

RAÚL M. GRIJALVA  
7TH DISTRICT OF ARIZONA

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
RANKING MEMBER

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD, ELEMENTARY, AND  
SECONDARY EDUCATION

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT

CONGRESSIONAL PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS  
CHAIR EMERITUS

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
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March 31, 2023

Tom Cole  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on THUD, Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives

Mike Quigley  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on THUD, Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member Quigley,

I am requesting \$2,160,000 under the FY 24 HUD-Economic Development Initiative program for the City of Somerton's Main Street Redevelopment Project.

The Main Street Redevelopment Project will help with the revitalization of Main Street with improvements that will enhance economic development through reinvestment by businesses, property owners, and future private development. It will span Somerton Avenue and the western edge of Sanguinetti Park. Improvements include widened and improved pedestrian zone to ADA standards. The design includes crosswalks, landscape planting & irrigation improvements; roadway and pedestrian lighting with auxiliary outlets at trees; gateway monument arch at Somerton Avenue and two wayfinding elements; and replacement of outdated traffic signal at the intersection of Somerton Avenue and Main Street. The project has been vetted by community members via the Main Street Redevelopment Planning Process.

The City of Somerton is a rural border community in Yuma County, Arizona with a population of 15,000 that shares a border with Mexico. The city is a designated historically distressed community and an opportunity zone, predominately Hispanic (97%) and has an 11.7% unemployment rate, nearly three times higher than the state and national rates. Within the project area daily average daily traffic count is over 22,000. Somerton is considered a transportation desert in respect to individuals who have access to cars or other sources of transportation except for Yuma County Area Transit, which only operates certain times of the day in Somerton. Pedestrian traffic is considerable in Somerton. Somerton is ranked the highest for the greatest concentration of persons with disabilities, persons below the poverty level, unemployed and zero-vehicle households in Yuma County. Developing a pedestrian friendly, multi-modal downtown environment achieves many of the goals of HUD-EDI and will create a sustainable economic downtown. At the project's completion enhanced features will establish room and a venue for on-street dining at restaurant areas, bus stop shelters, and bicycle riders will be able to share the sidewalk zone, which eliminates the need for bike lanes in the roadway zone. Overall, Main Street will still function as an efficient 3-lane roadway with on-street parking, however, corner bulb-outs will be utilized to shorten crosswalk lengths, which will increase pedestrian safety.

Primary supporters are: Yuma Greater Economic Development Corporation, Yuma County Metropolitan Planning Organization, Yuma County Board of Supervisors, and local businesses. This project meets all requirements, is shovel ready, and can obligate funds within a year.

Thank you for your consideration for this important proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Raúl M. Grijalva". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent flourish at the end of the last name.

Raúl M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress