



July 19, 2025

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

Dear Mayor and Members of City Council,

I am writing to express my strong support for the City's proposed zoning reforms, specifically the elimination of parking minimums in targeted central areas and the legalization of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) on all residential lots. These changes are practical and forward-looking. They will make it easier to build a more dynamic, affordable, and livable El Paso.

Minimum parking requirements are a product of an outdated planning philosophy. They increase construction costs, complicate the reuse of older buildings, and impose a burden on the types of infill and mixed-use projects that our urban core needs. In neighborhoods in and around Downtown El Paso, where walkability and density are natural strengths, parking mandates often make development unnecessarily difficult. The issue is not a lack of demand, but rather a code that does not reflect current urban realities.

Removing these mandates does not eliminate parking. It simply restores flexibility. Developers and property owners will continue to provide parking where it makes sense, but they will no longer be forced to overbuild it at the expense of housing, retail, or other productive uses. Cities such as Austin, Dallas, and Seattle have already taken this step. The result has been more adaptive reuse, more housing options, and more investment in aging neighborhoods.

Legalizing ADUs in all residential zones is also important. ADUs allow homeowners to create flexible living space for extended family, renters, or aging in place, all without disrupting the character of existing neighborhoods. They are a proven, cost-effective way to add housing in a manner that is gentle, incremental, and accessible to a broader range of people.

As a developer focused on infill and historic projects in El Paso, I have seen firsthand how rigid zoning rules and parking requirements can prevent viable projects from moving forward. These reforms will not solve every challenge, but they are foundational. They are an important step to enabling further smart growth, addressing housing needs, and strengthening the long-term economic health of the city.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Palacios", written over a horizontal line.

Robert Palacios  
Principal  
Paseo Development