

CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS
AGENDA SUMMARY FORM



DEPARTMENT / COUNCIL OFFICE: Strategic and Legislative Affairs

AGENDA DATE: 4/1/26

REVISED

9:58 am, Mar 24, 2026

PUBLIC HEARING DATE:

CONTACT PERSON NAME: Omar Martinez

PHONE NUMBER: 915-479-0341

2nd CONTACT PERSON NAME: Ian Voglewede

PHONE NUMBER: 915-299-9409

DISTRICT(S) AFFECTED: All

AGENDA ITEM:

Discussion and action on a Resolution authorizing the submission of an application to the Office of Congressman Tony Gonzales requesting funds from the Community Project Funding program, in the amount of \$4,580,215.77, with no match from the City, for the El Paso Police Drone First Responder Expansion Initiative.

ISSUE STATEMENT:

This action asks City Council to approve the City's application for federal funding through the U.S. Community Project Funding process, which allows members of Congress to request appropriations for eligible local projects. If approved, the City will pursue these federal funds by submitting the El Paso Police Drone First Responder Expansion Initiative through the Office of Congressman Tony Gonzales for consideration in the annual appropriations process. This step positions the project to compete for federal funding and includes outreach to community and institutional partners for letters of support, demonstrating broad local backing and shared investment in advancing the initiative.

BACKGROUND:

The El Paso Police Department (EPPD) Drone First Responder Initiative involves procuring drone vehicles and pods consistent with items typically supported through the Department's COPS grant applications. The City has identified modernization and replacement of essential operational equipment as a continuing need to maintain officer safety, effectiveness, and service readiness. This item authorizes submission of a \$4,580,215.77 Community Project Funding (CPF) request for FY27 through the Office of Congressman Tony Gonzales to support critical equipment purchases as EPPD finalizes specific procurement items.

This grant application does not require a local match. Securing federal funding would advance Council priorities related to public safety, operational readiness, and community protection, while reducing reliance on local funding sources. Purchases will be in compliance with the American Security Drone Act of 2023 and state and federal laws, as required. The attached resolution provides formal authorization for application submission and acceptance of funds, if awarded.

COUNCIL OPTIONS:

I make a motion to authorize the submission of an application to the Office of Congressman Tony Gonzales requesting funds from the Community Project Funding program in the amount of \$4,580,215.77, with no match from the City, for the El Paso Police Drone First Responder Expansion Initiative.

COMMITTEE REVIEW AND/OR RECOMMENDATION:

n/a

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH (if applicable, as an attachment) – please include:

Supporting partners include the Rio Grande Council of Governments.

RELATED CITY POLICIES:

City of El Paso Grants Management Policy
ASF signed by Omar Martinez, Assistant Director, on behalf of Ian Voglewede, Director of Strategic and Legislative Affairs.

PRIOR COUNCIL ACTION:

In 2025, City Council authorized the submission of five applications to the Office of Congresswoman Veronica Escobar requesting funds from the Community Project Funding and one application to the Office of Congressman Tony Gonzales. See items: 25-617, 25-582, 25-526, 25-525, and 25-524.

LEGAL REVIEW:

- Legal counsel reviewed as a part of Council packet
- Legal counsel reviewed in advance of packet as an individual item

AMOUNT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:

Total of \$4,580,215.77, with the federal government contributing \$4,580,215.77 and no match from the City.

REPORTING OF CONTRIBUTION OR DONATION TO CITY COUNCIL:

N/A

NAME	AMOUNT (\$)

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution
2. Attachments
3. Application sent to the Office of Congressman Tony Gonzales, as submitted. The funding amount was reduced to \$4,580,215.77 total per guidance from the Office of Congressman Gonzales.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Omar Martinez

915-479-0341

martinezol@elpasotexas.gov

*****REQUIRED AUTHORIZATION*****

SIGNATURE:

Omar Martinez

Digitally signed by Omar Martinez
Date: 2026.03.24 08:46:25 -06'00'

Signed on behalf of
Director Ian Voglewede

(If Agenda Summary Form is initiated by Purchasing, client department should sign also)

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, members of the U.S. Congress may request funding to support specific community projects within their districts as part of the annual federal appropriations process; and

WHEREAS, such funding is referred to as “Community Project Funding” within the U.S. House of Representatives; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Congressman Tony Gonzales is currently accepting Community Project Funding requests; and

WHEREAS, the City of El Paso has identified the El Paso Police Drone First Responder Expansion Initiative (the “Project”) as worthy of funding through the Community Project Funding process; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Ordinance No. 016016, the City Council previously designated the City Manager as the authorized signatory for City grant applications and acceptances in the interest of efficiency of administrative governmental operations.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL PASO:

THAT City staff is authorized to submit an application to the Office of Congressman Tony Gonzales requesting funds from the Community Project Funding program requesting an appropriation from the Community Project Funding program in the amount of \$4,580,215.77, with no match from the City, for El Paso Police Department Drone First Responder Expansion Initiative.

1. **THAT**, the City Council, through the City Manager, has authorized the Grants Administrator as the City’s Authorized Official for purposes of compliance with grant application, administration, and reporting requirements with the authority to apply, submit, accept, reject, alter, or terminate grant applications, agreements, and related documents on behalf of the City.
2. **THAT** the Grants Administrator is authorized to prepare and submit, on behalf of the City of El Paso, an application to the Community Project Funding Program seeking financial assistance for the El Paso Police Department Drone First Responder Expansion Initiative.
3. **THAT**, the City of El Paso shall provide all applicable matching funds for the Grant, if applicable.
4. **THAT**, in the event of loss or misuse of said grant funds, the City of El Paso agrees to return all such funds for said grant to the Community Project Funding program in accordance with applicable grant requirements.
5. **THAT**, the City Council, through the City Manager, hereby designates the Deputy Chief Financial Officer, Comptroller as the City’s Financial Officer for purposes of compliance with grant requirements imposed by the Community Project Funding program and other applicable granting authorities, either of whom is authorized to

submit financial and programmatic reports and to perform grant-related actions on behalf of the City.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the City Council, through the City Manager, hereby designates the Deputy Chief Financial Officer, Comptroller Grants Administrator, as the City's Financial Officer who is authorized to execute any related documents to carry the intent of this Resolution, including but not limited to the grant agreement, the authorization of budget transfers, and/or revisions to the operation plan, as well as any grant amendments, corrections, or extensions of the grant agreement that increase, decrease, or de-obligate program funds, provided that no additional City funds are required.

APPROVED this ____ day of April, 2026.

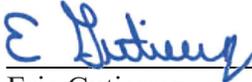
CITY OF EL PASO:

Renard U. Johnson
Mayor

ATTEST:

Laura D. Prine
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Eric Gutierrez
Senior Assistant City Attorney

APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:

 Signed on behalf
of Director Ian Voglewede

Ian Voglewede, Director of Strategic and
Legislative Affairs



El Paso Police Department

MAYOR

Renard U. Johnson

The Honorable Harold "Hal" Rogers
Chairman

The Honorable Matt Cartwright
Ranking Member

CITY COUNCIL**District 1**

Alejandra Chávez

District 2

Dr. Josh Acevedo

District 3

Deanna M. Rocha

District 4

Cynthia Boyar Trejo

District 5

Ivan Niño

District 6

Art Fierro

District 7

Lily Limón

District 8

Chris Canales

CITY MANAGER

Dionne Mack

House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce,
Justice, Science and Related Agencies
2362-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Cartwright:

On behalf of the El Paso Police Department, we express our strong support for the Drone First Responder Expansion proposal submitted by Representative Tony Gonzales (R-San Antonio). We believe this project is vital to the safety and security of the El Paso region and critical to its efforts to support national border security initiatives.

The Drone First Responder Expansion Program seeks to add 12 drone pods to the department's growing need for responding to calls for service. The American made drone pods will be strategically positioned throughout the city with the expectation of reducing incident response times by 25%.

The El Paso Police Department is an integral border security partner. Our efforts include supporting the Texas National Guard and state troopers to secure the Rio Grande borders, combat cartels, and track and disrupt criminal organizations in the El Paso/Juarez area. This expansion will specifically address enhancing crime prevention initiatives and increase police visibility in neighborhoods with the result of reducing violent and property crime incidents by a projected 10% annually.

The El Paso Police Department's Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) team is mission-focused, dedicated, and consistently delivers strong results. The proposed plan recognizes the achieved value that our existing program has delivered with drone-led policing and stands to fill a critical resource gap.

We respectfully urge you to favorably consider this funding request.

Sincerely,

Peter F. Pacillas
Chief of Police



Peter F. Pacillas – Chief of Police

Chief Gregory K. Allen Police Headquarters
911 N. Raynor | El Paso, TX 79903

Office (915) 212-4000 | www.elpasotexas.gov/police



DELIVERING EXCEPTIONAL SERVICES



Annette Gutierrez – Executive Director
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El Paso, Texas 79925

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March 18, 2026

The Honorable Harold “Hal” Rogers
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Commerce, Justice, Science and
Related Agencies
2362-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Matt Cartwright
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Commerce, Justice, Science and
Related Agencies
2362-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Support for El Paso Police Department Drone First Responder Expansion Initiative

Dear Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Cartwright:

I am writing to express strong support for the El Paso Police Department Drone First Responder Expansion initiative. This project represents an important opportunity to enhance public safety, expand technological capability, and build on the operational strengths that have made El Paso a recognized leader in UAS tactical operations.

El Paso’s public safety agencies have developed one of the most advanced and mission-focused UAS programs in the region. The existing team consistently delivers high-quality results, utilizing drone-based response to improve situational awareness, increase efficiency, and provide critical support during complex incidents. Expanding this program would further strengthen a proven model that other communities look to as an example of innovative and responsible UAS integration.

The expansion plan includes the deployment of additional drone units positioned strategically throughout the El Paso. These resources would support faster response times, enhance real-time visibility for first responders, and help reduce risks to both the public and responding personnel. Importantly, this initiative directly supports proactive crime-prevention efforts and aligns with El Paso’s continued commitment to leveraging technology in service of community safety.

The Rio Grande Council of Governments has a long history of collaboration in public safety initiatives with the El Paso Police Department. I respectfully encourage full consideration of this proposal and the positive impact it will bring to our region. This expansion would reinforce El Paso’s leadership in modern UAS tactical operations while delivering meaningful benefits to the people who live, work, and visit our community.

Sincerely,

Annette Gutierrez
Executive Director





PILLARS	ECONOMIC MOBILITY <i>Opportunity & prosperity that reflects El Paso</i>	PUBLIC SAFETY <i>Protection and visibility are a baseline responsibility</i>	INFRASTRUCTURE <i>People, places, and daily life that feels connected</i>	QUALITY OF LIFE <i>A city that is both livable and enjoyable</i>	GOOD GOVERNANCE <i>Leadership that is responsive + reliable</i>
<p>KEY INSIGHTS</p> <p><i>2025 Community Survey Results + Resident Conversations feedback methods during Assessment Phase</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents want to feel that opportunity is for them, not happening around them Overall satisfaction with the availability of living-wage jobs remains low at 22% However, younger residents (47%) and lower-income residents (44%) report substantially higher satisfaction, suggesting recent economic progress may be felt more strongly among these groups Among residents dissatisfied with economic development in El Paso, growth is most visible through business and commercial activity rather than improvements in everyday job opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety is viewed as a defining strength of El Paso to be preserved El Paso resident respondents report a higher sense of overall safety (63%) than both the cohort (55%) and national averages (62%) While most residents in El Paso are satisfied with the overall sense of safety, perceptions of safety vary across demographic groups Older residents are more likely to rate safety positively (68%) as compared to younger respondents (58%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents care most about the infrastructure that improves everyday access—safe and clean streets + spaces to gather Satisfaction with the condition of streets (31%) emerged as a key opportunity Respondents said they wanted to see El Paso invest in more community spaces such as parks (29% of labeled responses) and better mobility and transportation (19% of labeled responses) People want easier ways to move and interact across the city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of life acts as an integrating pillar that ties together opportunity, safety, infrastructure, and sense of belonging The majority of residents are satisfied with their quality of life, with 60% being positive (above the cohort average of 59%), and only 11% showing negative sentiment Sense of community (53%) and acceptance of residents from all backgrounds (65% vs. 60% cohort average) emerged as key strategic strengths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents expect responsive leadership that listens and communicates clearly Community pride and resilience are strong themes Engagement is valued not as a one-time input, but as an ongoing relationship Timely responses to resident concerns and service requests <p><i>Workforce feedback:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See themselves as stewards of El Paso's identity—don't just work for the City; they are personally invested Streets, infrastructure, and basics matter and are interpreted as a signal of care
<p>GOALS BY PILLAR</p>	<p>CREATE GROWTH opportunities that strengthen economic mobility and our local identity to keep families rooted and thriving in El Paso.</p>	<p>SUSTAIN EL PASO'S STANDARD of safety by prioritizing prevention, visibility, and a shared responsibility.</p>	<p>STRENGTHEN INFRASTRUCTURE by making care and improvements visible and enabling easier, safer movement across the city to help residents feel more connected to their neighborhoods and their city.</p>	<p>ENHANCE THE ENVIRONMENTS that make daily life livable and enjoyable through welcoming spaces, accessible human services, and experiences that support wellbeing.</p>	<p>REINFORCE GOOD GOVERNANCE PRACTICES focused on reliable approaches, so our workforce, residents, and partners feel heard, informed, and a part of the City's direction.</p>
<p>CORE STRATEGIES & FOCUS AREAS</p> <p><i>(Adopted two-year plan)</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Activating workforce pathways toward livable wages Focus areas: employer-aligned skills training, small to medium-business growth, business-driven career mobility, and reducing workforce participation barriers (i.e., childcare) 2. Supporting individuals, local businesses, and key industries Focus areas: collaboration, incentive policies, cross-sector economic partnerships, expanded business support resources, local innovation and startup growth, attracting tourism (key industry) 3. Defining how the City will support the expansion of housing options and affordability Focus areas: infill, efficient land use development, housing aligned with community cost of living, and community housing stability 4. Streamlining permitting and licensing processes to support efficient, timely building construction Focus areas: fast-track permitting and licensing system, clear development process guidance, improved interdepartmental coordination, predictable project review timelines 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recruiting and retaining first responders Focus areas: Support responder well-being, maintain reliable emergency response, and reduce staff turnover 2. Investing in community safety programs, training, and equipment Focus areas: Keep responders prepared and ready, use data to guide safety efforts 3. Focusing on key transportation planning and traffic management Focus areas: Improve lighting for safer streets, increase traffic safety awareness, work with community safety partners 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expanding street maintenance and roadway improvements Focus areas: Fix the streets that need it most, maintain streets and infrastructure regularly, funding alternatives, capacity to implement 2. Enhancing community pride through cleanliness, maintenance, and beautification of public spaces Focus areas: Maintain what we have first (i.e., facilities, standard of care), work with neighborhoods to improve spaces and keep areas clean, share information on how residents can help (provide visual access/tools) 3. Facilitating easier and safer movement for people of all ages and abilities Focus areas: Improve safe travel options/convenience for everyone, partner with schools and communities on safety 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Spotlighting current community offerings and amenities that invite discovery, enjoyment, and connection Focus areas: Promote awareness of local amenities, maintain welcoming public spaces, improve community program communication and wayfinding, complete the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, climate and sustainability 2. Making essential human services easier to access and navigate Focus areas: Strengthen service delivery partnerships, meet residents where they are (underserved), expand education and prevention resources (public health navigation and outreach) 3. Encouraging gathering, recreation, and cultural expression across neighborhoods by continuing to build experiences Focus areas: Support neighborhood-based activities, encourage youth involvement (i.e. UNICEF USA Child Friendly City Initiative), use feedback to improve experiences 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Creating clear, accessible communication pathways for community input and engagement Focus areas: Make it easier to share input, follow up with residents, use clear and simple language, broaden collaboration with Council District Offices, engage youth in social media approach 2. Sharing a visible sense of progress and meaningful wins that convey the value and overall quality of services provided Focus areas: Clearly show community progress, be transparent about services, communicate service expectations 3. Identify and implement sustainable fiscal opportunities to support community priorities Focus areas: Work together (internal and external channels) to improve efficiency and long-term financial stability



Purpose of Project

The expansion of the Patrol and Drone First Responder program will enhance the El Paso Police Department's ability to rapidly assess critical incidents, improve officer safety, and deliver real-time intelligence to the field. This growth supports more efficient resource deployment, strengthens community protection, and advances the department's commitment to modern, technology-driven policing.

Why should this request be considered a priority for the people of Texas' 23rd Congressional District? How would this project benefit the public and why is it a responsible use of taxpayer dollars?

This project should be considered a priority for the people of Texas' 23rd Congressional District because an expanded Patrol Drone First Responder program will significantly enhance public safety by reducing emergency response times, improving real-time situational awareness, and enabling faster detection of threats, hazards, evidence collection, missing persons, and criminal activity. The district's extensive border region presents unique public safety challenges, and drone-based rapid response strengthens information gathering, supports coordinated interdiction efforts, and improves officer and community safety without increasing risk to personnel. By enabling more efficient use of limited resources and reducing the need for costly ground deployments, the program delivers measurable public benefit and represents a responsible, cost-effective use of taxpayer dollars.

The expanded Patrol Drone program has the potential to drastically reduce operating costs by reducing unnecessary dispatches, accelerating call resolution, reducing officer injuries. Further, these drones will supplement use of features currently being underutilized with our existing technology stack.

What is the total cost of the project? Will the requested dollar amount satisfy the full request? Please indicate if the project is anticipated to require additional federal dollars in later fiscal years.

The total cost of the project is \$13,120,678.40. Additional funds will not be required in later fiscal years.

Please provide cost breakdown of the requested funding amount (cost summaries and/or budget estimates such as "\$500,000 for X and \$500,000 for Y" for a total of \$1,000,000).

\$3,548,437.20 is intended to fund the purchase of 40 vehicles to support the scalability of the drone response expansion. Currently, not all department vehicles do not possess the technology to leverage the enhanced situational awareness provided with the use of the drones. Approximately 85% of the fleet is in need of replacement. New vehicles would allow for integrated communication systems and technologies that support a more efficient, modern patrol function.

\$9,572,241.20 will be used to cover the costs of purchasing 25 Drone Pods with 5-year support and maintenance.

Has the project received Federal funding before and, if so, how much, when, and from which agency or agencies and program(s)?

The project received federal funding via the American Rescue Plan Act in May 2022 on behalf of the US Treasury. \$560k was allocated and used to purchase drone docks.

Can this project spend a smaller amount of appropriated funds within 12 months of the enactment of the appropriations act? If yes, please provide any details that may be helpful for understanding the scalability of the project.

Yes. The quantities reflected can be scaled down in increments of 25% to match implementation deadlines.