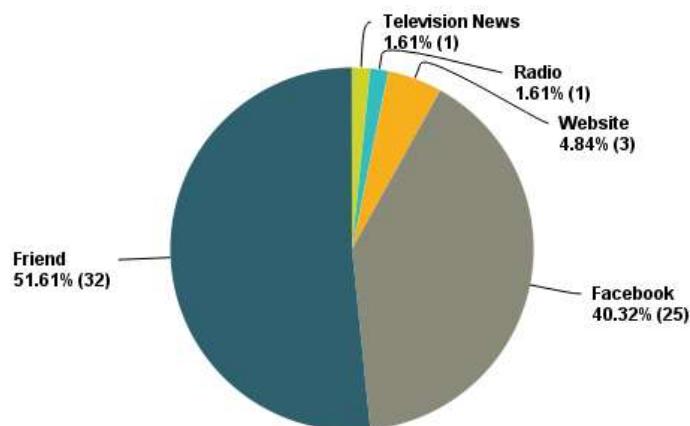
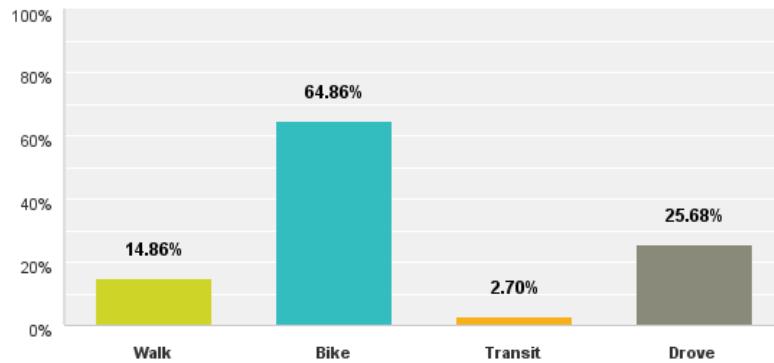


Figure 11: How did you hear about the event?

Most event participants bicycled to the event.

**Q2 Did you walk, bike, take transit or drive to the event?**

Answered: 74 Skipped: 4



*Figure 12: Did you walk, bike take transit or drive to the event?*

**C. Participant comments and suggestions for Improving ABQ CiQlovía**

ABQ CiQlovía survey respondents provided comments regarding the event and suggestions for future events.

- Appreciation and support for the event (most frequent comment).
- Desire to have event again and more frequently.
- Desire to have more programming and activities at the event.
- Desire for improving county/city biking infrastructure.
- Suggestions for improving logistics of event (safety and infrastructure).
- Suggestions for improving event marketing and communication.

Participants provided suggestions for locations of future ABQ CiQlovía events. Here are where survey participants suggested future CiQlovía routes:

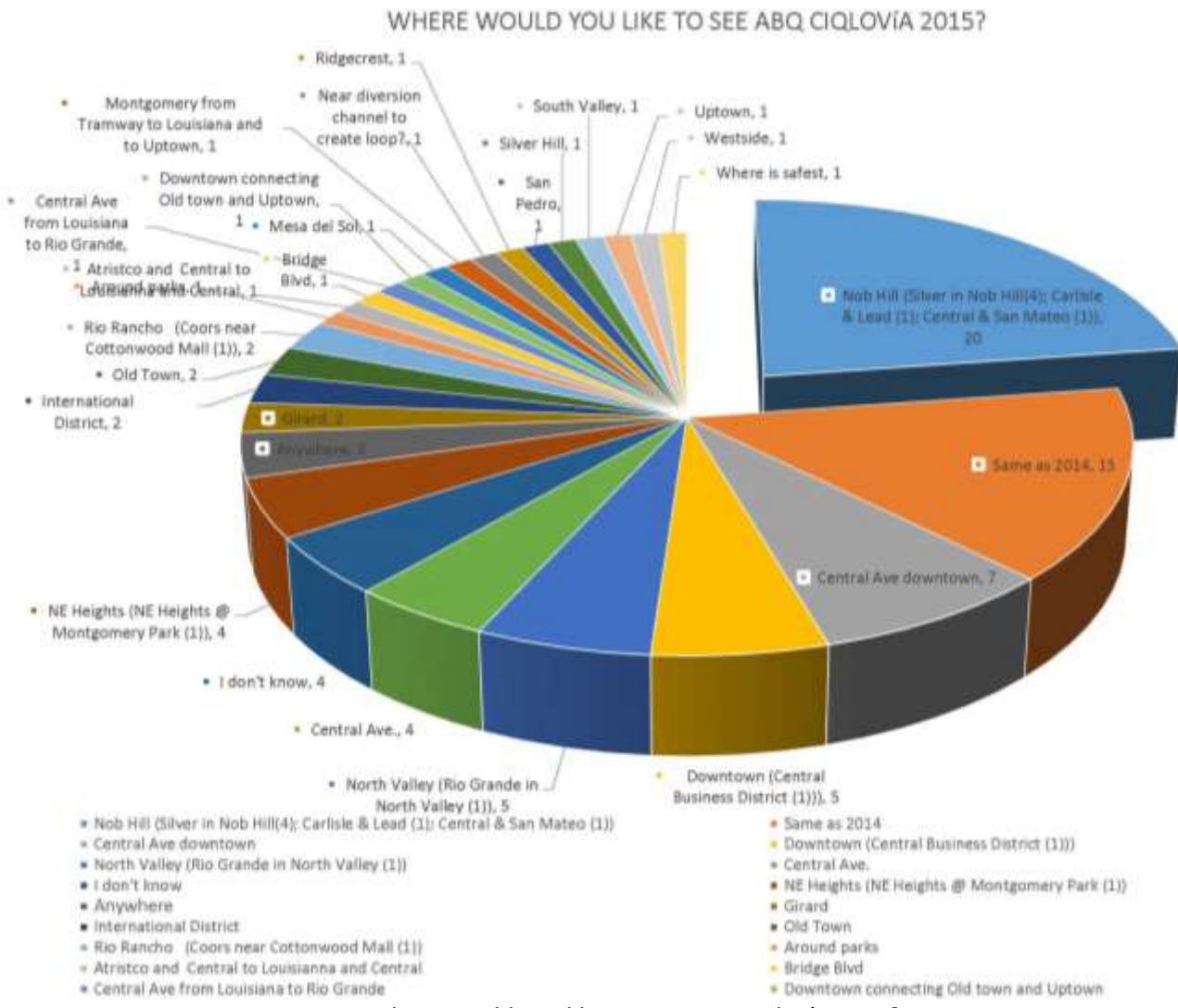


Figure 13: Where would you like to see ABQ CiQlovía 2015?

#### Examples of comments when asked “What was your favorite thing about the event?

- “That it turned streets into places (because places are for people) in a festive way.”
- “The closed street, open and safe space for walking and going from one park to another without worrying about cars.”
- “Everything! Loved seeing masses on the streets of all ages and walks of life.”

#### Examples of comments when asked “What was your least favorite thing about the event?”

- “Vehicles violating barriers and mixing with unsuspecting cyclists on the route.”
- “That it doesn’t happen once a month.”
- “That the route wasn’t able to take more major streets. (Yet!)”

#### IV. Participants



*Figure 14: Participants at ABQ CiQlovía.*

ABQ CiQlovía was an event that welcomed all regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity, income or any other characteristic. Although there were certain groups whose presence was hoped for, the participation from as diverse a group as possible was desired. Because of the event's location near the Bosque Trail, getting the attention and participation of trail riders was one of the coveted groups, with the idea being

that they could be lured off the trail to go and enjoy a different part of the city and a different, more social, riding experience. On the other hand, attracting new and novice bicyclists and pedestrians was also desired to provide those people a safe and positive experience of using active modes of transportation. The event also attempted to showcase the potential of streets being more safe, social and economically vibrant. Although a few desired groups are called out here, in fact, the participation of all groups of people was desired: children, young people, seniors, people with disabilities, local business owners, patrons of local businesses, neighborhood residents, residents from other neighborhoods, avid bicyclists and pedestrian advocates, the curious, the skeptics, etc.—the thought being that a new way of designing, building, using, investing in, and imagining our streets could be promoted and would be of interest to just about anyone.

The total attendance for the event was approximately 4,700. As mentioned previously, the Committee set the goal for 1,000 event participants, so this goal was overwhelmingly achieved. No demographic information was obtained on participants, but observations of the event found that there was a reasonable level of diversity in age, gender, race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and familiarity with bicycling (that is, there appeared to be both seasoned bicyclists as well as novices; gauging familiarity with other activities was not as easy to assess).



*Figure 15: Participants at ABQ CiQlovía.*



*Figure 16: Participant at ABQ CiQlovía.*

Although the event was intended to be inclusive, who actually heard of or was made aware of the event is another matter. CiQlovía organizers tried to promote the event as broadly as possible. The event was promoted on the CiQlovía Facebook page (and shared on other Facebook pages) as well as other social media sites such as Nextdoor.com and Twitter. There was also a website created to promote the event (<http://www.abqciqlovia.org/>). It was included on local website event calendars, was written about in the local press (the Albuquerque Journal, Local IQ, ABQ Business First, KOAT TV-7, and KRQE TV-13), was covered on local radio stations (94 Rock, 104.7 The Edge and 101.7 ESPN), was promoted with flyers at events around the city (e.g., farmers markets, Summerfest) and at neighborhood businesses and residences, and posters were displayed at stores and other businesses.

The event was also included in various newsletters (the Mid-Region Council of Governments, NM Express Rail Runner, and the Downtown Action Team) and organizers also developed a newsletter for the CiQlovía event itself, which was sent out weekly three months prior to the event. In addition, presentations about the event were also given to several groups, including the Downtown Neighborhood Association, West Old Town Neighborhood Association, Raynolds Neighborhood Association, Sawmill Neighborhood Association, Downtown Action Team Millennial Project, the NMASLA 2014 Multimodal Event as well as others. The event was also co-promoted through the Harwood Art Center's annual Carnuel Road Parade's efforts. In summary, the event was promoted fairly extensively and received good press coverage.

For future CiQlovía events, organizers may want to experiment with different advertising methods such as billboards and other promotional venues to reach an even broader market and to attract more participants. Also, much of the press coverage may have been due to the fact that this was the first event of its kind in the city. Next time around, more effort may need to be placed to attract press coverage and more money may need to be spent on advertising efforts.

Desired participants for future events are all people: seniors, newcomers, longtime residents, children and young adults, people with disabilities, etc. The main goal for the next time around will be to obtain strong support from the local neighborhood and businesses, build a good volunteer base (at least 50 volunteers per route mile), and attract a larger attendance.



*Figure 17: A young participant at ABQ CiQlovía.*

## V. Partnership Opportunities

Partnerships will be essential for future CiQlovías, both financially and organizationally. For the initial event, a number of partners made the event possible. The following list includes past partners as well as **future partnership opportunities (shown in bold)**. Note that in some cases, specific groups are listed; the purpose of doing so is only to provide an example of the type of group being described and is in no way intended to be binding or necessarily suggestive.

### Governmental Agencies and Departments

- City of Albuquerque (various departments)
- Bernalillo County
- Mid-Region Council of Governments
- Albuquerque Police Department
- New Mexico Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department
- **Transit departments and organizations (e.g., ABQ Ride, Rio Metro Regional Transit District and NM Rail Runner Express)**
- PNM
- **New Mexico Department of Transportation**

### Businesses, Community Groups and Non-Profits

- Neighborhood associations and **Main Street organizations**
- **Community organizations (e.g., Rotary Club, Downtown ABQ Millennial Project, East Central Ministries)**
- Advocacy organizations (e.g., NM Complete Streets Leadership Team, **additional bicycle advocacy groups in the city, AARP, Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation**)
- Youth-oriented groups (e.g., YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, YDI, Girl Scouts)
- Professional organizations (New Mexican chapters of the American Planning Association, American Society of Landscape Architects, American Society of Civil Engineers, **American Institute of Architects**, etc.)
- **Religious groups and places of worship**
- **Local businesses (particularly those along the event route)**
- **Corporate sponsors (REI, Trader Joe's, Intel, Wise Pies, Whole Foods, Starbucks, etc.)**
- **Schools** (private and public, especially those in proximity to the event and mostly for volunteer/participation purposes)
- **UNM (various departments and groups such as the Health and Injury Prevention Department, School of Architecture and Planning, Office of Sustainability)**
- Health organizations and companies (e.g., **Center for Chronic Disease Prevention**, hospitals and clinics, health insurance companies such as Presbyterian and **Blue Cross/Blue Shield, UNM medical school and Institute for Public Health**)
- **Emerging entities-bike share sponsor(s), Innovate ABQ**
- **Chambers of Commerce (Hispano Chamber of Commerce, Green Chamber of Commerce, Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce)**
- Community-oriented non-profits (e.g., Acción, Rio Grande Community Development Corporation, etc.)

- **Sports groups, organizations and businesses (e.g., UNM Athletics Department, Sports and Wellness, Duke City Soccer League, etc.)**
- Arts and performance arts groups (e.g., Albuquerque Aerialist Collective)
- **Foundations (e.g., Kellogg Foundation, ABQ Community Foundation, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and McCune Foundation)**

## VI. Recommendations

Based on the Committee's analysis and experience in planning and implementing this event, a series of recommendations for the next ABQ CiQlovía in 2015 have been developed.

Recommendations for the next CiQlovía include the following:

- Start planning earlier.
- Identify more local champions.
- Identify funding opportunities for the event early in the planning process and secure as early as possible. This is necessary not only for the viability of the event, but also to pay for early upfront costs such as advertising and permitting.
- Establish partnerships early in the planning process. These can also serve the purpose of co-promoting certain events, projects or programs (for example, bike share or ART).
- Obtain all necessary permits as early in the process as possible. Many potential donors were hesitant to support the event until it had been permitted. A permit will provide more certainty to event partners and donors.
- Select a route that has a good number of local businesses and local businesses that are supportive of the event. As an important component of the event is to promote local economic development, having local businesses to highlight is crucial to that key message.
- Ensure the message that the event is for all people, including those who want to travel through the event in ways other than by bicycle, such as walking, by wheelchair, skateboarding, etc., is clear. In other words, stress the concept that the event is not just a "cycling" event—it is much more than that!
- Dedicate one person (or more) to organizing the volunteer effort. The point is that the job requires full dedication to that very important and time-consuming task.
- Consider shortening both the route length and event duration to achieve a greater concentration of participants at any one time.
- The event requires additional organizers. Identify more people interested in coordinating event and have one person per task area. For example, a programming coordinator, advertising/marketing coordinator, etc. Suggested roles for the planning and organization effort include: project manager (oversees all efforts and leads in pitching and promoting the event at

the highest level); fund raising lead; advertising and promotion lead; programming lead; volunteer coordinator; communications and graphic design coordinator.

- If a major sponsor or partner (with funds) can be identified, organizing the event should go much more smoothly and make the event more sustainable, as securing funding is not only time-consuming but makes the event much more tenuous until adequate funding is found.
- Identify more programming, activities and the publish schedule well in advance of the event.

## VII. Conclusions

The inaugural ABQ CiQlovía held on September 21, 2014 was felt to be an overall success. The key takeaways from the event were that 1) it was fun and people really liked being able to freely recreate and socialize on the streets; 2) it helped bring the community together; and 3) it should happen again. Indeed, participant response was so incredibly positive that organizers felt compelled to make the event happen again and to deliver a bigger, better more broadly-reaching CiQlovía event next year using experience gained from this initial event. It is felt there is really something distinctive about open streets events that residents in the city are clamoring for and that they do a good job in providing a healthy and community-oriented event that let people see the potential our streets when they are safe, vibrant, and designed for all.

While there are existing challenges and weaknesses, most of them can be mitigated through better planning, coordination, collaboration and communication. This will allow for more seamless planning considered when planning an event like this and integrating it on a more permanent and reoccurring level.

Regardless of how and when ciclovía is implemented, events like ABQ CiQlovía are enjoyable, healthy and free events that every one of all ages and abilities can enjoy. ABQ CiQlovía achieved all four of its goals demonstrating that events like this do promote bicycling and walking both as alternative, active modes of transportation and as a way to incorporate exercise into daily life. Importantly, this event enabled a greater sense of community among burqueños. Lastly, the event promoted local businesses and there is considerable potential to further promote local businesses at future events.

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<sup>i</sup> <http://la-bike.org/news/hundreds-thousands-angelenos-jam-venice-boulevard-ciclavia-and-love-it>

<sup>ii</sup> <http://www.livingstreetsalliance.org/2014/04/cyclovia-tucson-april-6th-by-the-numbers/>

<sup>iii</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albuquerque,\\_New\\_Mexico](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albuquerque,_New_Mexico)

<sup>iv</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/27/opinion/sunday/now-coveted-a-walkable-convenient-place.html>

<sup>v</sup> <http://www.brtabq.com/>

<sup>vi</sup> City of Albuquerque “Bikeways and Trails Facilities Plan. (2014).

<http://www.cabq.gov/planning/documents/DraftBikewaysTrailsFacilityPlan.pdf>

<sup>vii</sup> <http://www.peopleforbikes.org/blog/entry/24-states-53-cities-protected-bike-lanes-have-become-as-american-as-pizza>

<sup>viii</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/CompleteStreetsInNewMexico>).