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## OFFICIAL NOTIFICATION OF DECISION

July 18, 2024

City of Albuquerque Department  
of Municipal Development  
400 Marquette NW, Suite 303  
Albuquerque, NM 87102

**Project # PR-2024-010493**  
**RZ-2024-00032** – Amendment of Facility Plan

Valerie Hermanson, Public Works Strategic Program Manager, representative of the City of Albuquerque Department of Municipal Development, requests an Amendment of the City of Albuquerque Bikeway and Trail Facilities Plan (BTFP). City-wide.

Staff Planners: Robert Messenger and Catherine Heyne

On July 18, 2024, the Environmental Planning Commission (EPC) voted to forward a recommendation of APPROVAL to the City Council for PR-2024-010493 RZ-2024-00032 – Amendment of Facility Plan based on the following recommended Findings and Subject to the recommended conditions of approval.

### RECOMMENDED FINDINGS – RZ-2024-00032 –Amendment of Facility Plan

1. The request is for an Amendment to the 2015 Bikeways and Trails Facilities Plan (BTFP). The BTFP is a Rank 2 Facility Plan that provides direction for the City's infrastructure investments and is a mechanism for implementing the Comprehensive Plan Goals and Policies – specifically for bikeway and trail facilities within the City.
2. The 2024 BTFP amends and updates the 2015 BTFP with new or improved bike facilities added to the existing citywide bike system to reflect emerging best practices in bicycle network planning and bikeway design.
3. The request is for a citywide plan that includes all area Uses and Zoning.
4. The major changes in the 2024 plan from the 2015 Plan are that the 2024 BTFP:
  - Supports the implementation of recently-adopted City ordinances and plans such as the Complete Streets Ordinance, Vision Zero Action Plan, and the Climate Action Plan.
  - Reviews the adopted policies, programs, and criteria for the selection of on- and off-street bike facility improvements with an emphasis on crossings with major roads.

- Addresses equity in the distribution of safer and better biking connections throughout the City and updates the prioritization process to center the needs in areas where bike facilities have traditionally been under-funded.
  - Reflects the City’s commitment to emphasize an “all ages, abilities, and backgrounds” approach in providing bike facilities throughout the City.
  - Prioritizes safety improvements in areas with high levels of traffic violence especially at crossings where on-street bikeways and trails intersect major roads.
  - Adds a Bicycle and Trail Crossings Guide (Appendix J) for the selection of appropriate crossing treatments based on the bike/trail facility, the road facility, and location context (e.g., urban, suburban, or rural).
  - Includes a Bike Boulevard Toolkit (Appendix E) to reflect the value of bike boulevards as part of an implementable, on-street bike network.
  - Provides policy recommendations for e-bikes on paved trails and emerging best practices in e-bike rebate programs to reflect the growth in e-bike mobility.
  - Contains descriptions and summary tables for all proposed projects, including timeframes and cost estimates.
  - Updates the document name from Bikeways & Trails Facilities Plan to Bikeway & Trail Facilities Plan.
5. Bike & trail facilities proposed in the 2024 Plan recommendations are intended to be integrated into the regional Long Range Bikeway System that is maintained by the Mid-Region Council of Governments (MRCOG) with a recommendation to update the Bikeway and Trail Facilities Plan at regular intervals, such as every five years.
  6. The Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan and the City of Albuquerque Integrated Development Ordinance (IDO), and the BTFP Rank 2 Facility Plan are incorporated herein by reference and made part of the record for all purposes.
  7. The request is consistent with the following Comprehensive Plan Goal and Policy regarding Development Patterns from Chapter 5- Land Use:
    - A. **GOAL 5.1 CENTERS & CORRIDORS:** Grow as a community of strong Centers connected by a multi-modal network of Corridors.

The facility plan amendment could help the City grow as a community that connects strong Centers through a multi-modal network of Corridors that include on- and off-street bicycling facilities. The 2024 BTFP strengthens the ability of both Centers and Corridors to serve the needs of bicyclists because it emphasizes an “all ages and abilities” approach to make biking a more convenient option for those who bike for transportation purposes as well as recreation. By emphasizing low-stress facilities, such as bike boulevards that parallel busier roads (e.g., Multi-Modal Corridors), biking becomes a viable option for new bicyclists and those hesitant to ride with traffic or in bike lanes along busy roads

As part of the prioritization process for proposed bike projects, the request strengthens Centers by giving bike facilities that connect to Centers higher points than those that do not connect to Centers. The request is consistent with Goal 5.1 Centers & Corridors.

- B. **POLICY 5.1.11 MULTI-MODAL CORRIDORS:** Design safe, Multi-Modal Corridors that balance the competing needs of multiple modes of travel and become more mixed-use and pedestrian-oriented over time.

The 2024 BTFP supports the design of safe Multi-Modal Corridors that balance the needs of multiple modes of travel. These Corridors are designed to become more mixed-use and pedestrian-oriented over time. Development should be encouraged to include a more mixed use, pedestrian-oriented environment with nearby parallel streets dedicated to serve bicycle travel. Because the 2024 BTFP aims to make biking safer for all users, it avoids placing bike facilities such as bike lanes or sidepaths in places where such facilities would be unsafe for the majority of bicyclists. In their present state, Multi-Modal Corridors are unsafe locations for bike facilities since they concentrate on serving fast-moving and heavy volumes of motorized traffic in locations with frequent driveways for commercial parking lots.

8. The request is consistent with the following Comprehensive Plan Goals and Policies regarding Development Patterns from Chapter 6: Transportation:

- A. **GOAL 6.1 LAND USE-Transportation Integration:** Plan, develop, operate, and maintain a transportation system to support the planned character of existing and future land uses.

The 2024 BTFP amendment would facilitate the creation of a bike network within the context of a complete transportation system to support the planned character of existing and future land uses as designated by Centers and Corridors in the Comprehensive Plan. A key feature of the 2024 BTFP is an emphasis on improved bikeway and trail crossings, specifically in locations where pedestrian and bike facility crossings should be prioritized to support the planned character of Centers and street elements based on Corridor designations. Additionally, the network attempts to connect people as directly as possible to major community destinations and other low stress bikeways, including multi-use trails. Examples of integration of existing and future transport systems are highlighted in Appendix G: Project Profiles of the 2024 BTFP.

- B. **GOAL 6.2 MULTI-MODAL SYSTEM:** Encourage walking, biking, and transit, especially at peak-hour commuting times, to enhance access and mobility for people of all ages and abilities.

The 2024 BTFP encourages people of all ages and abilities to choose walking, biking, and transit through improvements to bike and trail facilities as well as intersection improvements of the crossings of these facilities with roads, both of which enhance access and mobility. The 2024 Plan proposes to improve biking and walking comfort and safety by providing barriers between automobile traffic and those using alternative forms of transportation. This can include adding protected hybrid beacons (PHBs) at road crossings. Buffers and other bike facility improvements can also enhance comfort and access to people of all ages, which can further inspire more people to choose transit since transit trips typically begin with either biking or walking to reach transit stops. With safer bike and trail facilities and intersections, commuters can be more motivated to walk, bike and/or use transit, especially during peak hours. Lastly, the 2024 BTFP proposes policies and programs to encourage mode share shifts, especially during peak-hour commuting times.

- C. **POLICY 6.2.2 Incorporate Complete Streets concepts and policies into the development, retrofit, and rehabilitation of all transportation infrastructure at all phases, including planning, scoping, design, implementation, and performance monitoring.**

The 2024 BTFP incorporates Complete Streets concepts and policies into the development, retrofit and rehabilitation of all phases of transportation infrastructure. It leverages the City's

Annual Complete Streets Maintenance program identify opportunities to quickly and cost effectively create on-street bikeways such as a) bike routes through signage and traffic calming, b) restriping bike lanes and/or buffered bike lanes, and/or c) improve substandard existing bike lanes within the curb lines of paved roads. One of the 2024 BTFP recommendations is to enhance the Annual Complete Streets Maintenance Program to include advanced planning for resurfacing needs and inclusive selection criteria for project locations.

- D. **POLICY 6.2.5 BICYCLE NETWORK:** Promote an areawide bicycle and trail network for transportation and recreation that emphasizes connections among Centers and safe crossings at intersections.

The 2024 BTFP promotes an areawide bicycle and trail network for transportation and recreational purposes that emphasizes connections among Centers and provides an increased focus on safe intersection crossings. Part of the scoring to evaluate potential bike facilities that was done for the 2024 BTFP update was to evaluate how well bikeways connect to Centers and other community facilities. Those that provide better connectivity and access more Centers and community facilities are scored higher than those that do not. The 2024 BTFP emphasizes the importance of safe intersection crossings by providing a Bicycle and Trail Crossings Guide, which was not included in previous plans (for more information, see Appendix J in the 2024 BTFP).

- E. **GOAL 6.3 SAFETY:** Plan, develop, operate, and maintain a transportation system that provides safe access and mobility for all roadway users.

The 2024 BTFP is a guide to plan, develop, operate, and maintain a transportation system that provides safe access and mobility for all roadway users. Although the 2024 BTFP intent is to improve conditions for bike travel, bike facility improvements also support safe access for modes such as walking and transit use. This is because the 2024 BTFP incorporates Vision Zero goals and policies to improve safety, especially for such roadway users as people bicycling or walking.

The 2024 BTFP improves safety for cyclists through street design. The plan recommends bike facilities such as protected bike lanes that follow national best practices that are proven to improve safety.

- F. **GOAL 6.4 PUBLIC HEALTH:** Promote individual and community health through active transportation, noise mitigation, and air quality protections.

The 2024 BTFP promotes individual and community health through promoting active transportation via biking. As the bike mode share increases and motor vehicle mode share use decreases, there will be less noise and air pollution caused by motor vehicles burning fossil fuels.

- G. **POLICY 6.4.1 ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION:** Promote options and mobility for walking, biking, and other nonmotorized travel.

The 2024 BTFP promotes options and mobility for walking, biking, and other non-motorized travel. The plan recommends safety improvements, especially at intersections of multi-modal trails at major roads, which can encourage more walking trips and other nonmotorized travel, as well as better access for persons using active transportation to reach transit stops because these recommendations improve access to Centers and other key community destinations. The 2024 BTFP plan has several recommendations to encourage biking as a form of active transportation, such as the Esperanza Bicycle Safety Education Center and events like Bike to Wherever Day.

- H. **GOAL 6.5 EQUITY:** Expand mobility by providing safe and connected networks for non-auto travel and public transit for low-income and vulnerable populations.

One of the main goals of the 2024 BTFP is to expand mobility for low-income and vulnerable populations by providing safer and better networks for bike and other non-automotive travel modes. Because low-income and vulnerable populations are less likely to own a car (or be able to drive) and more likely to use public transit, bike network improvements in High Fatal and Injury Network (HFIN) high crash areas and vulnerable communities also expand transit mobility. This is because all transit trips begin and end with a non-motorized mode such as biking or walking. In recognition of the disproportionate share of traffic violence experienced in low-income and vulnerable communities, equity was given the highest single evaluation criteria to and weighted at 20% (see Chapter 6, Table 18).

- I. **POLICY 6.5.1 EQUITABLE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS:** Consider the needs of people of all ages and abilities in the design, construction, and operation of transportation systems.

The 2024 BTFP request makes an “all ages and abilities” approach the main theme in the design, construction, and operation of bike transportation systems. This importance is reflected in the first sentence of the Vision Statement:

Albuquerque is a city that embraces bicycling by implementing convenient on-street bikeways and paved multi-use trail facilities that enhance safety and appeal to people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds (underlined for emphasis).

The first Goal in the 2024 BTFP is to “Increase access to on-street bikeways and multi-use trails for all people in Albuquerque.” One means of increasing access is to prioritize bike infrastructure improvements in areas previously lacking in such facilities or in areas with high social vulnerability.

- J. **GOAL 6.6 ECONOMY:** Invest in a transportation system that stimulates and supports job creation and business development and improves the movement of people, goods, and services.

Consistent to the original 2015 BTFP, the bikeway and trail network can continue to be leveraged as an integral part of economic development that helps stimulate and support job creation and business development along routes made more accessible to cycling. Also, providing quality transportation infrastructure citywide is a proven approach to improving access to jobs and services, especially for those without personal vehicle transport.

This request also invests in a transportation system that improves the movement of people, goods, and services by applying appropriate contexts of bikeway facility types derived from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Bikeway Selection Guide and the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Bikeway Design Guide and in support of the City’s Vision Zero goals by implementing high-quality facilities that promote user safety and comfort. Additional design guidance and standards are taken from the City of Albuquerque Development Process Manual (DPM) with the 2024 BTFP also recommending revisions to the DPM based on emerging national best practices. The resulting 2024 BTFP suggestions for individual bikeway and trail improvement projects reflect the bikeway infrastructure needed to achieve low-stress conditions for people biking citywide.

- K. **GOAL 6.7 SYSTEM EFFECTIVENESS:** Implement and maintain an effective and efficient transportation system in a coordinated and cost-effective manner.

This request implements and maintains an effective and efficient bicycle and trailway transportation system in a coordinated and cost-effective manner. Like most cities, the City of Albuquerque is constrained by resource availability that necessitates prioritizing improvements and implementing priority projects. This 2024 BTFP describes the potential means of implementing projects, identifies complementary policy and programmatic actions, and describes potential funding sources for the recommendations that were derived through a data-driven prioritization process. This process considered evaluation criteria that address six key issues (i.e., safety, equity, access, network improvements, level of use, and community input). Identifying these categories for each proposed facility creates an opportunity to better coordinate and implement recommended projects more cost-effectively.

Additionally, the 2024 BTFP coordinates with existing City plans and programs (e.g., Annual Complete Streets Maintenance, Vision Zero, Climate Action Plan) to help further opportunities to quickly build new or improve existing bike infrastructure. Design and development of the 2024 BTFP updates were made with input from city, county, regional, and state level transportation partner agencies and associated programs and documents. These entities helped assist with the bikeway and trail transportation system update for the City of Albuquerque and the region.

Conditions for people biking through the Village of Los Ranchos and unincorporated portions of Bernalillo County between Rio Bravo Blvd and Tramway Blvd outside of the City of Albuquerque jurisdiction were also evaluated for the purposes of developing a better coordinated, efficient, and well-connected network. The overall 2024 BTFP acknowledges the real constraints related to staffing capacity and the financial resources available for implementation, and the approach emphasizes projects with lower costs combined with higher impacts.

- L. GOAL 6.8 CONTEXT: Provide transportation investments that are responsive to context and natural setting.

This request provides transportation investments that are responsive to both context and natural setting (e.g., see Chapter 4: Facility Types: Definitions and Considerations). The project team used Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA's) Bikeway Selection Guide and the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Designing Bikeways for All Ages and Abilities guidelines to analyze and then recommend the appropriate bicycling facility type for roadway setting and context. This includes looking at bikeway context, traffic speeds, design standards, facility types, and other factors—such as natural setting, rights-of-way—to complement the existing network to plan low-stress bikeways.

In keeping with the intent of Multi-Modal Corridors, the 2024 BTFP recognizes that “...nearby parallel streets will serve bicycle travel” as noted on page 5-17 of the Comp Plan (2017). For example, one of the highest-priority, near term bike project is the Claremont Avenue Bike Boulevard. This route can serve as an alternative to the busy Menaul Boulevard, or a “network spine” because of its length, low vehicle speeds and traffic volumes, existing traffic-calming features, and connectivity to Centers.

- 9. The request is consistent with the following Comprehensive Plan POLICY 7.6.2 TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE from Chapter 7: Urban Design: Match infrastructure capacity, design, and maintenance to the development context, expected land use intensities of abutting development, and all travel modes:

The 2024 BTFP matches infrastructure capacity, design, and maintenance to the development context, expected land use intensities of abutting development, and all travel modes by considering roadway capacity, design, maintenance, and land use when identifying the appropriate bikeway facility type for a roadway. The roadway right-of-way and width, traffic volumes and speeds, traffic volume thresholds, and existing or expected land uses were additional metrics considered as new and enhanced bikeways were proposed, or when considering when a road diet would be appropriate in the implementation of a bikeway.

10. The request is consistent with Comprehensive Plan GOAL 10.2 PARKS from Chapter 10: Parks & Open Space: Provide opportunities for outdoor education, recreation, and cultural activities that meet community needs, enhance quality of life, and promote community involvement for all residents:

This request provides opportunities for outdoor education, recreation, and cultural activities that meet community needs, enhance quality of life, and promote community involvement for all residents by proposing a connected network of low-stress, high-comfort on- and off-street bikeway options for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds for transportation and recreation. Additionally, the 2024 BTFP intends to prioritize bikeway investments in areas that have not had their fair share of past investment. Although, the 2024 BTFP does not consider unpaved trails, equestrian needs, and recreational facilities within City parks and open space as did the 2015 BTFP, these items are maintained within the 2024 Plan with opportunities for revision as needed in the future.

In addition to the invite of participation through the physical activity of bicycling, the City of Albuquerque reached out to involve community members for their input, experience, and recommendations to inform 2024 BTFP bicycling-related needs and priorities.

11. The request is consistent with Comprehensive Plan GOAL 13.5 COMMUNITY HEALTH from Chapter 13: Resilience & Sustainability: Protect and maintain safe and healthy environments where people can thrive:

This request can help protect and maintain safe and healthy environments where people can thrive. As part of the 2024 BTFP update, there is an expanded focus on safety in vulnerable communities where individuals are more likely to rely on walking, bicycling, and taking transit. Second, adhering to the City's Vision Zero goals, implementing high-quality facilities that promote user safety and comfort can cut traffic fatalities and serious injuries as well as reduce overall stress for bicyclists with a network of connecting corridors that enable a wider range of trips to be taken by bicycle. Ideally, improving bikeway infrastructure can increase the number of trips taken by bicycle or alternative mode of transit, which can lead to a reduction of total vehicle GHG emissions and related impact on public health outcomes. The plan adds safe opportunities for passive and active recreation, that can also encourage greater time spent in the outdoors which is linked to a variety of health benefits including connections to nature, the community, and healthful habits.

12. Pursuant to IDO §14-16-6-7(B)(3) of the Integrated Development Ordinance, Review and Decision Criteria, an application for Adoption or Amendment of a Facility Plan shall be approved if it meets all of the following criteria:

- A. 14-16-6-7(B)(3)(a) The proposed plan or amendment is consistent with the spirit and intent of the ABC Comp Plan, as amended, and with other policies and plans adopted by the City Council.

Staff Response: As demonstrated by the policy-based analysis of the proposed Facility Plan, the request is consistent with applicable Comprehensive Plan Goals and Policies. These Goals

and Policies were analyzed in Section II: Analysis of City Plans and Ordinances of the staff report, and are included as Findings 7-11.

- B. 14-16-6-7(B)(3)(b) The proposed plan or amendment promotes the efficient use or administration of public or quasi-public facilities.

The proposed 2024 BTFP shall promote the efficient use and administration of public or quasi-public facilities in a variety of ways. First, the 2024 BTFP prioritized implementable, on- and off-street bikeway projects. This process used a data-driven, equity-focused approach to identify locations not easily accessed and provides a more consistent approach to bikeway and trail planning. It describes potential implementation timeframes so that there is less need to investigate options for funding and staff capacity, all of which can reduce build time and capital costs.

Next, the 2024 BTFP emphasizes on-street bikeway projects that can be easily implemented, either through routine maintenance or existing programs. Proposed projects such as safer crossings at major streets can also benefit people walking and/or walking in order to reach transit stops. Last, the 2024 BTFP promotes efficiency by identifying partnerships with local and regional groups or opportunities for project implementation through private development to leverage funding. The final 2024 BTFP recommendations are intended to be integrated into the Mid-Region Council of Governments (MRCOG) regional Long Range Bikeway System.

- C. 14-16-6-7(B)(3)(c) The plan or amendment will promote public health, safety, and general welfare.

The proposed BTFP shall promote public health, safety, and general welfare.

The 2024 BTFP supports public health by creating a bikeway network for all ages, abilities, and backgrounds of bicyclists. It proposes a more equitable distribution of bike network facilities by targeting improvements in locations that have lacked bike facilities but have disproportionate levels of traffic fatalities and injuries. It recognizes that different user groups have varying comfort levels using on- and off-street bike facilities and sometimes it is necessary to create facilities in parallel corridors. For example, some bicyclists who are more experienced may prefer bike lanes rather than multi-use trails because bike lanes allow more direct access to destinations than multi-use trails could provide. On the other hand, less experienced bicyclists may prefer the slower speeds and lack of auto traffic on multi-use trails.

The 2024 BTFP supports safety by prioritizing safer bike facilities and safer crossings in areas with disproportionately higher rates of bike and pedestrian fatalities and injuries (i.e., the HFIN maps) as well as areas with persons who are more dependent on walking, biking, and transit for everyday transportation needs. It incorporates FHWA best practices for proven safety countermeasures and aligns with recently-adopted policies such as Vision Zero.

The 2024 BTFP supports general welfare by creating a more equitable and sustainable network of bike facilities. It encourages biking not only for recreation and fitness but for all transportation purposes as an economically and environmentally sustainable transportation mode. It emphasizes the short-term implementation of on-street bike facilities through programs such as the Annual Complete Streets Maintenance Program to more quickly build a bike network that is both useful and safe.



13. Representatives of all Neighborhood Associations that are on file with the Office of Neighborhood Coordination (ONC) were notified of a final informational meeting that was held Tuesday, May 14, 2024, 6 - 7 pm via Zoom.
14. The 2024 BTFP Project Team held an online Zoom meeting to answer questions and spread awareness about the public review draft of the plan. The meeting was recorded and posted online, which was open to public comment from April 22, 2024 through May 31, 2024. Comments and concerns were addressed during the meeting. No additional comments were received following the posted May 14, 2024 Zoom meeting.
15. All Neighborhood Representatives were notified of the July 18, 2024 hearing as required by Integrated Development Ordinance (IDO) IDO §14-16-6-7(B) Adoption or Amendment of Facility Plan.
16. Written comments were received from community groups, representatives, and their members: Active Living Workgroup, the Greater Albuquerque Active Transportation Committee (GAATC), the Greater Albuquerque Recreational Trails Advisory Committee (GARTC), the President of BikeABQ, and the BikeABQ Board of Directors and group members. The five letters were in support of both the adoption and implementation of the 2024 BTFP. There is no known opposition as of this writing.
17. A total of seven Agencies responded to a request for comment.
  - Both the Bernalillo County Planning & Development Services and Public Service Company of New Mexico (PNM) support the adoption of 2024 BTFP.
  - CABQ Solid Waste indicated that any added vertical separation will cause challenges for residents putting out trash and recycle carts since these bins would no longer be serviceable if the wheels weren't allowed against the curb. Although the Plan does not recommend implementing separated bike lanes on residential streets—proposed bikeway projects will be on larger streets with higher vehicle volumes and speeds.
  - NMDOT asked that any potential impacts to NMDOT facilities from the 2024 BTFP be discussed with the District 3 Assistant Engineer. Proposed facilities on NMDOT roadways follow NMDOT Bike Plan recommendations or match existing NMDOT proposed plans. Additionally, the 2024 BTFP states that if a project falls within the NMDOT area or ROW, the City must coordinate with NMDOT as part of the design phase with internal/external coordination as needed before implementation.
  - Additional comments were general notes for communication during planning of any proposed project.

#### RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL – RZ-2024-00032 – Amendment of Facility Plan

1. The applicant shall coordinate with the staff planner to ensure that all Conditions of Approval are met and then submit a vetted, final version to the staff planner for filing at the Planning Department.
2. The number of evaluation criteria and verbiage on page 95 of the 2024 BTFP document shall match that which is used in Tables 17 and 18.
3. Solid Waste shall be consulted for any project incorporating separated bikeway designs especially where trash and recycle carts are stationed for pickup.

4. If a project falls within the NMDOT area or ROW, the City shall coordinate with NMDOT as part of the design phase with internal/external coordination as needed before implementation.
5. Any related future development shall comply with the General Regulations of the IDO and all other applicable design regulations, and be subject to collaboration with other City of Albuquerque Departments/ Offices and appropriate Agencies except as specifically approved by the EPC.
6. A legend shall be added to Figure 7 (page 40) and Figure 8 (page 41) labeling the mapped color scheme and associated bikeway features.

Sincerely,



for Alan M. Varela,  
Planning Director

AV/CH/RM/MJ

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