



8/11/2025

El Paso City Council
City Hall
300 N. Campbell St.
El Paso, TX 79901

Dear Members of the El Paso City Council,

I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed zoning code amendments. With nearly 50 years of experience in real estate and land development, as a broker, a certified planner, and a developer, I believe these amendments will position El Paso for continued growth and sustainability while enhancing the vibrancy and livability of our urban environment.

Reducing the parking requirements in downtown and uptown areas is fully supported and I would prefer to see it incorporated city wide. I fully understand the concerns that some neighborhoods may have about parking demand potentially spilling over onto their residential streets. While this is a valid concern, it can be effectively managed through targeted regulations, such as restricted parking zones or permits for street parking and better signage for available public parking areas. These measures can provide protections for residential areas while still allowing for the flexibility needed to maximize the value and potential of our urban spaces.

Having developed Piazza Escondida, a mixed-use project in El Paso, I have seen how parking needs shift between residential and commercial uses. At times, parking for commercial uses sits unused, only for residential tenants to fill those spots later in the evening. This overlap shows that a more flexible approach to parking can work in the real world, where the market, not rigid zoning laws, helps drive the use of space efficiently.

Progressive cities across the nation, including Phoenix, Austin, San Antonio, Dallas, Fort Worth, and Tucson, all of which El Paso competes with for economic development, have taken significant steps to reduce or eliminate parking minimums as part of their efforts to promote sustainable development, increase housing affordability, and foster walkable urban environments. By reducing parking minimums, these cities, , as El Paso should, are also maximizing their tax revenue from development and redevelopment efforts, when more taxable building square footage gets built where the parking would have been.

Reducing parking requirements is a smart development principle that just makes sense on several reasons. First, it encourages walkability by creating pedestrian-friendly spaces, including sidewalks, parks, and public spaces. This, in turn, fosters more vibrant, livable neighborhoods. Second, it supports sustainable transportation by reducing reliance on cars, which aligns with goals to lower emissions and promote alternatives like walking, cycling, and public transit.

Additionally, reducing parking requirements lowers construction costs, which helps make buildings more affordable. This reduction in cost can also be passed on to renters or buyers, contributing to the availability of affordable housing and business spaces in our city.

Furthermore, by reducing the need for large parking lots, developers can use the land more efficiently, increasing the density of projects and maximizing the economic potential of the property.

The flexibility offered by parking reforms allows developers to respond to actual demand rather than outdated, one-size-fits-all standards. This creates an environment where innovation and creativity can flourish, leading to more diverse and dynamic developments. Moreover, reducing parking requirements can stimulate economic vitality by encouraging mixed-use projects that combine residential, retail, and office spaces, making neighborhoods more active and attractive to businesses, residents, and visitors alike.

On the issue of accessory dwelling units (ADUs), I strongly support the removal of the owner-occupancy requirement and the other modifications. This policy change will offer property owners greater flexibility in utilizing their land, creating more affordable housing options, and promoting housing diversity. It is a policy that many cities have implemented successfully and should be viewed as an important tool to increase livability and address housing challenges.

I encourage the City Council to approve these zoning code amendments, as they represent an important step in enhancing our city's growth, sustainability, and overall quality of life. I look forward to the positive changes that these amendments will bring to El Paso.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Scott Winton. AICP