



CFF IMPACT BRIEF | Cycle Avenue Medio Milenio

# Colombia's First Large-Scale Cycle Avenue

The C40 Cities Finance Facility has supported Bogotá in developing the city's first large-scale cycle avenue. Quinto Centenario Cycle Avenue - now renamed to Ciclorruta del Medio Milenio - will make bicycles the common means of commuting across Bogotá. Traversing the city from south to north, this 25 km-long cycling corridor shall connect citizens from low, middle and high-income neighbourhoods with jobs, schools and recreational opportunities.



The innovative avenue paves the way for Colombian cities to shift their urban infrastructure to cycling as means of sustainable, zero-emission transport. It will be the first rapid cycle way in the country and marks a starting point for the next generation of cycling avenues.



"The role of CFF was comparable to that of a fitness trainer in a gym. You helped us plan how to achieve our goals, kept an eye on timelines, reminded us of things we may miss and pushed us to go beyond the usual practice."

**DAVID UNIMAN**  
Former Bicycle Manager  
and Secretariat for Mobility



## City profile



**POPULATION:**  
7.41 million (2018)



**PROJECT SCALE:**  
25km new cycle highway



**TOTAL REPORTED GHG EMISSIONS:**  
12.4 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e per year



**IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS:**

- Inter-American Development Bank
- World Resources Institute



# Prepared with the support of the CFF, Bogotá announced construction to start in 2021 – opening for citizens in 2023.

The avenue has been presented as one of the city's key responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and for a green recovery.



## PROJECT OUTCOMES Colombia's first large-scale cycle avenue



USD INVESTMENT CAPITAL LEVERAGED

**84,000,000**



ESTIMATED GHG EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS (UNTIL 2050) tCO2E

**182,000**



DAILY TRIPS ON CYCLE HIGHWAY

**42,000**



**A technically-sound, finance-ready project and a comprehensive financial options analysis.** As a result, two development banks expressed interest in offering a direct loan to the city and co-funding from the private sector is being explored. The responsible city department announced the construction schedule in May 2020.



**Improved capacities and skills of city administration to plan and design cycling infrastructure independently in the future.** Overall 20 city officials from 5+ key city departments, including the Secretariats of Mobility, Women, and Planning, regularly engaged in workshops and trainings to address needs regarding barriers around project development and inter-organisational coordination.



**A gender-responsive project concept.** Colombia's first-ever female focused cycling conference identified and raised awareness for gender-specific barriers to using cycling infrastructure. The "50-50 lab" and a role-playing game allowed 60+ representatives from cities and civil society to experience the benefits of equitable cycling infrastructure first-hand.



**Effectively shared knowledge and lessons learned with over 200+ participants from cities, national governments, financiers, NGOs, academia and the private sector.** CFF set up an impactful informal exchange for city delegates. Since 2019, this group has shared information on bike-sharing operators, on the benefits of cycle lanes to local economies and on considerations regarding road safety.



**Strategic dialogues** to forge strong alliances and partnerships with stakeholders, financial institutions and civil society. The Inter-American Development Bank and the World Resources Institute were key supporters of the project contributing, assisting the feasibility study and capacity development.

## Medio Milenio stood ready for Bogotá's COVID-19 response

- In May 2020, the route was set up as a temporary cycle path – re-distributing one lane of the car-highway, reserving it for cyclists.
- The permanent cycle avenue is in the Development Plan and will be built according to schedule, despite COVID-19. It will be built as a vital contribution for the city's green recovery plan.
- The COVID-19 outbreak showed the vulnerability of mass transportation systems. To address the gender dimensions of cycling infrastructure, CFF will provide recommendations to implement measure to make it accessible to all, especially women.

## BOGOTÁ after adding 22 miles of temporary cycling infrastructure

- Existing bike lanes
- Temporary bike lanes during quarantine



# Signs Of Transformation – planning and governing the shift to cycling in Colombia

The CFF seeks impacts and transformative change beyond its projects - supporting shifts in the systems of cities that enable access to finance and further climate action. With our partners, we strive for shifting urban mobility to cycling!



## ■ CREATING FINANCING OPPORTUNITIES



“It is very difficult to access loans that require guarantee from the government which is usually the case for development banks. The CFF helped open up financial options that did not require a national endorsement which was very important.”

### SHIRLEY MARDONEZ

Former Deputy Director, Public Credit, Secretariat for Finance



## ■ USING EMISSIONS AND RESILIENCE AS A KEY CRITERIA FOR DECISIONS



“We realised the importance of framing cycling projects in the context of climate change. Calculating GHG estimates and assessing the project’s resilience were thus put at the centre of project preparation and became an important requirement to access funding”

### DAVID UNIMAN

Former Bicycle Manager - Secretariat for Mobility



“I think the value of the CFF was in showing the different forms of financing and engaging with city officials in terms of showing them the variety of options available.”

### GABRIELE CAPROTTI

British Embassy in Colombia - UK PACT Programme Coordinator



“The Women’s Secretariat now has the capacity to push the issue with all the municipality’s agencies. And that capacity will continue even beyond CFF support. We will not let this go.”

### SANTIAGO NUÑEZ

Former Director of International Cooperation - Secretariat for Women

## ■ PROMOTING GENDER PERSPECTIVES



“Medio Milenio is a taste of how urban planning can be done with a gender approach from the zero-minute. From the Women Secretariat’s perspective it is a very transformational project.”

### CESAR PINZÓN

Former Director of Knowledge Management Secretariat for Women

## ■ COMPREHENSIVE CONCEPTS



“The project is very interesting for us because it has this comprehensive concept which includes social and gender perspectives. Knowing that CFF is supporting the city made the project even more attractive since we knew that the studies would adhere international standard.”

### SONIA PIWEK

Coordinator KFW, Colombia



Medio Milenio is an emblematic project for Bogotá. It is also the type of initiatives in which development banks are interested in because of its impact, both social and environmental”.

### Natalia López

Advisor, Inter-American Development Bank



“Engagement of citizens was unusual but crucial for the project definition. The learnings derived from this process had lasting impact on the way the department prioritized social engagement activities.”

### SERGIO MARTINEZ

Under Secretary of Policy, Secretariat for Mobility

## KEY CHALLENGES

- Bogotá's legal and institutional frameworks complexity stand in the way of access to financial instruments for cycling projects.
- Limited access to climate finance funds for local governments due to application processes centered on national government.
- Elevated risks regarding changes in political support due to elections.

## LESSONS LEARNED

- Thorough timing and jointly forecasting events were deemed crucial to mobilise resources from all partners effectively and to better align the timelines of the CFF study delivery and the city's project cycle.
- Financial expertise remains a key skill lacking in city administrations. CFF thus became a "translator" explaining the results of the financial analysis to the city and contextualising them respectively in the city's reality.
- Following a comprehensive idea phase and two years of project preparation, city officials suggest that more emphasis should have been spent on the financial modelling, e.g. assessing funding sources and respective timelines and requirements first.

## BEST PRACTICES

- CFF's support enabled the city to spend time on the 'idea phase' to establish a comprehensive vision of Medio Milenio. The images created in this process were found to be key to later "sell" the project.
- Identifying "champions" within the city and supporting them to promote the momentum and attention around the project, e.g. with the help of partner governments, was found to be crucial for the project's success.
- The CFF has pioneered new institutional mechanisms with the potential to be scaled-up and institutionalised in Bogotá. In particular, the inter-departmental collaboration through the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) is unprecedented and fostered cross-department coordination for project planning.
- Cycle lanes in Bogotá have usually been designed in conjunction with larger transport projects, e.g. bus rapid transit lines. Medio Milenio's approach is transformative because it considers cycling as an equally important means of transport to other motorised means.
- Climate change considerations have been at the center of CFF technical assistance driving the project to become more resilient and contributing to the city's climate action goals.

## OUTLOOK

- On 1st January 2020, Bogotá's first female mayor Claudia Lopez began her term. She gave the green light to further develop the project.
- In May 2020, Medio Milenio was announced as a flagship project for Bogotá's green recovery from COVID19 impacts.
- Based on experiences in Bogotá, CFF works with three more cities in Colombia to develop comprehensive bikesharing projects – building healthy, green and sustainable cities.



"Where I see the value? The level of detail that we were able to achieve for Medio Milenio. We were able to monetize all the benefits as well as the not-so-traditionally seen benefits of cycling."

**SERGIO MARTINEZ**  
Under Secretary of Policy, Mobility Secretariat

