Gaps in the Implementation and Stakeholder Perception of Glendale's 2024 Bicycle Master Plan: A Mixed-Methods Analysis

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Introduction

Glendale's 2024 Bicycle Master Plan seeks to reduce car dependency by significantly expanding cycling infrastructure and encourage a shift toward active transportation. This study asks: To what extent do the plan's objectives align with the priorities of local residents? Using a mixed-methods approach, the analysis focuses on two contrasting corridors of Brand Boulevard, a highly active arterial in south Glendale, and Honolulu Avenue, a historic commercial corridor in the city's north.

Methodology

This study employs an exploratory mixed-methods design that integrates spatial analysis with qualitative review of public feedback. The evaluation focuses on three key criteria of safety, connectivity, and equity, identified through preliminary plan documentation and City Council recommendations related to the 2024 Bicycle Master Plan.

Qualitative Design

- Thematic analysis of public comments from two City Council meetings (July 30 & Dec 10, 2024)
- Comments coded by theme: Safety, Connectivity, Equity and Positive/Negative sentiment

Quantitative Design

Spatial analysis of Brand Blvd and Honolulu Ave using GIS raster scoring:

- Safety: Collision density (2019–2023 TIMS data)
- Connectivity: Access to key destinations (POI data)
- Equity: Demographics (income, dependents, bike commuters)
- Applied ¼- and ½-mile buffer zones for corridor-level scoring

Key Findings

Safety perceptions match actual risk.
Brand Boulevard has a high crash density and strong public demand for safer infrastructure, notably for youth and school commuters. In contrast, Honolulu Avenue's low crash rates reflect public skepticism regarding need of protected lanes.

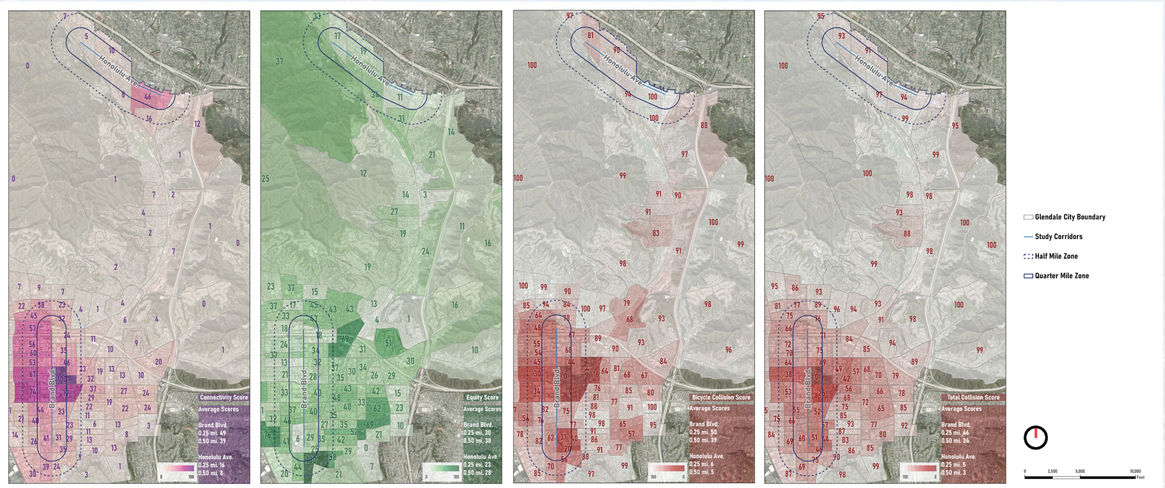
Connectivity varies by corridor.
Brand connects a dense mix of destinations, framing it as a key route for multimodal travel. Honolulu's residential character and reduced destinations suggest smaller-scale improvements are more appropriate.

Equity concerns center on process.
While spatial equity indicators were balanced, residents criticized the lack of outreach to renters, lower-income groups, and Glendale's minority ethnic groups.

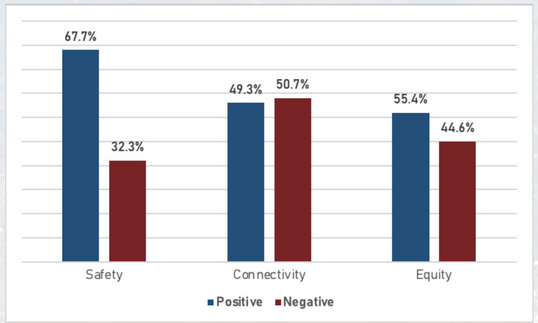
Support is context-dependent.
Residents were more likely to back infrastructure where safety risks or connectivity gaps were clearly visible. In lower-risk areas like Honolulu Avenue, skepticism grew when proposals felt disconnected from local needs or imposed without meaningful input.

Criteria	Positive	Negative
Safety	• Protected bike lanes benefit children and families; • Support for Vision Zero goals • Need for safer school routes • Health-promoting mobility options	• Emergency vehicle delays • Confusing road/ intersection design • Obstruction from planters/bollards
Connectivity	• Desire for direct access to schools, parks, and retail • supports micro-mobility • potential for short-trip mode shift	• Fear of increased traffic congestion on major arterials • Residential spillover • Pilot installation seen as underutilized
Equity	• Safer mobility for non-drivers, youth, and seniors • Potential to reduce transportation costs • Promote transportation independence	• Concerns about exclusionary outreach • perceived cyclist bias • neglect of car users' needs

Summary table of thematic analysis



GIS vizualization of normalized safety, connectivity, and equity scores along Brand Boulevard and Honolulu Avenue based on spatial and demographic analysis.



Distribution of public comment sentiment by criteria

Policy Recommendations

Brand Boulevard

- Design protected intersections and corner safety islands at high-collision areas.
- Use curb extensions to shorten crossing distances and enhance pedestrian safety.
- Opt for modular ZICLA Zipper barriers for protected bike lanes to balance cyclist protection with flexible curbside access.
- Conduct a block-by-block curbside use inventory to identify loading, parking, and access needs

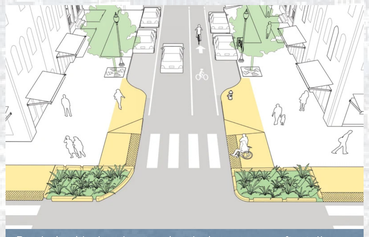
Honolulu Avenue

- Use light-touch treatments like sharrows, Class II lanes, and small-scale traffic calming.
- Improve access between neighborhoods, Old Town Montrose, and schools with signage and markings.
- Continue to test low-cost pilots during open street events before permanent upgrades.

System-wide

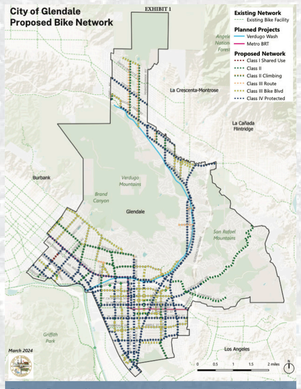
- Prioritize corridors using spatial destination and equity scoring.
- Build trust through implementation scorecards and open data tools.
- Reassess community outreach strategy

ZICLA "Zipper" traffic lane divider - www.zicla.com



Rendering ideal curb extension design - www.craftontull.com

Rendering of buffered bicycle intersection - City of Santa Monica



City Council approved proposed bicycle network map - (2024)

Conclusion

Glendale's 2024 Bicycle Master Plan marks an important step toward a more inclusive and sustainable transportation system in an automobile-dominant city, setting strong goals around safety, connectivity, and equity. However, this study presents clear disconnects between those goals and how residents experience and interpret proposed changes in practice.

Brand Boulevard, with its high crash rate, cluster of pedestrian activity and destination density, stands out as a priority for meaningful infrastructure upgrades that support multimodal use without acting as hard barriers. Honolulu Avenue's lower-intensity land use, historical and local-serving context and scale calls for modest interventions that respects its existing character. These differences highlight the need for designs that respond to the specific context of each corridor.

Many residents welcomed changes that addressed clear safety issues or gaps in access. Others questioned proposals they felt were out of step with local conditions or were envisioned without their input. For the plan to move forward successfully, the city must commit to accountability and rebuild trust through clearer communication and more inclusive outreach.