

**RESOLUTION APPROVING THE CITY OF EL PASO
2007 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES AND 2008
APPROPRIATIONS REQUESTS AND ADOPTING A
STATEMENT OF POLICY FOR THE CITY OF EL
PASO REGARDING FEDERAL LEGISLATION AND
ACTIONS BEFORE FEDERAL ADMINISTRATIVE
AGENCIES.**

WHEREAS, the Federal Legislature and its administrative agencies will consider many measures and actions that affect the City of El Paso; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to provide guidance to City representatives in conducting legislative and administrative efforts and relations with other levels of government.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS, THAT THE ATTACHED DOCUMENT ENTITLED "2007 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES AND 2008 APPROPRIATIONS REQUESTS" IS ADOPTED AS THE CITY'S LEGISLATIVE AGENDA FOR THE 110th FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE SESSION AND THAT THE FOLLOWING ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY BE ADOPTED:

1. The legislative or administrative positions herein approved shall be communicated to the El Paso legislative delegation, to the Federal Legislature, in general, and to the appropriate legislative committees and administrative agencies by the City's federal legislative lobbyist and federal agency consultant, City of El Paso staff persons, members of City Council and others as coordinated through the Mayor's office.
2. City employees, members of City boards, commissions, and advisory groups may not represent in oral testimony or in writing the City's official position on proposed legislation or administrative action unless that position is approved and coordinated through the Mayor's office.

CITY CLERK DEPT.
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3. The City Council authorizes and directs the Mayor's office to coordinate its legislative program and the City Attorney's Office shall be authorized to interpret on behalf of the City this policy with the necessary broad policy concerns set forth in this policy.

ADOPTED this the 20th day of February 2007.

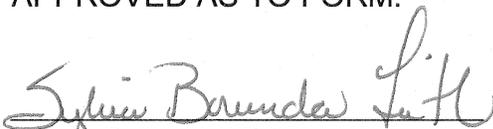
THE CITY OF EL PASO

John F. Cook
Mayor

ATTEST:

Richarda Duffy Momsen
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


Sylvia Borunda Firth
Senior Assistant City Attorney

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CITY OF EL PASO
2007 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES
AND
2008 APPROPRIATIONS REQUESTS



MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

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MAYOR

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CITY OF EL PASO
2007 Federal Legislative Priorities
and
2008 Appropriations Requests

General Principles: The City of El Paso supports federal legislation that enhances a city's ability to solve problems and improve the quality of life for its citizens. The City of El Paso opposes federal legislation that reduces a city's authority or increases costs for municipal governments. We will work with other cities to enhance and protect the authority of municipalities and to ensure that taxpayers are not burdened with additional unfunded mandates.

The City of El Paso will also support legislative initiatives of community partners that enhance the educational, cultural, military assets and infrastructure resources in our region.

This document reflects the City of El Paso's adopted federal legislative policy as approved by City Council. The City's federal legislative program is organized into four categories: I. Priority Legislative Initiatives; II. Pending Appropriation Requests; III. Issues of Advocacy and Interest; and IV. General Guiding Principals.

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Note: Items are not listed in order of priority.

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For more information, please feel free to contact:

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I. Priority Legislative Initiatives

1. MASS TRANSIT

a. Lift Paratransit Vehicles

Proposal: Seek federal funding to purchase twenty (20) Lift Paratransit Vehicles

Amount Requested: \$1.6 million

Total Project Cost: \$2 million

Background: This is Phase I of the total replacement of the paratransit fleet, which has exceeded the useful life of the equipment. The new vehicles will be equipped with the following: security cameras, radios, automatic vehicle locator (AVL), and up-to-date fare boxes. The inclusion of cameras on the vans will help with passenger complaints and overall safety to our disabled community. This will allow Sun Metro to remain fully ADA compliant.

b. International Service Vehicles

Proposal: To secure federal funding to purchase ten (10) alternative fuel buses that will allow Sun Metro to provide international service.

Amount Requested: \$3.2 million

Total Project Cost: \$4.0 million

Background: Federal funding will help the City of El Paso purchase ten (10) ADA compliant, alternative fuel vehicles equipped with: up-to-date fare boxes, security cameras, automatic vehicle locators (AVL), and radios. This fleet will provide the International Service between Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico and El Paso, Texas. Sun Metro is working diligently with Mexican officials to begin service, and is ready to initiate internal service. The terminus point for the service will be the Camino Real Terminal, which will provide a transfer point to Sun Metro buses and intercity buses.

Locally, the purchase of ten (10) alternative fuel buses will allow Sun Metro to provide international service without adversely impacting service to the citizens of El Paso. Regionally, this will have positive economic impact by allowing citizens of Juarez to more easily access shopping, work, and the University. The bus purchase will also impact the region by reducing congestion at the bridge and

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thereby reducing pollution. Each bus will eliminate approximately 40 vehicle trips.

c. **Neighborhood Circulator Service**

Proposal: To purchase 12 thirty-foot, ADA compliant buses, equipped with the following: up-to-date fare boxes, automatic vehicle locator (AVL), radios, and security cameras.

Amount Requested: \$3.6 million

Total Project Costs: \$4.5 million

Background: These buses will run on clean diesel which will reduce emissions and will be easier to maneuver within the narrower neighborhood streets.

d. **Downtown Circulator Service (Trolleys)**

Proposal: To purchase 13 trolleys to replace the trolleys that were purchased in 1996 and have exceeded their useful lives.

Amount Requested: \$3.9 million

Total Project Cost: \$4.9 million

Background: The purchase of Downtown trolleys will replace 13 trolleys that were purchased in 1996 and they have each exceeded their useful life. The purchase of new vehicles will provide the Citizens and visitors of El Paso with reliable and safe services, which will positively impact the downtown area and the local economy. The new Downtown trolleys will comply with stricter EPA standards, which will result in a reduction of air pollutants for the region. Additionally, Sun Metro will benefit by the reduction in maintenance costs associated with the old trolleys.

The Downtown Circulator Project consists of the purchase of 13 new, 30 foot vehicles, which will be ADA accessible, and equipped with radios, automatic vehicle locators (AVL), and up-to-date fare collection system. The vehicles will circulate in the Downtown area to provide a convenient and comfortable transit service for our passengers. Additionally, by replacing the aging vehicles the public safety issue regarding the unreliable air conditioning units is corrected.

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e. **Glory Road Transit Terminal**

Proposal: Seek funding for the construction of the Glory Road Transit Terminal.

Amount Requested: \$3.2 million

Total Project Cost: \$4.0 million

Background: The Glory Road Transit Terminal is on the edge of the UTEP campus and is a cooperative effort with UTEP. The proposed terminal will include parking and transit services to address the many safety, congestion and mobility issues at the critical intersection of Mesa Street and Glory Road (formerly Baltimore Street).

f. **Natural Gas Fueling Station**

Proposal: Seek funding for natural gas fueling stations for Sun Metro.

Amount Requested: \$10.4 million

Total Project Cost: \$13 million

Background: Deployment of a natural gas fueling station will secure Sun Metro's supply of liquefied natural gas which will increase operational efficiency. Currently facilities are supplied on a daily basis by truck from as far as 400 miles away, which is impacted by weather, traffic conditions, and mechanical failures. Regionally, this will reduce emissions and pollution, and future energy needs will be met with clean, domestically produced fuels.

g. **International Terminal/Camino Real**

Proposal: Seek funding for the construction of the Camino Real International Transit Terminal.

Amount Requested: \$2.4 million

Total Project Cost: \$3 million

Background: The impact of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has resulted in additional automobile, truck and pedestrian movement between the El Paso-Juarez border. Together, these two cities form the largest border community in the world, with over 58,000,000 border crossings on four international bridges annually. This has created significant congestion as well as bus, automobile, and pedestrian conflicts at the border. This facility would

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facilitate easy transfers between local El Paso transit (Sun Metro) and the international and intercity carriers.

The Camino Real International Terminal would include gates and terminal facilities for over 10 intercity bus carriers, Sun Metro, and other transportation activities. In addition to retail space, as many as 500 parking spaces could be provided. A station for the proposed international services will also be incorporated. Currently, Sun Metro is in dialogue with Mexican officials to initiate International Service. This facility will be the major transfer point on the US segment.

h. Job Access Reverse Commute Program (JARC)

Proposal: To seek funding to continue the JARC program.

Amount Requested: \$400,000.00

Total Project Cost: \$400,000.00

Background: The Job Access Reverse Commute program is run in cooperation with local social service agencies. The clients are offered transportation services that allow them to gain work and training experience they could not accomplish without the transportation assistance. Over 40,000 trips were provided in FY2006 using a fleet of 8 vans. This impacts the entire region by enabling low income, disadvantaged local citizens the opportunity to obtain work and training.

2. PUBLIC SAFETY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

a. Broad band Mobile Network

Proposal: To seek funding to fully implement broadband communications for the El Paso Police Department (EPPD) and create the infrastructure for other national, state and local first responders, public safety agencies, and public information sources in the El Paso Region.

Amount Requested: \$2,769,200

Total Project Cost: \$3,049,200

Background: The City of El Paso has implemented a pilot project for broadband communications in its patrol vehicles. To be effective the system must be expanded. The purpose of broadband communications in patrol vehicles is to promote the efficiency of field operations by ensuring that first responders have

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access to data in a timely manner. This project will provide for the build out of the existing pilot broadband moto-mesh canopy to provide city-wide coverage and extend into county areas. Broadband communication in the field allows officers to maximize their time in the field, as they are not required to return to the station to complete reports. The system will also provide for a safer community as the officers and other responders will have immediate access to reports and images in the field. Photos of suspects, missing children and adults, and stolen property could be immediately dispersed to patrolling officers. Images of active crime scenes could be transmitted to command centers for direct input from appropriate staff.

b. Public Safety Radio Voice/Data System Upgrade

Proposal: To seek funding to update and expand the first responder radio system to a digital platform.

Amount Requested: Approximately \$25 million

P25 Platform Project- add digital voice channels and address insufficient portable and mobile radio coverage.	\$19,000,000.00
Add antenna sites (3): City Hall, two water company tower sites.	\$1,000,000.00
Handheld Radios – PD (700)	\$ 2,100,000.00
Mobile IP interoperability	\$2,180,000.00
Total	\$24,280,000.00

Suggested Phasing and Funding:

Year One: write RFP and select vendor, complete radio engineering survey, review vendor's plan, determine sites for antennas, and take care of permitting, licensing, and inter-local agreements.
Expenditure: \$7M.

Year Two: build and furbish antenna sites; take care of connection to existing radio infrastructure.
Expenditure: \$10M

Year Three: purchase handheld radios, complete outstanding infrastructure projects, test, train, and cutover.
Expenditure: \$8 M.

Background: The radio system in use by public safety agencies in El Paso is in need of updating and expansion to address responder safety and regional

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interoperability. The EPPD officers and other first responders are dependent upon the City's radio system for information, coordination of activity, and safety. There is intermittent radio interference in all areas of town and several "dead" areas where there is no service. When the existing system was new, it was very effective. The interference and dead spots have crept into existence over the last ten years. Cell towers, competing radio systems, and fifteen years of changes in area topography have had a negative effect despite intense efforts to keep the system in top shape. The current system is aging and may soon become very difficult to maintain as parts fall out of production. It is old technology and does not lend itself to current interoperability standards.

c. **Mass Alert Notification System**

Proposal: To secure funding for a software system that integrates multiple communications systems.

Requested Amount: \$900,000

Total Project Cost: \$1.2M

Background: The purpose of the project is to provide an efficient means of mobilizing first responders, state and federal entities, mutual aid partners, the media, and the public. The system gives EPPD a means to provide information and instruction according to the situation.

This notification utility adds value to the EPPD's existing means of communications because it integrates with existing voice and data communications systems and allows EPPD to tap into each type simultaneously. This utility is needed because traditional methods of making notifications to first responders can be cumbersome and inefficient. Simply stated, a sure method of directly notifying the general public does not presently exist. This system ensures that the same information is delivered to all targeted receivers of emergency information.

Current mass alert methods involve mobilizing responders via two-way radio or pager. Officials are notified by a phone call or an email. Mutual aid is typically invoked via telephone contacts. The public is notified via the media and the emergency broadcast system, or, in cases of a localized threat, emergency dispatchers try to call all the phone numbers they can find for the immediate area. These methods take a great deal of time (each person notified typically also has to be briefed) and uses resources that are often needed elsewhere. The message may also "lose something in the translation" as multiple contacts create opportunities for increased human error.

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d. **Automatic Electronic Issuance of Citations (E-Ticket)**

Proposal: To seek funding to purchase additional equipment and software to allow for full incorporation of E-Ticketing department wide.

Amount Requested: \$7,307,222

Total Project Cost: \$9,527,222

Background: The electronic ticketing system allows for violator's driver's licenses to be scanned by the use of a magnetic strip reader and the appropriate information is automatically populated into the citation. Officers complete the citation by selecting the vehicle information and applicable violation(s) from drop-down menus. The program then automatically inserts the appropriate statute number, fine and court information, along with a state issued citation number. The citation is printed utilizing a wireless Bluetooth connection to a thermal printer and given to the violator.

At the end of the officer's tour of duty, the E-ticket device is cradled to a desktop computer located at the regional commands where the data is automatically uploaded (Quick Data) using the established network connection(s). The officer will verify that the information taken from the violators' during the traffic stops is correct before a Notary Public. The Notary Public will then electronically notarize the electronic citations and a digital image of the citation is created instantly. The image is attached and uploaded to the current program on the established network connection used by Municipal court that is called JIMS/View Point.

The benefits from this program include the following:

- Eliminates data errors on traffic citations.
- Completes tickets faster and more accurately.
- Enables officers to return to service more quickly.
- Produces professional, easy to read tickets.
- Stores citations electronically for entry into JIMS and ILEADS RMS.
- Reduces the need for data entry clerks to transcribe data from hand written reports/forms.
- Reduces errors from transcribed data from hand written reports/forms.
- Citation data is retrieved from records systems more quickly.
- Works with the current software utilized by the El Paso Police Department. There is no need to replace any existing technology.
- Boosts efficiency

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e. **Handheld Radio Cache**

Proposal: To seek funds to purchase 200 handheld radios for use in coordinating operations with other agencies so that individual enforcement agents will have direct communication with the first responders.

Amount Requested: \$611,840

Total Project Amount: \$611,840

Background: The project will establish a cache of handheld radios that will be issued for a specific operation or permanently placed with key personnel in partner agencies that will greatly improve interoperability in the region. The bulk of the radios will be stored either at the EPPD regional command locations or the emergency communications center for efficient distribution when needed.

3. **INTERNATIONAL POINTS OF ENTRY**

a. **Expansion of Zaragoza Port of Entry**

Proposal: Seek funding to assist in the expansion of the Zaragoza port of entry with a direct ramp connecting to Loop 375.

Requested Amount: \$5 million FY '08

Total Project Cost: \$20M - Preliminary Estimate

Background: The El Paso MPO has agreed that this project is regionally significant and has approved \$1,000,000 feasibility study for this project at the Transportation Policy Board meeting on January 26, 2007. The project is part of the Border Improvement Plan, which was also approved by the El Paso MPO (<http://www.elpasompo.org>).

The project as proposed will incorporate all the latest technology to provide more efficient and safe crossing for dedicated commercial, public transit, vehicular, and pedestrian traffic and increase the City's dedication to commercial traffic with expanded commercial lanes servicing pre-sealed and pre-cleared cargo loads; include U.S. Visit Protocols such as DCL services for both Private and Commercial users incorporating Free and Secure Trade (FAST), Radios Frequency Identification Technology (RFID) and Border Crossing Card (BCC).

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b. Construction of New Point on Entry

Proposal: Begin the process of securing a presidential permit, selecting the site and designing a state of the art border crossing complete with advanced technology options and modern security while creating a “transparent” user-friendly border crossing facility; including re-configurable traffic lanes to allow for increased flexibility in response to daily traffic conditions; and provide for both north/south bound services.

Amount Requested: \$5 million

Estimated Project Cost: \$25 million

Background: The El Paso MPO has agreed that this project is regionally significant and has approved \$1,000,000 feasibility study up through presidential permitting at the Transportation Policy Board meeting held on January 26, 2007. The project is part of the Border Improvement Plan, also approved by the El Paso MPO (<http://www.elpasompo.org>). It is anticipated the point of entry will be located in the vicinity of Loop 375 and Yarbrough Drive.

4. FLOOD CONTROL AND RIVER MAINTENANCE

a. River Grating System

Proposal: Seek funding to design a river grating system.

Requested Amount: \$1.1 million

Total Project Cost: \$1.1 million

Background: The City needs to replace the existing grates that with a more technology advanced grating system that will meet the water conveyance requirements of the City and the security requirements of Homeland Security, specifically Customs and Border Patrol. The Project involves approximately 20 grates at a cost of \$55,000 each = **\$1,100,000** (including design and construction).

b. Army Corps of Engineer Projects

Proposal: Request that the Army Corps of expedite the design and construction of 5 projects in the El Paso region to improve conveyance of rainwater and flood prevention.

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Background: After the storms in August of 2006, the City sent five letters to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers requesting recommendations on five projects to improve conveyance of rainwater and flood prevention in parts of the City; this included the watersheds in the northeast and northwest part of the city, the watershed in the Central-Pershing area, the watershed in the far east side (Sparks/Arroyo) area, and the Mesa Drain (Chevron Channel) watershed. At present time there is no cost estimate for these five projects; information may be supplied by the COE Albuquerque District.

c. International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC)

Proposal: Support a request for funding in FY2008 IBWC budget for the repair and upgrade of the aging concrete channel lining along the Chamizal Agreement boundary.

Proposal: Support a request for funding in the IBWC budget over a three year period for the de-silting and removal of debris from the river basin to improve water conveyance, prevent clogged river grates, and remove restrictions to the flow of water in the following stages.

FY2008-Stage I – Dredge, de-silt and remove debris along the concrete lined channel area designated in the Chamizal Treaty. Approximately 4.35 miles and 200,000 CY of debris; calculated at \$60/CY = **\$12,000,000**.

FY2009-Stage II – Dredge the entire river within the City corporate limits, but outside of the limits of Stage I. Approximately 20.73 miles and 953,103 CY of debris; calculated at \$60/CY = **\$57,186,180**.

FY2010-Stage III - Dredge the entire river within the entire County limits, but outside of the limits of Stages I and II. Approximately 32.25 miles and 1,482,800 CY of debris; calculated at \$60/CY = **\$88,968,000**.

d. Purchase of Agricultural Drains.

Proposal: Secure funding to purchase agricultural drains for the El Paso County Water Improvement District No 1. (EPCWID)

Amount Requested: \$5 million (estimate pending receipt of appraisals)

Total Project Cost: \$6 million

Background: Currently the City leases agricultural drains from the EPCWID for conveyance of storm water within the drainage system. The leases will expire in the near future, beginning in 2009, the City would like to purchase the drains prior to the lease expiration. Ownership of the drains will allow the City to re-shape,

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re-flow, and re-size them to meet specific needs without having to deal with complex right of way and easement issues with other entities bordering these drains. Purchase of these drains will be critical to modifying the entire drainage system to meet current and future water conveyance requirements. Ultimately the drains will be incorporated into the Regional River Trail Project.

II. Pending Appropriation Requests

1. Regional Lab

Proposal: Federal funds to develop regional law enforcement lab.

Amount Requested: \$1 million (Planning/infrastructure/Design Development)

Background: At the present time, El Paso has almost 800,000 residents but has no true crime lab. Currently, Police, and Sheriff operate in over-crowded lab facilities with only basic infrastructure to process crime information such as Breath Alcohol Testing, Drug Analysis, Latent Print, Photography and Crime Scene Analysis. Unfortunately, most of the more sophisticated lab work must be sent out of town for analysis. The City County Health and Environmental District space is also inadequate to carry out critical infectious disease and bioterrorism related analysis.

Rather than build several new laboratories for various departments and agencies, the City of El Paso is working with several government partners to develop a joint use laboratory model that would provide significant cost-savings through shared resources. The Regional Lab would bring together numerous agencies from the City and County and serve the West Texas, Southern New Mexico region. Such a facility would also allow regional lab services to be expanded to include the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) certification in order to expedite the flow of commerce at this port and reduce national security threats posed by unknown substances at our bridges. The cooperation created by the co-location of key laboratory functions greatly enhances our ability to identify and respond to homeland security threats.

In fiscal year 2005, Congress appropriated \$500,000 for this Regional Lab project and \$200,000 in 2006. These funds are important to begin planning a combined forensics and epidemiology lab for law enforcement, public health, agricultural and other city and regional needs. Additional funds are sought for this project in fiscal year 2007 with the goal being to initiate the construction of the Regional Lab.

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The total project cost is estimated at \$40 million. Additional federal funds will be needed over the next several years to support the creation of this important asset.

2. River Trail

Proposal: Seek \$1million in federal appropriations to assist in the development of a River Trail network in the El Paso region that offers recreational opportunities and access to historical, cultural, and natural resources. In addition, seek assistance for a study by the Corps of Engineers for environmental restoration of portions of the riverine areas along the River Trail system.

Amount Requested: \$14 million

Background: This project has catalyzed a broad-based effort to add new trails, protect open space, and river corridors in the city and county of El Paso. Important features along the trail corridor include the Keystone Archeological and Wetlands site, International Boundary Marker #1, Paso de Norte and Old Fort Bliss, Chihuahuita Neighborhood, downtown El Paso, *Chamizal National Memorial*, El Paso Zoo, Ascarate Regional Park, Shawver Park, Rio Bosque Wetlands, Franklin Canal, and the historic Camino Real de Tierra Adentro and El Paso Missions in the lower valley.

The overall vision of the project is to create a multi-use trail and open space network along the entire length of the Rio Grande as it flows through the El Paso region. This could include over 42 new miles of trail. A New Mexico extension is funded and will soon be under construction. In recent community visioning events, local residents and community groups have expressed overwhelming support for the project and have participated in providing input to create a River Park and trail system that meets their needs.

A great deal of progress has been made on the development of the trail including the completion of a Phased Regional River Park Plan and the establishment of a River Park Task Force. In addition, the West Side portion of the River Trail was awarded a \$750,000 regional park grant from Texas Parks and Wildlife and the East Side trail initiative was awarded \$3.1 million in funding from 2001 TEA-21 transportation enhancement program. The funds will be used to build four miles of new trail in El Paso. The East Side trail funding will connect Ascarate Park to the Riverside High School.

According to budget estimates, costs to complete Phase II - 5.6 miles of trail mostly along urban streets (\$138,000) from Ascarate County Park to Chihuahuita Historic Neighborhood Park in downtown - and Phase III, which includes 3.5 miles of trail in a suburban/rural area of El Paso, from Country Club Road to Keystone Heritage Park (\$875,000). Both phases will include street signage, lane painting, trailheads, information kiosks, and other amenities including water conserving drip irrigation systems when appropriate. Completing this portion of the trail will assist in reaching

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three-quarters of the full project. Private funding has been committed to complete the remaining trail gap if public sector funding for this section of the trail is secured. It is estimated that that \$1,013,000 is needed to complete nine miles of trail.

3. Regional Transportation Projects

Proposal: Advocate for El Paso's transportation priorities as developed and approved by the El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Transportation Policy Board (TPB). The City must work with the MPO over the next four years as the federal Department of Transportation, Congress and national transportation associates begin to address and formulate proposals for the next reauthorization bill. The next reauthorization bill is going to focus on goods movement and infrastructure financing. It is essential that El Paso be involved in making proposals to Congress that benefit local highway planning and construction.

Background: The transportation needs of people along the U.S. - Mexico border, and Texas in particular, are unique. El Paso is no exception. If we do not address them now, they will impact the rest of the nation. Our expanding relationship with Mexico is increasing trade and interaction between our two countries but also adversely impact our already strained infrastructure. El Paso continues to struggle with street congestion, lack of alternative freight routes, an aging bus fleet, deteriorating inspection facilities, and a host of other issues. The Mayor and Council will support legislation and federal agency action that will accelerates transportation infrastructure funding for communities disproportionately affected by international trade.

a. Border Highway Extension West (Loop 375) – Southern Relief Route

Construction of this regionally significant transportation project will provide the only parallel alternative route to Interstate Highway 10. Extension of the Border Highway west to connect with Paisano Drive (west of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad) would be the last link of a continuous freeway/expressway route from I-10 (at Sunland Park Drive) to I-10 east (at Americas Avenue). The El Paso MPO identifies this project in the 2030 Metropolitan Transportation Plan as a 4-lane expressway. The total project cost of this project is \$200 million.

b. Central Business District Improvements (Phase 4)

The City of El Paso, in conjunction with the Texas Department of Transportation, will reconstruct portions of the following streets in downtown El Paso:

- Oregon – Paisano to Border Highway
- Mesa – Paisano to Border Highway
- Campbell – Paisano to Border Highway
- Kansas – Paisano to Border Highway
- Sixth – Campbell to El Paso
- El Paso – Missouri to I-10

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- Fourth – Stanton to Mesa
- Father Rahm – Oregon to El Paso

The project includes right-of-way, parkway, roadway, drainage, lighting, and traffic infrastructure improvements. These streets are within the central business district of the largest city in the region, making their improvement important not only to transportation in the downtown area, but also to the economy of the region as a whole.

c. **Great Streets**

This project will revitalize several historically significant corridors along Alameda, Dyer, and North Loop in El Paso through the integration of public transportation services and the construction of pedestrian-oriented amenities. It will enhance access to businesses and residences located near transit stops by providing new sidewalks, accommodations for persons with disabilities, and additional transit shelters, among other improvements. The project will help further promote redevelopment in the area.

d. **Northeast Parkway**

There is no truck bypass around metropolitan El Paso, nor is there a relief route to the Interstate Highway system. The Northeast Parkway project will provide for an 18.3-mile, four-lane divided highway from Loop 375 (Transmountain Road) to the Texas-New Mexico state line on FM3255. The project will divert truck traffic around El Paso and send it on a more direct route to New Mexico and eastern Texas. The route will provide truck traffic an alternative to using Transmountain Road and should reduce runaway truck accidents.

e. **Widening of Interstate Highway 10**

This project provides for widening of I-10 by adding two inside travel lanes from the Texas-New Mexico state line to Transmountain Road. The amount of truck traffic on I-10 has increased dramatically as a result of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), causing severe strain on I-10. Widening the section of the highway from the state line to Transmountain Road will reduce congestion in a particularly high-volume section of the highway. Other congested sections of I-10 have been widened or are planned for widening, and this project will ensure that there are no bottlenecks along the I-10 corridor.

f. **Regional Intermodal Rail Project**

The “SAFE-TEA” Act of 2005 included an authorization of \$14 million for the relocation of the railyards in downtown El Paso to Santa Teresa, New Mexico. The City of El Paso needs funds to study the economical and environmental effects of the project and to plan for use of the recovered site.

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III. Issues of Interest and Advocacy

1. Immigration and Border Security

The City of El Paso will oppose legislation not in keeping with the "Consensus Statement By the Community of the El Paso Region to encourage the United States Congress and the Elected Officials of the State of Texas to Pass Fair and Comprehensive Immigration Reform" approved on August 17, 2006 and the City Council Resolution regarding same.

2. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization

The current FAA reauthorization legislation will expire on September 30, 2007. The City of El Paso will support legislation that provides airports with the necessary tools to fund projects benefiting their local communities and help meet the growing airline and passenger demands such as bills that:

- **Streamline FAA's Management of the PFC Program**

PFCs are now an essential component of airports' capital programs. Many of the original administrative provisions of the PFC program are now outdated, costly, time consuming, and inefficient. The current maze of applications and approvals administered by FAA should be replaced with an "Impose, Report and Review" process administered by airports. This process would save airport and FAA staff time by reducing review and reporting to questions of project eligibility and revenue accumulation.

- **Increase and Strengthen the Airport Improvement Program (AIP)**

The AIP is an important source of funding for airport capital projects, especially for smaller airports that have less ready access to private capital markets. Those airports should receive at least the same level of funding from the program as currently provided. AIP should also be reauthorized with greater discretionary funds and a fortified Letter of Intent program for runway and other large projects important to the national air transportation system. Additionally, Congress should strengthen points of order and budget protections that would make it difficult for appropriators to fund AIP below the authorized amount and increase funding for programs that help small communities attract and retain commercial service.

- **Improve the Airport and Airways Trust Fund to Foster Financial Stability**

The current structure of taxes supporting the AATF, combined with uneven and declining general fund participation, result in an unpredictable funding source to pay for aviation system needs. In order to plan for and support long-term capital

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investment in airport infrastructure and the Next Generation Air Traffic Control System, the FAA and system stakeholders need a stable and predictable funding stream, that does not unfairly allocate cost to any particular user group of the system and is bolstered by an equitable and guaranteed General Fund contribution.

- **Treat Airport Bonds as Tax-exempt Public Purpose Bonds**

While airports are owned and operated by state and local governments and serve a vital public purpose, 60 percent of the bonds issued to build needed capital projects are classified as "private activity" bonds. This means the interest on the bonds is subject to the Alternative Minimum Tax, which raises the cost of borrowing funds for airport improvement projects, thereby making fewer projects fundable. The classification of airport bonds as "private activity" bonds ignores the public benefits derived from the projects they make possible. Reform would also allow airports to "refund" (or refinance) their bonds, taking advantage of lower interest rates.

- **Allow Airports More Financial Flexibility**

Airports currently operate under layers of laws and regulations that restrict their ability to efficiently use their revenue. FAA's Grant Assurances should be streamlined and simplified to eliminate obsolete and redundant provisions, focus on unauthorized diversion of aviation revenues, and empower airports to sustain themselves as non-profit public entities. Airport operators should also be permitted to charge federal agencies for the use of airport facilities.

3. Military Affairs

- Support the development of infrastructure to accommodate growth at Fort Bliss.
- Support the construction of access road from our existing and emerging Airport Industrial areas which will help expedite trucking access and remove truck traffic from current congested access routes, i.e., Montana/ Airport/Airway routes (see appropriations section).
- Support the repair of apron and taxiway at the airfield to enable increased air traffic.

4. International Transportation System Hub

The City of El Paso has adopted the strategic goal of creating a just-in-time (JIT) international commerce port by integrating the highest level of international supply chain measures into the design of hub facilities and operations as required by the Free and Secure Trade (FAST) program. The City actively supports the Custom-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) and initiatives to:

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- Expand the FAST Program.
- Development of more secure and smarter containers.
- Expand the structured training program for C-TPAT Supply Chain Specialist.
- Coordinate with the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Modernization Office to enhance C-TPAT's data collection and information management.
- Work with MPO and Congressional delegation to ensure that next surface transportation authorization bill includes program(s) to fund international transportation hub.

The City will advocate for additional border crossings and assure that such crossings are FAST equipped facilities.

5. International Trade

Situated on the border of two nations and three states, the location of El Paso/Juarez presents a unique array of opportunities. The cities have an excellent relationship of friendship and cooperation and a concerted effort must be made to strengthen this important relationship. Efficient and streamlined trade through our port is significant not only to our own economy but to the economies of Mexico and the United States. El Paso's proximity to Mexico furnishes an excellent opportunity for businesses to capitalize on the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the maquiladora industry, and other prospects in Central and South America.

The efficient implementation of the US-VISIT program in a way that enhances security for our citizens and visitors while facilitating legitimate travel and trade across our borders is a top priority for the El Paso community. In addition, the US-VISIT program must help secure our borders, facilitates the entry and exit process, and enhance the integrity of our immigration system while respecting the privacy of our visitors. In this regard, the City's international trade priorities are as follows:

- Ensure that the City's interests and preferences are fully and fairly considered in the implementation of the US VISIT program.
- Support federal efforts that advance international commerce, promote investment and industrial development.
- Support federal efforts that advance tourism and cultural heritage.

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- Support increased funds and resources being directed to the border to streamline international trade and commerce.
- Institute an international bus service route with Ciudad Juarez to increase international cooperation, commerce and decrease bridge traffic.
- Support increased federal funds to address and resolve serious environmental issues along the U.S. – Mexico border.

6. Healthcare and Public Health

The people along the border suffer disproportionately high levels of poverty and disease, including diabetes, TB, hepatitis, cancer and HIV. Over three million U.S. residents who live along the border are uninsured. The border region is also adversely affected by environmental health hazards including lack of adequate drinking water, chemical exposure and air pollution. We have shortages of nurses, doctors, and other health practitioners, but no shortage of need. In addition, the border is shouldering the burden of providing services to the large numbers of uninsured, under-insured, and the undocumented

- Support legislation and action that increases federal healthcare expenditure and resources directed at the U.S. – Mexico border and or highly underserved, low-income areas like El Paso.
- Support increased funds and resources directed to El Paso in support of the four-year medical school and the development of medical infrastructure.
- Support legislation that will allow for greater federal resources to reimburse hospitals and other providers for care to the uninsured and undocumented.

7. Rail Security

The responsibility of securing our nation's rail and mass transit systems is a shared one. The Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Transportation and other federal agencies have taken significant steps to enhance rail and transit security in the last three years in partnership with the public and private entities that own and operate the nation's transit and rail systems. Efforts have focused on greater information sharing between the industry and all levels of government, assessing vulnerabilities in the rail and transit sector to develop new security measures and plans, increasing training and public awareness campaigns and providing greater assistance and funding for rail transit

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activities. The Federal government provides leadership and technical assistance to transit and rail system owners and operators.

- Support federal funding to examine issues of rail security in the El Paso Ciudad Juarez community.
- Encourage federal co-sponsorship of legislation that directs additional DHS and DOT funds for rail security and safety for railroads and rail facilities including both passenger and freight lines.
- Engage private rail interests to increase rail security in the El Paso metropolitan area.

8. Water Policy

The federal Water Resources Development Act authorizes dozens of federal flood control, hydroelectric, and, to a lesser extent, water supply projects around the country, including in the El Paso region. There will likely be a renewed effort to consider this legislation again this year, which could present new opportunities to initiate, expand, or continue El Paso water projects.

- Address needs of the colonias located in the City's ETJ.
- Support legislation that addresses issues of water availability in border areas.
- Support Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) funding of flood control project in the El Paso community.

9. Workforce Development

The Upper Rio Grande Workforce Development Board was appointed by local elected officials in 1997 and certified by then Governor Bush as a mechanism to give local control to communities and their workforce system. The workforce system is tasked with providing job training, childcare and employment services to employers, job seekers and youth in the Brewster, Culberson, El Paso, Hudspeth, Jeff Davis and Presidio counties. Unfortunately, the workforce board has very limited local control, given the rigid nature of the rules governing the use of these funds. These rules and restrictions make delivery of innovative programs difficult to accomplish. Granting a waiver would help communities in accomplishing the goals specific to the needs of their population. In addition, the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) is up for reauthorization this year. This Act could provide local workforce boards and other entities with even greater flexibility in the use of federal funds, which could be used to address El Paso's unique job training and adult education needs related to manufacturing and workers dislocated due to trade and other factors.

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- The number one priority in workforce development for the El Paso community is to assist the Texas Workforce Commission in seeking a federal waiver that allows for more local control and discretion in the use workforce development funds for programs tailored to the needs of individual communities.
- The Mayor and Council will support federal funds for creative workforce development programs such as Project Arriba.
- Support increases in the NAFTA Trade Adjustment Assistance Program (TAAP) to fund additional job training for workers displaced by international trade.
- Support a greater Department of Labor (DOL) presence in the El Paso area to address displaced worker issues and issues of federal worker's compensation (OWCP).

IV. General Guiding Principals

The City of El Paso will support legislation and federal agency actions that:

- Will protect and enhance City revenues.
- Reduce costs to the City.
- Provide for more local control.
- Protect those policies previously established through the Charter, ordinances, resolutions, and master plans.
- Promote educational, employment and recreational opportunities for our residents.

The City of El Paso will oppose legislation or administrative actions that:

- Undermine the principle of home rule and local self-government.
- Result in loss of revenue or revenue growth to cities.
- Diminish the current authority of cities to regulate and manage their growth and development.
- Nullify or undermine the City's policies contained in existing provision of the Charter, ordinances, resolutions and master plans, unless such changes expand the City's ability to manage its own affairs.
- Diminish any existing authority of cities.
- Impose mandates that require any expenditure by the City unless all costs of same, including administrative as well as direct out-of-pocket costs, are fully reimbursed by the mandating government.