

7681 Barton

City Plan Commission — September 25, 2025



CASE NUMBER: PZST24-00011
CASE MANAGER: Saul J. G. Pina, (915) 212-1604, PinaSJ@elpasotexas.gov
PROPERTY OWNER: Harmony Road Recovery
REPRESENTATIVE: Wright and Dalbin Architects
LOCATION: 7681 Barton St. (District 7)
PROPERTY AREA: 1.50 acres
REQUEST: Special Permit and Detailed Site Development Plan approval to allow for the use of Sanitarium in the R-3 (Residential) zone district One (1) letter, two (2) phone calls, and four (4) emails in opposition received as of September 17, 2025
PUBLIC INPUT:

SUMMARY OF REQUEST: The applicant is requesting a special permit and detailed site development plan approval for the use of Sanitarium in the R-3 (Residential) zone district.

SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommendation is **PENDING**.



Figure A. Detailed Site Development Plan Superimposed on Aerial Imagery.

DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST: The applicant is requesting review and approval of a special permit and detailed site development plan for the proposed use of sanitarium on the subject property. The property is zoned R-3 (Residential) and the detailed site plan shows an integrated facility with four (4) existing buildings. The integrated facility includes the following:

- **Building 1:** A 6,504-square-foot boarding house with a maximum height of 22 feet.
- **Building 2:** A 4,015-square-foot community room and office with a maximum height of 13 feet.
- **Building 3:** A 3,660-square-foot office and treatment building with a maximum height of 15 feet.
- **Building 4:** A 908-square-foot office and storage building with a maximum height of 10 feet.

The integrated facility will provide a boarding house, a community room, treatment areas for incoming patients, and offices. Building 3 is to be used as a sanitarium. Twenty-three (23) vehicular parking spaces and three (3) bicycle parking spaces to accommodate patrons and personnel will be provided on site. Main access to the subject property is provided from Franklin Drive. The detailed site development plan demonstrates compliance with all applicable standards per the El Paso City Code and is binding.

COMPLIANCE WITH SPECIAL PERMIT REQUIREMENTS (El Paso City Code 20.04.320.D)	
Criteria	Does the Request Comply?
1. The proposed development complies, except to the extent waived, varied or modified pursuant to the provisions of this title, with all of the standards and conditions applicable in the zoning district in which it is proposed to be located.	Yes. The detailed site development plan demonstrates compliance with all other applicable standards per the El Paso City Code. The applicant shall comply with all city and state regulations for in-patient treatment and personal care facilities.
2. Furthers <i>Plan El Paso</i> and applicable neighborhood plans or policies.	Yes. Through the special permit review and approval process, the proposed sanitarium will be integrated with the residential neighborhood, ensuring that any potential impacts are mitigated.
3. Adequately served by and will not impose an undue burden upon public improvements.	Yes. The subject property is located at the intersection of Franklin Drive and Barton Street, both of which are classified as local roadways on the City of El Paso's Major Thoroughfare Plan (MTP). The proposed development will not impose an undue burden on public improvements, as most of the necessary facilities are already located on-site and only minimal upgrades, such as sidewalks and landscaping, are required.
4. Any impacts of the proposed development on adjacent property are adequately mitigated with the design, proposed construction and phasing of the site development.	Yes. No impact is anticipated from the approval of the proposed special permit and detailed site development plan. The integrated facility is required to comply with all applicable zoning, city, and state regulations to ensure the protection of neighboring properties.
5. The design of the proposed development mitigates substantial environmental problems.	Yes. Subject property does not involve greenfield/ environmentally sensitive land or arroyo disturbance.
6. The proposed development provides adequate landscaping and/or screening where needed.	Yes. The proposed sanitarium development includes screening and landscape to enhance the site and create a buffer from surrounding residential areas.
7. The proposed development is compatible with adjacent structures and uses.	Yes. The buildings of the proposed sanitarium development have a residential character that is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. Additionally, on-site parking will be screened from view, and operations will be managed to prevent major traffic and other disruptions in the area.

8. The proposed development is not materially detrimental to the property adjacent to the site.	Yes. The proposed sanitarium development will count with minimal landscape and screening upgrades while maintaining its existing residential character. Additionally, all construction and operational activities will be managed to prevent any disruption to neighboring properties.
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COMPLIANCE WITH *PLAN EL PASO* GOALS & POLICIES – When evaluating whether a proposed special permit is in accordance with *Plan El Paso*, consider the following factors:

Criteria	Does the Request Comply?
Future Land Use Map: Proposed zone change is compatible with the Future Land Use designation for the property: G-3, Post-war: This sector applies to transitional neighborhoods typically developed from the 1950s through the 1980s. Streets were laid out with curvilinear patterns without alleys and shopping centers are located at major intersections behind large parking lots. This sector is generally stable but would benefit from strategic suburban retrofits to supplement the limited housing stock and add missing civic and commercial uses.	Yes, the proposed sanitarium facility meets the intent of the G-3, Post-War Future Land Use designation. The facility will integrate with the residential area by providing a compatible institutional use that offers a needed service to the neighborhood without deviating from the character of the surrounding properties.
Compatibility with Surroundings: The proposed use is compatible with those surrounding the site: R-3 (Residential): The purpose of this district is to promote and preserve residential development within the city to create basic neighborhood units. It is intended that the district regulations maintain a low density of dwelling units supporting a suburban-urban interface that permits developments utilizing varying lot configurations. The regulations of the districts will permit primarily single-family and two-family residential areas, and recreational and institutional uses incidental to and serving the neighborhood.	Yes. While the property is located in an R-3 (Residential) zone district, the proposed sanitarium is not permissible by right. Review and approval of a special permit is required to ensure the facility adheres to specific conditions and is compatible with the predominantly residential zoning in the area.
THE PROPOSED PROJECT'S EFFECT ON THE PROPERTY AND SURROUNDING PROPERTY, AFTER EVALUATING THE FOLLOWING FACTORS:	
Historic District or Special Designations & Study Area Plans: Any historic district or other special designations that may be applicable. Any adopted small area plans, including land-use maps in those plans.	The proposed sanitarium facility is not located within a historic district or special designation area.
Potential Adverse Effects: Potential adverse effects that might be caused by approval or denial of the requested special permit and detailed site development plan.	The proposed facility is not expected to have a negative impact on the community, but additional approvals may be required to ensure compliance with city and state regulations.
Natural Environment: Anticipated effects on the natural environment.	The subject property does not involve greenfield/environmentally sensitive land or arroyo disturbance.
Stability: Whether the area is stable or in transition.	The area is stable, with no changes in zoning or other zoning processes in the area within the last 10 years.

Socioeconomic & Physical Conditions: Any changed social, economic, or physical conditions that make the existing zoning no longer suitable for the property.	The existing zoning for the property will not be changed. However, due to the proposed use of a sanitarium, a special permit is required by city code. This permit will ensure the use is regulated to maintain the low-intensity character of the area.
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ADEQUACY OF PUBLIC FACILITIES, SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE: The subject property is located at the intersection of Barton Street and Franklin Drive. Both are local roadways on the City of El Paso's Major Thoroughfare Plan (MTP). Vehicular access is provided via Franklin Drive. There are currently no bus stops available within walking distance (0.25 mi.) in the area.

SUMMARY OF DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW COMMENTS: No adverse comments from reviewing departments were received.

PUBLIC COMMENT: The subject property lies within the Mission Valley Civic Association and the Corridor 20 Civic Association, all of which were notified of the request. In addition, the applicant conducted two (2) separate meetings events with the neighborhood, the latest being on July 26, 2025. Notices were sent to property owners within 300 feet of the subject property on August 29, 2025. As of September 17, 2025, the Planning Division received one (1) letter, two (2) phone calls, and four (4) emails, in opposition to the special permit and detailed site development plan request, citing safety concerns, given the potential for increased crime and the proximity to a school and church. The opposition includes communication from the Mission Valley Civic Association and the Corridor 20 Civic Association.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: The property received legal nonconforming status on February 4, 2025, due to one of the existing buildings encroaching into both the rear and side yard setbacks. Additionally, the existing fencing along Franklin Drive and Barton Street, as well as on a neighboring side, will be reconfigured to address encroachments on the right-of-way and adjacent properties.

CITY PLAN COMMISSION OPTIONS:

The purpose of the Zoning Ordinance is to promote the health, safety, morals and general welfare of the City. The City Plan Commission (CPC) has the authority to advise City Council on Zoning matters. In evaluating the request, the CPC may take any of the following actions:

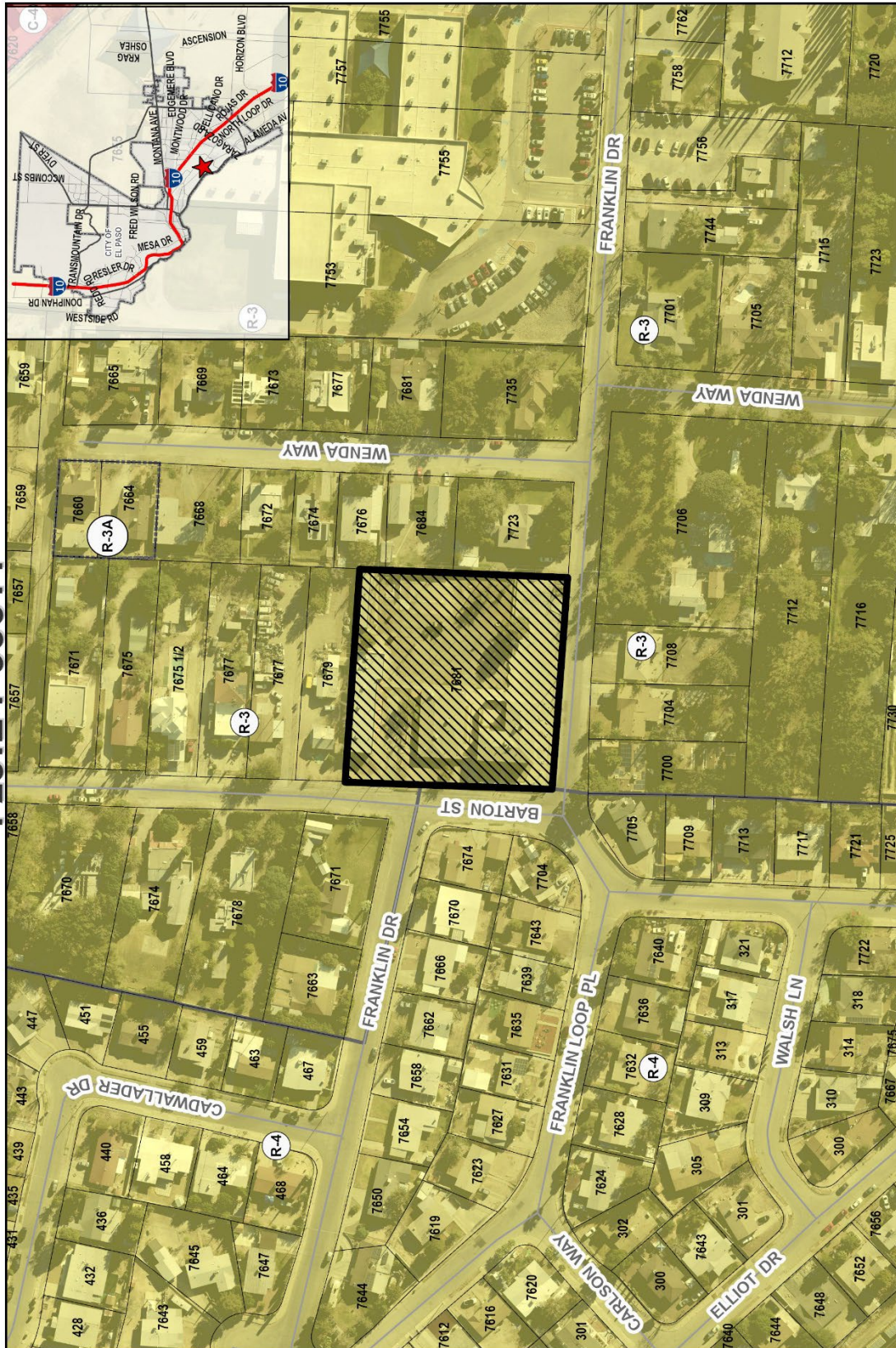
1. **Recommend Approval** of the special permit request, finding that the request is in conformance with the review criteria of *Plan El Paso* as reflected in the Staff Report, or that the request is in conformance with other criteria that the CPC identifies from the Comprehensive Plan.
2. **Recommend Approval of the special permit request With Modifications** to bring the request into conformance with the review criteria of *Plan El Paso* as reflected in the Staff Report, or other criteria that the CPC identifies from the Comprehensive Plan.
3. **Recommend Denial** of the special permit request, finding that the request does not conform to the review criteria of *Plan El Paso* as reflected in the Staff Report, or other criteria that the CPC identifies from the Comprehensive Plan.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Zoning Map
2. Detailed Site Plan
3. Elevations
4. Department Comments
5. Neighborhood Notification Boundary Map
6. Public Input

ATTACHMENT 1

PZST24-00011

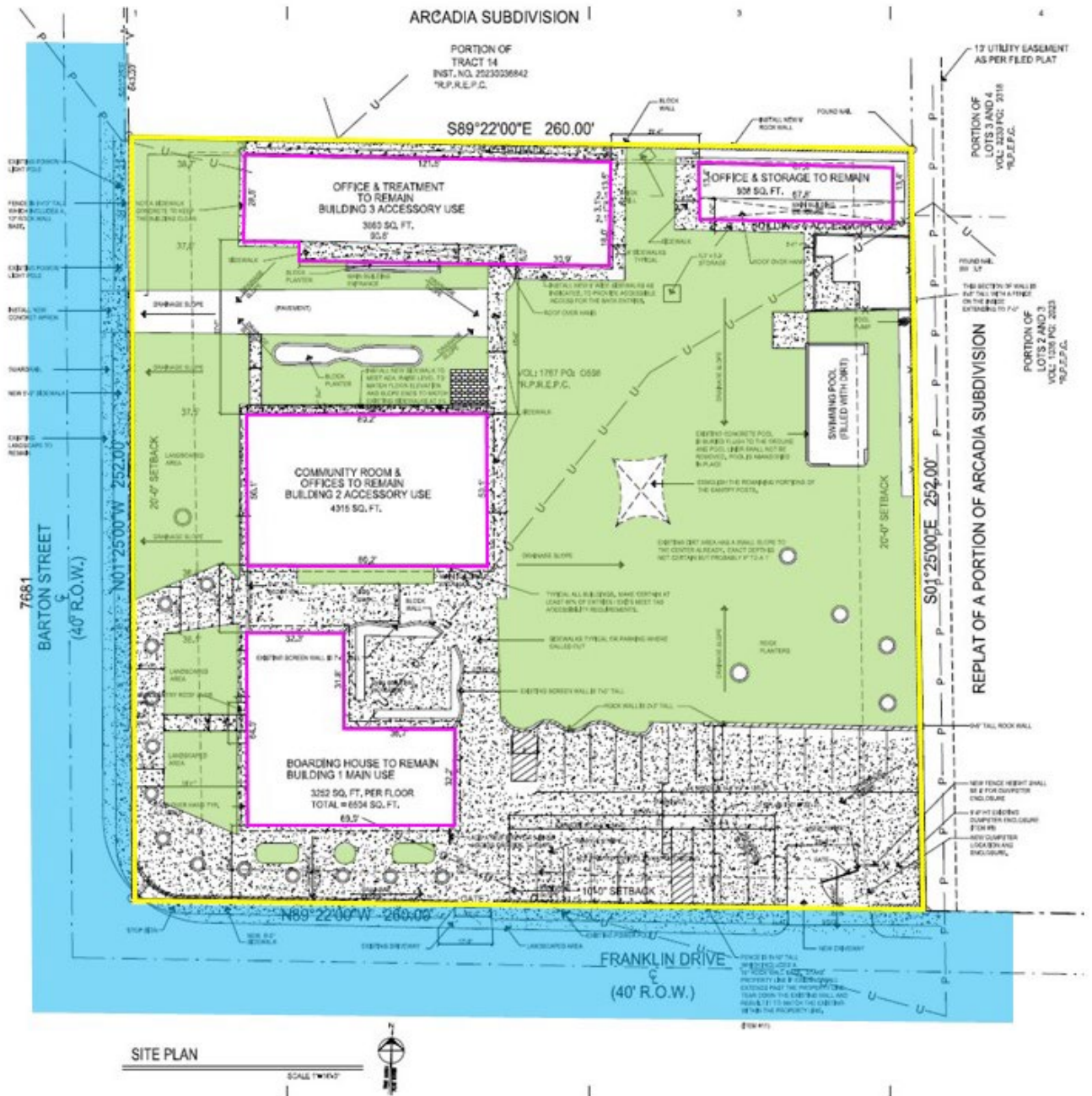


Subject Property

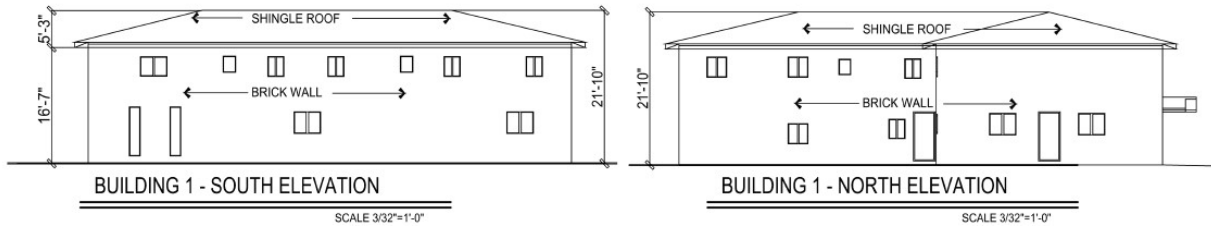


This map is designed for illustrative purposes only. The features depicted here are approximate and more site-specific studies may be required to draw accurate conclusions. Enlargements of this map to scales greater than its original can induce errors and may lead to misinterpretations of the data. The Planning & Inspection Department Planning Division makes no claim to its accuracy or completeness.

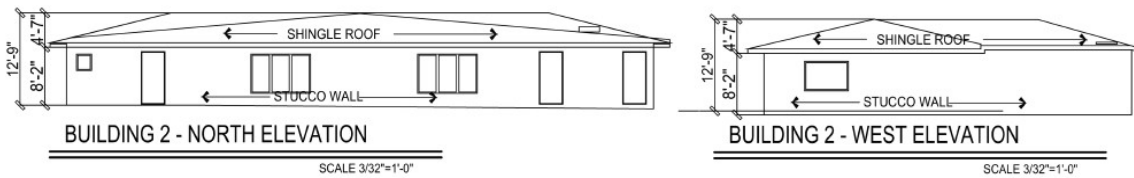
ATTACHMENT 2



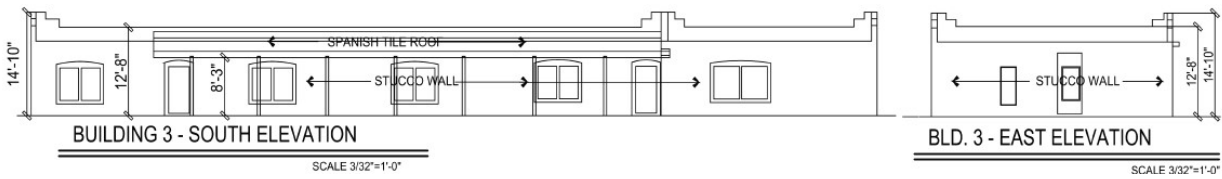
ATTACHMENT 3



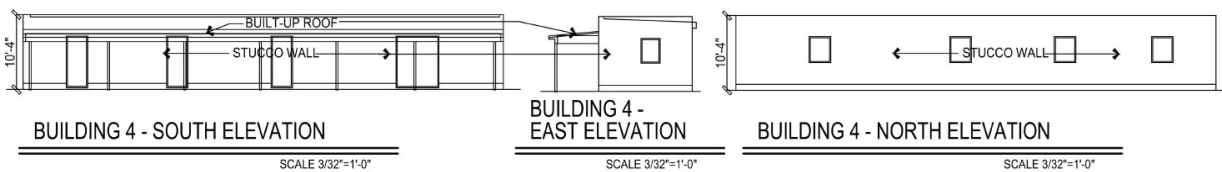
Building 1: Boarding House. Maximum height of 22 feet



Building 2: Community Room and Offices. Maximum height of 13 feet



Building 3: Office and Treatment. Maximum height of 15 feet



Building 4: Office and Storage. Maximum height of 10 feet

ATTACHMENT 4

Planning and Inspections Department – Planning Division

Staff recommends **Approval** of the special permit and detailed site development plan request per Section 20.04.320 – Special Permit, and Section 20.04.150 – Detailed Site Development Plan.

Planning and Inspections Department – Plan Review & Landscaping Division

No objections to the proposed special permit. At the time of submittal for building permits, the project will need to comply with all applicable municipal and building code requirements.

Planning and Inspections Department – Land Development

Recommend approval. No objections to the proposed special permit. At the time of submittal for building permits, the project will need to comply with all applicable municipal and building code requirements.

Environment Services

Ensure that if a dumpster is used, a closure is installed for it.

Note: The requirement for a dumpster closure is compliant, as declared on the site plan.

Streets and Maintenance Department

Transportation Engineering:

No objections to special permit.

Street Lights Department:

Do not object to this request.

For the development of this project a complete set of plans shall be submitted to Street Lights Department for review showing the minimum requirements for street illumination proposals**. The submission shall contain but shall not necessarily be limited to plans indicating the location on the premises of all lighting fixtures, both proposed and existing on the site***. The description of all lighting fixtures, both proposed and existing. Photometric data. Plans shall show street illumination design and details. El Paso city code is applicable to this process, Street Design Manual (SDM)* and any other applicable standards or requirements of the city.

Street Lights Department requires that all projects that involves a roadway is to be evaluated for lighting requirements based on the City of El Paso Street Design Manual (SDM) and the Design Standards for Construction (DSC) according to City of El Paso Codes (cited below). While developing a project or construction area the existing street illumination system shall be protected and preserved. Complete survey for street illumination system shall be shown on plans. Any change on existing street illumination systems shall be coordinated with Street Lights Department. The applicant is responsible for any relocations or adjustments of a street light.

City of El Paso Codes to be followed:

*Title 19 - 19.16.010 - Streetlighting.

**18.18.190 – Submission contents.

*** 19.02.040 Criteria for approval.

Sun Metro

Recommend approval. Proposed land use does not affect Sun Metro transit services.

El Paso Water

El Paso Water (EPWater) does not object to this request.

Water:

There is an existing 6-inch diameter water main extending along Barton St., located approximately 17 feet east of the western right-of-way line. This main is available for service.

There is an existing 8-inch diameter water main extending along Franklin Dr., located approximately 31 feet south of the northern right-of-way. This main is available for service

EPWater records indicate one (1) 1-inch domestic service and two (2) ¾-inch domestic meters. The address for these services is 7681 Barton St.

Previous water pressure from fire hydrant #01015, located at the northwest corner of Franklin Dr. and Barton St. has yielded a static pressure of 100 (psi), a residual pressure of 94 (psi), and a discharge of 1,061 gallons per minute. The owner should, for his own protection and at his own expense, install at the discharge side of each water meter a pressure regulator, strainer and relief valve, to be set for pressure as desired by the customer. The Lot owner shall be responsible for the operation and maintenance of the above-described water pressure regulating device.

Sewer:

There is an existing 8-inch diameter sanitary sewer main extending along Barton St., located approximately 24-feet east of the western right-of-way. This main is available for service.

There is an existing 8-inch diameter sanitary sewer main extending along Franklin Dr., located approximately 15.5-feet south of the northern right-of-way. This main is available for service.

General:

EPWater requires a new service application to provide service to the property. New service applications are available at 1154 Hawkins, 3rd floor and should be made 6 to 8 weeks in advance of construction to ensure water for construction work. A site plan, utility plan, grading and drainage plans, landscaping plan, the legal description of the property and a certificate-of-compliance are required at the time of application. Service will be provided in accordance with the current EPWater – PSB Rules and Regulations. The applicant is responsible for the costs of any necessary on-site and off-site extensions, relocations or adjustments of water and sanitary sewer lines and appurtenances.

Stormwater:

EP Water-SW reviewed the property described above and provide the following comments:

- Barton St. & Franklin Dr. were not designed to incorporate any outside storm water runoff; the above property is responsible for maintaining adequate provisions to accommodate all runoff generated from within the property plus one-half the runoff generated from the streets abutting his it.
- Walls constructed abutting street right-of-ways shall be constructed with a series of drain pipes allowing the street runoff to be conveyed to the subject property.
- As per Municipal Code: new developments and redevelopments are required to maintain the pre-development hydrologic response in their post-development state as nearly as practicable in order to reduce flooding. The code also encourages the use of nonstructural storm water management such as the preservation of greenspace, water harvesting, and other conservation efforts, to the maximum extent practicable, per Chapter 19.19, Section 19.19.010, and Subparagraph A-2 & A-5.

Note: Comment to be addressed during the permitting stage. Stormwater to be managed as indicated by the detailed site development plan.

El Paso County 911 District

The 911 District has no comments or concerns regarding these zonings.

El Paso Electric

No comments regarding the case.

Texas Gas Service

No comments/objections.

Fire Department

No comments received.

Texas Department of Transportation

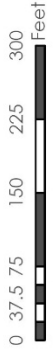
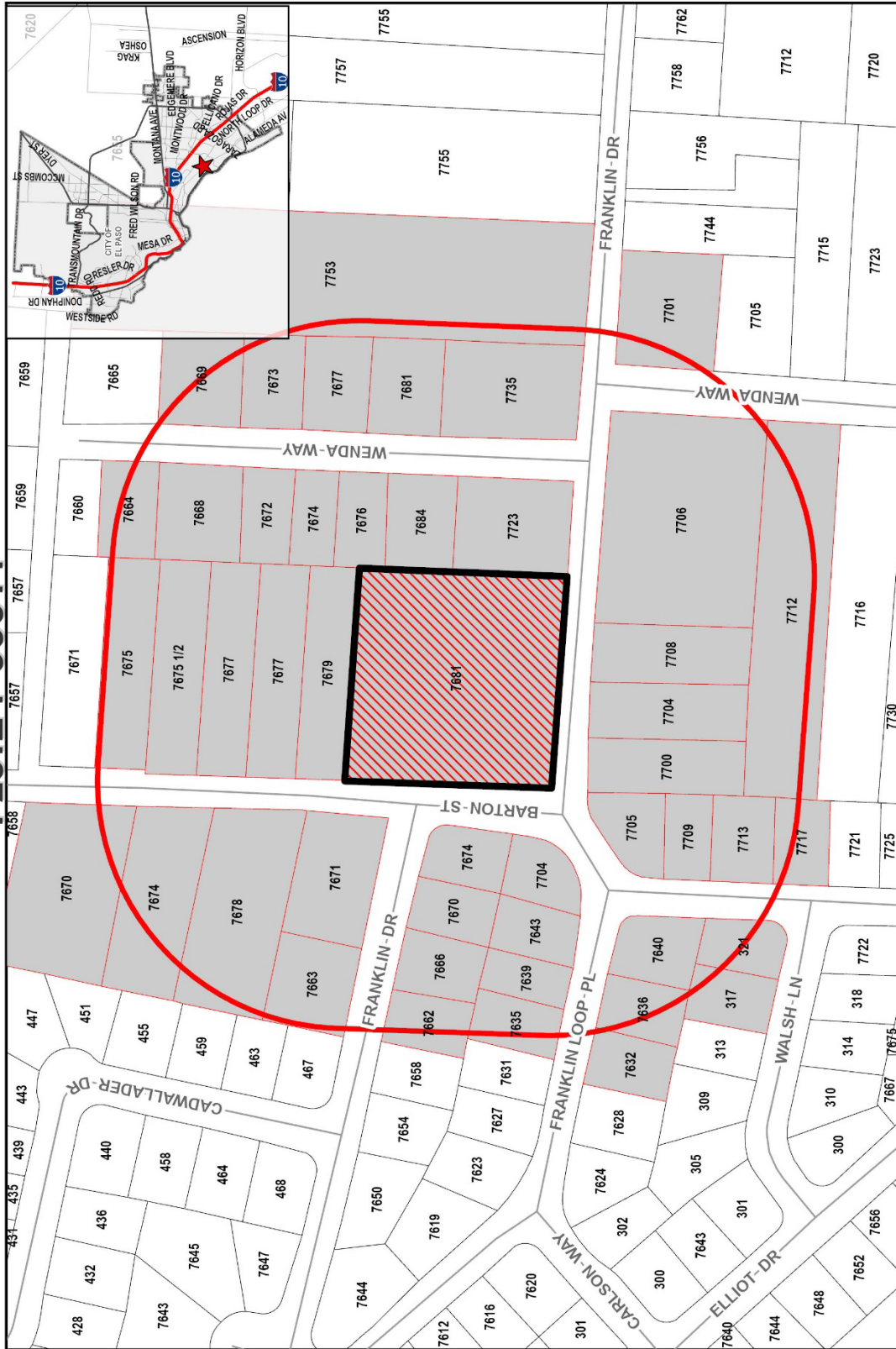
No comments received.

El Paso County Water Improvement District No. 1

No comments received.

ATTACHMENT 5

PZST24-00011



- Subject Property
- 300 Feet Notice Area
- Notified Properties



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ATTACHMENT 6

Opposition to Special Permit for Harmony Road Recovery at 7681 Barton St.

Wenda Drive Neighborhood Watch
El Paso, Texas 79915

Opposition to Special Permit for Harmony Road Recovery at 7681 Barton St.

January 25, 2025

Dear Saul Pina,

We are writing to express our strong opposition to the Special Permit for the Harmony Road Recovery rehabilitation program facility that is already operating at 7681 Barton St. Our concerns stem from both the manner in which this facility opened and its location within our residential community.

Lack of Transparency and Notification

Our first concern is how this facility could open without the prior knowledge of residents in the neighborhood and without a Zoning change or the proper issuance of a Special Permit. The absence of transparency in this process has left residents feeling excluded from a decision that directly affects the character and safety of our community.

Noncompliance with City Ordinance Code

This facility is situated in the middle of a residential neighborhood, directly bordering properties at 7723 Franklin and 7683 Barton. Additionally, it is approximately 740.61 feet from Ramona Stem Academy Elementary School and 837.28 feet from Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church, as verified by Google Maps.

According to the City of El Paso Ordinance Code 20.10.266, a halfway house may not be permitted within 1,000 feet of the following:

1. A church;
2. A public or private elementary or secondary school;
3. A nursery school, kindergarten, child care center, day nursery, or day care center;
4. A university, college, vocational, or business school;
5. A boundary of any residential district;
6. A public park; or
7. The property line of a lot devoted to any residential use.

Given these stipulations, the facility at 7681 Barton St. is clearly in violation of the city ordinance, as it is located within 1,000 feet of multiple restricted entities, including an elementary school, a church, and residential properties.

Community Concerns

While we empathize with the need for rehabilitation facilities and support individuals working to recover from substance abuse, this facility is simply not an appropriate fit for our neighborhood. Its proximity to an elementary school, a church, and numerous family homes raises significant concerns regarding the safety of children and the potential impact on property values in the surrounding area.

Conclusion

In light of these issues, we strongly urge you to reconsider the approval of the Special Permit for Harmony Road Recovery at this location. We believe that alternative locations better suited for such a facility can be identified, ensuring that both the needs of individuals seeking recovery and the interests of our community are respected.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We hope you will carefully consider our concerns and the broader implications of allowing this facility to continue operating in its current location.

Sincerely,

Susan Patterson

Susan Patterson
Captain Wenda Drive Neighborhood Watch

Margarita Moncada
Co-Captain Wenda Drive Neighborhood Watch

Belinda Pacheco
Member Wenda Drive Neighborhood Watch

From: [Rodolfo Monarrez](#)
To: [Pina, Saul J.](#)
Subject: Special permit
Date: Wednesday, June 25, 2025 7:26:30 PM

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Buenas tardes Sr. Garcia,

Me comunico con usted para hacerle saber que no estoy de acuerdo con el permiso especial que esta solicitando la empresa ubicada en las calles Barton y Franklin Dr. El Paso Tx. 79915, la mayoría de las personas que vivimos en esta comunidad somos jubilados y queremos seguir viviendo con la tranquilidad de siempre.

Atentamente

Sr. Rodolfo Monarrez

7663 Franklin Dr.

El Paso, Tx 79915

El Paso ISD Non-discrimination disclaimer <http://www.episd.org/Page/1115> "It Starts With Us"

From: [Margaret Finley-Vasquez](#)
To: [Pina, Saul J.](#)
Subject: Protest to establish drug residential treatment facility
Date: Friday, June 27, 2025 3:31:45 PM

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Dear Saul Piña,

I recently visited my home town, El Paso. I went through the neighborhood I grew up in and saw that the building on the corner of Barton and Franklin Dr is being considered to become a drug residential treatment facility.

This established neighborhood has a lot of elderly residents, there is a public school and church just a block away from the location and there is no bus route all contributing to a reduction in property values to a neighborhood that has a low crime rate.

Please reconsider your attempt to establish this type of housing in this neighborhood.

Thank you and sincerely,

Margaret Finley-Vasquez

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)

From: [Mary Finley](#)
To: [Pina, Saul J.](#)
Subject: Residential Treatment Facility - Lower Valley
Date: Thursday, July 3, 2025 2:58:45 PM

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Hi Saul,

I'm a native El Pasoan who grew up on Franklin Loop, my home for many years. It has come to my attention that the former convent and kindergarten facility on the corner of Franklin & Barton streets has been sold and is being considered for a residential drug rehabilitation center. I applaud the City for providing for those in need with such services. However, I'm writing to ask you to reconsider the location. This neighborhood, although lower-income, has families that have lived there for generations. Many of the original owners, who are now elderly, continue to reside within steps of the building. There are also churches and schools within a 1-2 block radius.

My concern is the potential for crime and the degradation of property values that could result from this facility being located in that area. I kindly request that you reconsider using this neighborhood and find a more suitable location for the services to be provided.

Thank you and saludos,

Mary Finley

From: [Fabiola Campos-Lopez](#)
To: [Pina, Saul J.](#)
Cc: [Garcia, Raul](#)
Subject: CORRIDOR 20 civic association's OPPOSITION to Special Permit Application: PZST24-00011
Date: Friday, September 5, 2025 12:27:16 PM

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Case: PZST24-00011
Address: 7681 Barton
Current Zoning: R3 – Dense Residential Area
Request: Special permit and detailed site plan to allow a *Sanitarium* (Latin for Hospital)

Key Concerns

- **Incompatible Land Use**

- The property sits in the heart of a long-established residential neighborhood.
- Current infrastructure (lack of sidewalks, limited street lighting, proximity to irrigation canals, and train tracks) is unsuitable for such a facility.

- **History of the Property**

- Former parochial school (closed in the late 1980s).
- More recently, it has been used as an extension of a rehabilitation center, housing residents for several days without mobility restrictions, which has caused uneasiness and safety concerns among the neighborhood's residents.

- **Community Opposition**

- Over a year ago, neighbors strongly opposed a similar application, possibly even this one, for a rehabilitation center.
- Changing the name to *Sanitarium* does not alter the negative impact on the community.

- **Proximity to Ramona Elementary School**

- Located less than one block from the site.
- Hundreds of children and parents pass through the area daily.

- Placing a facility of this nature next to an elementary school poses unnecessary risks and concerns for student safety and well-being.
- **Building Condition**
 - The property has never been in optimal condition to provide safe or adequate services for vulnerable individuals.
 - It fails to ensure the quality of care Sanitarium residents deserve.

Conclusion

For reasons of **safety, community well-being, and land-use incompatibility**, CORRIDOR 20 civic association firmly **OPPOSES** this application and urges the CPC Committee to deny the special permit request.

This location is not appropriate for the proposed use.

Sincerely,

Fabiola Campos-Lopez
CORRIDOR20 civic association
 President