

**CITY OF EL PASO TEXAS  
AGENDA ITEM  
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S SUMMARY FORM**

**DEPARTMENT:** Strategic Partnerships

**AGENDA DATE:** March 29, 2021

**CONTACT PERSON:** Elizabeth Triggs, [triggsek@elpasotexas.gov](mailto:triggsek@elpasotexas.gov)

**DISTRICT(S) AFFECTED:** All Districts

**SUBJECT:**

A resolution that the City Manager is directed to identify eligible federal appropriations and surface transportation project and programmatic/policy requests that fall within one of the eleven identified priority areas, further the City's mission and vision, align with the City's strategic goals, and where possible, advance the City's 25 by 2025 visionary initiatives, as further outlined in the attached **Exhibit "A"** ("Federal Funding and Programmatic/Policy Priorities"); that the City Manager is directed to communicate and authorized to submit the projects and programmatic/policy requests and the impact of those projects and programmatic/policy requests on El Paso residents to the City's federal delegation for consideration through the federal appropriations and surface transportation advancement legislation processes; and that this resolution shall take effect immediately from and after its passage, and it is accordingly so resolved.

**BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:**

The 117<sup>th</sup> United States Congress convened in Washington D.C. on January 3, 2021 and will continue through January 3, 2023. On March 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, the City was invited to submit local project and programmatic/policy requests through the federal appropriations and surface transportation advancement legislation processes, respectively. The corresponding deadlines for request submittals is April 2<sup>nd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>. This agenda item provides the criteria for evaluating and selecting project and programmatic/policy requests for submittal to and consideration by the City's federal delegation and authorizes the City Manager to make and communicate those requests to the delegation. The criteria identified require that eligible project and programmatic/policy requests: 1) fall within one of eleven identified priority areas; 2) further the City's mission and vision; 3) align with the City's strategic goals; and, 4) where possible, advance the City's 25 by 2025 visionary initiatives as outlined in the City's Strategic Plan.

**PRIOR COUNCIL ACTION:** None

**AMOUNT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:** None

**BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION:** None

\*\*\*\*\*REQUIRED AUTHORIZATION\*\*\*\*\*

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:**

  
Elizabeth Triggs, Strategic Partnerships Officer

## RESOLUTION

**WHEREAS**, the 117<sup>th</sup> Session of the United States Congress convened on January 3, 2021 and will consider many issues that affect local governments; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of El Paso wishes to submit projects and programmatic/policy requests to its federal delegation for consideration through the federal appropriations and surface transportation advancement legislation processes; and

**WHEREAS**, the City has identified eleven priority areas for project and programmatic/policy requests that further the City's mission and vision, strategic goals, and 25 by 2025 visionary initiatives; and

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

**SECTION 1.** That the City Manager is directed to identify eligible federal appropriations and surface transportation project and programmatic/policy requests that fall within one of the eleven identified priority areas, further the City's mission and vision, align with the City's strategic goals, and where possible, advance the City's 25 by 2025 visionary initiatives, as further outlined in the attached **Exhibit "A"** ("Federal Funding and Programmatic/Policy Priorities"); and

**SECTION 2.** That the City Manager is directed to communicate and authorized to submit the projects and programmatic/policy requests and the impact of those projects and programmatic/policy requests on El Paso residents to the City's federal delegation for consideration through the federal appropriations and surface transportation advancement legislation processes; and

**SECTION 3.** That this resolution shall take effect immediately from and after its passage, and it is accordingly so resolved.

**APPROVED** this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2021

**THE CITY OF EL PASO:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Oscar Leaser  
Mayor

**ATTEST:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Laura D. Prine  
City Clerk

**APPROVED AS TO FORM:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Juan Gonzalez  
Senior Assistant City Attorney

**APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Elizabeth Triggs  
Strategic Partnerships Officer

# CITY OF EL PASO

## FEDERAL FUNDING AND PROGRAMMATIC/POLICY PRIORITIES 117<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS

### MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

**OSCAR LEESER**  
MAYOR

**PETER SVARZBEIN**  
DISTRICT 1

**ALEXSANDRA ANNELLO**  
DISTRICT 2

**CASSANDRA HERNANDEZ**  
DISTRICT 3

**JOE MOLINAR**  
DISTRICT 4

**ISABEL SALCIDO**  
DISTRICT 5

**CLAUDIA RODRIGUEZ**  
DISTRICT 6

**HENRY RIVERA**  
DISTRICT 7

**CISSY LIZARRAGA**  
DISTRICT 8

**TOMMY GONZALEZ**  
CITY MANAGER

## EXHIBIT “A”

### **Background**

#### ***Appropriations and Community Project Funding Requests***

On March 18<sup>th</sup>, the City of El Paso was invited by Congresswoman Escobar’s office to submit appropriations and community project funding (CPF) requests with an April 2<sup>nd</sup> deadline. Appropriations requests include programmatic or language requests; the former including requests for funding of specific federal programs that are important to the City, while the latter includes specific policy directives to federal agencies.

CPF requests are local projects that will be funded through various federal government funding bills during FY2022; each member of Congress may only submit 10 projects for consideration by the House Appropriations Committee. CPF requests are typically for projects with a clear purpose and goal above and beyond normal operating activities, for which existing funding is not available or sufficient. As part of the submittal process, the City must include evidence of community support for the project request, availability of matching funds, and be readiness to undertake the project in FY2022.

Submitted requests will be evaluated by the Congresswoman’s office and, if approved, advanced to the United States Congress through the appropriations process.

#### ***Infrastructure Requests***

On March 19<sup>th</sup>, the City of El Paso was additionally invited to submit policy suggestions or project requests for the upcoming surface transportation authorization legislation that will be advanced through the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. The legislation will build on the “Moving Forward Act” approved during the previous Congressional session and the deadline for project requests is April 7<sup>th</sup>.

Only highway and transit project requests eligible under Title 23 and Chapter 53, Title 49 of the United States Code are eligible for consideration, while certain rail projects may be eligible under other federal programs may be eligible. Projects submitted should advance the goals of building a safer transportation network, increasing access, strengthening multi-modal transportation systems, reducing carbon pollution, enhancing environmental just, supporting underserved communities, and improving the state of good repair of our community’s infrastructure.

Submitted requests will be evaluated by the Congresswoman’s office and if approved, advanced to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

#### ***Statement of Purpose***

It is the intent of the City Council to authorize the City Manager to submit appropriations, CPF and infrastructure policy and project requests to the Congresswoman’s Office and further, that these requests be communicated to the City’s federal delegation for consideration during the appropriations and surface transportation authorization legislation processes.

Submitted project, programmatic and policy requests should: 1) further the mission and vision of the City; 2) align with its strategic goals; and 3) where possible, advance the 25 by 2025 visionary initiatives identified in the City’s strategic plan. Additionally, this document broadly outlines 11 priority areas for funding and policy requests through the appropriations and surface transportation authorization legislation processes; requests submitted by the City Manager should fall within one of these 11 priority areas and align with the stated areas of support within each category.

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### Strategic Policy Statements

The El Paso City Council has adopted a Strategic Plan which includes eight strategic goals that serve as guiding principles for the governance of the City of El Paso. To achieve these goals, City Council has additionally identified 25 visionary initiatives with a target completion date of 2025.

Decisions regarding City of El Paso projects submitted for funding consideration or other programmatic and policy requests made through the appropriations and surface transportation authorization legislation processes for the identified priorities will be weighed against these guiding principles and initiatives. The City’s eight strategic goals and 25 by 2025 visionary initiatives include:

- **Goal 1:** Create an Environment Conducive to Strong, Sustainable Economic Development
- **Goal 2:** Set the Standard for a Safe and Secure City
- **Goal 3:** Promote the Visual Image of El Paso
- **Goal 4:** Enhance El Paso’s Quality of Life through Recreational, Cultural and Educational Environments
- **Goal 5:** Promote Transparent and Consistent Communication Among All Members of the Community
- **Goal 6:** Set the Standard for Sound Governance and Fiscal Management
- **Goal 7:** Enhance and Sustain El Paso’s Infrastructure Network
- **Goal 8:** Nurture and Promote a Healthy, Sustainable Community

**Table 1.** 25 by 2025 Visionary Initiatives

	<b>Goal Link</b>	<b>25 by 2025 Visionary Initiative</b>
1	Goal 1	Activate targeted (re)development
2	Goal 1	Expand Downtown revitalization/redevelopment
3	Goal 1	Enhance cross-border mobility experience for bridge users
4	Goal 1	Capital improvement implementation
5	Goal 1	Revamp toll operation schedules and lane management
6	Goal 1	Launch new business friendly practices and services improving speed-to-market and supporting entrepreneurship/microenterprises
7	Goal 2	Expand investment in public safety operations
8	Goal 4	Complete Quality of Life Bond projects and develop signature programming
9	Goal 4	Align and implement key investment strategies sustaining and enhancing park system operations and outdoor offerings
10	Goal 6	Expand workforce development and organizational focus on continuous improvement through targeted training, activating partnerships, and growing best practices
11	Goal 6	Become a model for activating interagency and multisector partnerships and demonstrate results and under the <i>Communities of Excellence</i> framework
12	Goal 6	Optimize resources by evaluating and aligning service delivery mechanisms
13	Goal 6	Create and implement a plan to address long-term liabilities and sustain the City’s bond rating
14	Goal 6	Identify potential new revenue streams
15	Goal 6	Establish a citizen-led bond election
16	Goal 6	Define and begin implementation of a Smart Community Roadmap through the strategic integration of technology and data-driven action into City operations
17	Goal 7	Expand the investment and beautification of street infrastructure

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18	Goal 7	Implement improvements and activate programming that support and promote multimodal transportation
19	Goal 7	Create and implement a comprehensive facility and fleet investment plan
20	Goal 7	Establish Eastside and Mission Valley Growth Plan and begin implementation and complete Comprehensive Master Plan update
21	Goal 8	Evaluate and integrate key policies, practices and space planning improving community health outcomes and risk reduction
22	Goal 8	Support affordable, high quality housing options especially for vulnerable populations
23	Goal 8	Sustain the live-release rate
24	Goal 8	Create and implement the Urban Energy Plan and identify state and federal legislative funding opportunities
25	Goal 8	Seek out and activate interregional and binational partnership opportunities that support trade, technology and tourism

### Specific Legislative Categories

#### *Pandemic Relief:*

COVID-19 has severely impacted local municipalities across the nation. From declines in revenue to long-term financial expenditures, local governments require support from the federal government to maintain services and programs for their residents. The pandemic has disproportionately affected El Paso as the majority of our community is heavily Hispanic and with a prevalence of underlying medical conditions among the El Paso population.

Despite these obstacles, the City of El Paso has identified key initiatives and programs that will support our community overcome the financial, social and health impacts the pandemic has created.

The City of El Paso **supports** federal legislation, policies, and funding that:

- Provide direct financial and logistical assistance to state and local governments to maintain community access to pivotal programs, recover lost revenue, and aid those impacted by COVID-19;
- Support and provide fiscal allocations for the following initiatives:
  - Utility Assistance for residential and commercial customers;
  - Rental and mortgage assistance for residents experiencing negative economic impacts;
  - Direct financial assistance for El Paso’s most vulnerable populations;
  - Childcare for essential workers performing critical services; and
  - Increased access to and expansion of food bank operations.
- Continue investment in federal, state, and local public health infrastructure to ensure an efficient and strong response to the pandemic;
- Improve access to resources and education about COVID-19, especially for communities with high barriers to accessing assistance;
- Support small businesses severely impacted due to the pandemic, including programs that provide direct financial assistance, improve future resiliency, or information and education regarding available assistance;

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- Promote workforce development programs, including work relief programs, apprenticeship programs, and workforce skills training, to increase workforce participation and lower local unemployment;
- Expand health care coverage and access for Texans, including continued progress on behavioral health and the expansion of Medicaid; and
- Expand unemployment benefits for those impacted by COVID-19.

### ***Housing and Homelessness:***

The City of El Paso **supports** legislation, policies, and funding that:

- Extend and provide program flexibility to determine how best to spend funding allocated through the following programs:
  - HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding;
  - HOME, HOPWA and Homeless Assistance Grants; and
  - Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) Program, including elimination of the cap on RAD conversion authority
  - Other programs that support states’ and local municipalities’ efforts to create a sustainable and resilient homelessness response program and infrastructure, including the construction of necessary homeless living facilities;
- Support robust funding of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and preservation and expansion of the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit.

### ***Public Safety***

The City of El Paso **supports** legislation, policies, and funding that:

- Promote a public health approach to reduce violence, including addressing the root causes of crime in a long-term and sustainable way, rather than solely treating the symptoms of those causes (e.g., the violence) with punishment and temporary incarceration. (i.e., mental health, domestic violence and homelessness);
- Increase investment in evidence-based reforms that reduce crime and incarceration;
- Support survivors of violent crime;
  - Research shows us that trauma either through witnessing or directly experiencing violence, when left unaddressed, can have devastating long-lasting effects on individuals. In light of recent events, this is especially relevant to El Paso;
  - Congress should maintain current levels of CVF funding to provide expanded outreach and services to victims of crime;
- Strengthen community safety and prevent mass violence by strengthening existing laws to allow for a stronger, more efficient and consistent enforcement of laws and new legislation that will assist in the identification of risk indicators for potential threat to include the use and role of mental health professionals and ways to reduce the risk;



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- Concern police reform and training that will enhance and foster public trust in the police department, to include the appropriation of funding to municipalities for the acquisition of police body cameras and the storage of data obtained by body cameras;

### *Digital Inclusion and Expansion*

The City of El Paso is committed to ensuring every resident has access to technology and internet access. To achieve this, the City of El Paso **supports** legislation, policies, and funding that:

- Promote substantial digital inclusion study that identifies populations and communities that are severely underserved;
- Invests in those underserved communities by providing internet technologies (MiFi, WiFi, Hotspots, PC, etc.) to public buildings; and
- Promote partnerships with service providers to increase fiber investments along major street arterials.

### *Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy*

The City of El Paso supports Congress’ efforts to fund and support energy efficient and renewable programs across the nations. As one of the sunniest cities in the United States, El Paso is committed to investing in renewable infrastructure and programs.

The City of El Paso **supports** legislation, policies, and funding that:

- Support municipalities’ efforts to transition all city owned properties Net-Zero Energy buildings;
- Support solar and more energy efficient lighting for major corridors in major US cities;
- Establish a mechanism for private sector developers to be incentivized to reduce community wide energy demand by incorporating high efficiency performance standards and renewable energy in new develop or redevelopment projects;
- Promote programs with utility partners to upgrade outdated appliances into energy efficient appliances, including low-income appliance replacement, as well as all incentives for new residential, residential retrofit and commercial energy efficient alliances;
- Support municipalities’ efforts to upgrade heavy energy usage buildings to incorporate renewable energy technologies;
- Provide for more economic incentives and support for solar and renewable energy initiatives; and
- Provide funding for renewable and electric vehicle development and related infrastructure to reduce carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions, including continued and increased federal tax credits for the purchase of electric vehicles; and support local municipalities’ initiatives to upgrade city-owned vehicles to electric vehicles.

### *Airport and Aviation*

The El Paso International Airport is pivotal to the growth and success for the Borderland region. To counteract the impacts of COVID-19, enhance the sustainability of existing services and grow operations, the City of El Paso **supports** legislation, policies, and funding that:



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- Expand existing airport infrastructure to support economic development initiatives that aim to create a sustainable economy;
- Invest in research and development for innovative technologies and idea in aviation;
- Provide for airport infrastructure funding to maintain and build the infrastructure needed to serve passengers with safe, secure, and efficient facilities;
- Ensure all Airports and Airways Trust Fund revenues are spent on aviation programs;
- Increase flexibility of the Airport Improvement Program and how airports use Passenger Facility Change revenue;
- Provide local municipalities and airport officials the resources to implement innovative, safe, and efficient aviation systems; and
- Maximize the flexibility of the Airport Improvement Program.

### *International Bridges*

El Paso’s economy thrives through its cooperation and partnership with Ciudad Juárez, Mexico. However, there are several improvements and policies that could be instituted that would strengthen this relationship.

The City of El Paso **supports** legislation, policies, and funding that:

- Promote the use of technologies and best practices to streamline complex transportation and trade systems, including such technologies as: Dynamic Message Signs, Closed-Circuit Television, cameras, WiFi Readers, Lane Management Signs, Miles of Fiber Optic Cable and Conduit, Upgrade to Existing Traffic Management and Toll Collections Systems;
- Support local municipalities’ efforts to master-plan and enhance existing bridge crossings; for example, the following could greatly improve efficiency at the City of El Paso’s international ports of entry:
  - Expansion Feasibility Study and Ysleta Port of Entry Master Planning. Study will review federal, state, and local facilities, staffing and technologies analysis; and
  - Dedicated pedestrian pick-up and drop-off areas, shade canopies, raised cross-walks, sidewalk improvements, lighting, landscaping areas and various pedestrian safety improvements; and
- Expansion of current federal international travel policy efforts, including the creation of te additional capacity for Sentri users, as well as opportunities for additional multi-modal lanes at the Stanton Bridge.

### *Transportation*

The City of El Paso urges Congress and the United States Department of Transportation to study and provide equal consideration to address the infrastructure needs of communities throughout the nation. Additionally, the City calls on the federal government to fully fund and expand all federal highway and transit programs.

Generally, the City **supports** legislation, policies, and funding that:

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- Support major infrastructure projects to provide options and minimize traffic congestion and maximize the efficiency of El Paso’s transit and road system;
- Provide long-term, sustainable funding to ensure continued investment in all modes of surface transportation;
- Fund the robust collection of data, and use of analytics, to improve travel operations, provide real-time traveler information, and inform infrastructure investment decisions;
- Continue funding for Transit Oriented Development (TOD) grant programs and maintain financing programs for TOD investments at transit stations and multimodal facilities;
- Ensure the equitable distribution of highway and transit funds;
- Do not increase the required local share required to secure funding for federally assisted highway or transit projects;

In addition, the City **supports** legislation, policies, and funding that:

- Support the construction of local infrastructure projects, including but not limited to:
  - The buildout of the Deck Park at I-10, providing multi-modal connectivity between downtown and uptown El Paso;
  - Buildout of projects identified in the MTP in an expedited manner;
  - The ability to bring new projects in to the MTP;
  - Reconstruction of major corridors, such as Mesa, Dyer, Alameda, and Airway; and
  - Phase 2 and 3 of the Streetcar.
- Support facilitating secure domestic and international travel through the support of programs such as the Secure Travel Partnership and the Trusted Traveler Programs;
- Provide funding and policy support for automated vehicles, vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-infrastructure technologies;
- Facilitate a demonstration project for the bridges illustrating the feasibility of movement across the port using driverless electric vehicles with all paperwork via electronic process, resulting in a reduction in pollution, elimination of waste from drivers, possibly expediting and automating the crossing and inspection process in a manner that is scalable to all ports of entry;
- Improve applicable federal navigation regulations (Title 33, Code of Federal Regulations, Navigation and Navigable Waterways) to help expedite the flow of people and the movement of goods across the U.S.-Mexico border;
- Provide direct funding to allow cities to pursue innovative solutions to urban transportation problems, traffic congestion, and other local transportation issues.

### ***Development and Redevelopment***

As part of the city’s effort to cultivate an environment conducive to strong, sustainable economic development, several site across El Paso have been identified for redevelopment to maximize the value to the community.

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The City of El Paso **supports** legislation, policies, and funding that:

- Promote redevelopment of community prioritized sites with the intent to enhance the surrounding community and residents’ quality of life; and
- Supports the creation of a city-wide urban trail system to connect underserved populations, linking neighborhoods to major employment centers, parks, and open space;
- Expands and extends programs that promote development and redevelopment, including but not limited to tax credit programs, opportunity zones, and tax-exempt municipal bonds.

### *Arts + Culture*

The City of El Paso **supports** legislation, policies, and funding that:

- Promotes and preserves El Paso’s culture and programs that support local artists and art organizations;
- Enables the rehabilitation of and provides support for pivotal arts and cultural programs and infrastructure; and
- Promotes eco- and heritage tourism as an economic development driver for the region.

### *Economic Development*

In addition, the City **supports** legislation, policies, and funding that promote economic development for the community, including legislation, policies, and funding that:

- Initiate a workforce training programs dedicated to promoting skills development in emerging industries that align with existing resilience challenges;
- Support entrepreneurship and microenterprises;
- Facilitate the establishment of an accelerator for small business growth and continuity; and
- Engage the private sector in the development of innovative solutions for social and economic problems facing low-income communities.