



June 18, 2020

The Honorable Ricardo Samaniego, County Judge
The Honorable Carlos Leon, Commissioner, Precinct 1
The Honorable David Stout, Commissioner, Precinct 2
The Honorable Vincent Perez, Commissioner, Precinct 3
The Honorable Carl Robinson, Commissioner, Precinct 4

RE: Segundo Barrio Historic District

Dear County Judge and Commissioners:

I applaud the recent efforts to create an historic district for Segundo Barrio. This is a critical step in recognizing the historic significance of this community, and providing new avenues for the future. This is one reason why my office established the Heritage Tourism Advisory Committee, which includes a cross-section of historians, preservationists, educators, and advocates for historic preservation.

However, I was surprised to learn the boundaries you voted upon do not actually incorporate all of Segundo Barrio; in fact, much of the neighborhood was placed in the Downtown National Historic District. I am perplexed at how this conclusion was reached. Inexplicably, the Segundo Barrio Historic District does not even include Sacred Heart Church, a central institution in the life of the community.

This project has been years in the making, and is too important to do half-way. The significance of taking a part of its heart and putting it under a Downtown district sends a message that the community is lesser. This is the wrong message. What constitutes the Segundo Barrio community is well-recognized, and it should not be divided in this way.

It is my sincere hope that you will reconsider this action, and create a Segundo Barrio National Historic District that accurately reflects the community that has provided the deep roots for so many people in El Paso and across the nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "José Rodríguez". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

José Rodríguez