

**CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS
AGENDA ITEM
AGENDA SUMMARY FORM**

DEPARTMENT: Mayor and Council

AGENDA DATE: Tuesday, February 28, 2023

CONTACT PERSON NAME AND PHONE NUMBER: City Representative Henry Rivera, District 7 – 915-212-0007

DISTRICT(S) AFFECTED: All (Districts, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)

STRATEGIC GOAL:

Goal 2 – Set the Standard for a Safe and Secure City

SUBJECT:

APPROVE a resolution / ordinance / lease to do what? OR AUTHORIZE the City Manager to do what? Be descriptive of what we want Council to approve. Include \$ amount if applicable.

Discussion and Action to direct the City Manager to provide a public safety plan the City of El Paso has taken in preparation for an upcoming migrant surge as a result of the end of the national emergency and public health declarations on May 11, 2023 related to COVID-19 pandemic; specifically for neighborhoods near the border and to protect drivers from migrants/pedestrian crossing the Border Highway.

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION:

Discussion of the what, why, where, when, and how to enable Council to have reasonably complete description of the contemplated action. This should include attachment of bid tabulation, or ordinance or resolution if appropriate. What are the benefits to the City of this action? What are the citizen concerns? **See attached.**

PRIOR COUNCIL ACTION:

Has the Council previously considered this item or a closely related one?

AMOUNT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:

How will this item be funded? Has the item been budgeted? If so, identify funding source by account numbers and description of account. Does it require a budget transfer?

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

Migrants flee to Lower Valley, causing concern for residents

by: Allyah Maria Taylor Posted: Dec 21, 2022 / 08:44 PM

MST Updated: Dec 23, 2022 / 11:04 AM MST

EL PASO, Texas ([KTSM](#)) — Lower Valley residents are growing concerned after seeing a more and more migrants in their neighborhoods.

With the recent increase in migrants attempting to cross, road signs saying, “watch out for unexpected pedestrians” have been put up along the border highway to prevent drivers from hitting migrants. However, these road signs meant to warn drivers have also sparked some concern for local residents living near the area.

The concern arose when migrants where seen crossing from the border highway into local neighborhoods in the Lower Valley of El Paso. Some residents have seen migrants either walking or running through their neighborhoods after crossing from the other side. One gentleman provided footage of migrants that had crossed and entered onto his property at night after crossing from the Border Highway.

"Honestly it's happening a couple times a week. There's never less than three or four people crossing at a time. They have dry clothes in their backpacks, and they swap it out from the wet clothes to the dry clothes so they can blend in a little bit more with the population," says Jason Garcia, a local resident living in the Lower Valley, whose come across migrants walking onto his property more than once.

Jason contacted the police after seeing the video footage from his home camera. His concern was his family's safety.

"My concern was with them leaving four backpacks in my

trash can, I don't know what's in the backpacks, I don't know if they're going to come back for the backpacks. I think everybody should be worried about this," he further explains.

After Jason contacted the police, he said they told him since they work unitedly with Border Patrol that there wasn't much that they could do other than detain them while they wait for Border Patrol to arrive. However, by that time it was already too late, the migrants had already left.

Lower Valley residents take security measures against migrants leaving belongings behind

EL PASO, Texas (KFOX14) —



El Paso is not only seeing a record number of migrants turn themselves in to Border Patrol, but El Paso is seeing many migrants cross illegally without being encountered by agents.

KFOX14 spoke to residents in the Lower Valley about the situation and how they are taking security measures into their own hands to stay safe.

"I've seen several immigrants come actually for the past week and a half," Raymond Beltran said.

"We've seen a lot of people crossing over. Personally, I've seen more than 30 people a day," a resident said.

Jonathan Mejia reports on Lower Valley residents taking security measures into their own hands as migrants show up on their property

Residents of the Cedar Grove neighborhood in the Lower Valley said migrants crossing the border highway is nothing new to them.

Some migrants even make their way inside residents properties.

"I called the police department they came this morning and they told me there's nothing they can do so just throw them away and get rid of them [migrants belongings left behind] and that's what I did," Beltran said.

"We worry because we don't know who is coming over. There are good people who cross and there are bad people that cross as well," a resident said.

Cedar Grove residents told KFOX14 they've taken security measures into their own hands as Border Patrol is overwhelmed with migrants showing up at the border and El Paso police inability to resolve the issue.

"We have taken measures to put locks and chains because of fear because a lot of people who live in this area are senior citizens," a resident said.

"Just keep an eye out and now I lock my fence it was a nice and quiet neighborhood," Beltran said.

KFOX14 took residents concerns to Mayor Oscar Leeser.

"Border Patrol does not have the man power to really patrol the whole border today and to continue to do as asylum seekers come in. It's important we

have proper protection. El Paso police department is willing to do what it needs, the Sheriff's department, so we'll all be working together to, along with DPS (Department of Public Safety), to make sure that all areas including the border highway is secured," Leeser said.

RECOMMENDED: [Mayor: 'We felt that it's proper time today to call a state of emergency'](#)

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Migrants crawl through the fence at the border highway

[Michael Courier](#) December 21, 2022

EL PASO, Texas - Migrants are seen crawling through sections of the fence on Loop 375. The migrants cross the canal and climb up to the fence with all of their belongings.

Once migrants get past the fence they then cross into traffic on the border highway. This is a very dangerous trend for migrants. The drivers are also at risk as they are going at speeds up to 60 mph. As the migrant surge continues you will want to be very careful if you are driving on Loop 375.

WATCH: Apparent groups of migrants cross Border Highway, harrowing close calls with vehicles

[Erik Elken](#) December 20, 2022

EL PASO, Texas -- An ABC-7 camera captured video showing what appear to be groups of migrants crossing the Border Highway near Fonseca Dr. on Tuesday evening in El Paso.

It is an area that is prone to seeing dangerous migrant crossings, but it's playing out more frequently during the current migrant crisis.

The speed limit on that stretch of highway is 60 mph, but vehicles are often traveling at faster speeds.

There have also been migrant deaths in that area.

In the video captured by ABC-7 cameras, several groups cross with cars sometimes coming to a complete stop.

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Digital TxDOT signs in the area have recently warned drivers of "unexpected pedestrians" in the area.

ABC-7 also [captured video of the same area showing migrants crossing into El Paso through a hole cut into a fence.](#)