

**Scenic Summer is (almost) Here!  
But we need your help  
ACTION ALERT**



Earlier this spring, when the City shut down much of the community in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the City cited outdoor recreation as an essential activity, necessary to promoting our physical and mental health. Shortly thereafter, however, due to the popularity of getting out to walk, bike or play, the City decided our parks and trails were too crowded, and shut them down. While the City has since reopened the trails, the City has said that budget and safety concerns have made it all but impossible to re-open parks and other recreational facilities.

Physical activity is important, and so are safe, comfortable places where we can exercise. Open Streets are a simple, cost effective method of creating such safe, welcoming, and perhaps most importantly, traffic free spaces for people to get out and exercise, and on Tuesday, June 9th, the El Paso City Council will consider extending the Scenic Sundays program to an everyday Scenic Summer.

All the City needs to do is close the gates to traffic, and in so doing, open Scenic Drive exclusively to people to walk, to bike, and even to play. Before the Pandemic, hundreds of people would enjoy Scenic Drive as an open street every Sunday, so in response to the clear demand for places to safely social distance while exercising, we believe the City of El Paso should open streets all across the City for people and businesses to engage in safe, essential and healthy outdoor activity, and the first step in this process begins with opening Scenic Drive to pedestrians and cyclists to create a Scenic Summer.

We ask that you contact our Mayor and City Representatives right away, and encourage all your friends, family and associates to do the same, then sign up to speak on ITEM 23.1 next Tuesday (instructions below)

**Call/Email Script**

Dear Mayor/Representative,

Thank you for recognizing outdoor activity and exercise as essential for our physical and mental health, especially during this time of the COVID-19 pandemic. I also want to thank you for reopening our urban and natural open space trails for physical activity. But even with the trails re-opened, we still need more places where we can safely recreate and travel across our City, and Scenic Summer (item 23.1) is a unique opportunity for the City of El Paso to grow our very successful Scenic Sundays program and open Scenic Drive exclusively to pedestrians and cyclists. I am asking you to support Scenic Summer so that we may enjoy yet another needed place where we can social distance and exercise for our physical health and mental well being.

Dozens of Cities across the United States and the world have closed streets down to vehicles during this pandemic to allow extra space for safe, social distancing, by providing a traffic free opportunity for active

recreation and play. Through the simple act of voting for Scenic Summer, and closing the gates to traffic, you can open Scenic Drive to all El Pasoans.

It is out of our collective concern for people's health, well being and safety that we need to identify and open more traffic free places for people of all ages and abilities to be able to get out and exercise. Despite a reduction in traffic volumes during the pandemic , we have seen an increase in traffic fatalities over this time last year! For so many, our streets don't feel safe, and sidewalks are too narrow, or at times simply not available or even usable. We need and deserve safe and comfortable places to walk, bike, play, and even travel for essential activities, while safely social distancing, and Scenic Summer gives us another needed place where we can do just that.

By opening Scenic Drive to people, we can:

- create another safe space for people to get out and exercise while safely, social distancing
- add a safe route for people who engage in active transportation to get to/from essential jobs and destinations
- prioritize people of all ages and abilities, so they can walk, bike or play

Please vote yes on Item 23.1, Scenic Summer, and thank you for your consideration,

[you name]\_\_\_\_\_

#### City of El Paso Contact List

Title	Name	Email	Phone
Mayor	Dee Margo	mayor@elpasotexas.gov	(915) 212-0021
District 1 Representative	Peter Svarzbein	district1@elpasotexas.gov	(915) 212-0001
District 2 Representative	Alexsandra Annello	district2@elpasotexas.gov	(915) 212-0002
District 3 Representative	Cassandra Hernandez	district3@elpasotexas.gov	(915) 212-0003
District 4 Representative	Dr. Sam Morgan	district4@elpasotexas.gov	(915) 212-0004
District 5 Representative	Isabel Salcido	district5@elpasotexas.gov	(915) 212-0005
District 6 Representative	Claudia Lizette Rodriguez	district6@elpasotexas.gov	(915) 212-0006
District 7 Representative	Henry Rivera	district7@elpasotexas.gov	(915) 212-0007
District 8 Representative	Cissy Lizarraga	district8@elpasotexas.gov	(915) 212-0008
City Manager	Tommy Gonzalez		(915) 212-0023

Scenic Summer will be considered by the El Paso City Council on June 9, and we strongly encourage to contact the Mayor and Representatives now, as well as to sign up to speak on Item 23.1 during next Tuesday's meeting. You will need to sign up before the meeting starts at 9:00am, using the following link (note: the form is only available from 12:00am Friday until 9:00am Tuesday)

[http://legacy.elpasotexas.gov/muni\\_clerk/signup\\_form\\_agenda.asp](http://legacy.elpasotexas.gov/muni_clerk/signup_form_agenda.asp)

If you post this information on social media, please be sure to use the hashtags: #OpenStreets #ScenicSummer and #StreetsForPeople