

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
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April 30, 2024

The Honorable Steve Womack
Chairman
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing, and
Urban Development, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Quigley
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and
Urban Development, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Womack and Ranking Member Quigley,

I am requesting \$2 million under the FY 25 HUD-EDI account for the City of Tucson's Barrio Nopal Park Development project.

The Barrio Nopal Park Development project will bring the final elements of a park master plan including: a new dog park, basketball court, fitness stations, skate spot, irrigation, lighting, landscaping, and trees to fruition. The improvements will provide safe and age-appropriate amenities to serve children, teens, adults and seniors, while providing healthy, green spaces for the neighbors.

Barrio Nopal is one of the neighborhoods in Tucson that has experienced significant historic disinvestment. Many of the neighborhood streets are in failing condition and the urban heat island effect is not mitigated effectively with drought-tolerant trees and landscaping. Overarchingly, the neighborhood does not have a safe environment for pedestrians and cyclists. The next closest park is 1.8 miles away, which is a 40-minute walk. This is critical public infrastructure for a community in need of these investments.

Between phase 1 of the project currently being funded by the City of Tucson, and this request for phase 2 of the project, 175 new drought-tolerant trees will be planted on this six-acre park. Nearly 12,885 people live within a one-mile radius of this part. The demographics of this neighborhood are: 86.4% Hispanic or Latino, 2% Black or African American, 3.4% American Indian and Alaska Native, .9% Asian. Significant community engagement in 2021 and 2022 included two in-person meetings, two virtual meetings (English and Spanish) and two surveys that resulted in 339 contacts. This feedback was critical to developing a master plan with the amenities most important to the neighbors.

The City of Tucson has already invested \$450,000 to acquire land for the park project and \$3,800,000 for constructing phase 1 of the new Barrio Nopal Park. Construction begins in June 2024. Phase 1 of the park focused on the family friendly features such as a playground, restroom, ramadas, and walking paths. Funding for Phase 2, would allow completion of the brand-new

park construction, fully actualizing the dream of the community. The combined total project cost including the federal CPF request and local contribution is \$6,350,000. Once the project is complete, this will be a hub for the Barrio Nopal community activities, events and outdoor recreation.

Primary supporters are Mayor Regina Romero, Council Member Lane Santa Cruz, Pima County Barrio Nopal Neighborhood Association, Sunnyside Unified School District and the local community. This project meets all requirements, is shovel ready, and can obligate funds within a year.

Thank you for your consideration of 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 large, stylized 'R' at the beginning.

Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress